

LECTURES
ON THE
PROGRESS AND PERFECTION
OF THE
CHURCH OF CHRIST.

—
BY GEORGE BOURNE.
—

After the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God. And they went forth and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen. MARK.

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PREFACE.

These Lectures upon Ecclesiastical History were originally intended solely, to diversify public instruction in the ordinary routine of christian ministerial duties ; which constitutes a sufficient apology to disarm criticism. The Prospectus remarked, “as the principal object is to develope to youth, and to persons who have enjoyed but few opportunities of study, a *concise* delineation of the prominent features and facts which the annals of the Christian Church combine; and as the form of instruction is oral and popular, all learned and recondite investigations are unavoidably precluded.”

The last note in the Appendix contains the information ordinarily included in an introductory notice; to it, the reader is referred for any explanation which he may desire, concerning the materials of which the volume is composed.

The Author believes, that notwithstanding all their imperfections, these Lectures are not the vehicle of error ; he has endeavoured in connection with the narrative, to oppose essential aberrations from the truth, to defend the fundamental doctrines of the

PREFACE.

Gospel, and to inculcate the importance of fraternal affection among Christians, thereby to augment that “communion of all saints” which will constitute the peace and the glory of the Millennium. If an heterodoxical opinion sanctioned as evangelical verity, or a statement which can excite a discordant feeling between the sincerely devotional disciples of the gracious Redeemer—should be discovered in the volume, no person will more sincerely censure, or more quickly expunge the morbid excrescence.

The prophetic illustrations are incorporated expressly to demonstrate the truth of Divine Revelation, and to educe a devout and practical acknowledgment that the Author and Founder of Christianity, is the God of all Grace, King of Kings, and Lord of Lords.

GEORGE BOURNE.

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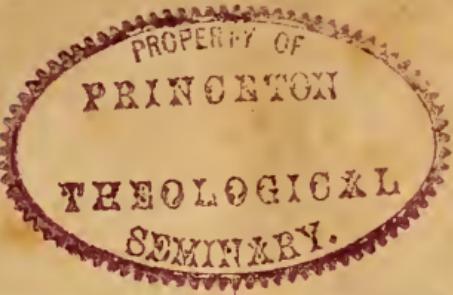
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ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY.

INTRODUCTORY.

THE history of the Christian Church comprises the most interesting and splendid topics for contemplation in the annals of our globe. If the study of general history be one of the best means of mental expansion; if an extensive acquaintance with Biography be a copious source of self-knowledge—it follows, that of all the departments of historical record, that which includes the government of Jehovah in connection with the disciples of the Prince of Peace, must be the most instructive and important.

To review the moral transformation which has been developed in the world since that august Pentecostal morning, when in Jerusalem, in every language, Peter and the disciples “spake the wonderful works of God;” briefly to retrace the divine dispensations by which the grand design of redemption has been evolved ; and to display the gradual progression of the church of Christ towards that period, when “the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, even as the light of seven days;” can be neither a useless nor a superfluous employment.

Here we shall behold the most astonishing contradictions, under the government of infinite wisdom, all combining to produce the same beneficial result; in the methods by which the Great Head of the Church has directed all her affairs, we shall perceive the Redeemer exalted; from the fortitude, patience,

virtues and triumphs of suffering Martyrs, the timid oppressed disciple may be encouraged; from the labors, energies and zeal of Apostles, Reformers and Missionaries, the slothful may be excited to activity and diligence, and the faithful Servant must be animated to nobler exertions for the cause of him “ who died that we may live;” and from the awful end of many who have with unhallowed hands touched the ark of God, we may be induced to tremble lest we should be hardened into the spirit of persecution, or ingulphed in the abyss of impenitence and despair.

From contemplations upon the visible kingdom of Jesus, in the successive ages through which she has passed, we may deduce every species of moral and spiritual improvement. The perfections of God, as illustrated in her narrative, are adapted to excite equal fear and confidence; the mercy of the gracious Saviour has so often interposed for the deliverance of his tried and stedfast disciples, that no one can reasonably be agonized; the graces which inspire and adorn the Christian, are manifestly demonstrated to be of celestial origin by the wonderful effects which have flowed from the possession of them—thus devotion, hope and a similitude to him “ who was holy, harmless, and undefiled” are engendered, and we become “followers of them who through faith and patience now inherit the promises.”

What was the state of the world on that morning when “the Lord was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God ?”

The greater portion of the civilized and explored countries of our globe were tributaries to Rome; their morals formed a mass of indescribable turpitude, and their pretended religion was the most preposterous and senseless idolatry. Even their philosophers, with scarcely an exception, were little more elevated either in the rationality of their conceptions, or their purity of conduct: and the Epicurean system, which was the most extensively prevalent, and obtained

the most numerous enrolment of devotees, commingled all the absurdities of the most debasing Atheism in principle, with unbounded practical sensuality and corruption. The Jews alone appeared under a different character; while the other nations were enveloped in tangible darkness, light beamed upon them; notwithstanding, errors of the most pernicious nature infected all orders of the people, and the disputation of the Sadducees and Pharisees tended only to augment their delusions.—Pharisaic traditions which made the commandments of God of none effect, were the entrance, by which the people travelled to Sadducean infidelity and thence to Epicurean licentiousness. Of those sections of the world, which the conjoined ambition and cupidity of Rome had not grasped, little is known; but that record which has survived the destruction of time, evinces that in principles, manners, appearance and civilization, they were probably inferior to the most degraded and wretched tribe of our Aboriginal Americans.

At this period, about the year of the world 4000, in Judea resided a being in human form, of the most extraordinary character. The instructions which he delivered, were all sublime, novel, decidedly opposed to the sentiments and habits which then prevailed, and totally destructive of their longer continuance: these doctrines he enforced by matchless authority, and verified by the most stupendous miracles. From the hatred which his opinions excited, he was unjustly and ignominiously murdered; having previous to that event, predicted his premature and cruel death, the instruments who should be permitted to slay him, disclosed his restoration to life to his twelve disciples, and commissioned them at a subsequent *call*, to itinerate through all the world, promulgating as they travelled, instruction for the ignorant, reformation for the vicious, and redemption for the lost, merely by believing the “glad tidings,” the good news, which they were enjoined to preach; promising them, at the time of their appointment to

this arduous employ, that "in his name they should cast out devils, speak with new and unknown tongues, take up serpents unhurt ;" drink poisons without injury, and be capable of healing all manner of diseases, to authenticate the message which they were directed to deliver to the benighted idolater and depraved bacchanalian. Jesus had also assured his disciples, that as the infallible consequence of the publication of the doctrines which he taught, they should experience great opposition ; but that his cause should ultimately triumph, to banish Atheistic darkness, the orgies of idolatry, and all the dominant corruption of the human family. He ascended on high, and left his apostles to realize the verity of his divine mission.

Now, Jesus Christ did live, die, rise again, and majestically disappear from Judea, in conformity with the narrative in the New Testament ; on the evangelical history is fabulous. If it be replied, that no such being ever resided among the Jews, then a vast majority of the most splendid and blissful events in the annals of the world, have no anterior cause ; that is, all the transactions of the civilized nations, during nearly eighteen hundred years, have existed without any commencement, or concatenation : and what is more astonishing, this same Jewish nation, among whom he is related to have been numbered, are expelled from the land of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, according to his prediction ; in every age, in every generation, in every country, of all climates, colours, languages, periods, scattered through the habitable globe, almost universally feeling an inextinguishable hatred to that Jesus who was crucified by their ancestors, and manifesting an insuperable aversion from all those who profess to believe in his doctrines, and to obey his commands ; that is, they abhor that which never existed, and are most inveterately malignant against a non-entity. Admit this consequence, and all the miracles in the holy scriptures dwindle into insignificance, contrasted with the magnitude of that

prodigy to which Infidel credulity flies for refuge.—Deny the truth of ancient history, which thus represents the state of the world prior to the destruction of Jerusalem ; all the past becomes a blank, and reliance upon human testimony a delusion. But as this principle in operation would immediately produce a dissolution of society, it requires no argument to demonstrate that it is fallacious.

If, on the contrary, we affirm, that Jesus Christ lived according to the evangelical narration, we are involved in a single alternative—either the results which the Saviour declared should attend Apostolic preaching, have been witnessed by the successive generations of mankind, or no such consequences have ever actually existed. It is a point perfectly indifferent, which of the positions is selected, because both must inevitably conduct the impartial judge to the same eventual conclusion. Deny that these effects have accompanied the promulgation of the Gospel—then, who subverted the Pagan Idols ? who dethroned the Heathen Mythology ? who razed the altars of superstition ? what extinguished the fire of human sacrificial victims ? who transformed the Gladiator's Aceldama into a temple of devotion ? what so metamorphosed the human family that no person could probably be discovered, certainly no audience could be collected, even to hear a faithful and plain detail of the authorized, riotous and unhallowed abominations, which constituted the glory and the attraction of the Bacchanalian and other solemnities ? Who influenced the Roman Empire to be called after the name of Jesus Christ, and to perpetuate his honours by regularly dedicating every seventh day to his praise, and by celebrating sacred institutions “in remembrance” of him ?

It cannot be affirmed, that these changes occurred from the fluctuations of human opinion ; because this mutation was gradually exemplified, notwithstanding ceaseless opposition to prevent it, and the most unremitting, artful, and energetic measures, to eter-

nize the ancient system. Suppose twelve men in the United States should coalesce to attempt the re-establishment of the diversified absurdities of antiquity : allow them wealth amply sufficient to secure them against the vicissitudes of dependence and penury ; grant them the possession of all the stores of intellect and the powers of eloquence ; assist them by all the advantages of the typographic art ; and permit them to publish their doctrines, to engage in their abhorrent orgies, and to exalt their Jupiter, their Bacchus, their Venus, without restraint and without persecution—every person instantaneously perceives, that a greater folly could not enter the blind and morbid imagination of man ; yet this is indescribably more plausible, than that which we see, and hear, and know ! The inference is irresistible, that twelve “unlearned and ignorant men,” without any of those beneficial appendages, could not possibly have been “more than conquerors.” But through the instrumentality of the Apostles and their fellow labourers, idolatrous statues have been consumed in the flames ; the theogony of the Ancients is remembered only as a subject of ridicule and contempt ; Pagan altars no longer smoke with unhallowed incense ; the festivals of cruelty are no more exhibited, and beastly licentiousness has been banished from those regions, in which the doctrines of Christ and his Disciples illuminate the understanding and sway the heart : and these effects have been produced, although the prejudices of antiquity counteracted, the pride and cupidity of interested Priests repelled, the Imperial majesty, armed with invincible power resisted, and wretchedness, disgrace, persecution and death, overwhelmed the Teachers of Truth in every form, and with the most terrific horrors. Hence we are forced to conclude that the primitive Christian Instructors were supernaturally assisted, and consequently that their contest was divine, supported by an invisible energy, and prosperous through omnipotent co-operation.

If the result to which this brief review has conducted us, be the natural and the sole conviction of our judgments, it is evident, that the history of “the church of God, which he purchased with his own blood” is the most dignified, interesting, and momentous topic which can engross our attention. Here is a cause of heavenly origin, sustained by supreme interposition, and bearing in all its features, and in all its progression, the stamp of its eternal Author : so that we may justly say, during the examination which it involves—“ This is the finger of God.” 1.

All that can certainly be known of the Christian church until the death of John the Beloved, is comprised in the Acts of the Apostles and their Epistles ; but a correct and lucid understanding of the doctrines of the primitive Disciples, their miraculous qualifications, the government of Christ’s mystical body, the heresies which arose during that era, the persecutions which they suffered, and the opposition which they experienced, will enable us to form exact ideas of the subsequent departure from “ the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.”

Thence the history of the Redeemer’s Kingdom on earth until the reign of Constantine, and the ages of darkness which overspread the nations nominally Christian, until the commencement of the sixteenth century ; in connexion with the predictions recorded in the sacred Oracles, will be successively delineated. The progress of that brilliant flood of light which the Sun of Righteousness incited Luther, Calvin, Zuinglius, Knox, Cranmer, and their coadjutors to pour upon the nations which were immersed in ignorance and corruption, will then be pourtrayed. After which the general influence of the Reformation, a theme equally delightful in retrospect, as exhilarating in anticipation ; and a view of the diversified means organized to extend universally the knowledge of Christ and him crucified, with particular reference to the advancement of “Pure and un-

1. Appendix I.

defiled religion" in these confederated Republics, will complete the design of these Lectures.

The wisdom and mercy of the Saviour of Sinners are equally elucidated by the adoption of a popular address, as the most efficient method to enlighten and impress mankind. From their multifarious and active engagements, many persons possess little leisure and less inclination to read and meditate even on those subjects which conduce to their everlasting peace; but by this medium their minds are expanded and their hearts cheered—the presence of others uniting in their reflections relieves them from the dullness of solitude, and they easily imbibe at once that accumulated intelligence which is abstracted from a variety of books, that they might realize neither patience nor opportunity effectually to peruse.

It is proposed therefore to select the most popular and striking facts only, to notice those stars of the first magnitude who have successively shone in the Christian constellations, and thence to deduce those instructions which shall establish our faith in Divine Providence, our hope in redeeming mercy, our conviction of the divine Government in our world, our resignation to the disposals of the King of Saints, and our inflexible resolution to imitate the examples of them who through much tribulation having entered the kingdom of heaven, are now in the beautiful vision of God resounding the incessant and eternal chorus, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain; blessing and honor, glory and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne and to the Lamb for ever.—Amen."

What benefits may be anticipated from a review of ecclesiastical history?

I. A complete antidote to unbelief.

The annals of the Christian church, are equally adapted to slay the proud Scowler's atheistic tendencies, and the timid Disciple's unbelieving terrors. We scan the record, and we mark the presence of the supreme Jehovah. He who decides with rationality, can no more attentively reflect upon the historical

pages of Christianity without a resistless conviction that he who said "let there be light and there was light, has also commanded the light to shine out of darkness, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ," than he can confute his own personal identity. But it is a melancholy, lamentable truth, that men generally are altogether ignorant of this most necessary source of intelligence—hence they pretend to Infidel scruples; because they shun the illumination in the beams of which their doubts and scruples would vanish.

The timidity of a sincere disciple may be fostered by similar negligence. We should deem it highly dishonorable for a child not to feel interested in some information respecting the residences, habits, opinions and character of his Ancestors; important effects may flow from his intimate acquaintance with their past history ; his corrupt propensities may be counteracted by the remembrance of their piety, and his virtuous resolutions may be fortified by the example of their courage in adversity. It is much more the duty of every Christian to know the pilgrimage of his Predecessors in the faith ; and hence the study of the holy Bible is continually urged upon us with the utmost earnestness, by *precept*, "Search the Scriptures;" and by *example*, "The Bereans were more noble than those of Thessalonica, because they received the word with all readiness of mind and searched the Scriptures daily, whether these things were so." While we do not exalt the fragile records of the Church by human pens, to the authority or to an equality with the imperishable dictates of supernatural inspiration, it may be admitted that the former are supplementary to the sacred Oracles, and should maintain the second rank in our regard and attention.

In the human heart naturally is found a disposition to disbelieve the divine existence, to discard the supremacy of God, to deny our obligations of obedience to his commandments, and to disown future retribu-

tion.—The volume of celestial revelation was promulgated to exterminate these irreligious principles and sensibilities from the soul; and to implant sublime, consistent, reverential sentiments concerning the Godhead; with enlarged views of our character, duties and destinies as men. This native infidelity is banished by the word of God, and in its stead a vital faith is substituted. It is not presumed that similar effects would result from the most amplified knowledge of Ecclesiastical History; because faith cannot be generated, nor can its efficacy be sustained without the word of God; but as a Coadjutor, the records of the Church present innumerable and most cogent arguments to arrest the influence of our unbelief, and to give energy to that faith “which overcometh the world.” Nevertheless it must be remarked, that no doctrine taught by any Expositor, no ceremony practised by Christians of any age or country, no government or laws which have been established at any period, should be admitted as authoritative, unless they are sanctioned by “Thus saith the Lord;” and no example must be imitated, unless it flowed from “the same mind which was also in Christ Jesus.” With this proviso, in the history of the Christian church, appears such multiplied proofs of the power, wisdom, interposition, justice, and mercy of God, that every species of unbelief must, under the operation of their influence, when duly scrutinized, be completely confounded, if not totally extirpated. Thus an additional alterative is obtained against the mortal poison which creeps through our veins, and which must be extinguished or we die for ever.

H. The spirit of acceptable devotion.

In the most eventful and perilous storms of persecution, with which the Lord permitted his sheep to be agitated and worried, it was a proverb, that became at last, from its long experienced truth, a Christian axiom, “the blood of the Martyrs is the seed of the church.” In this aspect, how worthy of all our

devotion and confidence, does that King of Saints appear, who from the conflagration of his adopted children could produce the conversion of their executioners, who by the corporeal murder of one Christian could quicken blind, dead idolaters, to spiritual sight and life! Are your affections dull, your intellects benumbed, the powers of the soul torpid?—fly to Jerusalem. Hear Stephen, the Proto-Martyr, whose wisdom and spirit were irresistible, and who “full of faith and power did great wonders and miracles”—mark the rage of his envenomed Judges, they gnash on him with their teeth—listen to his defence: watch him—his eyes are elevated to the heavens; those heavens he saw opened, and the crucified Messiah enthroned in celestial glory. The rage of his enemies could no longer be restrained, they silenced his eloquence by their vociferation, stopped their ears, forcibly seized him, dragged him out of the city, and there stoned him into Paradise. His *dying confidence*, “the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God” to receive his spirit; his *last words*, the prayer of affection for his deluded assailants.—Every particle of this narrative inspires devotional sensibilities. Here the presence of the adorable Jesus, “Him who is exalted Prince and a Saviour,” in his people’s distress is unequivocally attested, to encourage our confidence—here the natural enmity of the human heart against revealed truth is distinctly exemplified to excite our remorse and vigilance against the intrusions of this unhallowed temper—here the spirit of Christianity is triumphantly displayed, in disarming the injured of the most powerful passion of corrupt human nature, *revenge*, and in transforming the fury of malediction into the transports of filial and believing imploration, that we may remember the value of prayer, when we combine with Stephen’s dying intercession, the subsequent renovation and labors of Paul—and here the decisive superiority of the religion of Jesus to all other systems of theology and morals which have ever been devised among

men is irrefragably certified, as it imparts to its possessors a tranquillity which injustice cannot interrupt, and which an unexpected and merciless death cannot diminish. These views are more than sufficient to educe all the ardors of praise, the fervour of love, and ceaseless ebullitions of gratitude to him who can thus regenerate the soul, and qualify it for an admission into those mansions of bliss which he is gone before to prepare for them, "the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

Who can hear a Martyr expressing his contempt for "all that earth calls good and great," contrasted with the approbation of the Redeemer, the Son of man "who shall judge the world in righteousness," and not feel the incapacity of things terrestrial to satisfy the desires of the immortal soul? and their insignificant value, when compared with that "good hope through grace" which terror could not shake, and which the "midst of the burning fiery furnace" could not consume? Who can listen to an outcast from earth, proclaiming the conquests of redemption, and "the unsearchable riches of Christ," to the obdurate sinners who have unjustly exposed him on the cross, as food for birds of prey, and not admire the impress of a gracious Saviour's hand? Who can stand around the stake to which are chained the despised disciples of Jesus of Nazareth, view the flames which destroy their tortured limbs, and hear the warblings of their dying hallelujahs, without corresponding emotions in his soul? On scenes like these we may gaze with conflicting sensations of rapture, until, like the disciples travelling to Emmaus, "our hearts burn within us," while the Lord walks with us in the way, and from the pages of his servants' history, more lucidly opens to us the Scriptures. Dead indeed must be the sensibilities of that man, who can behold these august evidences of Christianity without solicitude, when he scrutinizes his own different situation; and cold must be the feelings of that disciple who can pass by like the Priest and the Levite, and enjoy no sacred

warmth, when he contemplates the chariot of fire which wafts the triumphant Believer from great tribulations to the New Jerusalem.

III. A luminous commentary upon the Gospel of Christ.
To the sacred volume we are instrumentally indebted for all our intellectual expansion, and all our social superiority over those nations where the Sun of Righteousness has not yet arisen with healing in his wings. The truth cannot be too often repeated, cannot be too deeply impressed upon all descriptions of men, that the moral maladies of the human family admit but one mode of cure, and the evils which originate in sin have hitherto been mitigated only by the Balm of Gilead, the diffusion and reception of the Gospel. Hence, every proper attempt to corroborate its truth, to illustrate its doctrines, and to enforce its injunctions, must be beneficial. But to what sources shall we apply for confirmation of the Book, except to the histories which are a continuation, though written by fallible and uninspired men, of the divinely revealed oracles? whence can we more precisely ascertain the purport of our standard of faith and practice, than by investigating the opinions of all those who have received it as an infallible Arbiter, and by comparing their decisions with it, thence to educe our own conclusions? how can the precepts of Christ derive higher exemplary sanction, than by a delineation of that practical conformity which has been shewn to them in all ages by the most dignified members of the human family, and by an exhibition of the advantages which have invariably accompanied unreserved obedience and fidelity to the law of Christ?

It has been sometimes intimated, that christians professedly receive the gospel from a sinister motive, which designates them *hypocrites*, or from a weak intellect, which supposes them incompetent to form a correct judgment. May not this odious insinuation be confuted? Since the apostolic era, or at least since the miraculous gifts to the church have been

no longer experienced, the votaries of Christianity dread nothing when contrasted with their enemies, either in numbers, virtue, or illumination: and it will be no small acquisition, could this effect alone be produced by a review of Ecclesiastical History—an unshaken conviction that with the sincere reception of Christianity is indissolubly combined, all that which can infuse devotion, purify the heart, enlarge the understanding, promote present comfort, and implant the assured anticipations of felicity everlasting. In this portion of the annals expanded for the inspection of man, the sacred volume is copiously elucidated. Every perfection of the Deity is displayed; all the attributes of the Mediator's government are unfolded; the mysteries of Redemption are exhibited; the declarations of Prophecy are fulfilled; Man appears in all the dignity and perfection, of which our nature in this inferior state probably is susceptible: here we behold demonstrated, "that in the way of righteousness is life, and in the pathway thereof is no death"—the pilgrimage to Canaan is so lucidly marked, that the traveller is cheered with additional resplendency, and the gates of Paradise are brought within the vision of his enraptured soul and ineffably enlarged capacities. Thus admitting the divine word as our only authorized standard of all religious opinions and actions, yet we shall discover in the progressive stages of our course, continual reason to adore the High and Lofty one who inhabits eternity, to love the munificent Saviour, to honour the blessed dead who have died in the Lord; and shall receive confirmation of our faith, and instruction in our duty, while our hearts ennobled and enlightened by these grand exemplars, may thereby "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

IV. The proper introduction to all civil history.

A compendious narrative of the mutations through which the church has passed, forms the most appropriate accompaniment for the Bible of truth, and

should be universally perused as the only sure guide to all other historical annals. This would reduce all our knowledge into regular order; but according to our usual system, an inversion has been established, and that which should be first, is either last or totally obliterated.

If every book is characterized by defect, except the volume of supernal revelation, and if that defect is proportionate to the distance at which it is removed from the centre of perfection; how important is it, especially to youth, that ere corruption commences its unhallowed dominion, the pure light should irradiate the heart, and the noblest of men be viewed as examples. We introduce our youth to the sacred scriptures as the first Book, and instead of sanctioning the effects which it produces, by a course of reading which may equally instruct, interest, and corroborate the salutary impressions educed by the holy doctrines and lives of the departed saints, we transfer their attention from Mount Zion and the heavenly Jerusalem, to Greece and Rome, and the pages of those fables, which can have no other tendency than to vitiate their principles, while it simultaneously augments the innate corruption of the heart.

The object of "the glorious gospel of the ever blessed God," is to awaken in the soul of man that "fear of the Lord which is the beginning of wisdom;" by recalling to the reminiscence of the forgetful, the thoughtless, and the obdurate sinner, the immensity of the divine perfections, and the truth of our responsibility. Hence a mind not predisposed thus to behold the government of Jehovah in all sublunary affairs, might scrutinize all the records connected with profane history, without knowing any God but the phantom of a mythology as absurd as it is defiling, and without contemplating any exemplars except men whose predominant passions and uniform conduct, instead of being calmly pourtrayed, should never be adduced, except as a beacon to caution;

until at length, the stupifying potion has almost if not entirely expunged the prior impressions engendered by divine Truth : but a knowledge of Ecclesiastical History, would on the contrary increase the influence of the verities which a perusal of the sacred oracles might have imprinted on the heart ; and therefore, an acquaintance with the prominent facts which have occurred amid the revolutions of christianity, is not only proper, but indispensable.

Is it obvious that the moral qualities of man are of the highest regard, and demand our primary attention ; and that nothing adventitious, whether in intellect, or station, or acquisitions, is truly deserving of esteem, except it contributes to render the possessor more useful and beneficial in this state of probation, and to imbue him with superior qualifications for the immortality before us, when the corporeal powers shall be stilled by the grasp of death, and inclosed in the oblivious recesses of the tomb ? Then, to what sources of information must we apply for correct ideas of the Deity, especially in his government of the world ? Undoubtedly, to those histories in which his perfections are ever recognized, and the whole train of diversified change is attributed to the divine permission, or direction, or immediate interposition. But this grand stimulus to virtue, the impressive reality of the divine omniscience, is either diminished or forgotten in all other records ; and this general position will apply to every other truth, the operation of which is intended to glorify God, and to promote the welfare of men. To the holy scriptures we must ever primarily refer for all that knowledge which is requisite to our sanctification and peace ; and if this instruction be all-important, it follows, that it is a most incumbent duty, to assist the influence of these doctrines by the sanctions which they derive from their actual display in the lives and actions of those who professed to have been governed by them. Hence, it is incontestable, that a mind fraught with moral and religious influence,

and an enlarged acquaintance with the history of the Church of Christ, is much more prepared to peruse with advantage the annals of the world; and although the whole tenor of the author's narrative might induce a thoughtless reader to suppose that "there is no God," or at least to forget the exactitude of his dispensations, and the minuteness of his attentions to all the affairs of mankind; yet from the vivid and permanent sensibilities excited by the Gospel, and the delineation of its effects as embodied in the Martyrs and Reformers, he will be disposed to admire the control of that supreme, invisible hand, which primarily impelled, and which still regulates the machinery of the Universe. 2.

V. A treasury of self-knowledge.

We have often admired the saying of the antient Philosopher, "*know thyself:*" and we are frequently admonished that "the proper study of mankind is man:" admitting this truth, the most efficacious mode to attain this knowledge must be instantaneously approved. If the history of the world exhibits man in all his variegated hues, and of course enables the beholder accurately to estimate his diversified qualities; if in biography, his characteristics are portrayed with perfect individuality, and his features are distinctly depicted; indubitably, these points are much more advantageously and precisely ascertained in the records of the Christian Church. The good and the evil are so indiscriminately blended in profane history, that it is very often almost impossible to separate them; and it is very common for persons through this combination to contract an equal fondness for the vile as the precious, until the influence of this unhallowed amalgamation becomes in a measure incorporated in their own hearts and practice.

This pernicious consequence cannot attend the proper study of Christian history. In every stage, in every important occurrence, in every character of

notice and interest, the line of demarcation is so plainly drawn, that it cannot become obscured.— The distinctions between truth and error, vice and virtue, rectitude and injustice, barbarism and philanthropy are so invariably maintained and so lucidly exhibited, that it is impossible for the most superficial observer to commingle them. Consequentially in every step of his route the Traveller finds a source of knowledge in application to his own character; and his mind is insensibly, yet additionally impressed, with the importance, the benefits, and the celestial origin of the sacred books. In the annals of the church of Christ, the virtues of which man is capable are exemplified in their most fascinating appearance; and the vices to which sinners are prone are displayed in all their undisguised deformity.— The natural darkness which beclouds the human mind, and the depravity which sways his soul are clearly discerned; while in all the effulgence of meridian splendour, we witness the expulsion of the mental gloom, and admire the wondrous transformation which opens the blind eyes and whitens the Ethiopian's skin. Christianity expands her archives, and proclaims man, a creature destined for an immortal existence, this alone gives to ecclesiastical history an irrefragable and an incalculable superiority over all the other details of nations. Every page is fraught with serious recollections; by which we are reminded of the divine government, our personal obligations, our ineffable responsibility, the misery of an exposure to the wrath of the Lamb, and the extatic peace which accompanies the experience of the divine favour. The successive characters which are depicted, furnishing either a caution to alarm or an example to imitate, convince the mind, without a long process to analyze the composition; because the particles though combined are so distinct that the grandeur and simplicity of virtue are intuitively separated from the tortuous baseness of vice. Thus, as in a glass, we behold the secret move-

ments of our hearts, and the almost mysterious contradictions which adhere to the human character; and when it is subjoined, that since the period of Constantine's reign, the history of the Saviour's kingdom includes all that which is truly interesting in the affairs of men, we have an insuperable argument for the Course of Lectures now proposed.

If it thus appear evident, that an acquaintance with the events which have transpired during the existence of the Christian church is the most proper introduction to the perusal of the other annals of our globe; that it is one of the most ample sources of self-knowledge; that it affords a most lucid commentary upon the sacred volume; that it furnishes a strong antidote to unbelief, and nurtures the spirit of ardent and acceptable devotion; it requires no additional recommendation to urge our scrutiny of the prominent circumstances which in the successive ages of Christianity have occurred; especially as not amusement only but illumination is sought, and not instruction alone but also our melioration may be obtained.

However, it must be recollected that we are about to survey a very extensive field, to examine controversies which have agitated nations, and divided the members professedly of the same household, and to investigate doctrines, opinions, characters, ceremonies and institutions, on the correctness of which many may have already decided. It becomes us therefore, to divest ourselves of our preconceived prejudices, that we may derive from this research, that spiritual edification which the Martyrology of the Saints and the triumphs of Reformers are calculated to produce; even from listening to the perverse disputings of men, that we may be established in the faith and hope of the Gospel; and that the wretchedness which has attended the last terrestial days of Persecutors may inspire us with a holy aversion from all those feelings and excitements which are incompatible with Christian charity; without which, all eloquence, all knowledge, all power, and all suffer-

ing “profit us nothing, but are sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal.” If our meditations shall educe these effects, we shall not regret the hours devoted to an examination of the progress and influence of Christianity from that glorious Pentecostal morn to the present period; while the narrative of past events will radically impress the conviction, that we indulge only the anticipations of certitude, when we exult in the speedy approach of the reverberations of that blissful trumpet which the seventh angel shall sound, and in answer to which “the great voices in heaven” shall say; “the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; Alleluia, for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth, and he shall reign for ever and ever.” Amen.

The Apostles and Evangelists—the doctrines and discipline—the persecutions—and the progress of the church during the first century.

The history of the Christian church during the first century, is chiefly comprised in the Acts of the Apostles, and the epistolary part of the New Testament. The command of the ascending Messiah, which enjoined upon the Apostles, that “repentance and remission of sin, should be preached in the name of Jesus Christ, beginning at Jerusalem” was strictly fulfilled: for immediately after the day of Pentecost, the inspired followers of Immanuel commenced the promulgation of those celestial doctrines, which have illuminated and metamorphosed the world.

The stupendous results of Peter’s first sermon, of Stephen’s martyrdom, and of Paul’s conversion were accelerated and augmented by those identical methods which the enemies of the truth adopted to interrupt and exterminate them. Persecution erected its hell-incarnadined banner and severed the Apostles; driving them with relentless fury into all sections of the Roman Empire. By this dispersion, “the glorious Gospel of the ever blessed God” was resounded from India to Spain, and from the Danube to the Lybian deserts. Few are the records of the primitive disciples which have survived the corrossions of seventeen centuries—but some facts may be collected, from which their dispositions, the features of the truth which they believed, and the distinctive characteristics of the christian church can be ascertained.

I. The Apostles and Evangelists.

After Stephen, James the son of Zebedee died by the sword of Herod. Of his exit, an interesting and

marvellous fact is detailed. The man who had dragged him before Herod's tribunal, when he perceived his submission to the barbarous and unjust sentence which doomed him to death, struck with remorse, and suddenly converted by the Spirit of Truth, was turned from the power of Satan to God, confessed the Lord Jesus with great boldness, and was conducted with the Apostle to the same block; having implored James' forgiveness, having heard the Apostolic "Peace be to thee," and having received the kiss of charity, they were both beheaded together: exhibiting the noble fruits of apostolic example, and the blessed efficacy of redeeming grace.

James, the author of the Epistle, who by his extraordinary religious qualifications had acquired the name of the Just, was forced by his enemies to ascend the pinnacle of the temple, there to declaim against that Christianity, to the faith of which he had been astonishingly instrumental in adding converts—when thus exalted, the eyes of his mind being enlightened, he avowed, "that Jesus Christ was sitting at the right hand of God, and woul'd come again with power in the clouds of heaven." They commanded him to be hurled from the battlement, and then began to stone him—*his last words*; "Lord God and Father, I beseech thee for them, they know not what they do"—*his noble eulogy*, a Priest's vociferation; "Cease; the just man is praying for you"—*his imperishable epitaph*, the testimony of Josephus; "that the murder of James was the destruction of ill fated Jerusalem."

Of the seven other Apostles no records remain, except a general tradition that in various parts of the globe they successfully performed the duties of their high vocation, until the malignity of idolatrous barbarism commuted their terrestrial labour for heavenly rest, and the "crown of glory that fadeth not away." Andrew is related to have been crucified, after having displayed the utmost fervour against the preposterous worship of the Heathens, and an almost incredible constancy during the terrific preparations which

were made for his suspension on the cross—commingling with all the most solemn recollections of his Martyr's death, the utmost expansion of Christian benevolence.

Peter's wife received the honour of martyrdom, prior to the Apostle's death; as she was conducted to the place of execution—"Remember the Lord"—cried the saint—and soon afterwards he was called to exercise the same christian magnanimity and affectionate recollection. The history of that period assures us that Peter and Paul triumphed on the same day, or in rapid succession. Peter having been crucified with his head reversed, and his beloved brother decapitated. What a brilliant vision—the Barbarian could dismember his body, but could not shiver the crown of righteousness from his head! 3.

John survived all his brethren; and after, as the ancients narrate, he had been boiled in oil, and drenched with poison, he was banished to Patmos to be starved—but there he found Jehovah Jireh, and at length was restored to his former residence at Ephesus, where he died in the Lord.

Nothing more accurately, lucidly, and sweetly depicts the spirit of those primitive ages, than the apostolic sermon which the superannuated, enfeebled, but glowing John constantly repeated on every Lord's day in the assemblies of the saints, "Children love one another." This he declared was "the one thing needful." It is a source of the most pungent regret and painful humiliation, that the dying injunction of the last of the Gracious Redemer's associated servants has not uniformly and incessantly been exemplified among his successors.

II. The doctrines and discipline.

The moral aspect of the world during this period, exhibits the most surprising revolution conceivable; which was effected, notwithstanding the united opposition of every diversified enemy.

Learning and ignorance, licentiousness and idola-

try, prejudice and bigotry, ferocity and antiquated consecrations, armed with the resistless authority of the Roman empire were roused to the battle; nevertheless, the impotent, despised, unlearned Fishermen and Tentmakers sustained by him who on Calvary proclaimed, "It is finished"—vanquished every foe. Where they walked, diseases fled; when they spake, the benighted understanding was enlightened, the corrupt inclinations were reformed, the sensual affections were purified;—where they sounded the Jubilee trumpet, the God whom the nations knew not was received, the Saviour of whom they had not before heard was trusted and loved; and the barbarism of debased selfishness was transformed into the purest philanthropy—thus were the passions subjected to reason, the rebels against God bowed to their hitherto unknown Creator; they who shuddered at pain were changed into monuments of patience; and they who would not admit either the gloomy word or the sable imagery of death to be introduced in their presence, now benignly smiled amid its most appalling terrors, and meekly exulted in their approach to the land of blissful immortality. Yet the church possessed no terrestrial dignity or civic power; these were her decided enemies; and all that christianity could claim was almost exclusively circumscribed within the poor of the world, or the undistinguished mass of national society.

To what causes must such stupendous effects be imputed?

1. *Their faith.*—All history coincides with the New Testament, that the doctrines of the cross of Christ were universally the sole topics of Apostolic and Primitive Preaching. That Messiah, who is despised and rejected of men, was, in their estimation, King of Kings, and Lord of Lords: that baptismal covenant, which is disregarded from infidelity, was then most conscientiously and publicly avowed; and the cross of Christ was their only hope, and boast, and consolation.

The efficacious atonement of the merciful Jesus then constituted the basis of acceptance with God, and the unceasing source of solace and of song. It formed the corner stone of all their experience, of all their belief, and of all their preaching. The proposition at which modern pride revolts, and with which modern reason is disgusted, then combined the burden of their hymns, and the theme of their silver-tongued eloquence—"Christ died, the just for the unjust, to bring us sinners near to God." How shall a sinner be righteous before the Lord? was the inquiry daily propounded, and in reply continually illustrated. The phantom of human merit, and the visions of supererogatory good works, were not included in the creed which they adopted; all their justification originated in faith through the Lord Jesus Christ, as their infallible Instructor, their efficacious Mediator, their righteous Lawgiver, and by him they had access to God through one Spirit. Hence, all the pungency of their reproof, and all the thunder of their admonition, invariably tended to demolish every hope of pacification with God—of which Immanuel did not form the only basis. But how might this knowledge be acquired? How could a creature dead in trespasses and sins, be made alive to God, to himself, to the Savior, to eternity? To this they replied, by directing the enquirer to the Holy Ghost, as the enlightener, and the sanctifier of the world.—That humiliating topic, regeneration, was their fundamental position. "Ye must be born again," was continually reiterated; and to every objection respecting the instrument, the mode, and the possibility, they gave but one overwhelming retort—"Except ye be converted, ye cannot enter the kingdom of heaven—Thus saith the Lord."

As long as these heaven-born doctrines were plainly and energetically enforced, so long the church retained its purity, the preaching its success, and the nations their edification—but when the ridiculous perversions of men concealed these celestial verities,

and buried them under the rubbish of fantastic speculation, and the chills of sepulchral unbelief—then the honors of the only Redeemer were appropriated to legendary saints—then the favour of heaven was guaranteed for corporeal austerities or pompous ecclesiastical donations—then the peace of God was insured, not for faith and holiness, but for pecuniary mule.—then the regeneration of the Hely Ghost was swallowed up in that most odious of all blasphemous substitutes, priestly absolution ; and then the entrance to glory everlasting depended not, as they asserted, upon the name written in the Lamb's book of life, but upon a Pope's bull. The glorious Reformation dissipated this blackness of darkness ; and the resurrection of the same august doctrines from the oblivious vault in which the Papists had entombed them has produced similar magnificent consequences—the melioration of the nations where they have been received, enjoyed and practised.

The whole economy of grace, so constantly unfolded by the pristine preachers in the Christian Church, was exactly adapted to demonstrate the glory of God in the redemption of man. While they humbly confessed their sin, their helplessness, and their state of perdition of which they were effectually convinced ; while they relied alone for salvation upon the atoning blood, the perfect righteousness, and the prevalent intercession of Jesus, as their only hope of heaven : and while they acknowledged themselves sinful and vain, without the constant regenerating and purifying influences of the Holy Ghost, which were their common privilege—they were constantly reminded of their obligations to the Father who loved them in his Son—to the Saviour who died for their redemption, and to the Comforter who enlivened, supported, and sanctified them—thus combined in their experience and practice, they worshipped, believed, and adored the God of Christianity, in contradistinction from the idols of their hands, and from the detestable mythology which they had hitherto honoured and trusted.

2. *The discipline which they administered.*—The primitive church was a community of brotherly love. Ecclesiastical tyranny then was unknown—none existed who were lords over God's heritage—it would have been impossible, where all things were in common, and where the love feasts precluded the semblance of dictatorial authority. Evident indeed are the superlative charity and heavenly mindedness of these our Christian ancestors. They were all of one heart and one soul—their most odious crime, the ardour of their brotherly affection—their enemies' most indignant charge against them, their superiority to all things terrestrial. The societies of Christians were at that period all of them *independent churches*—electing their own Bishops and Deacons—admitting their own members, and exercising the various duties attached to their social relations, without appeal to any external authority—but exhibiting the most magnanimous, endearing, and universal affection to all who loved the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. The Lord's day was ever observed, the Lord's death weekly commemorated, and the fraternity of Christians exemplified in the strongest of all bonds, a union not only unprecedented, but absolutely unimagined by any mortal who had previously existed.

III. The heresies.

The best donation from the hand of God deteriorates when committed to men. Even in the all perfect revelation of the Gospel, this lamentable effect was displayed. Jesus Christ, the Sun of Righteousness, as “the light of the world,” beamed his ineffable splendour over our moral hemisphere; but human inventions quickly wrapped the radiance in clouds. Grace, unfolding all the unsearchable riches of Christ, filled the world with its ecstatic harmonies, but the pride of sinners robbed it of much of its worth and blessedness. In the review of that period, so long since elapsed, and the attempts of our own age, the reflecting mind is irresistibly arrested by the resemblance, or rather the identity,

"Both examples certify to us how prone is the human heart to undervalue the mediation of Jesus, and the glory of redeeming grace, while it attempts to substitute instead of the gospel method of salvation, the delusive schemes of a self-righteous spirit."

Two classes of heretics arose even during the Apostolic age. Widely did they differ in their errors, but both extremes joined in the same centre.

The Gnostics propagated that the Son of God was not properly man, and that the death on the cross was only an appearance. This principle at once extirpated all the essential qualities of Christianity; and rendered all its most sublime and peculiar doctrines a mere nullity, without foundation in existence, or argument to support; because if Christ died not, he rose not, he ascended not, he lives not to intercede, he cannot return to judge.

The Ebionites marched to the other extremity: they asserted, that the Lord Jesus was a mere man, only the Son of Joseph and Mary. Of course, they discarded the atonement, and endeavoured to establish their justification by the works of the law. Paul's epistles they rejected from their canon, and thus like their modern descendants, charged an inspired Apostle with error and vice. One party would not believe in the Mediator as Man, the other would not admit that he possessed any dignity superior to humanity—and between them both, it may be declared, as Mary complained in the Garden—"they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him." The doctrine of expiatory substitution, which is the grand corner stone of the gospel, was thus entirely removed: the Gnostics destroyed it by denying the human qualities of our Master; and the Ebionites, by opposing our Lord's divine nature, banished all the value of his sufferings.

The Gospel and Epistles of John were written expressly to counteract both these heresies; and no stronger proof can be given or required of the sentiments of the Christians of the first century, respect-

ing those who thus demolished the temple of God, than the fact, that the Apostle John, when entering a public bath for refreshment, upon seeing Cerinthus, one of the most furious and malignant of these heretics in the bath, said to his friend—"Let us flee, lest the bath should fall, while Cerinthus, an enemy of truth, is within," and hastily departed; thus expressing his disapprobation of his opinions, and his abhorrence of his pestilential errors.

IV. The persecutions.

These commenced when Peter and John, by the power of Jesus of Nazareth, cured the lame man in Solomon's porch, at the entrance of the temple in Jerusalem. Jews and Gentiles, who never consented in any other object, cordially combined to extirpate the disciples of the Lamb. Herod and Pontius Pilate must both unite, to malign and condemn the Lord of life and glory; and the disciples were assured, that they should not escape the prior allotment of their divine Saviour. Many minor conspiracies against the church, are noticed in the Acts of the Apostles, and in the Epistles; but the first general persecution originated from the conflagration of the city of Rome. Nero, a proverbial monster, had, for amusement only, commanded that metropolis to be set on fire; and after it was nearly consumed, to avoid the reproach of his infernal barbarity, for he played the harp to an old Grecian song, exulting in the desolation; he hypocritically accused the Christians as incendiaries of the empire. It is impossible to peruse with patience or serenity, the still remaining monuments of the inconceivable agonies which resulted from that merciless event. Peter died, and Paul was beheaded, during its ravages; and the following description will enable us to form an indistinct idea, of the horrific calamities which defenceless and meek Christians, such as those upon all of whom was great grace, were called to endure. "They were slain with the sword, or burnt with fire, or scourged to death, or stabbed with iron darts, or bored with

augers, or hanged, or crucified, or drowned in sacks, or flayed, or bereft of their eyes, and tongues, or stoned, or stripped and left to freeze, or starved, and in every way dismembered, for the scorn and derision of the world—insomuch that a man might see the streets of the cities full of men's bodies, the old and young together, with female corpses naked, in heaps, to which interment was forbidden. They were covered with the skins of wild beasts, torn by dogs, stripped, covered with combustibles, hung up in various parts of the cities and villages, and then fired, that they might serve for lights in the night, for their relentless murderers.” By all these various modes, was the malignity of Hell exhibited upon earth—until after four years, the Lord permitted Nero to be degraded, who fled into eternity by his own hand, and his wretched remains were dragged about Roine, in deeper disgrace than the Christians had ever experienced, the abhorrence of the good, and the execration of the wicked.

The ravages of persecution through the edicts of Domitian, were more widely extended and more cruelly afflictive. To him, persons of all ranks, stations, characters, and ages, were equally abhorrent. His highest delight was to discover and to inflict the utmost tortures which humanity could sustain, and his individual employment to kill flies, when even his ruffian hirelings were fatigued with butchering Christians. His own domestics, even his relatives, could excite no relentings, and he who commanded men to be barbarously murdered, and in the most lingering form, merely that he might be glutted with their excruciating agonies; he who boldly and diabolically wished that the whole human family possessed but one head, that he might exterminate them at a blow; permitted no interruption to his almost incredible extravagancies, until the righteous Judge of all the earth called him from the throne of his earthly tyranny, to the supreme bar, there to answer for “the things done in his body.”

V. The progress of the Church.

It might be rationally asked—amid these storms, could the defenceless ark survive ? Yes—the heavenly Pilot conducted her safely and triumphantly through the perils of the deep. The measures which were concerted to extinguish her name and to obliterate her existence, by the superintendence of infinite wisdom amplified the number and the sphere of her servants, and daily added to the church them who should be saved. “The blood of the Martyrs was the seed of the Church.” The executioner beheaded one man, and ten believers hallowed the spot—From the cross one was transferred to the crown, and a multitude sprung up around the consecrated scene—One saint marched through the fire to Paradise, and hosts of soldiers filled with the unquenchable love of the Redeemer shed abroad in their hearts, arose to avenge his death, by following his example. Until from zeal and persecution, each combining to produce identical results—all the then explored habitable globe displayed the trophies of the gospel, and resounded the honors of the Lamb that was slain. From Cæsar’s palace to the miry dungeon, from Rome to Britain, and thence to Africa; from the Nile to India, and Tartary, the messengers of salvation had transported the exhilarating Angelic chorus, “Glory to God in the highest, peace on earth, and good will to men ; for unto you is born in the city of David, a Saviour who is Christ the Lord !”

This condensed narrative excites serious reflections. For the primary establishment, the efficient promulgation, and the extensive progress of revealed truth, in so short a period, and amid such appalling opposition, impel us to admire the wondrous dispensations of God ! From darkness he educes light, confusion he transforms into order, and in his inconceivable benevolence to the wretched children of Adam, so “manages all mortal things,” that the conspiracies of malign depravity and corrupt ignorance, against his glory and christian enjoyment, under hit

all-wise controul, become the instruments to develop the honours of his government, and the medium through which the followers of the Lamb obtain, even in this vale of tears, “the peace of God which passeth all understanding”—and that most splendid and enrapturing of all terrestrial acquisitions—an evangelical capacity to “read their title clear to mansions in the skies !”

“Here is the faith and patience of the saints !” The influence of the grace of God, as exhibited in the experience and practice of the Redeemer’s disciples, presents the most dignifying moral spectacle ! In contrast with the Apostolic Fishermen and Tent-making Evangelists, all the intellectual expansion, all the noblest virtues, and all the boasted eloquence of Greece and Rome, dwindle into comparative insignificance. In vain do we explore their volumes, thence to derive any knowledge of the hope full of a blissful immortality ; and a debasing, revengeful passion realizes no diminution when we peruse their jejune arguments against unhallowed indulgence. But who is that Judge, arrayed in all the magnificence of Imperial majesty, and armed with all the jurisdiction of absolute power ? That is Felix, the Roman Governor : And who is he, in bonds, standing before him with the physiognomy of more than mortal philanthropy, and the dignity of saint-like innocence ? the prisoner is Paul of Tarsus ; a slandered, persecuted, despised, and detested Nazarene. Listen ! to a Tyrant almost proverbial for his arbitrary injustice, he proclaims the necessity of righteousness ; to a Voluptuary, wallowing in bestial licentiousness, he enforces temperance ; and to the Arbiter of his mortal destiny, he depicts, with all the infallible solemnity, and all the unmitigable urgency of a divinely commissioned Instructor, the indispensable necessity of transferring his attention from the judgment seat on which he was then stationed, to that “judgment to come ;” at which dread period, and before which august tribunal, Paul and

Felix would both answer, the Apostle for his faithful preaching, and the Governor for his practical improvement.

But this triumph of reason and Christianity over all other eloquence and illumination, the Judge trembling before his alleged criminal, is ineffably transcended by the virtues which like a resplendant halo, were displayed by them who “were called Christians first at Antioch.” Who can depict in all their varied value that constellation of excellencies which through the gospel of Jesus, stand as imperishable monuments of the benefits that are derived from the application to the soul of the things of Christ, by “the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth?” That wondrous Faith which almost unveiled the invisible future—that exhilarating Hope which vanquishes all the evils attendant on this state of “vanity and vexation of spirit”—that ardent love which supremely centering in the Saviour of sinners, diverged in all its purity and in all its forceful good to the “household of faith,” the members of which were adorned with the Redeemer’s similitude—that indescribable humility of temper, patience in suffering, self-denial in indulgence, resignation to the divine will, combined with a loftiness of fortitude, courage, activity of exertion, perseverance in duty, and an unwithering freshness of evangelical spirituality, which rendered them as unconquerable in their “good fight of faith,” as they were finally triumphant in their labours and contest. In them is a graphical portraiture of a disciple of the Lamb, delineated in the most attractive features, in the most beauteous tints, and in the most lucid colours, appealing to every Christian sensibility, and irresistibly compelling the desire, like them to live, like them to die!

But their terrestrial pilgrimage was an almost perennial course of every species of affliction, which “the love of Christ shed abroad in their hearts” alone enabled them to sustain. Agitation mingled with anticipated torture was part of their daily bread; tears

augmented by the pressure of death, sometimes immediate in experience, sometimes protracted until life was extinguished by lingering pain always uncertain in period, constituted an essential, often the chief portion of their diurnal drink; and with these were combined all the common calamities incident to mortality. Can we therefore review the glorious results which accompanied the dissemination of salvation by the Messiah; can we peruse the heart-rending records of those excruciations, and not feel and cultivate the highest degree of gratitude to the Almighty Sovereign of the Universe, that all the delights of this Gospel we may enjoy, without their former accompanying miseries and horrors?

To a Christian of the nineteenth Century, and especially to a descendant of those Puritan migrants who, for the rights of conscience, dared to buffet the tempests of the then almost untraversed Atlantic, and who erected their tabernacles where ecclesiastical hierarchies and antichristian despotism have never displayed their ruthless characteristics; nothing can be more difficult than the attempt to depict the vivid representation of the scenes, and to embody in his own sensibilities the experience of the Redeemer's disciples, during the prevalence of those storms with which Persecution desolated the church of God. When we retrace the virulent, the unceasing, the diversified, and the universal opposition which the Gospel of Jesus Christ has received from the nations among whom it has been promulgated—when we reflect upon the tortures, ignominy and multifarious death which have been the invariable concomitants of that “cloud of witnesses, of whom the world was not worthy”—when we are reminded that the grand object of their pursuit was “a city which hath foundations whose builder and maker is God”—and when we contrast the doctrines, the illumination, the duties, the prohibitions, the promises, the spirit and the object of divine Revelation, with the trials of them who “endured as seeing him who is invisible:”

who were mocked and scourged, “in bonds and imprisonment, stoned, sawn asunder, tempted, slain with the sword, wandered about in sheep skins and goat skins, in deserts, in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth, being destitute, afflicted, tormented”—we are overwhelmed with astonishment: and are coerced to believe, that our Ancestors were induced to suppose that the sacred Oracles, instead of being the treasury of “peace on earth, and good will to men”—were like the fabled box of Pandora, a casket filled with every multiform evil and malediction, from which even Hope itself was perfectly and for ever excluded. With the convictions which we possess, that to the extension of the Gospel, the civilized portion of the habitable globe are indebted for all their intellectual and moral superiority, how can we effectually comprehend the narrative of those inconceivable tornados of malignant fury, which, not like the Angel who scattering death through Senacherib’s army, mingled the whole camp of all characters in a solid mass of corpses—but with infernal acumen appeared instinctively to exonerate the haughty devotee of idolatry, vice and corruption; and to diffuse all its blasting energy upon the humble ~~sanctified~~ Christian? Reminiscences of the primitive ages of the Messiah’s kingdom, and of the ineffable calamities in which its citizens were then overwhelmed, must therefore excite and foster unfailing evangelical gratitude to the Great Head of the Church, who dispenses all “the unsearchable riches of Christ,” for the support and enjoyment of the present members of “the household of faith;” and who has so graciously made our lines to fall in pleasant places, that we “have a goodly heritage,” and enjoy the blissful promise, “they shall sit every man under his vine, and under his fig-tree, and none shall make them afraid: for the mouth of the Lord of Hosts hath spoken it”—Amen.

The seven churches of Asia—the first and second Apocalyptic seals—the interior order, eminent Christians, heresies, and the persecutions of the Church during the second century.

From this period in the annals of the Christian Church, all the prominent features of her history, are detailed by the spirit of prophecy; and our faith in the authenticity of divine revelation is strengthened by observing the wonderful coincidence between John's Apocalypse since its original transmission to the disciples, and the history of the Roman empire.

Among the most remarkable of these fulfilled predictions, the epistles to the famous seven churches of Asia, stand a striking and incontrovertible testimonial of the Apostle's supernatural inspiration.

The magnificence of Ephesus is a fact attested by all the ancient historians—and the glory which the Church there obtained, by their obedience to Jesus, is equally resounded in the primitive age. They were nevertheless premonished, that it is highly dangerous to depart from the living God, were cautioned not to encourage the Nicolaitans, an impure sect, whose doctrines and practices were equally abhorrent and vitiating; and assured that if they did not repent, “their candlestick should be removed out of its place.” Now the temple of Diana is in extinction; and of all the Christian houses of prayer—one only remains, which is transformed into a Mahomedan Mosque. A few Turkish families live in great wretchedness among the splendid ruins of Greek, Roman and Asiatic grandeur, with not one “household of faith;” the gospel, its preachers and ordinances, all have vanished.

The second message was addressed to Smyrna; they were commended and encouraged; and notwithstanding all the inroads of the Arabian Apostacy, it is believed, that the body of believers has never been at any period totally extinct. At present, the spirit of the Gospel is reviving among the descendants of them who heard the honoured Polycarp preach, and who saw the inflexible Martyr triumph.

The church at Pergamos, which was very sharply reproved by her great Head, has scarcely a vestige remaining. A few families who are called Christians, but whose name it may be feared, is the sole evidence of their evangelical profession, reside amid the desolations of this once dignified metropolis, in the utmost misery, and “in the most abject and sordid servitude.” Thus hath the Lord fought against them with “the sword of his mouth.”

In Thyatira, no traces of any devotional building can be discovered: a few Turks dwell among the immense piles of white marble which have survived the destruction of centuries; but the profession of Christ is extinguished, and engorged by the reveries of the Koran.

Sardis was the haughty metropolis of Crœsus, and at one time surpassed in brilliancy and opulence all the cities of the East—the church in it is stated to have been the first which was formed in lesser Asia, and also the first which apostatized from christianity. Now the city is a superlatively grand and very extensive mass of demolished magnificence, where no temple exists to the Redeemer’s honour; where no preacher blows the joyful sound, and in which no people walk, O Lord, “in the light of thy countenance.”

The epistle to the church of Philadelphia, is singularly prophetic—among them God reproved nothing, but declared that he would “keep them from the hour of temptation;” no doubt intending the tyranny of the Turks; and it was promised to them who overcame, that “they shall be made pillars in the temple

of God." In writing the history of the Mohammedan irruptions under the Turks, a modern scoffing Infidel has most unintentionally corroborated this marvellous prediction. He says, "that of all the Christian churches which are recorded to have existed, Philadelphia alone survives," and as if he had been divinely guided to confute his own scepticism, by using the very phraseology of the scripture, he adds, "she stands the pillar of stability, unmoved amid all the surrounding desolations." Here Christianity has always displayed something of its purity, and some of the buildings hallowed for the worship of Jesus still exist; a monument of the protection with which God encircles those who "keep the word of his patience."

Laodicea was, in its prosperous period, one of the most populous and superb cities of Asia—"she was rich, and increased in goods"—but the Christians within her walls were corrupted by the luxuries, and chilled by the carnal enjoyments to which they had such easy access. Their lukewarmness, and lethargy, and fondness for the things which are visible, produced for them unmixed censure from "the Faithful and True Witness." The Lord's declaration was wonderfully consummated; if they would not repent, "I will spue thee out of my mouth." Laodicea has long since been totally demolished; and during many centuries has been, as it is now, merely an assemblage of caverns, where wolves and jackalls prowl, and dragons, snakes and vipers hiss; so that not only has the ancient worship of God totally disappeared, and the recognition of a Saviour been perfectly exterminated; but the district even in which this lukewarm church existed, has been so immediately cursed by the righteous Judge of all the earth, and so branded with the visible marks of inextinguishable reprobation, that its stupendous specimens of architecture are not only utterly destroyed, but also by men completely abandoned. Modern visitors corroborate the truth, that "as they did not then hear the voice of merciful admonition, now every thing

seems as if God had doomed the place, and left it to the dominion of Satan." "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the Churches." I.

The history of Christianity as narrated in the Apocalypse, is divided into three distinct periods; *seven seals*, *seven trumpets* and *seven vials*. From the era of the vision, until the triumphs of Constantine over his foes, and the succeeding permanent establishment of the church, is the Heathen Roman Empire, included within six seals. Thence, the state of the Christian Roman empire to the commencement of the seventh century, is delineated under four trumpets of the seventh seal. Within the three last trumpets, is contained a view of the world during the famous prophetic 1260 years. The fifth, or first wo-trumpet includes the origin of the two Apostacies, Mohammedian and Papal; and the sixth, or second wo-trumpet represents the extension of their sway; both detailing Events which have occurred in the Eastern empire: and the seventh, or third wo-trumpet, with its *vials*, depicts the ultimate effusion of the wrath of God upon the powers, which in every age persecuted Christians, and finally coalesced for their extermination; and displays in all its horrors the destruction of "the enemies of our Lord and of his Christ."

The paragraph in the sixth chapter of the Revelation, from the first to the fourth verse, contains the prophetic history of the church and the Roman empire during the second century; and the first seal has almost universally been applied to the general diffusion of the gospel. The Lord Jesus Christ is represented as a Conqueror—his bow indicating energy; his white horse, the rapidity of his conquests, pure and merciful; and his crown, his royalty and triumphs. From the borders of India and Tartary on the east, to the Atlantic Ocean on the west, the name of Immanuel was known, and honoured as the Redeemer of mankind—thus circumscribing all the

civilized world, and the nations with which the Romans held any intercourse. Who can witness this extensive flow of the doctrines of the cross, in spite of all opposition and persecution, and not with rapture hail these demonstrations of celestial benevolence?

The second seal has been usually referred to the Roman empire, from the accession of the Emperor Trajan to the close of the century. It was a red horse, denoting his bloody character, and his rider had power to take peace from the earth by his great and tremendous sword. The Roman annals are replete with the almost incredible slaughters and massacres which continued without mitigation, and almost without intermission, during more than 80 years.

The Jews and the Romans, equal enemies of Christianity, were permitted to butcher each other with a destruction and malignity similar to that with which they desolated the Christians. In Cyrene, the Jews massacred 220,000 men with the utmost barbarity. Around Alexandria in Egypt, and in Cyprus, they murdered 240,000—while the relentless Romans, like ferocious beasts fired with rage, attacked the Jews at all times, and in all places, until in their grand rebellion under Barchohab, who pretended to be their Messiah, upwards of a thousand of their fortified places, and of their largest and most populous towns, were utterly razed and destroyed; 580,000 men were slain by the sword, besides incalculable numbers whom pestilence killed, and famine starved.

So great was the diminution of the inhabitants from these varied commotions and wars, so vast and dreadful were the dilapidations upon the prosperity and energies of the empire, that even the finally triumphant Emperors neither congratulated the Senate, nor would receive any honour for victory. If we add to these deaths, the myriads tortured, mutilated and slain by the ruffian arm of infernal persecution—we shall immediately perceive the accuracy and the miseries of this prophetical denunciation.

Which were the distinctive characteristics of the Christian Church ?

I. The interior order.

1. Their faith was very similar to that of the former period ; the fundamental doctrines already detailed, were still exhibited and preached in their purity ; but towards the close of the century, the introduction of the ancient Heathen philosophy, with a variety of distinctions diminishing the extent of moral obligation, much deteriorated the simplicity and dignity of the principles and practice of the former century.

2. The miraculous gifts of the Apostolic era were still prolonged, though with less frequency ; and were more generally displayed in those regions where the Gospel was primarily introduced ; and of course where supernatural attestation was requisite, than among the long established abodes of the Redeemer's followers. But towards the end of this age, a great degeneracy was discernible in the manners and virtues of the disciples ; they had multiplied schisms, and consequently their vices ; while their frivolous disputation only tended to evince, how weak was the tie which bound them to their Lord and Master, and to each other, although professedly united to "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world."

3. Apostolic practice generally continued on all the more prominent and essential institutions : but a variety of minor circumstances connected with the church, was partially changed during this centurial revolution. "The mystery of iniquity had already begun to work," and at length it developed itself.

In Rome, at some epoch not exactly determinable, originated the distinction between *Elders*, *Presbyters* or *Bishops*. The churches which had been collected in its vicinity having frequently assembled in general *association* by their delegates, at length selected an Elder Brother to preside ; for so influenced were these primitive disciples by the humility and affec-

tions of the gospel, that during the former period, it required no *Præses*, to preserve order and to repress turbulence, but from the increasing numbers who attended these meetings, and the necessity frequently imposed upon them through the immediate pressures of persecution, to contract their deliberations, and to expedite their decisions, an influential senior was appointed, merely to control any impediments to the despatch of business, which might unintentionally arise: and to this meek, lowly, persecuted chairman, already a *Martyr* in anticipation, and most probably seated on a rock, or coffin, in one of the unexplored recesses of those Christian dormitories of the dead, near the Tiber, encircled by the catacombs which constituted the surest concealment for these refugees from Pagan tortures; or in the dens and caves of the earth in the provinces, have succeeded *Popes*, and the whole minor train of Anti-Christian hierarchs, of almost all sects, and disguised under every cloak, and hat, and name, through every intermediate gradation, from "*Hell-Brand*," in the Vatican, even to the last *Moderator of an Ecclesiastical Trio of "Men-Stealers," among the Allegany mountains*. Notwithstanding this innovation, the Churches retained so much of the Apostolic purity, and the privileges guaranteed unto them by Jesus Christ, the Lord of Conscience, that the disciples of each distinct society of Christians, elected their own Bishops and Deacons, admitted their members, and exercised their power in discipline and in the regulation of all their internal concerns without exterior interference, or the acknowledgement of any terrestrial authority, whom they were obliged by the Gospel either to consult or to obey. 2.

Believers were continually devoted to the evangelical instruction of the children in the families of the Heathen converts; and the laws of the Apostolic household of faith, were tenderly but strictly enforced. Incessantly exposed to the irruptions of

merciless desolation from their malignant despots, their public assemblies could not admit the coldness, formality, or inadaptation of a stated ceremonial of words ; hence *forms of prayer* were totally unknown among the disciples of this century.

The Lord's day, or the first day of the week, was not only the general, but also the sole day of religious worship, except that it was partially combined, by some of the scattered Jewish descendants, with the observance of the Mosaic Sabbath ; but the festival days, appointed to memorialize the legendary saints, were at that period non-existent : having been long subsequent incorporated into the Calendar by Papal Idolatry. Yet the disciples had deviated into some superstitious notions and rites, which the lapse of 1600 years, and the purifying energy of the august Reformation have not effectually exterminated. A certain indescribable solemnity was supposed to belong to Baptism, which confined the administration of that ordinance chiefly to Easter and Whitsuntide ; and the origin of these names demonstrate the tendency of the human mind to aberrations from the luminous path of gospel truth and evangelical simplicity. Our English epithet Easter, is derived, either from the Assyrian Idol Astarte, or the Saxon Goddess Eostre, the grand celebrations of which *nothings* were about the month of April ; and Whitsunday was so designated, because the candidates for Baptism on that occasion, generally wore long white robes ; although it appears, from the custom in the early ages, the frequent *baptism of the converts naked*, that this garment must have been the appendage of later generations.

The seeds of the Romish Mass were also now implanted, by the rapidly increasing practice which had been introduced, to administer the Lord's Supper, and even to transmit the *consecrated elements*, to the sick and dying : and in connection with this departure from the primitive institution, the dogma swiftly and extensively was diffused, that a peculiar

sanctity was attached to a life in celibacy, which eventually conducted to all the Monastic establishments of the Greek and Roman hierarchies.

When the Christian religion remained without any recommendation from the influence of power, or the display of exterior magnificence, how was the existence of the gospel perpetuated? By what terrestrial coincidences and contradictions did the Lord sustain his cause? The extent of the Roman empire was so vast, that while its government crushed one part to atoms, the other was excluded from its coercion; and thus the very circumstance which in a more confined despotism, according to human estimate, would have demolished the Saviour's sway, augmented its amplitude, and contributed to its preservation. In the retrospect of this century, it is impossible not to remember the remarkable similitude between the most striking features of that distant period, and the present era.

The immediate successors of the Apostles are renowned for the dispersion of the Scriptures in the various vernacular languages; which constituted then the grand means to diffuse and prolong the knowledge of divine revelation, and which has been verified in our own generation, to be equally efficacious for the promulgation of the Truth, and the progressive enlargement of his empire, who is going "forth conquering and to conquer."

II. The *superior Christian writers* of the second, equally as of some other Centuries, constitute a very distinguished part of the historical detail of the Redeemer's church: and their magnanimity, their learning, and their claim upon our undying affection will not be diminished, by understanding the state of Paganism, when they sojourned in this vale of tears.

The various systems of Idolatry received all the sanctions of Imperial power, and notwithstanding they were becoming increasingly disreputable—yet the Apologists for Christianity evinced unexampled fortitude when they could dare unlimited earthly

authority in defence of the truth. Besides, the Heathen Priests and Shrine makers exerted themselves in every form and upon all occasions, to inflame the sanguinary multitude, thus fortified by sovereign example and defended by Imperial influence, against the passive and impotent brotherhood of the meek and lowly Jesus. The lucubrations of Pagan Philosophy, the effervescence of Atheistic ridicule, and the ebullitions of Epicurean reproach, ever most amply remunerated, combined all their powers to sustain Satan's throne, and to disgrace by falsehood, or extirpate by force, Christianity from the globe. Notwithstanding, Celsus vomited forth his blasphemies, Emperors enkindled the Martyrs' fires—and bribed Murderers tortured malignant ingenuity, to deter by every species of most abhorrent laceration and indecency the feeble Christian; the Infidel, the Tyrant, the Ruffian, toiled for a non-entity; still Idolatry was diminished by the loss of its devotees, and the number of sincere Penitents incessantly augmented in a geometrical ratio; while the imperishable apologies of some of the Martyrs, exposed the absurdities of the Mythological system, in the most luminous manner, to universal contempt, and utter abhorrence. The men of whom we speak were truly eminent "children of the light;" they adorned the doctrine of God our Saviour by their personal piety and multifarious labours—they promoted the cause of Christ by their continual writings—they sometimes blunted the sword of persecution, and always developed the infuriated senseless injustice of their Tormentors, by their eloquent apologies for their Master's religion—they enlightened the understandings and exhilarated the hearts of the disciples, by their treatises on evangelical doctrines and Christian devotion: and at last, suffered the excruciations, and obtained the crown of martyrdom, that the testimony of their dying blood might seal the evidence of their dignified lives.

Of these, Simeon, Ignatius, Justin, Polycarp, Potinus, and Apollonius, were in various forms slain;

but Athanagoras, Theophilus, Dionysius, Miltiades, and Quadratus, were protected of God to die in peace.

The writings of these primitive Christians are of the highest value, as evidence of the doctrine, discipline, heresies, manners and sufferings of the disciples of the ages in which they lived; and their testimony is of additional moment, because of their long protracted mortal pilgrimage. Simeon had attained 120 years when he was crucified—Ignatius during nearly forty annual revolutions was Pastor of the church at Antioch. Justin had been a renowned Christian in all parts of the church almost half a century, when he was transported to heaven by decapitation—and Polycarp had been the angel of the church at Smyrna seventy-four years, probably the very individual originally addressed by John, in the epistle to that body of believers. To those, therefore, whose eyes had witnessed the various changes in the church, and who had participated so actively and prominently in all their more general affairs, we may with confidence appeal for correct information; and this equally exalts the suffering and unresisting followers of the Lamb, and degrades to the very depths of ignominy the merciless and unglutted Bloodsuckers who were perpetually slaughtering the older generation, that by every refinement of barbarity they might intimidate their children from adhering to the cross. But in vain—"he that sitteth in the heavens laughed, and the Lord had them in derision. The King was set upon the holy hill in Zion."

III. The heresies which troubled the church during this era, originated in two sources.

1. *The Jewish opinions.* A sect arose called the Nazarenes, who mingled a vast variety of Mosaic ceremonial observances with Christianity, and who were much attached to the economy promulgated by him, who "esteemed the reproach of Christ, greater riches than the treasures of Egypt." Although not numbered with the avowed rejecters of

a good conscience, who, “concerning faith, have made shipwreck;” yet their opinions and practices deiled the simplicity and purity of the Gospel, and furnished others with arms in which more directly to contend against divine truth.

The grand heresy of the first, subsisted in the second century; *the doctrine which opposed or corrupted the real and proper Divinity of Christ;* and it is a solemn memento to the existing generation, that during the first 200 years of the existence of the church, any man who denied our Lord’s divine character, was not permitted to associate in communion with the church universal, or to retain the name of Christian. A singular fact is recorded concerning this controversy. Theodotus who attempted to revive the dogma, that our Lord Jesus Christ was only a man, was the principal heresiarch. During one of the persecutions—he was conducted with some christians before the inimical magistrates. His associates openly avowed their faith and attachment to their Lord and Master, and were immediately condemned and executed. Theodotus as resolutely denied him. Being afterwards severely censured for apostacy from his God; he replied, “No, I have not denied God, but man, for Christ is no more.” This opinion, with his exclusion from the usual tortures to which the Christians were doomed, produced a new nomination: the *God-denying apostacy.* “He had neither principles nor confidence to bear the cross—” and our modern Scoffers at the Lord Jesus Christ’s essentially divine perfections are his exact counterpart. Their love of immortal souls evaporates in a cold and cheerless system of dry ethics, animated by no missionary fire; and their dissemination of the Scriptures to enlighten the ignorant and reform the vicious, is circumscribed by a bigotry, which only admits them partially even to disperse a frigid and corrupted translation of the New Testament; so that a Humanitarian of the nineteenth, approximates, if not surpasses in error, a *God-denying Apostate* of the second century.

2. *The Oriental Philosophy* also contributed its full proportion towards the deterioration of evangelical truth.

The Montanists were collected by an infatuated enthusiast, who pretended to be the comforter that Jesus had promised. Montanus himself was an enemy to all literature, and the bigoted reviler of all those who did not submit to his dreaming inspirations. Believing many of the distinctive verities of the Gospel, notwithstanding their numerous and absurd additions, the sect which he formed exceedingly troubled the church.

The Pagano-Christian Philosophers probably effected the most important injuries and the most permanent corruption of Christianity. They were denominated Eclectics: their fundamental tenet was, that all religions are virtually identical. Their principal object was, to combine the morality of the Gospel, with the more refined notions of the Platonic philosophy. All the essential doctrines of the cross were excluded from their system; and a fictitious holiness, an exterior garb of sanctity was substituted, which was gradually amplified into all the penances and austerities of the Papal mummery. Hence the pleas of Pharisaic pride, and the fancies of self-righteousness, mingled with the refined argumentations of dialectic Platonism, obscured and partly obliterated the doctrines of justification by faith in Christ, the sole efficacy of his atonement and mediation, and the absolute necessity of the work of divine grace, through the operation of the Holy Ghost, to regenerate the heart and sanctify the life. From these causes, the purity of sacred truth, and the godliness of its Professors, manifested prior to the close of this century, direct symptoms of decay.

But nothing can more obviously exhibit the debasement of the Ministers of the Christian church in the latter part of this period, than the controversy that was agitated from one end of the Roman empire to the other, respecting the precise day on which

they should celebrate our Lord's resurrection. From Lyons to Rome, thence to Ephesus and to Antioch, this despicable fury raged.

The Bishop of Rome, not a Bishop in the gospel interpretation, but one of the Pope's progenitors, who with his predecessors had contrived to usurp additional jurisdiction throughout these hundred years, resolved that this solemnity should be observed according to a tradition which he declared had been received from Hermes. The churches of Ephesus and the Asiatics, commemorated the resurrection of Jesus, according to the day which had been designated by Polycarp, who had been taught as John's disciple, immediately from the Apostle himself. The principal question was, whether the crucifixion of our Lord should be memorialized on the same day when the Jews celebrated their Passover? This frivolous dispute excited every angry passion, and commenced that dissatisfaction and discord which finally divided the Latins and Greeks, into two distinct, and often inimical bodies. One of the most astonishing facts connected with this circumstance, and a most lamentable proof of human degeneracy and imperfection, is, that they over whom the sword of persecution ever hung, suspended by a hair, and for whose extinction, the incendiary always held the torch ready to kindle the fires of martyrdom, should thus debase their pacific religion, and debilitate their more than mortal energies, by childish disputation as absurd as they were unimportant; and yet they were sustained with a rancour little less malignant, than that with which the bitterness of the Heathen Priesthood inflamed the murderous rabble. This contemptible controversy eradicated the larger proportion of the harmony of the church, during the few years when "the Lord gave them rest round about from all their enemies;" so that between external storms and interior discord, we may reasonably wonder, how the church could have existed—but it was the bush in reality, which Moses only saw in symbol,

and though burning, it cannot be consumed, for the Lord is in the bush.

IV. The general history of the Church and of its persecutions, will include all that remains of importance in the second century: but this comprises those circumstances which embody the moral features of the Roman Empire, as well as of the Christians within its boundaries.

Never might the highly figurative lamentation of Jeremiah the Prophet of Tears, have been more aptly applied, than by the Disciples of the second century. “Our persecutors are swifter than the eagles of heaven; they pursued us upon the mountains, they laid wait for us in the wilderness.”

Their situation renders futile all attempts to delineate the ceaseless malignity, and not only unmitigable, but accelerating barbarism, which the Idolaters exhibited during the various successive generations of that period. Nothing less than the beneficial results which flow from the retrospect, could scarcely urge a person imbued with only common sensibilities, to explore the heart-rending annals of those primitive christians—but truth beckons, and her votaries know, that however mysterious and apparently inextricable the labyrinth, she infallibly conducts those who follow her, to light and life and joy.

The persecutions of the second century, may be illustrated by the remembrance, that during the former age, “the wisdom of this world” had centered almost exclusively in the Philosophers of Greece and Rome. With the unique exception of Paul, the Apostle of the Gentiles, no one of the immediate followers of the Lord Jesus Christ, appears to have opposed to their vain reasonings, a confutation deduced from their own absurdities. But after the departure of the last of the most noble twelve, John the Beloved; when the celestial effusion of the Holy Ghost, the extraordinary gift of cloven tongues, like as of fire, with the miraculous interpositions of the Great Head of the Church, had partially ceased; and when

the sublime truths, with the august effects of Divine Revelation, were developed in all their resplendency and righteousness, then the princes even of the illuminated Idolaters, submitted all the pride of learning, and all the licentiousness of Bacchanals, to the wisdom of the cross, and the sanctity of the gracious Redeemer's immaculate prescriptions and example.

The conversions of Justin, Aristides, and others of the Pagan prime devotees, evolved a new era. Evangelical truth, with her immutable adherents, had been supported almost entirely by her own simplicity and consistency ; but these new champions of the faith transformed the contest between the knowledge and worship of the one true God, and the abominable mythologies of superstition and Idolatry, which had hitherto been sustained by a defensive and resistless mode of warfare, into an irresistible assault upon all that creed which Pagan Philosophy had promulgated, and carnal ignorance had deemed sacred. The debasing doctrines of the Epicureans and Stoics, were contrasted with the holy dictates of the sacred oracles—the absurdities of Pantheism were arrayed against the luminous injunctions of the spirituality of the Godhead—the arcana of the Heathen Priesthood were displayed as a foil to that radiance which brings “ life and immortality to light, through the blessed Gospel of the ever glorious God”—and of course, Demetrius and the shrine-makers were alarmed. Prejudice and cupidity, with all that is selfish in principle, and sensual in action, felt the mortal thrust, and roused themselves to determined action. Of this vast combat, which was waged even at the foot of the Imperial throne, few memorials exist ; but the scattered remnants evince, that before the sword of the spirit, wielded under divine aid, by the Literary Martyrs of the second century, Greek and Roman Pagans were totally discomfited; and that like their more modern successors, the only arms with which they could crush undoubted verities, were the multifarious torments of relentless persecution.

To a reflecting mind of the nineteenth century, a question naturally arises ; how could the execrable devastations and miseries which Christians suffered, have been permitted by the successive chiefs of the Roman empire ? especially if we add, that by the forced confessions of their incurably inveterate and malignant opponents, they were the most submissive, meek, unoffending, peaceable and virtuous inhabitants under their sway ? One answer alone can be given ;—the disciples of the Lamb were ridiculed, misrepresented and calumniated.

It is also a fact incontestable, that these ungodly machinations were often commenced, and ever inflamed by the Jews, in all points where their influence extended. The whole fury of the scattered tribes was ever ingeniously exerted. As the Christians professed their plenary belief in the sacred Books of the Jews—when persecution unsheathed her sword, the descendants from Israel were often doomed to the same punishment—to avoid this extremity, the Jews never ceased to vilify the followers of the Messiah, that they might escape odium and torture ; and many of the most abhorrent scenes of that terrific period, originated in the same spirit which induced their ancestors to crucify the “Lord of life and glory.”

The opposition made to the progress of Christianity during the second century, originated in one source, and produced similar effects ; it may, in all its diversified exhibition, be embodied in one word, *persecution* : but it must be developed in its threefold operation.

1. *Calumny*.—Nothing can more irrefragably demonstrate the depravity of human nature, than the similitude which exists between the opponents of “pure and undefiled religion,” in all ages :—and did we not sometimes, however impotent their efforts, realize their rage even in these United States, we should be surprized to know the monstrous excesses with which the early Christians were reproached. Contempt

and indignation, in their utmost extension, were employed by those Idolaters, when they avowed their enmity to the sheep of the Saviour's fold.

They were denounced as Atheists ; because they would not worship the images made with hands, of Jupiter and Bacchus, which idol nothings they derided, as Elijah scorned the Baal of the Israelites : they were accused of magic and witchcraft, because in them was displayed the power of Jesus of Nazareth, to enable his servants, according to his promise, to work miracles : they were represented as haters of the light, because when their diabolical enemies had proscribed them from worshipping their Beloved and Gracious Saviour by day, they assembled in the night ; and because when they dared not meet on the face of the earth, they ventured to pray in its dens and caverns : because they addressed each other under the Christian epithets of Brothers and Sisters, they were depicted as an unbridled community of incestuous associates : the sacrament of the Lord's supper was transformed, by their misrepresentations, into a regular sacrifice of bread, accompanied with human blood : and as if it were possible to exceed this infernal mass of lies and enmity, the Martyrs who preferred a present death in torture and Heaven, to final apostacy and Hell, were ignominiously reviled as self-murderers.

These varied criminalities were all depicted as cemented by the most odious magical operations ; and as intended to consummate their secret designs and plots of revolt against the Imperial Usurpers, who called themselves, and who wished to be known as legitimate Rulers.

Aristides and Quadratus offered their justifications to Adrian, and Justin presented his apologies to Antoninus and Aurelius. To these literary warriors may be subjoined, Tatian, who began the warfare by a direct attack upon idolatry ; Theophilus, who unfolded all the abominations of the origin of their Gods ; and Hermas, who compared the subtleties

and insipid trash of the Philosophers, with the sublimity, harmony, and truth of the Scriptures. But Appollonius stands a perennial example of Christian fortitude and wisdom. He was one of the Roman Senators, and consequently of the very highest order in the Empire ; yet he ventured to pronounce an oration even in the Senate, in defence of the persecuted Believers ; the triumph of truth was sealed in his crown of martyrdom.

An almost incredible fact has survived the desolations of time—while the most relentless fury was unchained against the genuine Christians, the various sects of Heretics enjoyed profound quietude. Two reasons may be assigned for this artificial conduct. By division, they expected to enfeeble Christianity ; and thus they varnished over their persecution, by imputing to the true church, the crimes of its enemies and apostates.

Nothing can be more refreshing than the defence of Justin Martyr, against the calumnious imputations cast upon the children of God. In the apology which he offered to Antoninus, he most lucidly and eloquently pourtrays their pious concord, their ardent charity, their generous self-denial, their absorption in eternity, their unshaken confidence in the Redeemer's promises, their patient submission in every trial, their self-humiliation, their hatred of the world and its maxims, their unceasing vigilance over themselves, their assiduous culture of all the interior and secret excellencies, and their constant preparation for the Martyr's flight.

To demonstrate the utter falsity of the allegations brought against the primitive Christians, listen to Athenagoras : “But,” says the virtue-armed Christian sage, “if any one can convict us of any crime, either small or great, we will not deprecate punishment, but are prepared to suffer its utmost cruelty : Yea, we will rather hold to the judgment, that we may be punished for the crimes which we have committed. No Christian can be a wicked man, unless he belies

his profession." We can conceive that suffering innocence might thus write ; but it is impossible for defenceless guilt, in its utmost hardihood and insensibility, to assume effrontery sufficient to dare its judge to the inevitable consequences of the misery attached to assured and immediate conviction. The inquiry is, how could so many reproaches have originated, and so long have been perpetuated, unless some cause had existed on which to found them ? The primitive church was obliged to conceal their ordinances, and devotional assemblies, from the eyes of their enemies. Pursued through every avenue of the Empire, without protection, without liberty, without asylum, without human resource—the wildest deserts, or the deepest caverns, were the only temples in which, unmolested and fearless, they could worship the God of their devotions. Hence, their solemnities were enshrouded in sadness and the silence of the night ; and of course, bore the resemblance of mystery. This afforded to the Pagan devotees, the basis of their injurious stigmas against the professors of the Gospel. The fatal prejudices thus excited, long continued ; Justin was the first writer who unfolded all the simplicity and sanctity of Christian institutions, and thus demonstrated the injustice of their foes, and the indefensible malignity of their persecutions.

Respecting the slander, that they were privily arranging a destruction of the Imperial Government as then established ; the following striking extracts from two of the Apologists of that period sufficiently evince that the spirit of opposition to Revealed Truth, and the allotments of its defenders, are nearly identical in all countries and generations.

" What traces of Atheism can be discovered in those who worship an infinite Creator ? How can they barbarously immolate human victims to him, when they abstain from all animal blood, and cannot even endure the recital of homicide ? What ridiculous injustice must that be, which transforms the af-

fections of piety and the most scrupulous continence, into abominable incest ? What shadow of a shade exists for the appearance of revolt among them, whose only arms are faith, obedience and prayer ? During the long train of envenomed persecutors, all more obstinately determined to destroy Christians, than to counteract the Scythians and Parthians, what Believer ever armed himself for deliverance ? On the contrary, although discord was universal; Rome, the Senate, and the Armies, contended for the supreme power ; the banner of independence was unfurled in every province ; seditions were enkindled in every department ; and although Emperors were exalted and degraded by conspirators ; the Christian alone acknowledged the Persecuting Tyrants to be his Masters, and preferred the continuance of his pains, to the liberation which could not be obtained without rebellion.” The love of social order, the preference of the public good to individual advantage, due subordination to the laws, and perfect docility to the Imperial edicts, when conscience was not interested, were the characteristic features of those disciples. That we may understand the matter, as well as the manner, of the Believers’ petitions, one of them subjoins—“ Christians supplicate the throne of Grace, with expanded arms, because they are innocent ; with uncovered heads, for they are not ashamed ; without a form or promptu, because we pray from the heart, that Cæsar may enjoy all that Cæsar himself desires.” The calumnies, with their authors, would have been extinguished in utter oblivion, had not the Lord graciously permitted the triumphant refutations of these undeniable witnesses, to survive the “wreck of empires, and the crush of time.”

If we reflect that all those, with innumerable other falsehoods, progressively increasing in extent and baseness, had been disseminated throughout the Roman Empire, during nearly one hundred years, with no other contradiction than the radiance of the Gospel, and the faith and patience of the Saints, we shall

then almost cease to feel astonishment at the horrible infatuation of that part of the ruffians who glutted themselves with Christians' gore, and feasted on the torments of excruciated and expiring humanity.

2. *The blasphemies and ribaldry of the Priests and Philosophers*, constitute a very essential proportion of that energy which impelled the machine of persecution so long and so vigorously to operate. They inflamed the rabble; and a Roman commonalty were proverbially cruel: their public shows and most beloved entertainments, which were universal throughout the Empire, and which were continually recurring, especially in all the metropolitan cities, that invariably and necessarily determine the character, taste and propensities of the territories over which they exercise influence, were exhibitions and amusements, forming a combination of the most unnatural indecencies, and the most refined barbarity. The glory of the scene consisted in the adroitness with which the conflicting Gladiators and Captives could murder each other, and in the streams of human blood which incarnadined these Aceldamas. This sanguinary disposition became at last so ungovernable, that like the horse leach it cried give, give; and as the rapacious grave, still remained unglutted. In times of discontent and turbulence, these bloody dramas were performed to quench the popular ferment; and an ensanguined mob, stimulated by the enraged Bacchanals, Priests, and Priestesses, sanctioned by odious, corrupt and despotic Governors, who naturally must have been solicitous to bury their ceaseless iniquities in the sepulchre of forgetfulness, always could draw upon the Bank of Faith, to supply their raptures as human life exhaled, and Christian example was banished. The records of the Martyrs point out two modes by which the infernal propensities of these inhuman multitudes were often attempted to be satiated, and which nothing but the matchless grace of God could possibly have enabled them to endure. The defilement and pollution to

which the Female disciples were obliged to submit, will never be known in full until that day when the secrets of all hearts shall be disclosed—but one, if not the most applauded act of this grand Theatre of exultation in w^o, seems to combine every machination of fiend-like depravity which could be transplanted from Pandmonium to Rome. The harmless Sheep were dragged from their dungeons naked, to the immense and crowded Amphitheatres, and there the Brethren and Sisters were urged to slaughter each other—and when at last no torture could incite them to participate in this diabolical contrivance, and when the cries for blood from all parts of the multitudes could no longer be resisted—Gladiators and Wild Beasts were both unfettered that the Lion's roar might be accompanied with the worse than Cannibal shout. Yet all this impetuosity might have been restrained; and this dreadful depravation of intellect and sensibility might have been repressed and healed—had not the supreme authority not merely connived at these scenes, but actually directed their display. This develops the master agents of these inonstrous impieties and horrors.

3. *Imperial edicts* gave the impetus to the battering ram with which it was hoped to subvert the superstructure of the church, and to remove the Rock of ages on which its foundation was established.

The Princes who held the Roman sceptre during this century, and by whose instrumentality the churches of Christ were so severely tried in every varied form of torture, must be successively arraigned.

Trajan. When he assumed the Imperial authority, no edicts against the disciples of Jesus existed. The laws of Nero had been annulled by the Senate, and Nerva had abrogated the infuriated proscriptions of Domitian. Still the fury of the outrageous mobs and the demands of the bloody Priests supplied the defect, and as often as the Governors were solicited, they were unwilling or dared not refuse to deliver up innumerable multitudes of the children of God, like

Sampson of old in the house of Dagon to make sport for the Philistines. Notwithstanding all the eulogy which has been bestowed upon Trajan for his wisdom, clemency and other Imperial virtues ; it is certain, that if his conduct towards the Nazarenes be the criterion of our judgment, we must pronounce, that he was a confirmed prejudiced Idolater, who meditated the total extinction of Christianity. One instance of his conduct shall suffice. In Bithynia of which Pliny was Governor—the Christians were so numerous that the Heathen Temples were frequently desolate—yet by the force of power, incalculable numbers died in extreme excruciation rather than join the orgies of idolatry. Pliny wrote a letter to Trajan requesting directions how to act ; his Epistle is an authentic national document : from it we learn, that the Christians were very numerous, most exemplarily pious, and inoffensive ; their only crime, that at certain regular and appointed seasons they assembled to sing certain hymns to one Christ their God, and to covenant that they would abstain from theft, fraud, falsehood, adultery and murder—and notwithstanding their peaceable demeanour, they were sorely persecuted because they would not renounce Jesus Christ. This information he declared that he received from Apostates, whose testimony was also confirmed by “ two young females who were examined by torments and the rack.” Now this panegyриzed Trajan in his reply directs ; that every person who was accused and convicted of adhering to the faith of the Lord Jesus should suffer decapitation.

In Asia one of the Governors exerted the utmost coercion of persecuting rage. He so wearied them with unintermittent cruelties and oppressions, many thousands having been tortured to death ; that on one occasion, probably to plead for their suffering brethren, the whole body of the church presented themselves before his tribunal ; he immediately ordered a few of them to execution, and dismissing the rest said, “ Miserable people, if you choose death

you may find precipices and halters enough." It seems that the Savage was at last drenched with christian blood.

Three of the exalted worthies of that age require distinct memorials. Some of the Jews accused Simeon, 120 years of age, the son of that Cleopas with whom we have so often felt our hearts burning within us when we have been walking with him and the mysterious stanger to Emmaus; during many days in succession he was most cruelly scourged, until at length fatigued with that tedious mode of exterminating vitality, they crucified him like his master.

Phocas was commanded by Trajan in person, because he would not sacrifice to Neptune, to be immured in a burning lime kiln--and thence still living, he was thrown into a boiling bath. Yet this is the far-famed, the exemplary and the merciful Trajan; if this is Royal benevolence, what is vulgar cruelty?

As Trajan was travelling to the East, he rested at Antioch, where Ignatius had preached the Gospel nearly forty years, with Apostolic power and success. Trajan summoned the veteran into the Imperial presence; and having required him to deny the Lord Jesus, which was as peremptorily refused, he adjudged him to be conducted to Rome, and there in the usual slaughter-house to be given to the Lions. Trajan doubtless thought the nobler the victim, the deeper the ignominy, and exulted in the philanthropic sport, which he had contrived for the debauched canaille of the mistress of the world. Chained day and night to ten soldiers, during a protracted journey and voyage of more than 2000 miles, Ignatius seemed to rise more dauntless and pure in proportion to his tedious and miserable captivity. He arrived and was speedily devoured.

It is high time to strip these Imperial Spoilers and Tyrants of their purple and their laurels, and to exhibit them, not in the garb of Infidel panegyric, but in the genuine manufacture of impartial Christianity; and we may after this review of Trajan's persecution

with wonder inquire, How could the church survive? One reason only can be given, it was the rapture of prophecy—"The Lord is Judge, the Lord is our Lawgiver, the Lord is our King; he will save us."

Adrian. Although this Emperor never issued any edicts of a persecuting nature, yet the non-repeal of those which Trajan had promulgated, conduced to the same effects. By the law of Trajan, if a person could so conceal his attachment to the Gospel as to evade public accusation, he was safe; and Adrian had given no impulse to the executioner's employ. It was at this period, that some of the scenes already briefly described occurred. The blood-thirsty populace, stimulated by the interested and revengeful priests, in the most tumultuous manner, demanded at the public games, the destruction of the Christians; which was often granted, from the fears and dispositions of the Governors. We are informed, that upwards of ten thousand disciples were butchered at one time in Rome, to appease the clamours of the infuriated populace. Around Mount Ararat, there was formerly celebrated an annual festival, to commemorate the resting of Noah's ark upon the top of the mountain—it was accompanied with every species of the most brutal riot and licentiousness; on one of these occasions during the reign of Adrian, to augment the universal festivity, they erected a large number of crosses; and historians assure us, that after they had crowned the Christians with thorns, they crucified on that occasion nearly ten thousand of the followers of the Lamb; and that they might witness their expiring agonies, they thrust into their sides sharp darts, after the similitude of their Redeemer's death.

These scenes continued to be exhibited during nearly seven years, when Adrian having perused the apologies of Quadratus and Aristides, and urged by the importunities of Gratianus, the pro-consul of Asia, not to sanction that most unreasonable injustice, the slaughter of Christians guiltless and without trial;

he directed at once, that no Christian should be molested solely on account of his religious faith ; thus through the mercy of God, the Tyrant's arm was restrained, and a respite of peace afforded to the agonized and agitated church.

The next emperor, Marcus Pius, preserved the disciples in quietude ; he withered the arm of murderous rage by decreeing that if a christian were convicted of adhering obstinately to his profession, he should be discharged, but his accuser should suffer the usual punishment awarded to calumniators. Thus by the rigid execution of his righteous edict, during the reign of Pius, the christians worshipped God in peace.

The mercy of Heathens was too great a blessing for the possession of Christians ;—hence, after the reign of Pius had closed, Aurelius Antoninus obtained the throne ; a philosopher whose extraordinary wisdom and virtue have been a standing topic of eulogy and eloquence during the last 1600 years, among the Pagan and Infidel Orators and Authors and Poets. But the most evident proofs which he ever gave of superior intellect or morality, are embodied in the fact, that during nineteen years he was an implacable persecutor of Christians ; and to them, Nero himself scarcely surpassed his injustice and barbarities. Never was a cause more luminously and irrefragably defended than by Justin, Athenagoras and Tatian, and never was merciless cruelty more widely extended and more powerfully exerted than under the reign of this impurpled Despot in a philosopher's cloak.

The death of Polycarp, the disciple of John the Apostle, excited peculiar interest ; his terrestrial record remains in the letter written by the church of Smyrna to their brethren of Pontus. From this epistle we ascertain the extremity of those tortures which the humanity and beneficence of this Antoninus commanded to be inflicted upon those who would not bow down to his idol. The persons who witnessed the treatment of the martyrs were utterly astounded

at the admirable but incredible patience which they displayed. They were scourged and whipped, until the internal veins and arteries and members appeared ; afterwards in this wretched condition they were obliged to walk and were rolled upon pointed shells, nails, thorns, and goads sharpened for the purpose ; and ingenuity itself having been exhausted in devising torments, they were lastly transferred to the beasts of prey. We are assured, that at the sight of the peculiar and invincible constancy of two of the martyrs in the midst of unparalleled corporeal laceration, one of the rabble vociferated aloud, “ *Vere magnus Deus Christianorum.* ” Verily, great is the God of Christians. He was immediately seized, and partook of their martyrdom,

In one of these murderous assemblies, the whole multitude demanded Polycarp—When conducted before the Proconsul, and commanded to offer sacrifice to the Emperor’s image, he peremptorily refused. As the guards were conducting him to the seat of judgment, a voice from Heaven, it was believed, was heard, amid the uproar and shouting of the rabble that Polycarp was apprehended ; the supernatural address said, “ Be of good cheer, Polycarp, and play the man.” The Proconsul menaced him with the wild beasts and with fire, for his refusal to sacrifice to Cæsar’s statue—“ Eighty and six years,” said the saint, “ have I served my Master ; and how can I speak evil of him ? ” Immediately after he had avowed himself a Christian, the crowd of Jews and Gentiles at Smyrna instantaneously and with most vehement rage and noise shouted, “ This is the Father of the Christians and the destroyer of our Gods.” A most noble God which man could destroy ! “ Give him to the Lion”—but Polycarp had a short time before seen a vision, from which he assured the church at Smyrna, that he should speedily be burnt : the Proconsul refused their desire that he should be devoured by the Lion, but commanded him to be consumed alive by conflagration. When he was tied to

the stake, the fire having been kindled, the flame immediately divided, and formed an arch above and around him, so that the fire could not molest his body; a sword pierced his heart, and the quantity of blood which flowed extinguished the fire; but at length his corpse was totally destroyed in the second burning.

It would involve more particularity of detail than is necessary, to recapitulate the boundless extent and ceaseless repetition of these horrors. Many of the most noble Christian dignitaries were transported into Heaven during the prevalence of the fiery storm. Justin, whose learning and eloquence, and arguments and facts had silenced Bacchanalian calumny, and sheathed the sword of Persecution under Marcus Pius, during the early part of the reign of his successor, was remunerated by the Prefect's outrageous denunciation, "let him be first scourged, and then beheaded"—six of his fellow Christians from the same dungeon accompanying him by similar decapitation to the joys of Paradise. 3.

The world which we inhabit is a world of mutation; before its destiny equally bows the Beggar's staff and the Tyrant's sword; at length Antoninus disappeared and bequeathed to Commodus his power, but carried with him to Hades his barbarism.

During the greater portion of the century which remained, the empire was in peace respecting Christianity, but the Lord removed the young and careless Emperor; and a stern adherent of Paganism succeeded—whose nature was embodied in his name, Severus, and who after many years of quietude, resounded the horrific blast of war, and rekindled the volcano for the Martyr's fiery destruction.

From this narrative we deduce the depravity of human nature. Solitary instances of guilt may be overlooked without an impeachment of a general system; but it is impossible to develope uniform and general evolutions of turpitude, of the most proportionate

symmetry and the most amplified extent, without referring them to that very humiliating principle, the degeneracy of man, which Christianity reveals ; and it cannot be disputed, that to this corruption alone, must be appropriated these monstrous excesses that defy not only all description, but also all credibility. No atrocities are too great for the agency of men, when they are not restrained by the grace of God, and this deduction forms the strongest cement which binds Christian faith around the cross of the glorious Friend of Sinners, unites penitence and prayer, and excites through evangelical hope, the utmost expectation of final peace and triumph in him “ who died that we may live.”

How imperfect is the highest grade of terrestrial excellence ! Even dignified Christians, when persecuted by relentless tyrants, debilitated their own powerful associated energies, by frivolous dissipations and obstinately inflexible anathemas ; while the history of the seven churches of Asia admonishes us, how sedulously we should endeavour to counteract the destructive irruptions of heresy, and the seducing fascinations which ever urge us to a conformity with the world in its spirit, principles and conversation.

Studiously emulate “ the example of them who now through faith and patience inherit the promises !”

“ The good fight of faith” is a contest unmitigable in sharpness, and indefinite in extent. Here we behold arrayed against harmless, patient, unresisting and generally illiterate sheep, all the learning, malice and power of a malignant world ; but these were marshalled in vain. Their meekness could not be irritated or vanquished ; their patience it was impossible to transform into anger : their defenceless attitude could not be excited into rebellion or resistance ; and their heaven-born confidence could not be intimidated, though torture and death appalled—though Proconsuls and Governors condemned ; still they preserved all the illumination of faith and all

the fervour of devotion, in the midst of Imperial splendour and Amphitheatrical barbarity, with the almost incessant and universal slaughter or conflagrations of the church. “Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord, they rest from their labours, and their works do follow them.” “Here is the faith and patience of the saints” embodied in their triumph.—The Martyr dies, but the Christian survives ! Polycarp, Ignatius and Justin vanish, yet the Church stands ! Trajan, Adrian and Antoninus governed, and are almost obliterated ! “I saw the wicked buried, who had come and gone from the place of the holy, and they were forgotten in the city where they had so done.” How imperishable the record ! how august the duplicate example ! This is the invulnerable argument for your confidence ! Here is the impenetrable shield against external fury ! This grace is the infallible guide to his “presence, where there is fulness of joy, and to his right hand where there are pleasures for evermore.”

The third, fourth and fifth Apocalyptic seals—the eminent Christians—the interior state—the Doctrines—the Government—the Heresies—and the Persecutions of the Church, during the third Century.

The visions of the Apostle depicted in the sixth chapter of the Revelation, from the fifth to the eighth verses, contain a prophetic delineation of the Roman empire during the third century; and of its graphical correctness, all the surviving histories of that period furnish us most ample demonstration. The first of these seals has been applied to the reigns of Severus and Alexander, in which era, the want of the necessities of life was generally, severely and almost constantly experienced. A penny was the common daily wages, and twenty of the measures here referred to were usually sold at that price; but in this scarcity, one only could be procured, and consequently a man's diurnal labour was not valued at more than bread for himself:—but oil and wine were exceedingly plentiful; hence these privations attached principally to the poor; and as almost all the Christians were from various causes enumerated among the lower orders, their sufferings, especially when increased by every species of oppression and persecution, must have been indescribably horrific.

The fourth seal develops an accumulation of wretchedness; the sword, famine, pestilence and ferocious beasts were all embodied and marshalled in the train of Death seated on a pale livid green horse, and the Grave his follower, to desolate and kill the fourth part of the earth. All the historians of that most direful age coincide in their details of the in-

definitely diversified, boundless and almost unceasing calamities which the Roman empire realized during the last fifty years of the third century.

Maximin, the Emperor, was a monster of insatiate cruelty—the picture of his reign, and of some of his successors, is a commingled assemblage of war, murder, mutiny, invasions from abroad, internal rebellions, and civil dissensions. These contests and devastations were necessarily attended by hunger; and from the deficiency of food, one of the armies mutinied and murdered the Emperor Probus; while the same dearth extended through every part of the Roman territories. These evils were augmented by a pestilence which, from its commencement in Ethiopia, ravaged every province during fifteen years.

Two reigns are described as remarkable for nothing but this wondrous visitor's deadly operations. The Scythians, in the defenceless condition of the state, captured and depopulated all the boundaries of the different regions—5000 persons were diurnally victims of the distempers which walked in darkness, and of the destruction which wasted at noon-day; and as many portions of the empire were consequently uncultivated, uninhabited, and not even travelled, the wild beasts multiplied prodigiously, and from hunger became inconceivably ferocious; insomuch that large troops of lions and wolves entered the cities and towns, and a regular warfare for a long period was requisite, prior to that extinction of their numbers, when the inhabitants could remain in their districts without alarm. The vision was thus fully, though most mournfully verified: not less than one fourth part of the immense population scattered from the Danube in Europe to the Atlas Mountains in Africa, and from the Atlantic Ocean to the Euphrates, died during the prevalence of this tremendous scourge.

But where was the church of the living God, when these storms arose, and these tempests blew, and these floods came? All assailed her with tornados

still more appalling, but the house fell not, for it was founded upon the Rock.

A distinct view of her condition, character and trials, during this centurial revolution, will condense the history to that most stupendous alteration in her affairs which was conducted by the instrumentality of Constantine.

In the situation both of the Jews and of the Pagans, some circumstances existed which tended to uphold the afflicted disciples. Notwithstanding all the numberless and indescribable horrors which continually and universally encircled the stedfast Christians, yet the Lord permitted several Emperors to reign in the progress of this period, who afforded to the Believers a short space in which to recover their strength when persecution had enfeebled them; and as in the time of this respite no diligence was wanting, and every exertion was made to disseminate the light and the truth, it ensued, that the Kingdom of the Redeemer was much enlarged, and the societies of Christians astonishingly multiplied. Although the seed of Jacob still cherished their former obduracy and hatred against the followers of Messiah, yet their political influence and power had become so small, and their state so degraded, that they were not equally capacitated to molest and harrass the church, as during the prior generations.

The Pagan mythology was yet maintained by a number of writers, who employed every art of ridicule and the most atrocious calumnies against the Christian Oracles and system, to support the reign of Idolatry. Lives of Heathen Philosophers were published, emblazoning them with the most splendid virtues, in contrast with the immaculate course of Immanuel; but notwithstanding the unrelenting malignity of the Priests, who, as often as practicable, stimulated the fury of the barbarous and ignorant multitudes, their cause manifestly declined. A novel attempt was made, to decorate the Atheistic absurdities of their vain speculations in the sacred garb

of evangelical truth; and by this method, both to deteriorate from the value of divine revelation, and also to perplex those, who convinced of the excellency of the Gospel, might thus be embarrassed respecting a sincere submission to its sway. In the course of these attempts, a renowned and most indisputable testimony to the veracity of the sacred volume was reluctantly forced from its most virulent and shameless infidel assailant. Porphyry wrote a tedious and elaborate discussion, containing the most outrageous falsehoods concerning the followers of the Lamb : notwithstanding, he perceived that the prophecies of the four grand kingdoms and the demolition of Jerusalem, had been so evidently and completely fulfilled, that he could only escape from the difficulty, by declaring that the book of Daniel was written long after the events which he had pretended to predict had transpired. But all these efforts were in vain ; Philosophy and Heresy combined their energies to exterminate the holy records, without effect ; for “the word of God increased, and the number of the disciples multiplied.”

I. The eminent Christians of the third Century.

To preserve some memorial of the noble army of Confessors and Martyrs of the primitive ages is an incumbent duty upon later Christians. Some of the worthies were really stars of the first magnitude. Irenæus maintained the contest against the idolaters and heretics with equal zeal and success—but he was eventually doomed to follow his Master Polycarp to the alter of martyrdom ; for during the persecution under Severus, he was murdered with almost every known Christian in Lyons.

Tertullian, Pontænus and Clemens, largely contributed to the defence and the instruction of the disciples, although their doctrines were mingled with some of the philosophical tenets then predominant. But the highest in fame, and the most active in labour of all the authors, was Origen, who possessed a superior genius, most fervid piety, invincible

patience and zeal, and most extensive erudition ; which had “he used under the influence of a just judgment, instead of indulging a boundless imagination, would have placed him superior to the utmost eulogy.” Yet his pre-eminent talents, his virtues and his labours, must endear him to all Christians, as all his energies of soul and body were consecrated to the translation and dissemination of the Scriptures, and to the hallowed service of the gracious Redeemer. During the persecution of Decius, he triumphantly endured every species of torture which diabolical ingenuity could inflict ; for the malice of his tormentors determined them to agonize him to the last extremity without extinguishing his mortal existence. In consequence of this most merciless resolution, he finally recovered, and departed from this vale of tears in a good old age ; his remains now awaiting the resurrection of the Just. To these may be added Julius, Dionysius, Methodius, Minucius and Arnobius, whose writings in defence of the Gospel were of the most important influence, and whose support of the truth almost completed the confutation of the Gentiles and their idolatry.

But in some respects the most renowned, and as a Minister, the most laborious and the most successful in his vocation was Cyprian ; who was a very ardent disciple of the Lord of life and glory, and with uninterrupted activity devoted himself to the service of the church. The history of his life after he became Pastor of Carthage is a detail of duties and anxieties ; voluntary exile, seclusion and banishment all were his lot, that he might evade the storms of persecution that so grievously raged ; but at length during the reign of Valerian, he was seized by the Proconsul, condemned to be beheaded ; and thus elevated to the possession of the “ crown of glory that fadeth not away.”

II. The interior state of the Church.

It appears probable that with very few exceptions, the power of working miracles had almost universally

ceased. “The accounts which exist of the actions of Gregory, denominated the wonder-worker, not being attested by sufficient evidence render the narrative doubtful; but that he was made an instrument of great power in the conversion of souls seems indubitable.”

The manners and morals of the people in general had greatly degenerated from their purity and similitude to the standard of the Gospel. Philosophy had promulgated the tenet, that in abstract meditation upon spiritual subjects, consisted the highest virtue; and Persecution, especially in Africa, impelled many of the Christians to migrate from the limits of the Roman power, where their lives and peace were never safe, and to fly into the inhospitable deserts in which perfectly concealed they might worship God unmolested. Thus commenced the monastic life: and notwithstanding the sacrifices to which it conducted, the dangers which accompanied it, and its total repugnance to the activity and the self-denying offices of “Pure and undefiled Religion;” it was so highly esteemed, that the thoughtless and ignorant considered the seclusion of the Hermits, as embodying the very quintessence of the Gospel of Christ.

The augmenting imperfections, vices and corruptions of the church were displayed in the controversies which were agitated, and in the defections that occurred during the time of the persecutions. All other evils were increased by the adoption of a new method to sanctify every abomination, or to oppose all that was genuinely good: this was the convention and establishment of Synods and Councils, which eventually ended in Popery, and through whose influence that system has been so long maintained and perpetuated. 1.

III. The Doctrines of the Christian Church.

During this century may be plainly discerned the tendency of the Church towards the grand apostacy and the reign of Antichrist. Both the faith and the

practice of the disciples were debased. The principles contained in the Apostles' creed, in the former ages had constituted the chief if not the only subjects of general preaching and discussion. Of the alteration then introduced, one remarkable exemplification shall be given to illustrate the increasing degeneracy. "The Lord and his Apostles had merely declared, that the souls of good men at death were received into heaven, and that those of the wicked were banished into hell ; and this doctrine converted the Idolaters and sustained the martyred Disciples." But in this period, the ascent to heaven was confined to those who had died for the faith, and the rest were supposed to have removed to a species of Purgatory ; although that absurdity had not then obtained its height of predominance. Thus, from the ignorance of many of the Professors of the Truth, the incorporation of the systems of philosophy with that of religion, the mixture of Pagan superstitions with the simplicity of the Gospel, and the progressive succession of Heresy in multifarious forms, the temple of God was polluted with the vanities of men, and the lustre of Christianity on various occasions was partially obscured. The introduction also of the Monastic principles of self-mortification, as constituting the most acceptable righteousness before God, copiously contributed to the establishment of many additional rites and ceremonies, exorcisms, spells, the frequency of fasting, and an aversion from marriage. From all these causes, the creed, the devotions, the dignity of vast numbers who were called Christians, were much diminished from the standard of excellence which had formerly prevailed.

IV. The government of the Church.

The plain system of government which the Apostles had prescribed for the church, in this century lost nearly all its primitive features. By the deleterious effects of the Councils, the determinations of ignorant and erring mortals were transformed into

infallible dogmas, and the parity of station among the Preachers was lost in distinctions between Presbyters, Bishops and Patriarchs, until at last the Pope embodied the whole mass of deformity. One of the most absurd and stupid of all the pretexts which ambition and cupidity devised for self-aggrandizement, was deduced from the simulated analogy between the High Priest, the Priests and the Levites of the Mosaic economy, and the Bishop, Presbyters and Deacons of the Christian Church. Hence began all the corruptions of subsequent ages; and the system extended itself, until even all the necessary attendants of funerals were classed as Gospel ministers appointed by divine authority. The commencement of the Mass also is perceptible, in the additional ceremonies and the pompous rites which accompanied the administration of the Lord's Supper. Another circumstance added to this change—the meetings of the Christian assemblies which had formerly been held in a comparatively private manner, were now become more public in consequence of fixed and large houses for the worship of God being appropriated for that sacred object; but these seem to have existed only late in the century; for the first Christian house of prayer is generally supposed to have been built at Rome, after the Decian or Valerian persecution. Still some vestiges of original appointments remained: the youth were instructed in the doctrines of Christianity, the choice of Pastors remained in the members of each distinct Society, and the power of the Bishops extended only to the regulation of the Churches in their own immediate vicinity.

Two disputes which agitated the Christians of this period will develope the increase of a monarchical power in the ecclesiastical government and a mutation of sentiment respecting one of the ordinances.

The Bishop of Rome arrogated the jurisdiction to direct all things connected with the Church, for the submission of those, whom he declared to be his

inferiors. This claim was most inveterately opposed by Cyprian, who at the same time defended the dignity and authority of Bishops. A dispute arose concerning the baptism of Heretics, and the Asiatic Christians determined that all Heretics should be re-baptized prior to their reception into the Church; Stephen, Bishop of Rome, immediately promulgated, that all who held this opinion should be excluded from communion with the Church of Rome. Against this anathema, Cyprian and the Africans forcibly replied, and denounced baptism by Heretics as void and invalid: nevertheless this vague dispute was only ended by the death of the Roman, and the martyrdom of Cyprian.

A query was submitted to Cyprian, whether children ought to be baptized on the eighth day after their birth? and a council of sixty six preachers was assembled to decide the doubt. That *the children of Believers should be baptized, was admitted by all the controve-
rystists, as a Christian ordinance and practice derived from the Apostles, of which no one pretended even to hesitate*; but the question was finally dismissed respecting the precise time of baptism, as involving points which no rules could peremptorily determine; but *they all decided that infants should be baptized immediately.*

V. *The Heresies.*

Three errors of a very offensive tendency were promulgated during this period, all producing the same effect, the progress of the grand Apostacy, and the final exaltation of him, "who exalteth himself above all that is called God."

The Manicheans derived their designation from Manes, a Persian Philosopher, who combined the tenets of the Gnostics respecting the Lord Jesus Christ, that he was only the form of a man, with the principle of purification by fire after death, and the punishment of transmigration into the bodies of animals or the torments of malignant spirits. But as it was impossible to reconcile these monstrous absurdities with the sacred Oracles; he rejected all the Old

and the major part of the New Testament, and particularly denied the four Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles. A great variety of delusive opinions derived from this general source was propagated by different persons, among whom the Hierachites were the most distinguished ; for they maintained the abhorrent position, that *all children who died in their infancy were excluded from the kingdom of heaven.* These extravagancies have passed away ; and are so preposterous, that few men now have the hardihood to promulge them.

Two opinions prevailed under the general appellation of Sabellianism. Noetus and his disciples professed that God the Father, indivisible, was united to the man Christ, born and crucified with him ; hence they were described as persons who declared, that the Divine Creator of the Universe alone expiated by death, the sins of the world. But Sabellius and his adherents averred, that a certain energy only from the Supreme, or a portion of the Divine nature was united to the man Jesus, and that the Holy Ghost was also only an emanation from the Everlasting Father. These Sectaries were called Patri-Passians ; they who believed that God the Father died. Various modifications of these general propositions were sustained ; but all of them denied either the humanity or the divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ. Paul, the leader of one sect, affirmed that the Son and Holy Ghost exist in God, as reason and activity abide in man ; and that Christ was born a mere man, but that the wisdom of the Father descending upon him, he wrought miracles, and therefore was justly called God. The Heresies of modern ages therefore are 1600 years old, and only a little modified to conceal their deformity.

From the history of the Church, as well as from the Gospels, we deduce, that the Lord Jesus was always honoured as possessed of divine perfections, combined with human characteristics, Immanuel, God with us ; and this was the unvarying belief of

all the Christian disciples during the first three centuries ; to verify which fact, it is indubitable, that those who denied this fundamental doctrine were not admitted to the communion of saints.

The pestilential influence of these unholy principles was increased by a bitter and wide spread controversy, which arose respecting the restoration of those into the church, who, during the persecution under Decius, from fear of death had denied the Lord that bought them. In this most direful period, many of the Christians abjured their profession ; after the storm, by the relentless Tyrant's death, had ceased, the backsliding but penitent sheep prayed again to be received into the fold of the Redeemer. Novatian most furiously opposed their re-admission ; and although he coincided in every other point with all the churches, yet the controversy raged so warmly, and so extensively, that he at last, with many others, seceded from the fellowship of those who united with the lapsed, and formed distinct Societies. This produced a lamentable division, until the tenth persecution melted all the disciples into one mass, and had not the Lord interposed, would have consumed them all in the same general tremendous conflagration.

At this period the fifth seal, as recorded in the sixth chapter of the Revelation, from the ninth to the eleventh verses, having been opened, unfolds its woful mystic scenery ; and introduces the prominent characteristics of those heart-rending sufferings which the peaceful flock of the Lamb of God were doomed to endure.

VI. The Persecutions.

Those of the prior era have already been reviewed ; but incredible as the fact may appear, all the ingenuity in devising torment, and all the malignity in inflicting pain which hitherto had been exhibited, were merely the sport of children, contrasted with the inconceivable miseries with which the Lord permitted his saints to be afflicted, until the contest between the glorious Son of God and the powers of

darkness closed in the utter extinction of the Bacchanalian Mythology.

The partial calm which had subsisted during the early part of the reign of Severus, who filled the imperial throne at the commencement of this century, soon disappeared; for he promulgated a decree, that no person should exchange the religion of his Ancestors for that of Christianity. This iniquitous requisition furnished an excuse for plundering the Christians of their property, and for murdering them as having departed from Paganism. From the annals of this tempest, the following brief narrative is selected, as a specimen of the desolation which ravaged particularly in Asia and Africa.

Perpetua, a young married woman of high rank, with two men of superior order, and a male and female slave, the latter named Felicitas, were seized; and all intreaty and remonstrance, and multifrom hardships in prison, with every menace at the bar of judgment, having in vain been employed to induce them to recant; Hilarian, the Judge, commanded that they should be cast to the wild beasts at the next public shews. During their confinement, the Jailer was converted to the faith, and on the day prior to the public exhibition, vast crowds, not only of the Christians from love, but of the Pagans from curiosity, visited them. To the latter, Satur, one of the men, when they were closely inspected by the Idolaters, loudly and with great animation appealed, "*Observe well our faces, that you may know them at the day of Judgment.*" One of the men expired in his dungeon in peace. The other four were conducted into the sanguinary Despot's presence; "*Thou judgest us,*" said the Martyrs, "*God shall judge thee.*" They were immediately scourged in the most barbarous manner; and having with great christian magnanimity, experienced very shameless abuse and every indecent degradation from the ruffian multitude, and torturing lacerations from the hungry brutes, they fell asleep in Jesus.

Tyrants, however, with all their power, must die ; and the Lord having permitted this Severus to devour the church during nearly ten years, summoned him to that dread tribunal, where even Imperial earthly edicts are scrutinized and remunerated in the utmost exactitude of personal retribution.

From this period during thirty eight years, the church enjoyed comparative peace, with the exception of the short and turbulent reign of Maximin. He vented his rage against Christianity, by an edict in which he commanded, that all the Pastors of the church should instantaneously and in the most barbarous manner be murdered ; thinking, without doubt, that by the destruction of the Teachers, the Congregations must follow. The doleful effects of his cruel mandates were realized by Christians of every rank and description. He reigned three years only, and consequently lived not to complete his design ; for his blood-thirsty temper, with equal gratulation and delight, would have exterminated the human race, as the noblest portion of his subjects.

The declaration of the Redeemer, “ in the world ye shall have tribulation,” and the doctrine of Paul, “ the godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution,” were still to be verified. About the middle of this century, Decius, having murdered Philip the Emperor, who, if not himself a Christian, was a most ardent Friend to the Disciples, was permitted by God to kindle a new fire. Some idea may be formed of this extremely horrific desolation, when it is remembered, that the provincial governors and praetors throughout the empire, were peremptorily directed under the penalty of immediate death, to exterminate the whole body of Christians without delay, and without exception, either of rank, station, sex or age ; or to coerce them by every possible species of torture, to join in the idolatrous orgies, and publickly avow themselves to be Pagans. The peculiar refinement and barbarity of the torments thus universally propelled into operation, were inexpressibly more,

dreadful and appalling than sudden martyrdom ; hence vast numbers, terrified at the slow-paced horrors which were prepared for them, abjured their divine Master's cause and profession, while innumerable multitudes, throughout all the provinces of the empire were transferred by the chariot of fire, to an immortal crown of glory. The brutal indignities especially to which the Christian virgins were forced to submit, left them no alternative, but to deny their Lord with every species of blasphemous lasciviousness, or to forget themselves, as one of them triumphantly uttered when the infernally infuriated Barbarians were most vilely abusing her mortal frame—*"You may put my body to shame,"* said the saint, *"but you cannot defile my soul."* Yet these are the most noble Greeks and Romans, who are ever propounded as the august exemplars of wisdom and virtue to our youth, and who, they are instructed to believe, embodied all that is dignifying in human nature. In short, had not the Lord, after the persecution had ravaged during two years, sent the invincible messenger Death, to remove the author of this pestilence, the public profession, if not the private knowledge of Christianity, according to all human calculation, must have been extinguished. At this period, began the devastations of that alarming plague, which disseminated agony and dissolution, in every district where it was permitted to enter.

Very speedily after the succession of Gallus to the throne, the storm, which on account of the death of Decius, had in some measure ceased, was re-animated with equal fury. But the Lord who by the former whirlwind had purified the Church, did not design that its enemies should triumph in her total destruction. An interval of peace succeeded until the year 257, when Valerian, having changed his kindness towards the Christians, first prohibited the assemblies of the disciples for public worship ; all the Preachers of the church were next doomed to exile ; and during the following year, every Christian

was commanded to worship the idols upon pain of instant death. Among the noble army of Martyrs who were removed to cry under the altar, were Cyprian, Sixtus and Laurentius ; the latter of whom is renowned for having been broiled on a grid-iron. When he had continued a considerable time lying on one side over a slow fire, the patient saint addressed the Prefect who was present, “*let me be turned, I am broiled enough on one side.*” When they had turned him, he added, “*It is enough, now ye may eat!*” Then praying for his enemies, he departed to Paradise.

From the records of this persecution, it appears, that the murderers learnt by experience and practice, new modes of torture, and more exquisite methods of prolonging life in every species of possible exrcuation ; so that it is not surprising, that those only whose faith was of the most ardent and seraphic nature, could triumphantly conquer the extremity of anguish which in every place and condition, and at all times encircled them.

This Emperor Valerian however, affords a remarkable evidence of the equality of Providential distributions. In a war with Persia, he was taken prisoner by Sapor, the Persian King, who would not release him ; but constantly used his neck for a stirrup when he mounted his horse, and finally flayed and salted him. Whether his immediate successors were impressed by this example is uncertain, but the fury of persecution ceased, and during the succeeding fifteen years, the condition of the disciples, if not altogether peaceful, was through faith and hope tolerable.

The calm, however, was disturbed by Aurelian, the Emperor, in 275, who, like Haman the Agagite, had resolved by one overwhelming stroke to demolish the Church :—a fellow-murderer effectually assailed him, and he was transferred from the Imperial palace of Rome, to the house appointed for all living, prior to the actual execution of his own ungodly mandates.

Here the persecutions of the third century close ;

but to complete the subject; it is proper to remark, that the vision of John already introduced, without doubt relates to the last combustion, emphatically denominated “the era of Martyrs.”

From this vision may be deduced a very important doctrine. The departed Martyrs are represented prostrate under the Altar; as sacrifices slain to the Lord, crying aloud, that Jehovah would avenge their cause. They are dressed in white robes to shew their justification before God; but they are exhorted to rest for a season, until the number of Martyrs shall have been completed, when they shall receive their plenary reward. This depicts the souls of the disembodied saints in an ever secure region, possessed of conscious energy, in devotion and enjoyment. The Historians of that period, who survived the persecution of Dioclesian, all affirm, that the final fiery storm was of longer continuance, wider extension, more atrocious barbarity, and as having effused more christian blood than all the former persecutions combined. It began in 303.—An order was issued by the Emperor, to demolish all houses dedicated to the worship of Jesus, to consume all Christian books and writings in the flames, to debar the followers of the Lamb from every civil right and privilege, and to impede them from any office of trust, honour or emolument. A second edict soon followed, by which all the Ministers and Deacons were sentenced to be instantaneously cast into prison. A third decree was speedily promulgated, that every torment which could possibly be devised, should be adopted, to impel the Preachers to desert the cross, and unite in the blasphemies of Imperial idolatry.

An immense number of persons was sacrificed through this stratagem. Decency precludes the recital of their tortures, vast multitudes of them died in their sufferings, and those whom they could not thus destroy, were sent to the mines, there to drag out the remains of a wretched life, in vassalage, la-

bour, and anguish. After a short interval, the fourth law was enacted, and by it all Christians, without regard to age, rank, sex or condition, were doomed to suffer every kind of shame and misery inflicted upon their bodies; and if they would not finally apostatize, then the Magistrates were enjoined to sentence them to death. Orosius assures us, that during ten years, the Roman empire exhibited nothing but one universal scene of devastation, slaughter and human victims in perennial conflagration. The fires of the Houses of Prayer, the proscription of the innocent sheep, the destruction and confiscation of the property of the Christians, and the ceaseless butchering of the Believers, altogether depopulated the people of God, stained every district of the whole empire with the Blood of the church, and the public strength and numbers and wealth, by these terrific means were more completely exhausted than had ever been effected by the most extensive, lasting and desolating wars. So completely at last had the persecutors triumphed, that pillars were erected, declaring that the superstitions of Christianity were totally abolished, and the worship of the Gods entirely and eternally restored. But the judgment of God awaited Galerius, the grand instrument of these infernal outrages; the latter part of his life was tortured with a disorder of the body, which literally in the utmost agony and amid complicated horrors ineffable, gradually corrupted him, until his corporeal frame in rottenness was finally separated from his soul; but not until by an Imperial edict, he had ordered the persecution to cease. Freedom and repose were thus restored to the remnant of the scattered and concealed followers of the Lamb. Here we must pause for the opening of the sixth seal; which crumbled idolatry into atoms, and exhibited the cross of Christ triumphant over all his enemies.

The subjects which have now passed in review instruct us—How vain are all the efforts of ungodly men to extirpate the Gospel of Christ, and the church of God!

Here learning most extensive, tortures unceasing, allurements most seductive, power uncontrolled, and general malignity unrestrained, congregate their energies in vain against the defenceless and unopposing Sons of Peace. Though like Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, they were cast into a boundless “burning fiery furnace,” the Son of God preserved them victorious amid the flames; and though like Daniel they were immured in the den of Lions,” through the presence and almighty power of their Saviour, they “were more than conquerors through him who hath loved us:” and our ensuing exhilarating employ is to review the annals, and to listen to the enraptured shouts of their triumph.

The Apocalyptic sixth seal—the triumph of Christianity—the doctrine—the government—the Ministers—the ceremonies—and the heresies of the Church during the fourth Century.

The scenes exhibited in the prophetic delineation, from the twelfth verse of the sixth chapter of the Apocalypse to the end of the seventh chapter, constitute one of the most remarkable revolutions recorded in the annals of empires. We have already sympathized with the suffering Martyrs; we have retraced the ceaseless malignity, and the combined energies of the Roman potentates, always excited to exterminate the name and the disciples of Jesus of Nazareth during nearly 300 years; and we have heard the Bacchanals shout that Christianity was extirpated, and Idolatry for ever established. But the star, however beclouded and feeble its glimmerings, was still visible above the horrizon in the West; and it is a wonderful coincidence of facts, that from England should have arisen the destroyer of Pagan abominations, and the most powerful enemy to Antichristian superstitions.

It would be a departure from our professed object to introduce the history of the demolition which the Heathen authorities realized at this period; but it is necessary to record, that through the instrumentality of Constantine, the whole imperial system of Rome was utterly subverted. The sixth seal has often been applied to the opening of that wonderous day of eternity which shall never know an evening—but it was no doubt intended primarily to predict that astonishing succession of events and victories, by which all the Imperial persecutors who had partici-

pated in the horrors of the era of Martyrs, were in succession, and finally subjugated; and by which a professed Christian became sole and undisputed Master of the Roman territories. Without attempting to investigate the controversies connected with this subject, it will suffice briefly to narrate the facts.

Constantius had uniformly displayed affection for the Christians, so that in his portion of the Empire, the rage of persecution was little known. Constantine his son, denominated the Great, having imbibed his father's predilections, became the object of aversion to all the other Princes. Providentially preserved from murder, he escaped from Galerius, the chief Persecutor who had designed his death, to his father's dominions; and speedily after he was chosen and proclaimed Emperor. A combination was immediately formed, to divest him of his authority and life. Convinced that a contest of indefinite magnitude and duration was unavoidable; and that the conflict involved not only his family interests, the enjoyment of his friends, but also the prosperity of the empire, and the apparent existence of that religion, the disciples of which were his only confidential and faithful adherents—on his march from Gaul to Italy, if Eusebius has correctly informed us, his mind was most grievously agitated with a view of the dangers, importance and results of that measure, which had compelled him to resort to arms in defence of his own dominions and people, by whom he was esteemed to the highest degree of devoted enthusiasm.

Of the affection which the Britons, Gauls and Spaniards bore to Constantius and his descendants, the following fact affords a beautiful illustration. All the exterior pomp and magnificence of Eastern royalty, were totally excluded from this Prince's humble mansion; hence on some occasion when Diocletian's ambassadors visited him, they were astonished that no goblets of gold and services of silver were found on his table. Diocletian reproved him very sharply, for not taxing the people more, for his own splendour.

and for the Imperial revenue. Constantius assured him, that although vast masses of the precious metals were not locked up in his palaces, yet that upon any emergency he could display more wealth than all the other Emperors combined. Diocletian appointed persons to go to Constantine's residence, at that time in France, and examine into the truth of his declaration. In the intermediate time, the beloved Emperor had sent to all the influential persons of every rank, a general notice, that the public safety and necessities required them to deposit at his command and service, whatever of the precious metals they could spare for the present exigency. On the day of exhibition, the Envoys expressed their utmost astonishment at the immense quantities of gold and silver, bullion, coin and plate which had been sent to him; and the view of this plate probably hindered the other persecutors from attacking him in his own territories. Immediately after this scrutiny, every man's deposit was faithfully restored to him; Constantius preferring the security of their affections, to any other treasury.

On another occasion Constantius was directed by all the other Emperors, during the fury of the persecution, to banish from his service every Christian. He transformed the order into a contrivance to ascertain his real friends; having published the decree, that every person must become an Idolater, or be dismissed from his office, he was rejoiced to discover that all his most attached, most useful, most faithful, and most respected friends and Officers, deliberately chose disgrace, poverty and death, rather than a violation of their consciences, and a sacrifice of the fear of Gods. The Apostates were immediately discarded, and to the inflexible Christians was committed the superintendance of all the affairs of his dominions.

That parties thus mutually and reciprocally united in interest, in principle and in heart, should be deeply impressed with so unequal a contest; Constantine

and his minor forces contending against the arrayed strength of three fourths of the Empire, supported by all the dignity of majesty, the confidence of victorious military genius, and the malignant opposition of Bacchanalian idolatry, is not surprising; and that their chieftain should be intensely agonized, is natural and just. In this distressing perplexity, when approaching Italy, where the actual warfare was expected to commence; at noon, or as some authors say at sunset, appeared in the heavens, the figure of a cross, such as that on which Jesus of Nazareth was crucified, splendid and luminous as the sun—and over it in plain letters in the Latin language, the words, "By this, thou shalt overcome." While he was overwhelmed with anxiety to ascertain the object of this astonishing celestial appearance, in a dream the same night, he saw the Lord of Life and glory, who commanded him to erase from the standards of his army, the usual idolatrous ensign, and to inscribe the figure of the cross which he had seen; assuring him, that if he sought the Lord in prayer, and trusted in him, he should prosper in all his enterprises, and confound all his enemies. The figures of Idolatry were at once removed, the cross was inserted, and Constantine in the progress of a few years completely fulfilled all that the sixth seal developed; for "the kings of the earth, the great men and the mighty men, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains;" and thanks be to God, there they remain yet entombed!! Several years were occupied in the consummation of his designs: but in the year 324 all opposition having been exterminated, Constantine issued those edicts by which Idolatry was trampled under foot, and Christianity proclaimed the religion of the empire.

The seventh chapter of the Revelations has been applied by all Scripture expositors, to the period immediately subsequent to the elevation of Constantine to the undivided government of the Roman empire; and although the Commentators are partially

divided in opinion respecting the interval betwixt the restraint upon the winds, and the close of the half hour's silence in heaven; every thing to be ascertained from the ancient records assures us, that it was not until after the death of Theodosius the great, in the year 395, that those tremendous desolations commenced, which ended in the division of Europe into the ten horns of the Beast depicted in the Apocalypse. Our present review will consequently include the history of these seventy years; and will prove that no history could have been more figuratively accurate, than the mysteries which the Prince of the Kings of the Earth, unfolded to the Apostle John, when in Patmos, he "was in the spirit on the Lord's day."

Before we enter upon the review of the internal state of the Church, it may be remarked, that two events of an unfavourable nature to the truth occurred. The *accession of Julian to the throne*; who having apostatized from the Christian faith, became a most artful malignant, deceitful, and bitter adversary to the Christians; and had determined, that if he returned successful from his war with Persia, to extirpate the terrestrial kingdom of Jesus. His reign was not of two years continuance; but during that period he resolved to try the validity of our Lord's predictions upon one of the most essential topics of our historical faith. The Amen, the faithful and true Witness had declared, that the temple of Jerusalem should be utterly demolished, and that trodden down of the Gentiles, it should remain in desolation and ruins, until "the times of the Gentiles shall be fulfilled." Julian felt the energy of this monumental visible argument in favour of Christianity; and wished to evince that it included no veracity, by a combination of the whole Roman power. Edicts were promulgated to rebuild the temple of Solomon in its pristine magnificence; and the Jews were commanded, there to re-assemble and restore their Mosaic ritual in all its pomp and ceremonies. In addition to the

myriads of Jews who hastened in their infatuation, to comply with an Idolatrous Magician's impious and impotent attempt to disprove the verity of God's declarations; a large military force was also appointed to superintend and aid the completion of the rebellious design. But every effort was in vain; as soon as the workmen began to remove the stones and earth, which in scattered masses had escaped the final conflagration under Titus, tremendous balls of fire, most appalling and hideous noises, continual concussions of the earth, not only filled the idolaters and Jews with the utmost terror and dismay, but at last rendered Mount Moriah absolutely inaccessible; so that all the menaces and promised emoluments which Julian addressed to them, were equally in vain. Fourteen hundred and sixty years have since elapsed, verifying to the highest degree of human credibility and confidence, the certainty of Christ's memento, "Heaven and Earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away."

The death of the Apostate was similar to his life: mortally wounded by a lance, he filled his hand with blood, and buried it towards heaven, exclaiming, "O Galilean, thou hast conquered."—Thus ending a life of infernal servitude, by the Devil's own faith and acknowledgement, "Thou art the Son of God."

In Persia, during part of this century, under Sapor, then King: *a long and most desolating persecution ravaged the disciples*, who lived within the sway of that idolatrous Tyrant. So general, so grievous, so complete was the extermination of the church, that from the fourth century to the present period, the profession of Christianity and the name itself have become so obscure, as with few exceptions scarcely to exhibit a solitary testimonial, that innumerable multitudes there warbled redemption's triumphs, and in those regions vastly increased the noble army of Martyrs.

Respecting the general enjoyments of that age which immediately succeeded the victories of Constantine; that the prophecy was fulfilled is evident,

not only from the testimony of the Historians who then flourished but also from medals still existing, on which are inscribed *Beata Tranquillitas*; *Blessed Tranquillity*; and as if the Authors had imbibed the spirit of the Apostle who foresaw their peace; they triumphantly depict their gladness in almost the very terms of inspiration. Lactantius thus writes, "tranquillity being restored throughout the world, the church lately ruined is resuscitated. After the violent agitations of so great a tempest, the calm air and the desired light are resplendent. God has relieved the afflicted, and wiped away the tears of the sorrowful."

Thus Immanuel restrained the winds of war and persecution: nothing was permitted from without essentially to injure the kingdom of Christ in the Roman empire. Vast numbers of the Jews were added to the church, and a great multitude which no man could number, the servants of God, sealed in their foreheads, that is baptized and admitted into the christian covenant, all united in that wonderful chorus, "Salvation to our God who sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, Amen." They were arrayed in white robes to denote their justification and sanctification through the death and merits of Christ; they carried palms in their hands to express their victory over all their tribulations, and their persecuting enemies; and they enjoy the comforts of a land, where sunine shall not molest, thirst shall not afflict, and fires shall no more consume. For the Lamb their gracious Brother, Redeemer, Guide, and Friend, nourishes them, supplies them from the stream which makes glad the city of our God: and banishes weeping and lamentation from every heart, and "wipes away all tears from their eyes." This was realized in many points of view, and while it demands our most fervid gratitude for the past, it sanctions hope for the future; when during the Millenium this splendid vision shall be the picture of our globe, and authorizes much more extatic anticipations of its final and

unalloyed consummation in the regions of bliss eternal.

But splendid as is the vision, and delightful as is the prospect; we must enter upon the threshold of the church which then existed, and inspect its various characteristics.

I. The Doctrine.

The pure sentiments of the Gospel were the general faith of the Christians of the fourth century : and here it may not be improper to record a summary of their fundamental creed. But it should be remarked, that while we adopt the evangelical principle, to “call no man Master, upon earth,” we may reasonably suppose, that the Christians who had suffered in the fiery ordeal of that most abhorrent persecution which has already been described, could not materially have departed from the doctrines of their Ancestors. Of this truth, one modern example affords ample evidence ; the present Independents in England, scarcely differ in any perceptible point, certainly in no essential feature, from their Forefathers 250 years ago ; but this is a lapse of time nearly double that which passed from the death of Polycarp, the disciple of John the Beloved, to the mutilation of Hosius, the chairman of the council of Nice. What then was their orthodoxy ? They held as truths undeniably—that man was a corrupt, helpless, and hopeless sinner—that Jesus of Nazareth, Immanuel, God with us, had left the throne of glory, and having become incarnate, had died to atone for our sins : by his resurrection had verified the Gospel which his Apostles preached and planted ; and by his ascension had resumed his station, Mediator, Prophet, Priest and King, that all who believe in him should be saved from the curse of God’s law—and that through him, that effulgence of spiritual light was diffused, by which men saw their misery ; and that the Holy Spirit by his divine influences, transformed men from the bondage of Satan, into the freedom of the children of God. To these truths were added,

the personal experience that every good thought, word, feeling and action were the result of God-like interposition ; and that faith, hope, love and good works flowed from promised assistance ; in short, that the redemption of man from his first serious impression to its consummation in glory, through all the stages of illumination, guidance, protection and deliverance was only to be ascribed to the praise of him who on the cross of Calvary, proclaimed in never-dying energy, “ It is finished.”

This is your faith—in it may you live, in holiness and peace ; in it may you triumphantly die, and forever exult in the beatific vision of God and the Lamb !

But it is lamentable to be obliged to add, that the purity of truth was beclouded with an almost endless train of absurd superstitions ; many of which were indubitably added from a desire to conciliate the Pagans. Here, it may be necessary to mention only one : among the Idolaters it had been an universal practice, to form grand public processions and prayers, to appease the wrath of their ideal Gods ; these were now partially adopted in a ritual of great pomp, and were most magnificently celebrated among the Professors of Christianity ; and in conjunction with this contradiction to common sense, as the Heathens had attributed to their temples and purifications, and to the statues of their Gods, certain propitious effects, thus to Christian houses of prayer, to water consecrated in a certain form, and to images of holy men, was referred the efficacy of that grace which the Holy Ghost can alone impart.

This was the introduction of that system of Purgatory which in subsequent ages was instituted ; and the addition of solemn rites attached to particular days, which however highly deserving of remembrance, ought to be commemorated without superstition, increased the tendency to a departure from the faith of the Saints. Hence arose the exhibition of those insincere practices, which subsequently intro-

duced the whole Papal fabric, and their only source of defence against the attacks of the Reformers. This facilitated the progress of the monkish system, and forced celibacy; and sanctioned the establishment of two maxims which subsequently unfolded all their iniquity. Towards the latter part of the fourth century, the Christian church was defiled with the general belief, adoption and practice of these most abhorrent positions, "That falsehood was virtue, when by it the interests of the church could be promoted; and that errors in faith should be punished with torture and death."

In connection with the doctrines of the church, may be properly enumerated their controversies. It must be admitted that the external peace of the church was probably one source of the arrogance, negligence, and disputations of the Prelates; many also were introduced into the external fold from motives of gain, or fear of punishment, and not from conviction—hence the church was contaminated with a motley crowd of concealed idolaters; and who no doubt took an active part in exciting and prolonging the spirit of discord.

The Meletian controversy began respecting the jurisdiction and extent of power of the Bishop of Alexandria; but it gradually assumed a more direct form, by having some religious opinions incorporated with it. This dispute divided the church during a long season, and baffled every attempt to extirpate it. So irreconcilable were the Meletians and the Alexandrians, that no mode of uniting them could be discovered.

A short time after, Eustathius produced a wide spread discord through all the western part of Asia; his system would have destroyed not only the order and happiness but even the existence of society. He prohibited marriage, the use of wine and flesh, enjoined immediate divorce to them who were united in matrimony, and permitted children and servants to violate the commands of their superiors upon re-

ligious pretexts. The disorders and confusion thus excited, were of the most baneful effects and long continuance.

Another dissension arose respecting the identity of Bishops and Presbyters in the New Testament ; and as this attacked all the power, and pomp, and pride, and dignity of the Prelates, it is not surprizing that the contest should have been violent and extensive. To this was subjoined an aversion from the superstitions which were then prevalent ; and this enlarged the dispute ; for the Bishops were striving for their usurpations, and their inferiors for their vain ceremonies and pageantry ; but the reformers were finally overpowered by numbers, and by the increase of ignorance and corruption.

But the most celebrated in importance, extension, and duration, of all the controversies, was that which involved the principles of the famous Origen. In the eastern part of the empire particularly, this frivolous dispute filled every region with malignity, vexation and disorder. So high was the reputation, so vast the influence of Origen's name and writings, that every party in all the controversies invariably appealed to him, and endeavoured to derive sanction whether for truth or error from his multifarious writings. Between the operation of conflicting passions, envy at his elevation, rage against those who defended him, bitterness against those who opposed him, and the rancour of the different partizans in the disputes, the whole empire was agitated, and in a degree distracted.

II. The Government and Teachers of the Church.

Essentially the administration of the church was not changed, but the pre-existent forms were modelled by Constantine so as to form the hierarchy, an exact counterpart to the civil constitution which he had established. In fact, he was the head of the Church, and his authority no man pretended to dispute. One privilege the Saints still enjoyed, the choice of their own Pastors and Teachers ; but the

whole of this right was finally extirminated in the plenitude of princely and papal power. The primary act was an exclusion of the people from all part in the administration of Ecclesiastical business ; then the Bishops divested the Presbyters of any participation in the direction of the church ; and thus they perfectly monopolized the possessions and revenues of the people, which were contributed and exacted for the professed support of the Gospel. And as in all the tumults respecting the election of the Bishops, the minority usually appealed to the Emperor, the result was, an usurpation by the Bishops of the rights of the people ; and the transfer of all Ecclesiastical concerns to the civil magistrates.

The Bishops of Rome, Antioch, and Alexandria, had, prior to this period, been considered as pre-eminent—to whom was added after the transfer of the imperial residence from Rome, the Bishop of Constantinople. These divisions introduced the convention of councils to decide religious controversies, and to regulate all the peculiar affairs of the churches. An accurate idea may be formed of the nature and character of these bodies from one fact. Theodosius the Great, summoned a council to meet at Constantinople ; and among the other Bishops who were directed to attend—Gregory Nazianzen was invited. That great man refused, and in his reply to the Emperor, after reciting his virtues, which he loved, and his authority which he acknowledged, he stated, that he could not conscientiously be present, for he would not voluntarily take a seat among chattering cranes and stupid geese, and that he had never seen or heard of any benefit having flowed from these councils ; but rather that they were sources of division and contention.—The history of nearly 1500 years has fully corroborated the justice of his opinion.

But to preserve the order of prophetic narrative ; it must be remembered that the seeds of papal supremacy were now exhibiting their fertility ; the mag-

nificence, the wealth, the power, and the patronage of the Bishop of Rome had so enormously increased, that the attainment of that station was the highest object of human ambition. Yet to counteract this, the Bishop of Constantinople was considered as his equal—and the strife which originated in this pretended equality, finally conducted those churches and the adherents of the two differing Bishops into that separation which still exists between the Greek and Roman professors of Christianity. Both equally ignorant and servile, and of course alike bigotted, even after the lapse of 1400 years.

It would be impossible here to recapitulate the names only of the various writers of the fourth century; among them however, we cannot overlook Eusebius, whose history forms the chief detail of that period—Athanasius the august opponent of the Arian Heresy—Chrysostom, whose profound and extensive erudition, proving his noble genius, still survives in his works, and especially famous for his extraordinary eloquence, whence he procured the name of “Silver Tongue.”

Gregory Nazianzen, Lactantius, Ambrose, Jerome and Augustine also must not be forgotten. Jerome is most deservedly esteemed for his versions of the Sacred Scriptures, which still constitute the standard text of our sacred oracles, and who if he were now alive, would no doubt be employed in the most arduous duties of the Bible Societies. But who can delineate a portrait of Augustine, whose fame was bounded only by the limits of Christianity? The sublimity of his genius, his indefatigable zeal for truth, his continued application, his patience, piety and learning, all have raised him to a pinnacle, the foundation of which, neither time nor opposition can remove.

III. The Ceremonies.

It is among the most wonderful of all the events recorded in the history of the church of a minor kind, that Augustine should have been reduced to the mor-

tifying confession, that “the yoke under which the Jews formerly groaned, was more tolerable than that imposed upon many Christians in his time.”

Vast numbers of the Pagan ceremonies were introduced into the idolatrous worship, and their observances with trivial alterations were incorporated into the service of the one true God. Who can reflect without regret, that the decorum of pure and undefiled religion was enveloped in mitres, robes, processions and pageantry?—and its spirituality sacrificed for the richness of the churches, and the honour of those who contributed to their erection.

The temples of idolatry were in a great measure subverted by the effects of Constantine’s government; but in their stead many splendid buildings were elevated—and to those who builded them was allotted the right of appointing a Preacher. This afforded to every patron the power of selecting his own Minister and Ceremonies. From this cause partly arose the numberless festivals, holidays, and days of fasting, which from indolence on one point, and debility on the other, must incredibly have contributed to the depopulation of the world.

During this century also, may be easily discerned the commencement of the Mass, for the Bishops used to elevate the bread and wine above their heads that the multitude might look and adore; in this was the origin of Transubstantiation.

IV. The Heresies.

It is scarcely possible to denominate the Donatists, Heretics; yet their conduct was at total variance from all harmony. The contest arose from the election of a Bishop, and in fact was never decided until the Pope of Rome ingulphed the contenders: but the most lamentable part of the fact is, that these disputants who filled all the Roman empire with the worst of all conflagration, the fire of ignorance, impudence and bigotry, were at the same time united upon every evangelical principle which involved the salvation of the soul.

The most important and durable of the controversies of this period, was the Arian contention. Arian was a word very commonly used ; but it is difficult to state exactly what doctrine Arius believed. One truth must be admitted—the whole mystic body of Christ had without interruption believed most solemnly, that there was a real difference and distinction between the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, but all existing in an incomprehensible and divine Unity.

Arius opposed this position by affirming that the Lord Jesus was merely a delegated Sovereign, and the Holy Ghost an emanation from the Deity. This Arian doctrine however was not ratified by the Council of Nice as the indubitable belief of their Ancestors, but totally denied ; and although it received all possible sanction from many of the Roman Emperors, and Gothic and Vandal Kings, it still could not preserve its buoyancy, but sank to its present degradation ; a few only, and those it is to be feared but nominal Christians, professing their faith in such palpable contradictions.

Four of the Apocalyptic trumpets—the extension of the truth—the doctrines—the rites and the ceremonies of the church during the fifth and sixth centuries.

Nothing can more effectually establish our faith in Divine Revelation, than the remembrance that the Apocalypse was written nearly 1730 years since; and that all its primary predictions have received the most exact consummation. We are now to enter upon a new division of its wondrously figurative descriptions; and it is a very remarkable fact, that Infidel writers have unintentionally confirmed Apocalyptic delineations by using scriptural metaphors in their history of the fifth and sixth centuries.

That we may be enabled as far as possible to adhere to the order of John's vision, we shall enlarge the present review to include the most striking features of the church until the evolution of the Mohammedan apostacy.

This part of the prophecy, the eighth chapter of the Revelation by John includes a period of nearly two hundred years. The silence, the duration of the calm of the church, was foreseen to continue but half an hour, that is for a very short term; then the angels received their trumpets; while the fire cast from the censer upon the earth was emblematical of the woes which the voices, thunderings, lightnings and the earthquake predicted.

"The first angel sounded," &c. This doubtless refers to the desolations committed by Alaric and Attila the scourge of God, who boasted that "grass never grew where his horse once trod." He appears to have been a fiend incarnate; whose sole delight was

pillage, murder, barbarity, fire and desolation without bounds and without end. Seven hundred thousand of the Huns and Goths extended themselves from the Euxine sea to Italy, and totally extirpated 70 cities, besides devastating the whole eastern part of Europe.

“The second angel sounded, &c.” This prophecy seems to have been the vision of Genseric’s success in Africa and his conquest of Rome. He and his myriads of Vandals crossed the streights of Gibraltar, and having taken possession of the whole coast from Tangier to Tripoli perpetrated the most indescribable atrocities. Rome was pillaged by these inhuman monsters during fourteen days, and the horrors of a large city doomed to the unrestrained fury, licentiousness and rapine of a horde of Scythian Savages, who can delineate? He was as a great mountain of fire, who transformed that part of the Empire where he ravaged, into a general Aceldama, a field of blood.

“The third angel sounded, &c.” This trumpet’s blast, was accompanied by the destruction of the imperial authority—for in the year 476, Augustulus was excluded from his station by Odoacer king of the Heruli, and the whole Roman empire exhibited only one unceasing and universal display of contention, discord and battle. In Italy, Africa, Spain, Gaul and Britain, the contests were fierce and uninterrupted between the natives and their barbarian invaders, and all the calamities which ever attend internal commotion, like wormwood, embittered every condition of society, and shortened the lives of infinite numbers of the wretched inhabitants.

“The fourth angel sounded, &c.” Here we have a very graphical portraiture of the final extinction of all the system which had been incorporated into the Roman government. About the year 566, Justin, the emperor abolished the senate, consular office, and all the magistracy; Rome was degraded from the state of a metropolis to a tributary; so that the sun, moon

and stars, prophetical titles to designate the various orders of the public administration, were all involved in the same impervious night.

After these four angels had sounded ; another angel was seen flying in the midst of heaven, pronouncing for the inhabitants of the earth three woes, when the fifth, sixth, and seventh angels should blow their trumpets.

If the spirit of prophecy had not previously revealed the fact, and did not all concurring testimony evince its truth, it would be absolutely incredible, that in so short a period, the glorious effulgence of the Gospel could have become so obscured ; and that during so many centuries, hence until the Reformation, with partial exceptions, the history of the Christian church is the narrative of a land of darkness, and of the shadow of death.

The Roman Empire after the decease of Theodosius was divided between Arcadius who resided at Constantinople, and Honorius who ruled the western provinces. But the latter portion was subverted eventually by the irruptions of the Huns, the Goths, and the Vandals ; and although a formal subjection was admitted to the Emperor of the East : yet they governed with absolute independence, and the authority of Constantine's successor was merely nominal.

Notwithstanding all the commotions and calamities which desolated the empire, and which were so destructive to "pure and undefiled religion," the ancient idolatry gradually disappeared. Theodosius the younger zealously engaged in the august duty of promoting its extinction : he either demolished the Heathen temples, or dedicated them to Christian devotion ; extirpated, as much as possible, the pagan festivals and ceremonies ; and excluded all Polytheists, from public offices and honors.

One circumstance connected with the overthrow of the ancient Roman order, is too remarkable not to be noticed. The barbarous hordes who pursued the work of universal devastation, although Pagans, e-

qually ignorant and ferocious, instead of displaying any peculiar malignity against Christianity as a system, or its disciples, purely on that account, as soon as they had reduced the countries which they invaded, universally assumed the profession and the exterior observances of the church; and thus became embodied with the original inhabitants. “The earth helped the woman.”

The following particulars comprise the narrative of that which is requisite to enable us to form a correct idea of the Redeemer’s kingdom, during the fifth and sixth centuries.

I. The Extension of the Truth.

In the east, the tribes who resided near the mountains of Lebanon, embodied themselves with the professed followers of the Lamb that was slain; and also the scattered nations who dwelt between the Euxine sea, and Mount Caucasus. Many of the Barbarians who had united in the division of the Empire, the Burgundians, Goths and Franks, were also induced to submit to Christianity. The Irish likewise in large numbers acknowledged their belief in the son of God — while many of the Picts, Scots, British and their Saxon Masters, pretended to embrace the Gospel of Christ.

The Jews also, in multitudes rejected their hatred and obstinacy and worshipped their crucified Messiah. But it is proper to develope the causes and the nature of these conversions which are so pompously and so exultingly detailed by some of the ancient historians. The change of the eastern nations was confined to a declaration of their belief in Jesus, a surrender of their idolatrous sacrifices, and the recitation of short creeds or catechisms. But there is no evidence to authorise the opinion that their ferocious tempers, their uncivilized manners, their impious licentiousness, or their idolatrous attachments, were in any perceptible measure, subdued by evangelical doctrine and authority.

While however, it must be admitted, that merited

eulogy may be justly given to many of those who zealously endeavored as Missionaries to "turn men from darkness to light;" yet it is irrefragable, that dread of imperial and royal power, hope of emolument and the anticipation of assistance, to resist the assaults of the still surrounding Pagans, constituted the chief motives by which so many were impelled to desist from the external exhibitions of their ancient idolatry. An exemplification of this general truth is indispensable. The remaining barbarians who resided on the boundaries of the Roman Empire, especially in Europe, valued the excellency of a religion in proportion to the advantages which attended the wars of those who professed it; and as the Romans had been most victorious, and their empire included the largest space; they inferred that Christ, whom the Romans worshipped as God, was the most profitable and just object of honour and acknowledgement.

From this impulse, Clovis King of the Franks, vowed that if Christ would give him victory over his enemies, he would adore him as the true God. Having been successful; we are assured, that after he and 3000 of his people had been baptized, Remigius preached a sermon on the Lord's death and passion; during the discourse, the King cried out in a loud voice, "if I had been there with my Franks, that should not have happened." It is also worthy of commemoration, that with the exception of Clovis, from whom the French monarchs derive their title of Most Christian King, and eldest son of the Church, all the other potentates who seized upon different portions of the Roman empire, were either semi-Pagans, or adherents of Arianism. Respecting the Jews, the majority bowed to Christ, not from the energy of truth, or attachment to the Gospel; but from the seduction of proffered wealth or emolument, or the fear of persecution. But one fact concerning them is too singular to be omitted. "In the time of Theodosius the younger, an impostor arose, called Moses Cretensis. He pretended to be a second Moses, sent to deliver the Jews who

dwell in the island of Crete; and promised to divide the sea, and give them a safe passage through it to the continent. They assembled with their wives and children on a promontory. There he directed them to cast themselves into the sea. Many obeyed and perished; while some who had complied, were saved. The deluded Jews would have killed the Impostor for his pretensions; but he escaped, disappeared and was seen no more." This wonderful instance of infatuation became the means of their voluntary submission to the authority of Immanuel.

Hence it is evident, that the name only of christianity was extended—no self-denial and little restraint upon their passions were required of these new converts; and the exchange was almost invisible from the worship of idols, to a similar adoration of the statues and images of Christ, the Virgin Mary and the Saints.

H. The Doctrines and Controversies of the Church.

The subjects of determination as points of doctrine which occupied the attention of this period, were principally upon the person and nature of Christ, human depravity, and the various topics connected with the natural powers of man, the necessity of divine grace, and the freedom of the human will. By the Donatists was perpetuated with the utmost obstinacy the contest concerning the purity of the church; for they differed in no point of doctrine from their brethren. It was a question respecting solely the choice, and election of a Bishop of Carthage; but it agitated the whole empire, divided the opinions of all parts of the church, and during 200 years, filled Africa with blood and war; but towards the close of the fifth century, it disappeared and ceased to exist.

The Arian heresy, which affirmed that the Lord Jesus and the Holy Ghost were only creatures, was generally received by the different nations who conquered the Roman Empire. Prior to their irruptions, the Arians had been severely oppressed and persecuted by the rigour of the imperial edicts. A recollection of the injuries which they had sustained, animated them

with revenge which was manifested in acts of the utmost barbarity. The Vandals in Africa under Genseric and Hunneric, demolished the places of worship, and most dreadfully tormented those who were inflexible in adhering to their profession of the truth as it is in Jesus. Whether the following remarkable event must be ascribed to natural causes, or to miraculous interposition, will continue to be controverted; but of its actual occurrence, the most ample and authentic evidence remains. Hunneric on some occasion commanded the tongues of a number of those pious men, who believed in the divinity of our Lord and Saviour, to be eradicated. After the execution of this outrageously inhuman sentence, the wretched sufferers were enabled to proclaim distinctly, the god-like honors of Jesus Christ.

About the year 550, the Arians were very numerous and triumphant, in large districts of Europe, Asia and Africa. This *wormwood* impregnated the rivers and fountains of waters; but its exultation was only temporary; the exclusion of the Vandals from Africa, and of the Goths from Italy, by Justinian, and the abandonment of the heresy by the Burgundians and the Suevi, were a death-blow to Arianism; so that from the sixth century, this system has never exhibited any energy or grasped any amplitude; having been swallowed up in its offspring, the delusions of the Prophet of Mecca.

Another most deplorable and widely extensive division arose in consequence of a controversy respecting the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Primitive Christians had always believed that the Redeemer was true God and true man; but the mystery respecting the manner and effect of this union of the two natures had never been discussed. "That Christ was one divine person, in whom two natures were inseparably united, without confusion," was the uniform opinion of the Believers, with very few exceptions, until Arius promulgated his errors. It is scarcely practicable to state the true

point of this verbal strife in intelligible language. Some of the writers avowed their opinions in terms which led to the doctrine, that the divine nature in the Saviour had absorbed the manhood ; their opponents, to avoid this extreme, expressed themselves as if the Messiah were two distinct persons. This is generally known as the Nestorian controversy, which was finally subdivided into several sects. But we shall attain the most luminous view of this lamentable discord, by adverting to one point. That title which has since the fifth century become the source of so much idolatry among the Papists, had already been applied to the Virgin Mary : in consequence of the disputes against the Arians, she was usually denominated, “the Mother of God.” To us, nothing can be more absurd and blasphemous, than the appropriation and use of such a pernicious epithet. The Nestorians most fervently contended against this title, and urged that she ought to be designated, only as “the Mother of Christ.” A general council of the Bishops and Rulers of the Church was held at Ephesus in the year 431—from which every thing that was candid, upright, and decent was completely excluded ; all their transactions being conducted with despicable cunning, unjust irregularity, and the utmost turbulence and rage. Nestorius was not only condemned without an opportunity of defence ; but even, although he utterly denied the charges of heresy alleged against him, and also notwithstanding he declared most solemnly his utter detestation of the doctrines imputed to him. In short, it has now become the concurrent decision of almost all the Theologians of every age, that the Council and Nestorius differed not in sentiments, but in the words which they adopted to explain them ; and that the origin and proloagation of the dissension must be attributed entirely to the arrogance and pride of Cyril, the Bishop of Alexandria, and Celestine, Bishop of Rome, with their aversion from Nestorius, who was Bishop of Constantinople, and against whom they had already pro-

mulged twelve most furious anathemas. He was eventually exiled ; but their body, as well as some of their original opponents, still exist in various parts of Eastern Asia and Northern Africa.

The Pelagian controversy, which has been more famous, permanent and extensive than all the others, originated in the early part of the fifth century. The doctrines universally received, "that human nature is originally corrupt ; and that divine grace is necessary to illuminate the understanding and to sanctify the heart," Pelagius and Celestius opposed. On the contrary, they averred, "that the sin of Adam and Eve, was not imputed to their posterity ; that we derive no corruption from their transgressions ; that children are born now as pure and holy as Adam was created ; that mankind are in themselves capable of repentance and amendment ; that they have no need of the internal assistance of the holy spirit ; that baptism is not the seal of the remission of sins, but a mark of admission to the kingdom of heaven ; and that good works are not only meritorious, but the sole conditions of salvation."

These positions were generally and immediately condemned, whenever, and as soon as they were promulgated. Augustin had urged with irresistible force and effect, that divine grace was the unmerited gift of God, and indispensable to the salvation of men. Hence arose a new sect, the members of which, with Cassian as their head, resolved to combine the discordancies between the Predestinarians and the Pelagians by opening a path, midway between the two extremes. These were denominated Semi-Pelagians. Their doctrine may thus be described. "Grace is not necessary to originate the first movements of penitence and melioration : these can be produced by every man by the exertion of his own faculties ; and all persons can thus believe in Christ and resolve upon evangelical obedience : but no persons can persevere and advance in that holiness and virtue which they commenced, without the perpetual support and assistance

of divine Grace. Their fundamental tenets were: "that God did not dispense his grace to one more than another, but was willing to save all men, if they complied with the terms of the gospel—that Christ died for all men—that the Grace of Christ was offered to all men—that man before he received grace was capable of faith and holy desires, and that man being born free, could resist or comply with the influences of the Holy Spirit."

This metaphysical and truly incomprehensible subject has continued to divide and alienate the church of Christ through every succeeding generation; and is even now as eagerly contested, and the disputants are as widely separated as if it were the first perceptible eruption of the Volcano. Augustine's followers are generally found among those denominated Calvinists—while the Arminians derive their origin from the Pelagians. In every age however, endless have been the modification of these opinions, from the mystery of Supralapsarianism to the Infidel maxim, that "men possess naturally the power to obey the divine law in perfection." During this controversy, Pelagius, who denied the original depravity of human nature, was charged with invalidating by his doctrine, the ordinance of infant baptism, with its propriety and necessity; he indignantly replied, that he was not a Pagan—for not a single individual, no one sect of Christians, even though avowed Heretics, had dared to deny, that Infant Baptism was the practice or injunction of the Apostles; or that it had not been perpetuated by their authority and example: for when an idolater was baptized and received into the Church, all his Children and household also, whoever the inmates might be, were considered subjects of the ordinance.

Amid all these controversies, the progress of superstition in principle and practice, was steady and uniform. The souls of departed Christians became the objects of constant invocation; and as it was believed, that they still continued to hover about the

places where their bodies were entombed, their sepulchres became the places where this abhorrent worship was stately performed. Images of these dead disciples were erected, and by the adoption of the old Pagan notion, that when the statues of Jupiter, Bacchus and Venus were erected, those fictitious Gods were really present and propitious to their devotees, so the deluded Christians attached a similar supernatural efficacy and incorporation to their anti-evangelical idols. To the bones of the Martyrs and to the figure of the cross, was attributed an energy irresistible in counteracting all calamities, and in extirpating all mental and corporeal maladies. Ancient Heathen institutions, in pilgrimages, supplications, and festivals to their demons and temples, were continued with very trivial changes, and thus the most odious part of the idolatrous mythology was embodied in the practice of the Christian Church. Hence the doctrine of purgatory, the worship of images and saints, the power of relics, and the efficacy of good works, had assumed a regular establishment and a permanent character; which continued to augment in diffusion and influence, until they enveloped in darkness the whole evangelical empire.

III. The rites and ceremonies.

The external frippery and meretricious glare combined with the worship of God during the fifth and sixth centuries, exceed all credibility. Robes adorned with the most costly and gaudy embellishments were introduced into the service of the Sanctuary as Priestly decorations. An unceasing choir of music was maintained in many places, which was never interrupted; but the choristers resounded their chaunts day and night, in bodies succeeding each other, as if the adversary could be extirpated, or the Judge appeased by unceasing sounds. We may almost wonder at the inquiry: to what region, all the wealth of the Roman empire at that period could have migrated? when we are assured, that the bones, sculls, teeth, nails and various supposititious reliques of

the dead Martyrs were sacredly preserved in caskets and closets of solid silver and gold ; while the images of the Virgin Mary nursing the holy child Jesus were adorned and enriched with all that superstition could prescribe or imperial wealth procure. The magnificence and pomp of all the other utensils employed in the service of the church may therefore easily be conceived ; and the immensity of the value must be estimated from the universality of the extravagance.

Two circumstances in the history of these centuries strongly develope that total degeneracy of manners which had become too general to be diminished by any counteraction then existing or discoverable. During the era of persecutions, the Brethren and Sisters had held Agapa, Feasts of Charity, where all the sanctity, and all the consolations of Christian love had ever encouraged and inflamed the Saints in their anticipations of immediate martyrdom ; these assemblies in consequence of the riot and licentiousness which they occasioned were totally dissolved.

But the proof and the cause of still more detestable enormities originated in consequence of a decretal issued by Leo, Bishop of Rome. It had always been customary for offenders against the discipline of the Church, publicly to acknowledge their guilt before the whole Congregation, prior to their restoration to the communion of the faithful ; but this progenitor of the Pope, directed that any penitent who privately confessed his sins to a Priest regularly appointed for that duty, should be absolved from guilt, and restored to the communion in the same estimation as if he had openly declared his contrition before the assembly at large ; thus all restraint upon impurity, and every shield of female modesty were totally exterminated.

A vast variety of unmeaning ceremonies, and the utmost absurdity of gorgeous display, were introduced into the celebration of the ordinances. The profession of the candidate was absorbed in the sil-

liness with which it was accompanied ; and the death of the Redeemer was forgotten in the preposterous ritual with which they pretended to commemorate that wondrous event. To consummate this mournful record, it only remains to be added, that to appease the Pagan converts, who were chagrined at the loss of their Bacchanalian orgies and feasts of Pan, several festivals were instituted at the same seasons, and the only difference perceptible was the alteration of a name ; Venus for Mary ; and Bacchus or Pan for John. This is the counterpart of an anecdote related of the most revered Latimer; who, preaching before Henry VIII. respecting his attempts to combine Popery and Protestantism, reprobated the scheme in most stern denunciation, and declared that it was all *Mingle-Mangle* ; and truly, they of the 5th and 6th centuries mingle-mangled all together ; when they displaced Venus to set up “Lady Mary, the Mother of God,” and when they only divested Mercury of his laurel coronet, to put on the Monk’s square cap, and write upon its front, Peter.

The church government during this period, with some other topics are omitted ; as it will be necessary to develope them more largely in their connection, when we illustrate the rise and progress of the Anti-Christian Babylon.

Of the Christian Authors during these centuries nothing of sufficient importance to attract our attention in these lectures, either as individuals or in their writings, exists.

This is a wretched wilderness over which to cast our eyes—during two hundred years the church of God appears to have been a complete exemplification of the affecting statement made by Asaph with regard to Israel—*Psalm 80: 8—19.*

Notwithstanding all this general gloom, some light shone or Christians would not have suffered persecution. We have a common proverb ; and however thoughtlessly or even improperly used and appropriated, it is a solemn momentous truth in connec-

tion with the Gospel of Christ, “The Devil helps his own.” Wicked men have seldom or never shared in the tortures of Christians; for in fact, the rage of hell would never be kindled against its own devoted earthly adherents; therefore, when we read that the solemnities of religion and the claims of humanity; the innocence of evangelical rectitude, and the pacific temper of a Christian’s walk; the irradiations of Gospel truth, and the universal seal of Divinity stamped upon the revelation of the Son of God; were all ineffectual to restrain the relentless rage of barbarian malignity, we may reasonably judge, that the majority at least of those incalculable multitudes who perished in every variety of cruelty, and ignominy and exquisite torments, in Gaul, Britain, Germany, Italy, Greece and especially in Persia, chiefly, if not altogether, for their inflexible adhesion to the Gospel of Christ, before the Idolaters among whom in consequence of their having been subdued, they continued to reside; was part of that glorious army of Martyrs who are now singing the song of Moses and the Lamb, “Great are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of Saints !”

The Apocalyptic predictions respecting the Arabian Mohammedans and the Turks--the superstitions, ignorance, discord and depravity of the Greek church within their dominions, until "the blessed Reformation."

We have now arrived upon the confines of that period emphatically denominated the 1260 years; at the commencement of which was exhibited the rise of that duplicate alienation from the Gospel of Christ, the Mohammedian Apostacy and the Roman corruptions. These have uniformly been designated as the dark ages, in which ignorance and vitiosity maintained a resistless and an almost universal sway. Evangelical simplicity, illumination and purity were effaced by pompous superstitions, unreserved submission to a Monk's directions, and the utmost licentiousness sanctioned by a Mendicant's plenary absolution. For the sake of perspicuity, the two divisions of Anti-christ shall be separately reviewed in their rise, progress and distinctive characteristics.

After the blast of the fourth trumpet, a pause ensued; during which interval, the Apostle heard the angel who fled through the midst of heaven, denounce the three woes which the inhabitants of the earth should experience. "by reason of the other voices of the trumpets which the remaining angels are yet to sound?" Revelation 9: 1—11.

This prophecy delineates the origin and success of Mohammedanism. When the trumpet resounded, the Prophet saw a star fall from heaven, which held the key of the bottomless pit; and having opened it, a caliginous smoke issued, that darkened the sun and air; those black confused doctrines which obscured the pure light of revelation. This star has

been applied to the apostate monk Sergius, who was the principal writer of the Koran, and peculiarly subservient to the designs of the Arabian impostor. But an insurmountable objection may be urged ; it refers a pre-eminent rank in prophecy, to one of the most obscure individuals in the history of the world.

From the most accurate computation, it is sufficiently demonstrable, that in their commencement, the grand features of their domination, and in their extirpation, the two apostacies nearly synchronize. But this remarkable coincidence justifies the belief, that the fallen star denotes the chief corrupter of Christianity. The star fell from heaven unto earth, precisely at the sounding of the fifth trumpet, anterior to the appearance of the locusts, and consequently preceded, though almost imperceptibly, the Mohammedan imposture. "Pure and undefiled Religion" had been almost concealed from sight by the authorized worship of images, saints and angels, prayers for the dead, and other papal inventions; which subsequent to the close of the period allotted to the fourth trumpet, had disfigured the countenance and defiled the character of the church. The head of these absurdities unlocked the abyss, removed the obstacles from the way of the Impostor, and formed the pretext for his mission: and the harmony of the prophetic records with reference to the Eastern and Western Apostacies, requires us to admit, that not an individual, either as the fallen star, or as the King of the locusts, Apollyon, was intended ; but that succession of men who corrupted the Gospel, and of Caliphs who exemplified their legal claim to the title of "the Angel of the bottomless pit."

The accuracy of this vision renders it a condensed history of the Mohammedans, during the 150 years which ensued after the first public declaration that the Arabian made of his celestial appointment.

Locusts strictly signified the Saracen armies : they originated in the same regions ; in numbers they were almost incalculable ; and they spread desolation

through all the Roman empire. Scorpions by their sting produce extreme pain, which is often succeeded by death: but in their compound character, these men were enjoined not to devastate the earth, but to slay all those "men who had not the seal of God upon their foreheads." The literal direction of this command was obeyed; for they were prohibited to injure any fruits, or to destroy any cattle, except that which was necessary for their food: and it is an irresistible demonstration of the certainty of the "scripture of truth," that the conquests of those scorpion-locusts principally extended, where the greatest corruptions of the Gospel had been admitted. They had no power to kill the nations: though they grievously ravaged many parts of the Greek and Latin churches, they could not exterminate them: before Constantinople they were always repulsed; Rome, they could not demolish. A locust lives precisely five months: and for the same prophetical duration, were these permitted to torture the nations. Accordingly, from the public declaratiou of Mohammed's delusions, 150 years elapsed, before Bagdad, the city of peace was erected, the locusts terminated their conquests, and their power gradually declined. Locusts in their heads resemble horses; and the Mohammedans were peculiarly skilful Equestrians. The Crowns denote their turbans and other badges of majesty, or the extension of their sway; their faces exhibited a manly beard, while their hair was decorated after the fashion of women: their lion-teeth prefigured their enraged force: their iron breast-plates bespoke their energy in self-defence: their wings lucidly develope the rapidity of their victories and the fury of their assaults; and their scorpion-stings diffused the Impostor's poison, which generated more injury to the souls, than their barbarities inflicted misery upon the bodies of men. The title of their king was peculiarly emphatic and applicable: Abaddon, the destroyer—for they murdered man in his enjoyments, in his hopes and in his doom.

“One wo is past; and behold there come two wos more hereafter: a long period intervened between the issuing of the Arabian locusts and the loosing of the Euphratean horsemen.” Rev. 9: 13—21.

This prediction is most luminously displayed in the history of the Turks. In numbers immense, and with irresistible force, the Scythians had migrated westerly, until their progress was arrested on the borders of the Euphrates. There possessing several parts of the Saracenic conquests, they remained bound in four distinct sovereignties, through the instrumentality of the European crusades. But when the rage for these more than Quixotic expeditions ceased, and the temporary dominion which the Latins obtained in Palestine was nearly extinguished; the trumpet sounded, the four angels were loosed, and the successes of the Turks over the Eastern empire commenced. Two circumstances in the accomplishment of this wo; the numerical exactitude of the period allotted to their devastations; and that unique characteristic, “out of their mouths issued fire and smoke and brimstone;”—are singularly remarkable.

The angels and their horsemen from the river Euphrates were prepared for a year, and a month, and a day, and an hour, or 395 years and 15 days; and it is indubitable, that from their first victory over the Eastern empire until their final conquest in Poland, that space of time was precisely exhausted. Gunpowder and artillery had not long previous to the attack upon Constantinople been introduced; and the most tremendous engines of destruction ever known to have been used, vomited death from their mouths, during the siege, in which was “killed the third part of men.”

Their numbers almost surpass credibility, and they were cavalry: enveloped in scarlet, blue and yellow, they appeared as covered with fire, jacinth and brimstone; and their horses were peculiarly strong and fierce. Their fire and brimstone destroyed the bodies, and their venomous stings, the souls of men.

Ferocity was their distinctive character; for similar to the scorpion-locusts, these serpent-horsemen were armed with worldly ambition and Mohammedan fanaticism; and the banishment of the Gospel with the substitution of the Koran, universally accompanied the successes both of the Saracens and the Turks.

The close of the vision depicts the Latin church during the progress of the Angels who were loosed. Many countries in Europe were not affected by the Saracenic Locusts or the Euphratean horsemen; but they persisted in the worship of saints and images, in their persecutions, inquisitions and murders, in their detestable licentiousness, the pretended celibacy of the clergy, monks and nuns, and in their fraudulent exactions, by which the nations were impoverished.

The victories of Mohammedanism and of the Roman idolatry coincide; yet the tremendous miseries produced by the former, and the glorious Reform which the superstitions of the latter finally engendered, effected but a diminutive transformation. Hence, they will feel the horrors of the third most awful wo.

Prediction is now narrative; for that which John prospectively saw has occurred. "The second wo. is past."

Nothing can be more evident than that this prophetic delineation refers to the desolation of the Eastern part of the Roman Empire; and it is a wondrous confirmation of our faith in the divinity of the Christian system, that the events should so accurately have coalesced with the prediction.

The progress of this curse over the earth was equally rapid, extensive and direful. From the Mohammedan era, the Hegira in 622, must probably be dated the commencement of the 1260 years in reference to the Eastern Church; hence the total extirpation of this system will probably have occurred prior to the end of this century.

The following brief view of the chief doctrines and practices of this delusion cannot be irrelevant.

The Mohammedans build all their faith upon one position—"there is no God but one, and Mohammed is the Apostle of God." All their articles of belief are comprised in the unity of God, the existence of Angels, the absolute immutability of the most minutely applicable predestination, the revelation of the divine will to Moses, David, Jesus and Mohammed; but the Jewish and Christian Scriptures they reject as totally corrupted, and maintain the Koran to be the sole standard of truth; they also admit a general resurrection and future judgment.

The Mohammedan description of hell is perfectly ludicrous, and yet extremely appalling to the senses; while the exhibition of heaven in the Koran is most offensively indecent and voluptuous.

This is their faith, what is their practice?—It consists in five daily stated prayers: before sunrise—after mid-day—before sunset—during the twilight—after night; with these are conjoined a variety of ceremonial washings and purifications.

Legal and voluntary alms—fasting; and above all the pilgrimage to Mecca; without which, this Arabian Impostor declares, even one of his own disciples might as well be a Jew or a Christian!

Hence, we may cease to feel any surprise, that Apollyon should have so swiftly and extensively ingulphed so many myriads within his vortex.

By the force of arms and the splendour of victory, the nations were obliged or intimidated to submit to the Caliphs. The cruel dissensions among the Nestorians, the Greeks, and the other sects were accompanied with such abhorrent outrages, that the very name of Christianity became odious. At this period also, all the Eastern countries, and even the major part of the Roman empire were overwhelmed in the most profound ignorance, and of course were easily deluded by an artful and bold Teacher, decorated with the garb of an irresistible Conqueror. But the grand reason, was its complete and cunning adaptation to the depravity of the human heart. He select-

ed some of the fundamental truths which both Jews and Christians believed—he required of his disciples but few religious duties, neither difficult to be performed nor involving any restraint upon their corrupt passions; and thus by sanctifying their pre-conceived opinions, by admitting all their usual customs, and by indulging all the vices to which they were naturally addicted, he successfully triumphed over the illumination and holiness of Christianity.

The delusions of the Arabian Impostor still comprehend within their sway, all the Eastern Roman empire, with the partial exception of the scattered Greek Church, Arabia, Persia, a considerable part of India, China, Tartary, Egypt and the whole northern part of Africa, except where the nominal Christians of Abyssinia yet perpetuate some remembrance of the ancient faith and glories of Redemption by the Lamb who was slain.

But the demolition of this apostacy seems to be predicted in Revelation 16: 12; and as this vial of the wrath of God is immediately anterior to the extinction of the Papal superstition; it furnishes a strong argument, that as they were not very distantly separated in their original establishment, so the destruction of the former will be followed at no long interval by the other's extermination.

The history of the Church in those countries where the “Angel of the bottomless pit,” Abaddon or Apollyon has during so many centuries been permitted to tyrannize, must now be examined; and the narrative which demands our attention, may be lucidly and summarily comprehended in four words, *superstition, ignorance, discord and depravity*. But to illustrate the progress and consummation of this odious and wrathful pestilence, it is necessary distinctly to separate the review of the Greek and Latin churches.

During the period which elapsed from the establishment of Mohammedanism in the seventh century, until the capture of Constantinople by the Turks in 1453, the Christians were nominal possessors of the

ancient authority which the successors of Constantine enjoyed and bequeathed; but from the period when the Bishop of Rome was elevated to the dignity of supreme Pontiff; in the west, the power of the Emperor was little recognized, and less obeyed. The progress towards idolatrous institutions and mental darkness was uniform; and the increase of these evils was accelerated by the contentions that successively arose among the adherents of the two rival hierarchies, Rome and Constantinople.

Notwithstanding these formidable barriers to the extension of "the truth as it is in Jesus;" during several centuries, diversified attempts were made by the Nestorians especially, which were partially successful, to amplify the knowledge of the Christian religion.

In all the countries generally included in the appellation, Independent Tartary; that is the northern boundaries of Syria, Persia, India, and even to China; the influence of that disfigured and mutilated Christianity which was then preached, was acknowledged and perceptible; and no doubt can be admitted respecting the fact; that myriads of persons, professing, and with all their imperfections, many of them sincerely believing and experiencing the power of Redeeming grace, then existed in those realms, which now appear ingulphed in the tangible darkness produced by the Arabian Apollyon's scorpion-stings.

During the twelfth century a remarkable occurrence highly benefited the cause of the Gospel. A Nestorian Priest, historically denominated Prester John, conquered a large kingdom in the eastern regions of Asia, and established the predominance of evangelical principles; but the authority of them was of short duration only; for during the reign of his successor, Genghiskan the Tartar demolished the kingdom and the sway of the cross; and wherever his victories extended, a diminution of the disciples immediately succeeded. The universal subversion of

the Nestorian churches was consummated by Tamerlane in the fourteenth century; and where the light of life in some degree irradiated the minds of men, now the reveries of Mohammed or the abominations of Paganism possess an undisputed, and almost an unlimited control.

The general condition of those who still adhered to "the glorious Gospel of the ever Blessed God," was at no period of these eight centuries more than tolerable; and often were they involved in very appalling miseries.

Immediately after the martial successes of Mohammed, and the earliest Caliphs had yielded them peaceable possession of the countries bordering upon Arabia; their astonishing intrepidity and infuriated fanaticism which had been previously engrossed in extending their military conquests, not having any external object for their continual ebullition, began to exhibit their malignity, in the oppressions of the Christians still resident among the nations whom they had vanquished and subdued. In their primary exercise of government they had been most laudably moderate and indulgent; but their lenient dominion was gradually transformed into vexatious severity: the Nazarenes were oppressed with tributes so heavy, that they were almost equivalent to a general confiscation of their property, and their rights as freemen were exchanged for the degradation of galling vassalage. This wretchedness was augmented through every succeeding generation. During the eighth century, the Saracens and the Turks, although conflicting between themselves, were equally opponents and destroyers of the Redeemer's terrestrial kingdom.

This unnatural combination could not long subsist, an Antichristian tyranny, and a Christian people: hence, in the revolution of another century, that they might live in this world in peace, vast numbers of those who professed Christianity, conformed to the apostacy of their despots; and they, whose evangelical magnanimity resisted all the deceptions of their

tempters, were so constantly and bitterly persecuted and debased, that nothing of Christianity remained, but the denomination, and a few insipid ceremonial institutions.

From this period, until the capture of Constantinople by the Turks, the history of the Christian disciples combines only an accumulation of their tortures. The severity of the Mohammedan victors increased in proportion to their triumphs in war; until their continual exactions of the wealth of the conquered; their demolition of the houses of prayer, their obstructions to the influence of Gospel intelligence, and their ceaseless murders of all the men of wisdom, fortitude, and exemplary piety, having bereft the remnant of the church of its terrestrial pillars enveloped, almost all that was called christian, in one mingled mass of ignorance, incivilization and ruin; in which devastation they still continue overwhelmed.

But it is requisite to delineate more graphically their prominent features.

I. Their Superstitions.

No proposition is more self-evident, than that the illumination of gospel truth, and the purity of religious worship are inseparable. Of the absurdity, equally with the extent and aggravation of the superstitious rites, which had been introduced into the church, prior to the seventh century, and during its revolution, the following extract from the life of Eligius a very famous Popish saint, furnishes ample evidence. It may not however be unnecessary to remark, that it was the general character of those Bishops of this period, who desired popularity or wealth, most pompously to promulge that they were supernaturally inspired to discover the relics of the martyrs. Such was Eligius; and the state of piety among those Christians we can therefore correctly estimate. The old writer of his life Dacherius thus declares his eulogy: "To this most holy man, God also granted among other miracles of his virtues, that, through his researches the bodies of the martyrs, which during so many ages

had been concealed; by his ardour of faith, should be produced and displayed." To dislodge the bones of the dead from their dormitories, seems thus to have been the most dignified and the noblest employment of a christian minister: and to worship them when inclosed in gold and silver caskets, was equally the proudest boast and the highest devotion of the avowed disciples of the Son of God.

An immense traffic was carried on in old bones, skulls, teeth and nails; and for the celebration of the honors due to their supposititious original owners, particular days, festivals, forms and ceremonies were appointed, so that each object might retain its peculiar and appropriate ritual. 1.

This detestable degradation of the human mind, and this abhorrent perversion of all Christian institutions, progressively augmented until it swallowed up the church, in the vortex of pompous idolatry. Genuine religion, learning and devotion having all nearly expired, an ostentatious ceremonial was substituted; and to invent a fresh ceremony; to change the music; to superadd a new mode of venerating the pictures, images, statues, or relics of the saints; to discover a novel exhibition of magnificent frippery, in embellishing the robes of the saints, or the garments of the sacerdotal order; and to direct the postures, looks and movements of those who conducted their public worship, were considered the highest attainments of human ambition, and the only guide to terrestrial immortality.

Hence the essence of pure and undefiled religion was lost; exterior splendor usurped the place of spiritual mindedness; the indulgence of an unbridled imagination, and the captivation of the bewildered senses, constituted the sole object of all the religious observances; and thus christianity was totally obscured in its authority, principles, spirituality, advantages and enjoyments.

II. Their Ignorance.

To this period may be referred the diminution of those efforts to cultivate the various sciences which eventually transformed the Christian world into lands sitting “in darkness, and the shadow of death.” The doctrines of the gospel were enshrouded by clouds of the most profound and impervious ignorance; instead of that spiritual worship which the truth requires, the teachers of that age, “the blind leading the blind,” substituted the imploration to saints, and the adoration of their images; the atonement of Christ was banished for the expiations of a future purgatory; the fundamental article, *justification by faith*, was excluded; and in its stead was proclaimed the efficacy of vain ceremonies to attain salvation; and the necessary influences of the Spirit of all grace, to begin and perpetuate the life of God in the soul, were discarded for the belief, that the vilest relics of corruption could heal all corporeal maladies, and eradicate every disorder of the understanding, the affections, and the heart. Thus, the clearest light was metamorphosed into the utmost labyrinthian obscurity.

The fundamental doctrines of christianity seem to have been nominally held by the generality of persons; but the efficacy of divine truth was impeded by the doctrine of the merits and intercession of the saints, and the growing attachment to the ceaseless and augmenting ceremonial of the puerile pomp and silly splendour which attended the image worship substituted for the magnificence of Bacchanalian Pantheistic idolatry, finally enveloped every part of the christian world in a total torpor; until the very highest dignitaries of the church were utterly unable to read or write; and used to append the cross to public records, to verify their signature and approbation: which was the origin of the modern marks to certify acts, when the parties cannot personally subscribe their own appellations.

III. Their Discord.

Controversies respecting the procession of the Ho-

ly Ghost—predestination and grace—the manner in which Christ was born of the virgin, and other minor points, partially disturbed the stagnation of the church during this period. But three other topics were sources of permanent contention, two of which finally severed the nominal Christians into Greeks and Latins.

The election of Photius as Bishop of Constantinople, involved the adherents of the two Patriarchs in general confusion. A catalogue of charges combining doctrinal and practical corruption was promulgated against the Romans, and only tended to prolong and strengthen the distraction.

But the contest which arose concerning the manner in which the body and blood of Christ are present in the Eucharist is especially distinguishable for its interest and consequences. A variety of opinions had been held upon this topic, without any person's having pretended to decide the controversy authoritatively and with precision. About the middle of the ninth century, one of that pestiferous generation of Vipers, the Monks, published a discussion upon the body and blood of Christ; in which that son of ignorance maintained, that after the consecration of the bread and wine by the Priest, their substantial qualities were removed; their figure only remaining, which contained the real body and blood of Christ truly and locally present; and that this figure of bread contained the same body of our Lord which was crucified, and was raised from the dead.

Against this most astonishing and palpable absurdity, one writer alone, John Scotus argued for the truth, by demonstrating, that the Sacramental elements were symbols only of the invisible Redeemer. The positions thus affirmed were discovered however to be of a very advantageous nature to the superstitious despotism; and amid the increasing gloom, they continued to charm the votaries of idolatry, until they were eventually proclaimed as infallible axioms by the Papal Transubstantiation.

But the most violent of all the contentions which

disorganized those who bore the name of Christian, was the subject of image-worship. The Roman Pope having by the most nefarious means grasped considerable temporal authority, resolved to defend his deteriorations of the Gospel, the profitable trade of shrine-making, and the devotions to the dead and their statues, by the power which he had usurped and possessed. Against this corruption; in 727, Leo the Greek Emperor, openly protested. In the porch of his palace at Constantinople, had been erected an image of Jesus on the cross. As it had been an incentive to idolatry, Leo directed that it should be removed; the person employed to destroy it was murdered by the devotees of the unhallowed similitude, and they who were punished for the slaughter of the officer, are to this day honoured by the Greeks as Martyrs! This event produced a rupture between the Emperor and the Pope. Leo refused all communion with Gregory; and the latter excommunicated all the contemners of Images.

In this state of discord, during fifty years, remained all the countries where Christianity nominally governed. It was a vigorous conflict between the devout adherents of the worship of one God, and the blind partizans of an open acknowledgement and honour of Satan. One of the councils thus decided—“Our Saviour hath delivered us from idolatry, and hath taught us to adore him in spirit and in truth. But the Devil hath insensibly brought back idolatry under the appearance of christianity, persuading men to worship the creature, and to take for God a stone or block to which they give the name of Jesus Christ.” Nevertheless, another council authorized this worship of the work of men’s hands, and notwithstanding all the imperial authority both of the Greek and German Sovereigns, so influential was the prevalence of superstition, so commanding the dignity and arrogance, and so impressive the pretensions to ecclesiastical superiority and veneration in the Pope, that although another very numerous council expressed

their abhorrence of this derogation of the divine supremacy, it extended its course; until every species of this adoration of inferiors triumphed over all opposition, and became commensurate with the civil boundaries of the Church's terrestrial domain; and with the exception of those countries purified by the unspeakably august Reformation, the lapse of a thousand years has neither changed its character, nor diminished its folly and corruption.

From these doctrinal, devotional, and practical disputationes combined, to which may be added, the boundless ambition of the Roman Pontiff, with the impetuous resistance of the Patriarch of Constantinople, may be derived the schism between the eastern and western portions of the church. Equally immersed in darkness, alike inflammatory in turbulence, unrestrained by evangelic principle, and pursuing nothing but their individual aggrandizement; it is not surprising that all attempts to harmonize such repulsive materials as these ambitious conflicting Lords of God's heritage, should hitherto have been in vain; and indeed it is probably preferable for the world, that the Lord in his wisdom has permitted these arrogant Pontiffs and their stupid adherents to exist in separation; as by that means, some little servor, and a few partial gleams of light have occasionally warmed and illumed the moral hemisphere.

IV. Their Depravity.

It would be improper to delineate the odious and general practices of the ages which we have reviewed. The flood-gates of iniquity were all open, and every moral restraint was completely extirpated. No surprise can be excited by this statement, if we consider that the holy commands of Christianity were no longer enforced; that the favour of God was understood to be a privilege which could be obtained only by money paid to the Church officers; that every crime, however enormous, was expiated by the Offender, if he could only offer to the Pope, or to the Priest who absolved him, a sum equivalent to insati-

able cupidity ; and that the Pontiffs and Patriarchs, through all the intermediate grades of Ecclesiastics, to the Bellringer, with the Friars, Monks and Nuns, a few only excepted, wallowed in all the impiety of Atheistic principle, and in all the corruption of bestial licentiousness. The system of auricular confession ; that is, the obligation imposed upon every individual above puberty, frequently to unfold to the Priest, all the secrets of their hearts, and all the actions of their lives, placed the reputation, the safety, the wealth, and the mortal existence of all persons, at the option of this confidential adviser ; and thus unhesitatingly elevated him into that superiority, which precluded all opposition to his commands, and all non-compliance with his wishes. Hence, he had no restraint for indulgence, but satiety : and the most artful of all the manœuvres connected with this most ungodly machination was, that it embodied around him a constant guard for his defence ; for they not only participated in his criminality, but were coerced to silence, by the dread of their own secrets being publicly divulged. From the constant and increasing operation of these varied evils, the world became at last one almost unmixed mass of utter loathsomeness ; having grasped the larger proportion of the wealth of society, to feed their voluptuousness ; and having banished all the virtue possible, that conscience might not effectually interpose, and induce their degraded adherents to resist their despotic and vitiating authority ; the ecclesiastical orders had, by their precept, example, connivance, commutation of sin, and their diminution of the sanctity and supremacy of the divine law, involved all persons within their ghostly rule, in a moral disorder apparently incurable, and in almost irremediable destruction. Yet it appears from the investigation of the history of the dark ages, that some difference must have been perceptible between the Romans and the Greeks. The devotees of the Latin Usurper were more ignorant, vicious and shameless, than the

Eastern disciples ; yet, the record is so painfully disgusting even of the best of the Monkish orders and of the hierarchical attendants, that the prophetical delineation, Revelation 9 : 20. 21, has been lamentably demonstrated to stand verified by all the accuracy of historical facts ; which corroborates the statement, that their depravity multiplied in energy, extent and diversity, during the seven centuries which elapsed, until the third angel with a loud voice proclaimed, Revelation 14 : 9--11. Yes, Martin ! thou wast commissioned to resound that dread denunciation, and to reverberate that wondrous blast ; which has silenced the groans of purgatory, stemmed the tide of idolatrous worship, drawn a vizor over Monkish vitiosity, and promulgated the triumphs of redemption throughout the civilized world.

*“ Fly abroad, thou mighty gospel,
Win and conquer, never cease :
May thy lasting wide dominion
Multiply and still increase ;
Sway thy sceptre,
Saviour, all the world around !”*

This brief review of Christian Prophecy, demonstrates the certainty of Divine Revelation.

On this invulnerable argument in defence of the Gospel, you may safely venture your everlasting hope. Sophistry cannot elude its truth, denial cannot weaken its validity, and Atheism cannot demolish its force. No man but a blind Doubter can resist the energy of that conviction, which an impartial investigation of Scriptural predictions will inevitably produce : and it has been evinced by testimony indubitable, that before a being endued with never-ending rotional powers can reject Christianity, he must become the fool, whom David describes, as saying in his heart, “ there is no God.” “ What consolation for us who believe ! Decorum, probity, modesty and all human sensibilities must be ejected, previous to the renunciation of the Gospel, and we

can no longer be men, when we cease to be Christians."

Daniel's predictions in their original state, are found in a tongue which has ceased to be spoken by any nation during the last 2000 years; and that the prophecies which regard Alexander the Grecian, the acts of Antiochus, the death of Messiah, the subversion of Jerusalem, the desolation of Judea, and the consequent dispersion of the Jews by the Romans, were all scrupulously fulfilled, is granted by the most subtle, acute, and determined foes, who ever by argument opposed the revelation of God. But to escape from the consequences which unavoidably result from this admission, they most preposterously contended, in defiance of testimony amounting to demonstration, that the book was a figurative history of past occurrences, not the anterior developement of future events.

The Greek language, which through the conquests of Alexander had been extended from the Mediterranean sea to the Indian Ocean, very soon diminished in its purity after the removal of the seat of government to Constantinople; and it has been gradually changing its external form, until it is very little assimilated to the style in which the Apostle wrote his visions; consequently, that the "Revelation of John" existed before Constantine was elevated to undisputed possession of the Roman Empire, is as manifest, as that the past is necessarily prior to the future, as the splendours of a meridian sun, or the existence of Jehovah. But he who rejects it, and this is the only mode by which modern Infidelity can justify his obdurate expulsion of the Gospel of Christ, must not impute credulity to believers: for this simulated unbelief involves miracles of magnitude so vast, that no Jew, no Theophilanthropist, no Deist, no Atheist, no Devil, ever would admit them to be credible.

The transmigration of the Jews across the Red Sea; the prostration of the walls of Jericho, at the blast of the ram's horns; the temporary suspension of the

solar motion at the command of Joshua ; Elijah's chariot of fire ; the life infused into the corpse which touched Elisha's remains ; the existence of Jonah inclosed in the whale : the deliverance of Shadrach, Meshech and Abednego from the flaming fiery furnace ; the preservation of Daniel in the Lion's den ; the flight of the fever by the distant mandate of the Son of God ; the cessation of tempestuous winds, and the cessation of the turbulent waves at the mere sound of Jesus' voice ; the multiplication of five barley loaves and two small fishes which felt his benediction into a super-abundance of food for several thousands of men, with the accompanying multitudes of women and children ; the resuscitation of Lazarus from the sepulchre in which he had during four days been deposited, when the Master commanded ; and the results of his own resurrection—the propagation of the Gospel by twelve fishermen, without money, talents or influence ; its subsequent establishment throughout the earth, not only without any species of human aid, but in direct opposition to all the cunning, hatred, learning, malice, power and persecutions which earth and hell confederated, could incessantly arm for its destruction ; and its daily increasing stability in defiance of every machination which its enemies can contrive or execute—these are the most stupendous actions which we are commanded to believe ; but when contrasted with the wonders which Atheism enjoins us to credit, they appear but ordinary facts which admit neither of suspicion nor contradiction.

He who denies the gospel of Christ to be a revelation from heaven, believes with a myriad of impossibilities not less irrational ; that every man of all generations has conspired to deceive him, that the sensibilities of his own heart are a vile delusion, that the wonderful phenomena of creation, the harmonious regularity of the annual seasons, the complicated machinery of the general system, and the unrivalled minuteness of mechanism which his own

frame discloses, all are fortuitous, that his intellectual powers are incurable blindness, that all things originated and are sustained by nothing, and that the universe commenced and will terminate in non-entity. O! pity him, he is infatuated ! O pray for him, he is already condemned ! O strive to enlighten him, for the wrath of God abideth upon him !

As it is self evident, that no finite mind can possibly comprehend all the past; it is equally obvious, that it cannot divine the future. But Daniel and John depicted the most important events in the history of the moral and Christian world, many hundreds of years previous to their completion. Therefore, the sacred volume is irreversible truth revealed by the Supreme ; and it is our paramount duty to believe its principles and to obey its injunctions.

Fathers ; are you solicitous that your sons should bless and support you, honour their country, adorn the church, and die shouting, Hallelujah ? Mothers ! are you anxious that your daughters should emulate every noble example, and exhibit every feminine excellence on earth, previous to their admission into heavenly bliss ? Enforce upon them the study of the scriptures. Are you men ? O send abroad *the light and the truth !* Are you Patriots ? Help to resound the Jubilee trump. Are you American-citizens ? Remember the God of your fathers, and divulge the knowledge of his wonderful works. Are you Philanthropists ? Point your blind neighbour to the light, your vicious acquaintance to virtue's path, and your endangered friend to the Ark of safety.

Are you Christians ? Look ! there they march, hosts innumerable to misery everlasting : in your hands is an impassable barrier, which has effectually opposed the progress of myriads who are now around the throne of God in ineffable happiness. Are you Christians ? you daily experience peace, through the operation of evangelical faith and hope ; and you finally anticipate, that when you walk through the valley of the shadow of death, you shall fear no evil,

because the Lord shall be with you, and his rod and staff shall comfort you : behold ! the vast majority of the human family, your neighbours, your friends, hastening to the period when the Angel of Futurity shall knock at the door, and Death shall deliver the summons, “ Set thy house in order, thou shalt die and not live,” with no vital apprehension that the day will ever arrive. Are you Christians? you have extended your vision into eternal things ; you have endeavoured to realize that inexpressibly eventful morn, when the Archangel’s trump shall revivify the dead to never-ending existence ; when Preachers and Congregations, Husbands and Wives, Parents and Children, Relatives and Friends, shall stand on the brink of the same grave, awaiting the Son of Man, *who*, in his glory, with all his holy angels, shall then pronounce the interminable doom of every child of Adam : and you have presfigured—no ! you were lost in attempting to delineate the very faintest view of that felicity which the righteous shall enjoy in “the kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world.”

This is your “ light to life—the glorious gospel of the ever blessed God.”

The Apocalyptic prophecies respecting the Latin Church.

The history of the Roman Church includes during several centuries, almost all the records of nations ; at least, all the most interesting and prominent features and actions of the human family. In all their grand distinctive qualities, the Latin and Greek Churches have ever remained identical : their idolatry and superstition, ignorance, servility to their Hierarchs, and their monastic institutions, notwithstanding the Latins were the most debased and corrupt, proclaim them though widely separated through extraneous circumstances, twin children of the same “Man of Sin.” But to the Latin Church is devoted nearly the whole of the divine predictions recorded in the Apocalypse : hence a more enlarged examination of her annals is requisite ; and the connection between Papal institutions and even all our modern customs and observances, renders the scrutiny equally indispensable and instructive. Preparatory however, to a systematic illustration of the primary characteristics of that “son of perdition, who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped ; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God ;” a brief recapitulation both of the successive events, and of the prophecies, may not be superfluous or unnecessary.

A review of God’s dealings with mankind, in his providential government of the world, when conducted by the light of the sacred records, and in a humble and devotional spirit, cannot fail to instruct the mind and meliorate the heart : but as the various generations of the human family are indissolubly concatenated in their nature, duties and destiny, it is equally necessary to scrutinize the page of prophecy, as

the volume of history. To the performance of this duty, the "Prince of the Kings of the earth" has annexed his benediction, at the commencement of the Apocalypse, which was revealed expressly to demonstrate the certainty of the Divine Oracles, by prefiguring the annals of the Church, and to proclaim the glorious millennial era, which at the appointed time shall felicitate the sons of Adam. "Blessed is he that readeth and they who hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein."

We have already investigated some of the most impressive scenes during the lapse of those centuries, when the Christian community nominally constituted but one body; and we have realized that by the triumphs of Constantine, the Gospel became the authoritatively established religion in every part of the Roman empire.

At this era, the doctrines of the cross were generally uncorrupted and the church comparatively pure. But when persecution ceased, the spirituality of the Christian was lost in a worldly temper; the fervour of devotion evaporated in external forms, and a variety of superstitions was speedily propagated. Veneration for departed saints, the worship of images and relics, and the celibacy of Priests, deplorably eclipsed the lustre, and infected the very essence of "pure and undefiled religion."

The ministers of the church, who, previous to Constantine's succession to unlimited power, with some exceptions, had gradually been losing their parity of rank and influence, were now placed at vast distances. The Bishops of Rome and Constantinople opposed each others pretensions to the highest dignity with the most infernal pertinacity; while the inferior clergy ranged themselves under either banner; and thus originated the controversy which eventually divided the professing Christians into the Latin and Greek churches: and by the declining power and growing indolence of the Emperors, these two Bishop-

attained unbounded control. These abuses gradually increased in their number and potency, throughout the whole of the fourth, fifth and sixth centuries, until the simplicity of religious worship was irretrievably banished, the purity of divine truth was contaminated with a mixture of devilish inventions, which augmented in proportion to their continuance; and the human mind was enchain'd in that consummate vassalage, from which it has never yet recovered.

The commencement of the seventh century beheld the evolution of the Mohammedan imposture, and the establishment of the Papal supremacy. Of the Romish church during the dark ages; the following are striking characteristics. The interminable multiplication of the most preposterous rites and ceremonies; the accession of temporal power to the Pope's spiritual jurisdiction; the chivalric derangement which depopulated Europe, that the land of Canaan might be rescued from the Mohammedans, but which directly produced the fulfilment of prophecy respecting the Turks; the increase of the orders devoted to celibacy, by which the nations were prodigiously weakened and vice inconceivably advanced; the absurdities of transubstantiation, which egregiously consolidated the power of the Pope; the practice of selling indulgences, and pardon for every sin, past, present or future, provided money sufficient was paid for absolution; by which the people were unspeakably robbed, and the church-officers proportionably aggrandized; the exaltation of the "man of sin" to the uncontrolled government of the universe, by disposing of temporal authorities, by dispensing with the obligations of the oath, by transforming the nature of morality, by substituting the most aggravated crimes for the most august virtues, and by pretending to abolish the everlasting punishment which God has denounced against the impenitent perpetrators of iniquity; and the incessantly malignant persecutions; for Rome Papal has murdered indefinitely more Christians than the Pagan per-

secutors, especially by that vilest of all abominations the Inquisition, which through a long succession of ages destroyed myriads of those witnesses, who in sackcloth continued to prophecy on behalf of their crucified Lord.

When the nations of Europe appeared to be overwhelmed in darkness irremediable, several most improbable events combined their influence to dispel the gloom which had so long enveloped them. Those crusaders who returned from the Asiatic military expeditions imbibed a considerable degree of knowledge during their absence ; for in Greece, through which the barbarian Fanatics passed, the arts and sciences, with a measure of literary information extensively superior to that which was possessed by the Monkish orders within the confines of the Latin church, still subsisted ; and from the taste which they acquired, a vast flood of light speedily issuing from the Italian Poets and Artists, introduced the revival of literature: the overthrow of the Constantinopolitan empire banished prodigious numbers of the Greek Christians, and scattered them throughout the various countries of Europe : the invention of printing multiplied books, which before had been confined to the monasteries ; and thus rendered every species of knowledge easy of acquisition : the discovery of the Portuguese and the adventurous spirit of Columbus, which unfolded to astonished Europe a new world, gave a spring to human exertions, and infused a spirit of independence among all descriptions of characters ; and the supine incaution, the boundless extravagance, the daring licentiousness, and the audacious extortions of the Popes and their dependant ecclesiastics considerably emancipated many of the nations from their disgraceful and tremendous thralldom.

At length by the goodness of Providence, Martin Luther was elevated to imperishable fame. His virtues, genius, learning, boldness, inflexibility and perseverance, by the assistance of Heaven, surmounted and demolished the intrenchments which inclosed

all the embattled hosts of the Papacy, and established the magnificent Reformation upon a basis hitherto immovable. His co-adjutors who survived him, enlarged the scene of his labours, and Zuinglius, Calvin, Cranmer, Knox, and the Puritans, resuscitated the Gospel from the grave of tradition, divine “worship in spirit and in truth” from the sepulchre of ceremonial observances, the Christian character from the death-like oblivion in which it had been so long incarcerated, and Messiah’s church from the degradation and torpor in which during several centuries it had been entombed. Since that period 300 years have nearly elapsed. Though dispossessed of some of its most terrific features; yet the character of that bloody bigot Mary, the savage barbarity of the Guises, the unrelenting and execrably inhuman temper of Charles IX, the martyrdoms occasioned by the Duke of Alva, the deluges of Protestant blood which have overflowed Spain, Portugal, Italy and France, the horrors commanded by Louis XIV, with other memorable instances in modern history, all demonstrate that the spirit of Popery is the same in every age, and that when the destined period shall arrive, similar desolations will be experienced throughout the ten Kingdoms, by the witnesses who shall “die in the Lord.”

“There appeared a great wonder in heaven, a Woman clothed with the sun, the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars;” she was the Christian church, shining in the splendour of the Sun of Righteousness, superior to the Mosaic dispensation, transported above sublunar enjoyments, and decorated with Apostolic doctrines. During the period of her travail from the day of Pentecost until the demolition by Constantine, “a great red dragon with seven heads and ten horns and seven crowns upon his heads, who drew the third part of the stars of heaven and cast them unto the earth,” stood ready to devour the woman’s child, avowed and consistent believers. That the seven crowns

were upon his heads, and not ten crowns upon his horns, evidences, that the Roman imperial government, not the kings of the European nations, was intended; and denotes the situation of the church under Pagan Rome. But previous to the deliverance of the Christians from persecution by victorious Constantine, the war of Michael and the Dragon interposed. This signifies the vehement exertions which the Pagans made against the establishment of Christianity. The Devil after a contest of nearly 300 years was finally overthrown; for the blood of Christ and the doctrines of the cross, by the testimony of them, "who loved not their own lives unto the death," vanquished every hellish machination, and the heavens rejoiced.

When the Dragon was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman, the church; and this designates the continual attempts which were formed and executed, after the age of Constantine, to subvert the Gospel and to restore the ancient irreligion. During these occurrences, the woman received wings, by which at the appointed time, she might fly into the wilderness during the 1260 years. The serpent then endeavoured to destroy her by a flood of water, the irruptions of the Northern Barbarians; which the surviving Pagans stedfastly and strenuously encouraged, hoping that Messiah's religion would perish in the commotions. Nevertheless, "the earth helped the woman and swallowed up the flood;" for the various nations which desolated the Roman empire became nominal Christians. Thus discomfited, the Dragon in his wrath went to "make war with the remnant of her seed," those who submitted not to the absurdities, superstitions, and pollutions of Popery, and "who keep the commandments of God, and the testimony of Jesus Christ."

The beast with seven heads and ten horns, now appears with crowns on his horns, and this alteration from the seven crowns on his heads to the ten crowns on his horns, declares the change which resulted from the extirpation of the imperial authority.

The ten horns are all the present kingdoms of Europe; Russia, Scandinavia, and Greece only excepted: and from their origin to the present day, this part of the Roman empire notwithstanding numberless tumults, vicissitudes and revolutions, has generally remained when in a settled condition, in ten distinct independent sovereignties; which decidedly intimates, that whatever modifications or external characteristics they may yet exhibit, they shall continue in number, ten, and are the Horns which shall fall with the Beast.

This beast was a leopard for fierceness, a bear in cruelty, and as a lion terrific. The sixth head was wounded in the overthrow of the Imperial power: but revived in Charlemagne, who established the Holy Roman empire; and by this association of the secular authority with the Papal spiritual supremacy, the nations were all reduced to submission and worshipped the beast, supposing his power irresistible. Daniel and John agree, that he should speak great things; he claimed to be God of Gods, and God upon earth, and the duration of his authority is fixed for 1260 years. The Papal Church has blasphemed God; his name, his tabernacle; by substituting image worship in the house of prayer and by murdering his saints, as heretics; and "them that dwell in heaven," by the imputation of the most ridiculous actions, and by sacrilegious devotion. He was to make war with the saints and to overcome them; all computation fails to ascertain the numbers of those, who for denying the Papal dominion and doctrines, have been mercilessly tortured by this savage unrelenting Beast; and his power extended over all countries, tongues and nations, and "all those whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, worship him."

Before this horn, three of the ten horns were to fall; and accordingly, previous to the elevation of the Pope to temporal authority, through the sanction which the *Holy Father* gave to the usurpations of the

sanguinary Phocas ; he became master of the Gothic kingdom which had been primarily established in Rome and its vicinity.

Another beast arose, which had “two horns, like a lamb, but speaking as a dragon.” This is the two bodies of ecclesiastics who in all generations have been the principal support of the Pope’s devilish sorceries : for they have exercised the consummate power of the first Beast, spread themselves into every country, subjected by their arts and menaces all people, and forced them to adore the “son of perdition.” Daniel’s little horn and this two horned beast are similarly described. “He doth great wonders ;” the pretended miracles of the Apostates : “he maketh fire come down from heaven upon earth in the sight of men,” the bulls and excommunications which regularly issued from the Vatican against all those who dared to oppose the authority of “him whose coming is after the working of Satan.” By these simulated wonders, men were deceived ; and he was to “make an image to the first beast ;” this image was either the Pope, to whom the Cardinals gave life and ability to speak, who as a temporal Prince represents the ancient Emperors, and as the infallible Head of the church is the great Papistical Idol ; and in both respects is now the chief of the whole Anti-christian tyranny : or it may include the impious abominations, which their chimerical devotions so ostentatiously display. “Those who will not worship the image of the beast, he was not himself to kill, but cause to be killed ;” the Papal Priests never absolutely destroyed their opponents, but delivered the witnesses to the Magistrate who was colleagueed with them, and completely under their dominion, that they might be murdered by the secular arm. “All men were marked in their right hand and their foreheads ; and no man might buy or sell, save he who had the mark,” or his name, or the number of the name of the beast ; they must bow to the idolatries and superstitions of the church of Rome, whose

mark is the cross, the cause of the most infernal cruelties and the most childish superstitions, and which is without cessation applied by every ridiculous votary, to his hand, his activity in supporting the throne of iniquity, and to his forehead, his subjection to this tyrannical compound of unholy power ; and all intercourse with the enemies of the Pope and his clergy was strictly prohibited. The beasts name is specified 666 : it is the name of the first beast ; of the ten horned beast ; of a man : it is the name with the mark ; and of every individual in the empire. These properties combined meet in the word Latinus only ; and consequently fixes it upon that Church.

The Apostle depicts the character of them who in all ages should oppose the Papal authority and supremacy, and “ follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth.” Three Angels then arise in succession, one flies in the midst of heaven with the everlasting Gospel—the Waldenses and Albigenses ; the second Angel followed crying, “ Babylon is fallen ;” the Bohemians and others who after the former witnesses were nearly or totally slain, more plainly and boldly proclaimed the wrath of God against the persecutors of the saints ; and the third Angel thundered with increased vehemence, and with augmented wo in his denunciations ; Luther, Zuinglius, Cranmer and Knox, with their co-adjutors and successors to the present period, who shall not cease to protest against the infernally erroneous principles and practices of the Latin Hierarchy, until the last witness is murdered.

Living nearer the era, and when the prophecy could not be so lucidly expounded, the Waldenses and Albigenses more mildly but with equal resolution, promulgated evangelical truth. When “ the mystery of iniquity ” had arrived at its acme, and the character of the “ man of sin ” was more clearly developed, the language of vaticination was used with more certainty, and the opposition of the Bohemians, Huss and Jerome, was marked with a more decided abhorrence.

But Luther and his descendants have been more determined in their protestations, more urgent in their importunity, more distinct in their application of these predictions to the Papacy, and more severe in the judgments which they have denounced.

John evidently concludes the testimony of the Reformers; he calls them to "patience to keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus;" and encourages them to persevere by the assurance, that "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord."

The predictions respecting the three Angels in the fourteenth chapter of Revelations, and that concerning the two witnesses, prophesying "a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth" demand additional elucidation. But a cloud impenetrable overshades the precise epocha when the 1260 years commenced. Prophecy evinces, that the Mohammedan apostacy will close before Popery shall expire; though their decease will be in swift progression; and that the end of their duration is not immediately to be anticipated. Speedily after the absolute dominion of "the Man of Sin," the witnesses began to exist; but the Pope's primitive antagonists were the first Angel, the Waldenses; who arose not prior to the year 666, when the Papal supremacy was generally acknowledged; for some of the horns long resisted the power which he claimed; but by secession from the Latin church, the primary witnesses consequently opposed her errors and growing enormities.

Ample evidence exists, that nearly at the same period when the beast began to reign, the witnesses in sackcloth commenced their prophesying in opposition.

It has already been noticed, that in the eighth century the Greek dissented from the Latin church; and the principal topics which constituted the basis of contest between the Papal Hierarchy and the followers of the Lamb, "as many as would not worship the image of the Beast," must be succinctly delineated.

1. *The worship of images.*—In the eighth century, the Greek Emperors most energetically opposed the devotions offered before the statues, the intercession of the saints, and the supposititious sanctity of the relics; and a succession of witnesses constantly protested against this derogation from the divine majesty and honour.

2. *The supremacy of the Pope* was another topic which excited severe contest: but it seems never to have been universally tolerated throughout the ten horns of the Beast, until Gregory, whose name Hildebrand was most appropriately transformed by the sincere Christians into Hell-Brand, claimed, exercised, and by every species of tyrannical violence, finally usurped and obtained, either a voluntary or a tacit subjection to his illimitable authority.

3. *Transubstantiation.*—This most absurd of all palpable and sensible contradictions for a long time received every variety of resistance; but ignorance finally triumphed: and the worship of the host, the canon of the mass transformed the wafer into the identical flesh and blood of the Redeemer of mankind.

4. *Penance and Purgatory.*—These were the genuine offspring of Superstition and Blindness. Submission to a Monk's prescribed mortifications, opened the road to invisible tortures and expiatory sufferings, of which the Pope held the Key, and which his inferior Delegates were authorised to turn, that departed souls might be transmitted to heaven. This most detestable and gainful of all traffics, in its progressive influence impoverished the nations by draining their wealth, and stultified the people by covering them with a thick darkness, impervious, gross and tangible as that of Egypt.

5. *Celibacy.*—The unnatural system of immuring all the flower of the human family in convents and nunneries, however odious and abhorrent, was so essential a part, in fact so indispensable a portion of the Romish hierarchy, that it could not have existed with-

out its prolongation. By the active influence of this anti-social abomination all the ligaments of society were shivered, and the whole Roman empire was divided into two classes of people; a band of adherents to the Papacy whose interest it was to support its ghostly despotism, by every artifice and exertion: and the stupid, debased, senseless multitudes, "silly sheep fleeced ten thousand times before;" who were continually robbed under a diversity of pretexts when living, and whose property was generally grasped when dead, that these associated voluptuaries might in indolence riot upon the spoils of industry, and with impurity wallow in every species of criminal indulgence.

It is not now necessary to enlarge upon these topics, as they will require a more distinct exposition, when the detailed narrative of the Roman hierarchy during the eight centuries from the year 666, until the Reformation shall occupy our attention. In every stage of this period however, opponents to the claims of Rome existed: they were widely scattered, and variously denominated: generally they were called Waldenses, Albigenses and Leonists; and in the thirteenth century they had become so numerous; that to crush the Rebels against him who was seated "in the temple of God, as God," the Inquisition was established armed with all the power that Jesuitical cunning, Dominican malevolence, interested energy, infernal cruelty, Pontifical sanction and incalculable numbers combined could impart, and in the development and in the exercise of their uncontrolled authority exhibiting all that cold-blooded, insensible malignity, at the recollection of which Barbarism itself would be appalled, and which nothing but Christianity could have sustained.

1. *What is Prophecy?*

God alone beholds the incidents which are encircled in the womb of futurity; for he only who arranged them for a certain end, can indubitably perceive all the vicissitudes and revolutions which shall agi-

tate the universe. Man by the knowledge which he has obtained concerning the general laws of our globe, may foresee some physical consequences, as the infallible and unvarying result of the motions which the Creator has communicated to matter: but that which depends upon uncontrolled and future combinations is impenetrable to finite intelligence.

That principle is not prophecy, which anticipates effects proceeding from natural and necessary agents that were destined to produce them; that declares a regular suite of occurrences by external signs, the deduction of long continued experience, in which the same events had without mutation been similarly pre-signified or which presages certain revolutions in the affairs of men, from the universal character of the species, or the methodical course of the human passions, when agitated by identical causes and exercised in an uniform manner.

Prophecy is the unquestionable intuition of future contingencies, in which neither the anterior determination nor the preliminary disposition is discovered. To announce the birth of a man many ages before he appeared; to declare the name by which he should be known; to detail the circumstances and consequences of his life and death; and to predict actions unprecedented and super-human; when every appearance opposed the consummation, is prophecy: and it is of divine origin, for man cannot acquire it by the exercises of his own mind. The Father of Spirits may gratuitously impart it to whom he pleases; not that he raises the rational powers beyond their natural bounds; but he communicates that which must in future exist, with the order to reveal it; without displaying the connection or the ground of the wonders which he had directed his servant to disclose. The genuine Prophet draws nothing from himself; he acts not; he merely obeys the supernal inspiration, and retains that which is delivered to him; that he may deliver it in the form which his Master commanded.

2. How mysterious the dispensations of God in the direction of his church!

After the review of the prominent scenes and characters of this period we are always disposed to inquire, why did the Lord permit such ineffable absurdities to arise? and are equally astonished when we reflect upon their predominance and protracted duration. The fact however is undeniable, and furnishes an irrefragable attestation to the humiliating truths, that man by nature is ever prone and willing to depart from Jehovah, and that Apollyon is emphatically the God of this world. To a dispassionate impartial Judge, nothing can be more irresistibly impressive, than the succession of events to which our attention has already been directed. The whole moral world was lying in wickedness; and with the exception of Judea, enveloped in impervious clouds of black darkness: to disperse the wretched gloom, the Sun of Righteousness arose with healing beneath his wings. With great joy the people saw the marvellous light; but a conflict arose between the disturbers of the creation of God and the servants of the Prince of Peace. During 280 years the contest was continued; admitting of little intermission and only to be decided by the complete overthrow of one of the combatants. On the part of Satan every abomination was exhibited towards his Antagonists; the carnal weapons were sharpened to their utmost edge against the spiritual armour, and in the battle, myriads of Immanuel's sheep were transferred from the cross to the crown, amid the most excruciating torture; but the vision was for an appointed time, and although it tarried, they waited for it until it came. "The sixth seal was opened—the great earthquake occurred; the sun became black; the moon became as blood; the stars of heaven fell; the heavens departed; every mountain and island were moved;" and all orders of Satan's troops "hid themselves in the dens and rocks of the mountains, for the great day of his wrath" came, and none of them were "able to stand."

After so complete a demolition of the ancient idolatry, the consummate exposure of its unhallowed mysteries and authorised corruption, and the establishment, by law and by insuperable force, of the sublimely “pure and undefiled religion, and the life and immortality brought to light by the gospel”—combined with the triumphant evangelical Hosannas of that multitude which no man could number—who could have supposed that Christianity would have been metamorphosed so as to display all the abhorrent qualities of the Bacchanalian mythology?—yet the nations governed by Papal authority were scarcely more evangelized than to change the worship of a block of marble, sculptured and denominated Jupiter, for an image of the Virgin Mary, or of an imaginary disembodied saint: to this astonishing departure from the Gospel must be added, the incorporation of the most sanguinary feature impressed upon the idolatrous system; that philanthropy which the gospel so earnestly and continually inculcates as the grand effect and evidence of the converting grace effused by the ever blessed Spirit, was absorbed in a furious malignity, incessantly devouring; cruel and insatiable as the grave. At the approach of the Papal adherents, all that was enlightened, pure and devotional disappeared; the substance of evangelical religion vanished, and in its stead, scarcely a shadowy similitude remained. The whole fabric called Popery was founded upon an impenetrable ignorance of the Gospel of Christ; and its long continued ascendancy was perpetuated by that combination of spiritual tyrants, who contrived during several centuries to bind the world in the most degrading mental vassalage. That illumination only is requisite to demolish the Papal corruptions, equally with the Mohammedan apostacy, is a fact verified by experience, and attested by the history of nations. Under the withering controul of that appalling and incomparable despotism, the ten kingdoms of the Roman empire, the ten horns of the beast became gradually more and more palsied, until

it appears, that an almost incurable lethargy pervaded their whole boundaries; at least, it is certain that nothing could have roused them from their stupor, but the activity inspired by the discovery of America, and the excitement enkindled by the rapid propagation of knowledge through the then novel art of printing; both of which loosened the chains of darkness and coercion with which the human soul had so long been fettered, and finally enabled the enterprising, and the learned and the pious to "fight the good fight of faith;" and by thus undermining the Papal fortress, to justify that anticipation which exults in the song of triumph over its total and irrecoverable destruction. In reviewing the moral degradation and the intellectual stupor of this desolate period in the annals of the human family—we are lost in astonishment at the mysteriousness of the Divine government, the wondrous reaction of human affairs, the exact retribution which the Supreme Governor often awards to mankind, even in this world, and the almost insuparable tendency that exists in the hearts of men to depart from the living God.

The gradual introduction of the Papal superstitions, and the sudden establishment of the delusions originally promulgated at Mecca, verify the Prophetic truth, "the Lord is with you if you be with him, but if you forsake him, he will forsake you:" and the infallible declaration of the Judge of all the earth is exemplified in all its humiliating force, by the annals of the nominal church during the three hundred years subsequent to Constantine's publicly authoritative recognition of the Gospel, as the Imperial religion. Spiritual devotion was generally unknown: the worship of God was transformed into a carnal exterior round of services by which the light of evangelical truth was obscured; the sanctity of the divine commandments was obliterated by a substitute which altogether commuted the whole moral system, in the practice of auricular confession, and priestly absolution; and as the progress of corruption is continually

accelerating; it was soon developed in all its enormity, evincing that “men love darkness rather than light because their deeds are evil.”

It is not surprize merely which affects us in contemplating these inscrutable movements of the Providential system; but also gratitude that God who presides over all terrestrial affairs, has so directed these apparently inexplicable and contradictory events, that they furnish the strongest possible conviction to our minds of the truth which the sacred scriptures develope, and thus through divine influence they may contribute most essentially to our spiritual edification. “He maketh the wrath of man to praise him, and the remainder of that wrath he restrains.” The Monks and Friars, whose Argus eyes explored every recess however secret, to seize all the copies of the sacred volume, that their contents might be unknown to the multitudes over whom they had obtained a resistlsss sway, entombed the manuscripts which they collected in oblivion, within the walls of their Abbies. Now it is not a little remarkable, that this same manoeuvre under divine controul became the safe-guard of the scriptures.

The copies which were obtained either by intimidation or force or fraud, were deposited in the monasteries and the large collegiate institutions as receptacles of safety; and as these were appropriated to the most sacred purposes in public estimation, and legalized as perfect sanctuaries, so they were seldom assailed; and thus became treasuries in which might most securely be intrusted any articles however costly or precious. Had the ingenuity of the Monks and Friars equalled their malignity, and their aversion from the Scriptures, they would have irrecoverably destroyed all the copies which could have been grasped; but they were taken in their own craftiness; and he who makes “all things work together for good to them that love God, to the called according to his purpose,” thus so regulated all the corrupt passions of men, that they who never rested

from the unholy employ, to obliterate the energy of revealed truth and to extirpate the charter of redemption from its residence on earth, became in the days of darkness, and through the centuries of moral and spiritual palpable gloom, the unassailable guardians of its imperishable truths, promises and commands.

Another circumstance which is not less impressive must also be remembered. In declaring the Latin version, the only authorised text of Scripture, it became necessary for the sake of those who continued to use that language both in speaking and writing, and who consequently might comprehend the oracles of truth, often to exhibit the Old and New Testament, that sceptics might be convinced that the various errors and mummeries of popery were truly sanctioned by the Founder of the Church and his Apostles.— Hence the exposure necessary even to change the tenor of the divine word, so that it might authorize all the new follies either in faith, worship or practice, which were continually increasing in the church, also tended to remind those who had never seen the Gospels, that such a book existed, and that so paramount was its authority, it was deemed in all cases of difficulty that standard of verity alone from the decision of which no appeal existed. He, the supreme, who does as he pleases in the midst of the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, often by this means illustrated the truth to the sincere and candid inquirer; and maintained the smoking flax, that it could not be totally extinguished. To this cause we owe the feeble opposition to the Papacy, which existed at every period from the rise of the Waldenses to the more furious assaults made upon the battlements of Antichrist by the Reformers of the sixteenth century.

When we consider therefore the nature, progress, extent and predominance of Popery, originating in the corruption of ungodly Despots and Hierarchs in the bosom of the church—when we reflect upon the

strictly accurate delineation given of all these posterior events so many hundreds of years anterior—when we observe the wonder-working displays of the perfections of God, as unfolded in his boundlessly wise super-intendence of these discordant and baneful events—when we see a constant interference propelling even the wickedness of man to consummate the dispensations of divine wisdom and mercy—and when we behold all the concerns of several centuries only operating to verify divine revelation, to humble us under the review of the vast imperfection attached to the human character, to exemplify the incalculable value of the truth as it is in Jesus, and to excite in us caution, watchfulness, and a more powerful solicitude rightly to improve our inestimable privileges, we must, lost in astonishment, subjoin with the Psalmist—“Lord, what is man that thou art mindful of him, or the Son of man that thou shouldst visit him?”

The Papal hierarchy delineated in its prophetical characteristics—the extent of its dominion, and the nature of its power.

After the permanent establishment of the Arabian imposture, the mystery of abomination was completely unfolded, and the 1260 years of gloom commenced their revolution. However impossible it may be to determine with precision the exact period; yet the moral aspect of the nations, the exaltation of the Roman Hierarchy, the inseparable combination of the ten civil horns of the Heathen Empire under one nominal Christian Judge and Legislator and terrestrial Vicegerent of God, and especially the original prophesying of the two witnesses in sackcloth authorize the deduction, that the sacred mysterious number 666 is probably the true date of that duplicate eventful era, in retrospect so humiliating, so joyful in anticipation.

The general history of the Roman Papacy, its most impressive features, the opponents of its authority, and some of its prophetical characteristics must be described. These topics will include the principal events which occurred during nearly 850 years, until the third Angel proclaimed with a loud voice, “they have no rest day nor night, who worship the Beast and his image.”

The narrative which these circumstances comprise will not be divided by dates or periods; but each subject will be distinctly reviewed throughout the duration of the almost uncontradicted supremacy of him “who had two horns like a lamb, and spake as a dragon.”

I. The extent of his dominion.

Of graphical prophecy, no painting can be more accurate than the portrait of the Papacy drawn by the Apostle, when in Patmos, he “was in the Spirit, on the Lord’s day.” The Beast to which “the dragon gave his power, and his seat and his great authority,” had “seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns;” and in the seventeenth chapter of the Apocalypse, the heads and the horns are explained. “The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sitteth;” for the prophet had immediately before described the woman as sitting “upon a scarlet coloured beast, having seven heads and ten horns.” The seven heads are also expounded as seven kings, of whom five had fallen, one existed, “and the other is not yet come;” and the ten horns are ten kings who have received no kingdom as yet but receive power, have one mind, and shall give their power and strength to the beast.”

The seven mountains determine the application of the prediction to Rome, “the city with seven hills;” and the seven kings imply the several forms of government which successively swayed the Roman empire. “Five of these had fallen; the *kings, consuls, dictators, decemvirs, and military tribunes*;” the imperial authority, which was the sixth, then ruled; and the seventh must intend either the Patrician form after the death of Augustulus, or the delegated sovereignty to the exarch of Ravenna, in combination with the Pope’s temporal authority, which is that complicated beast “that was and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven and goeth into perdition.” The scarlet coloured beast must be the Roman government in its final attribute; and this is the Papal hierarchy.

The great red dragon which stood before the woman to devour her child as soon as it was born, is delineated as identical with the scarlet coloured beast. To illustrate this point, it is extremely interesting to observe, that the deliverance of the church from the dragon is fixed at the ordinary period of

gestation ; and from the day of Pentecost until the proclamation of Constantine for the universal toleration and encouragement of Christianity, comprised exactly 280 years. But why is he clothed in scarlet ? The Roman Kings, Consuls, Generals, Emperors, Popes and Cardinals have continually adorned themselves in purple or scarlet robes ; and that this is the correct explication of the prediction is evident from the remarkable manner in which it was adopted by Constantine in his letter to Eusebius ; “ directing him to repair and rebuild the houses for the worship of God.” “ Liberty being now restored,” writes the Christian Conqueror, “ and *that dragon*,” meaning either Galerius who had so long endeavoured to murder him, or probably the whole Pagan imperial government, “ *that dragon* being removed from the administration of public affairs, by the providence of the great God, and by my ministry ; I esteem the great power of God to have been made manifest to all.” Eusebius assures us, that in express allusion to the divine oracles, where the evil spirit is called the dragon, a picture of Constantine was exalted over the gate of his palace, with the cross suspended over his head ; and under his feet, “ the great enemy of mankind, who persecuted the church by the means of impious tyrants, in the form of a dragon,” pierced with a dart in his body, and hurled headlong into the watery abyss.

At the period when Augustulus, the last of the western Emperors was vanquished, and the Imperial sway over the occidental part of the Roman empire was destroyed—his dominions were divided into ten kingdoms, which comprehended within its general boundary the whole of Europe except the countries subsequently possessed by the Turks, and the provinces of Russia according to their ancient boundaries, and probably excluding Sweden and Norway separated by the Baltic. This remarkable coincidence in the settlement of the countries immediately subject to the Dragon’s Beast, is a unique in the history

of the world. “ All these kingdoms were divided either by conquest or inheritance ; and as if that number *ten* had been fatal in the Roman dominions, it has been often particularly remarked.” Eberard, a Papist, mentioned it about the year 1240, in the diet of Ratisbon. Luther at the period of the Reformation. Newton and Whiston 120 years since—and that which is yet more astonishing, after the late European earthquake, which at one period seemed to have transferred nearly the whole sovereignty of that continent to an individual warrior, the Kings of the ancient Western Empire have “ returned again to the same condition, and at present it is divided into *ten* principal states.”

If any argument were required to verify our faith in divine Revelation, after so perfect a consummation of John’s prophecy; it might be triumphantly deduced from the wondrous fact, that 700 years previous to the publication of the Apostle’s visions, Jehovah had revealed the same history of the Roman empire to Nebuchadnezzar in the dream which Daniel interpreted ; and again about fifty years subsequent, to the Prophet himself.

These predictions of the Old Testament were written when the Roman power was confined to a small district in Italy, and when it is most probable even the name of such a city or people had never crossed the Adriatic. The application of these Prophecies was correctly made by all the principal ancient expositors of the sacred volume, and Jerome who lived during the irruptions of the northern barbarians, long prior to the complete fulfilment of the prophetical visions, in one succinct paragraph detailed the whole posterior history. “ The feet and toes are partly of iron and partly of clay, which is most manifestly proved at this time ; and when the Roman empire shall be destroyed, there will be ten kings, who will divide it between them, and an eleventh shall arise, a little king, who shall subdue three of the kings, and the other seven shall submit their

necks to the conqueror." This displays very acute scriptural perspicacity; because if we only change the style from the future for the past, we peruse the utmost exactitude of undeniable fact.

The grand difficulty connected with these delineations consists in the utter impossibility to determine the epoch when the power of the beast commenced. That the 1260 years of its duration have not terminated is evinced, because the Angel "having great power," has *not* "come down from heaven, and cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen." Several eras have been designated as the first of the 1260 years. "Their commencement must be placed after the subversion of the western empire; but the beginning of the rise and fall of the anti-christian tyranny, and the completion of them," may probably like the Babylonish captivity, be referred to different periods. Justinian the Emperor in 534 declared the Pope the head of all the churches; and not in language only, but sent Bishops to Rome as his ambassadors. Gregory I. domineered most haughtily over all the churches of the West during the sixth, and the posterior Spiritual Usurper much more despotically in the seventh century. This power of the Papacy was remarkably developed in the success which attended their efforts to establish the worship of images and the invocation of saints: for when Gregory so blasphemously inserted the name of the Virgin Mary in his litanies of devotion—although he was opposed by all the earnestness of Christian sincerity; by all the illumination of Biblical literature; by the hitherto irresistible influence of primitive practice, exemplified in the "Holy Church throughout all the world;" by the example of "the noble army of Martyrs;" and by the authority of the Christian Imperial Government; yet "the Man of Sin" was victorious, and in 606, was proclaimed *Universal Bishop*. Having excommunicated the Greek Emperor in consequence of his opposition to idolatry, and having excited such civil commotions

and intestine wars that the sovereignty of Leo was totally subverted in Italy—about 120 years from the almost general acknowledgement of his ecclesiastical reign, Gregory II. then Pope, usurped the temporal supremacy. In the mean time the heterodox, for all who dissented from the Beast were so denounced, were by the laws declared infamous, incapacitated as witnesses, and outlaws; the Pope's canons were of equal or superior authority to the legislative enactments. and hence it is evident, that at this period, the Beast had fully received from the dragon “his power, and his seat and great authority.”—It appears therefore a reasonable inference, that the year 696 is the earliest, and the Papal acquisition of the independent civil power, the latest date possible which can be fixed for the entrance upon the 1260 years. The first is too early; because it is prior to the Mohammedan Hegira, and the witnesses prophesying in sackcloth; and the latter seems to interpose too great an interval between events which prophecy and history both determine to have almost simultaneously occurred. One fact remains, incontestable—two of the dates, 1789 and 1815, which during the last century were frequently specified as the years when the Papal Hierarchy and abominations should be extirpated, have revolved, and the Beast still exercises his odious, intolerant sway over the major part of his original domains; fulminating his anathemas against the word of God and its Propagators from the Baltic to the Mediterranean, and from Thrace to Connaught; and despatching to all nations with renewed vigour, “the body guard of the Pope,” his horde of Jesuit Janazaries, “that generation of vipers,” to seduce and envenom the world.

II. The characters of his power.

These must first be illustrated in the language and painting of prophecy. Daniel represents him in his seventh chapter, as a horn, the scriptural symbol of energy and force, “plucking up by the roots, three

of the first horns," overturning three of the ten states; "he shall be diverse from the first;" his authority being both ecclesiastical and secular—"in this horn were eyes like the eyes of man;" this denotes his cunning policy and solicitude for his own advancement—"he had a mouth speaking great things;" the Pope filled all Europe with his noise, boasting of his supremacy, issuing his bulls, and dissolving all the relations of society—"his look was more stout than his fellows;" he claimed and possessed almost universal superiority over all the ten kings—"he shall speak great words against the Most High;" the Pope established himself above all law, arrogated the god-like attributes of holiness and infallibility, and demanded and enforced obedience to his decretals, when they were absurd, destructive and blasphemous—"he shall wear out the saints of the Most High;" whoever harrassed the sincere disciples of the Lamb with more cruelty or constancy, by massacre and tortures than the Popes and their Inquisitorial agents?—"he shall think to change times and laws;" this was effected by the indulgences for sin, the idolatrous festivals which he appointed, the anti-scriptural articles of faith and the vitiating practices which he sanctioned, and by claiming the indefeasible prerogative to alter and reverse at his pleasure the laws of God and man—"they shall be given into his hand, until a time, and times and the dividing of times;" time means a year, therefore this is equivalent to three years and a half—"forty two months, a thousand two hundred and threescore days"—now God declared to Ezekiel, "I have appointed thee each day for a year;" and Daniel's seventy weeks were 490 years, consequently these are 1260 years.

The description of the Apostle Paul is not less accurate—"he opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God or that is worshipped, so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God." In a further delineation, he describes the members of the Apostacy as giving heed

“to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils, speaking lies in hypocrisy, forbidding to marry, abstaining from meats, and having their consciences seared with a hot iron.” This is the genuine picture of the Papal system. The Popes have always destroyed, if practicable, those who adhered to the word of God and rejected their traditions—“ he exalted himself ;” Emperors and Kings, have been dethroned and restored by them ; and their kingdoms have been bestowed as the patrimony of the Beast ; the most dignified potentates of Europe themselves, have waited at the gates of the Pope’s palace almost naked, in the midst of winter—they have prostrated themselves before him, kissed his toe and held his stirrup ; two of them have led his horse by the bridle in procession ; their crowns have been kicked from their heads by the Pope’s foot ; he has trampled upon their heads ; and they have even suffered their necks to be trodden upon as a footstool, when he ascended his horse, or portable canopied throne. This scripture was used on those occasions—“ They shall bear thee up in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone. Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder ; the young lion and the dragon shalt thou trample under feet.” Psalm 91: 12, 13.—“ The word of God has been made of none effect by his traditions ;” the Pope has *forbidden* the communion of bread and wine, marriage, the knowledge of the scriptures ; while he enforces the violation of the first commandment, has erased the second to remove the divine barrier to idolatry, and sanctifies murder. “ He sits in the temple of God, as God :” upon the high altar at his pontifical inauguration ; the Lord’s table is his footstool, and thus he receives god-like adoration—“ he shews himself that he is God ;” he has blasphemously assumed the inalienable titles and attributes, with the incommunicable power and prerogatives of “ the only” blessed potentate, the only wise God our Saviour, to pardon sin, which the Jews declared belonged to God alone, and for which they impeached and

hated the Lord of life and glory to whom it belonged ; and has also declared that his authority is greater than the word of God, and must be received on the penalty of “ everlasting punishment.” It is almost sacrilege, and desecration of the house of prayer, but it is necessary to recapitulate some of his titles—“ Our Lord God the Pope ; God upon earth : King of Kings, and Lord of Lords ; Judge in the place of God—God has delivered to him all the kingdoms of this world : the power of the Pope extends to things celestial, terrestrial and infernal ; the Pope doth what he pleases, even things unlawful, and is more than God ; if the Pope commands vice and forbids virtue, the Church is bound to believe that vice is good, and virtue wicked, unless she would sin against her own conscience ; and the authority of the Church, that is the Pope, is more ancient and worthy than the scriptures.”

This blasphemy is the language of papal decretals, and may be discovered in the acts of councils ; it is evident therefore that Daniel’s little horn, and Paul’s man of sin, are identical ; and not less the Antichrist of John—this interpretation was published 1650 years ago by Justin ; and all the most enlightened Expositors who wrote prior to the extirmination of the Western Imperial power, corroborate his application of the prophecy. Tertullian, Origen, Lactantius, Cyril, Ambrose, Hilary, Jerome, Austin, Chrysostom ; and even Gregory the first, himself Pope at the close of the sixth century, declared that he who assumed the title of Universal Bishop, was either Antichrist or his forerunner ; and yet, in 606, his almost immediate successor, Boniface, two years only subsequent to the death of Gregory, usurped that same title thus so boldly denounced by the former Hierarch ; and the title, with all its antichristian appendages, is still retained by the present Pius VII. the genuine heir of all the pride, of all the hatred to the gospel, and of all the cruelty which Hildebrand or Alexander ever felt or displayed. The modern

“ Man of Sin,” it is true, possesses not the opportunity to develope his real and perfect character ; but he has often asserted the undiminished plenitude of his ecclesiastical supremacy ; he has invariably counteracted the spread of the scriptures by his audacious bulls, mandates and venom, against the Bible Societies and Revealed Truth in the vernacular language ; he has resuscitated the dead, entombed and accursed Inquisition ; and he has re-organized that band of Scorpions, the Jesuits, to pollute and disgrace the nations—thus combining a mass of incalculable and intolerable crime against the church and the world, which will consign the name and the acts of this Representative of the Beast and the pretended legitimate Despots of Europe, his restorers and abettors, to universal and imperishable execration.

The qualities belonging to the Apocalyptic woman, as described by John, have already been briefly noticed ; two of her characteristics however were not recited. Upon her forehead was a name written, “Mystery ;” and it is affirmed, that formerly this word was inscribed in letters of gold in front of the Pope’s triple crown. “The woman was drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus”—Blasphemy and cruelty were predicted as her prime distinctive features ; that they were appropriately described will most evidently appear when we narrate the high claims and the sanguinary practices of this Antichristian Apostacy. It has been calculated that the Popes and their vassals have massacred ten times as many rejecters of the Papal authority, as the number of them who under the Heathen Emperors were martyred because they refused to bow down to their idols ; well therefore might John wonder “with great admiration,” at the vision of the external form and name of the Christian Church, encircled with an ocean of blood, effused from the veins of Immanuel’s disciples, and the Apostle’s brethren in the faith.

The prophetical picture of the Beast having thus

been analyzed, the nature of his power will now be developed. It comprised two principal assumptions. Infallibility without defect, and supremacy without control.

1. *How was this Infallibility exemplified?*

The principles advanced by the claim of infallibility are these : “The Church of Christ is the rule of faith, the judge of controversy, visible, universal, and without error; the Roman communion is that church; the Pope is by divine right, its sovereign head, supreme judge and lawgiver in all things relating to religion, whether as to faith, manners or discipline—who, as the vicegerent of Jesus Christ, cannot err; but upon every point of revelation, pronounces sentence clearly, distinctly, and with certainty infallible.” This privilege is of vast extent; it comprehends *plenary power*—to determine upon the canonical authority of the sacred scriptures, and demands the belief or rejection of them in conformity with the papal decision—to authorize the knowledge of the celestial volume for us: this principle however, is now very much altered; formerly Popes, Cardinals, and the whole minor train of “Friars, black, white and grey,” insisted that it would have been better for the Church if there were no Bible, and contended that they derived not their existence from the gospel, but that the canon of revelation was indebted for its use among men to their permission: this dogma however, since the invention of Printing and the Reformation, has not been much promulgated, although it is still generally believed and practised among the adherents of the papacy—to expound the sense of the holy oracles, and with all that certitude, that every Christian is obliged without scruple to believe it; hence, under papal interpretation, vice and virtue change their characteristics; error and truth become metamorphosed; and that although Popes and Councils in every age, have contradicted each other to the utmost distance of possible separation; notwithstanding they have, with all gravity, fulminated every

Anathema which infernal malignity could invent against each other, the whole odious mass of contradictions and lies we are implicitly to credit because they are sanctioned by the Mother of Abominations—to decide peremptorily upon the additional doctrines and duties indispensable to salvation, and to supply as emergencies require, from tradition and expediency, the deficiencies which they avow are obvious in “the Scripture of Truth;” by the operation of this claim, all the abhorrent appendages of the Roman superstitions in worship, the stupendous errors of their pretended creed of faith and morals, and the debasing immorality of their conversation and practice are indebted for their origin—and to decide all controversies without reference to scripture, conscience, or any other tribunal; this was in fact, an arrogation of boundless wisdom, and therefore was evolved in the most contemptible specimens of ignorance and absurdity: sometimes by procrastinating a sentence until all the controvertists were dead; at other periods recommending peace among the mendicant orders, that neither of them might be alienated from their servitude; always legislating in favour of the strongest party; and invariably promulgating Bulls in direct opposition to the rights of conscience, the dictates of scripture, and the ordinances of Jehovah Jesus. Although it is self-evident that this pretended infallibility could not possibly exist among men without a delegation of heavenly influence never promised, and consequently not necessary to the church militant, yet it has been claimed even in these states: notwithstanding the parties who wish to grasp its authority are deeply convinced that it originated in “ignorance, superstition and error,” and that it can only be supported by the reign of the same unhallowed principles.

2. *How was the Papal Supremacy exercised?*

The authority of legislation and jurisdiction claimed by the Pontiff of the Antichristian Apostacy is unlimited and supreme; “he not only pretends that the

whole power and majesty of the church reside in his person, and are transmitted from him to the inferior bishops, but asserts the absolute infallibility of all decisions and decrees which he pronounces from his lordly tribunal." According to the genuine Romish faith, he is "the only visible source of the universal power which Christ has granted to the Church; all bishops and subordinate officers derive from him alone their authority and jurisdiction; he is not bound by any laws of the church, nor decrees of councils; he is the supreme lawgiver of that sacred community, and his edicts and commands, it is in the highest degree criminal to oppose or disobey."

This pontifical supremacy disclosed itself in the enactment of laws for the government of the church; in the ecclesiastical immunity from all temporal Rulers; and in the disposal of kingdoms and empires, as a prerogative inalienably attached to the dignity and office of the Pope. It is astonishing, that any portion of the human family could have so far relinquished their rights and privileges, as to submit to a power so unfounded in its nature, so depraved in its practice, so subversive of all the ligaments of society, and so derogatory to the God of providence. By the effects of this ungodly domination, the whole order of the world was "turned upside down." At the promulgation of a papal Bull—Christianity and irreligion lost their distinctive characteristics; the church of God was turned into the Synagogue of Satan; the idolatrous worship of Demons was restored under infallible authority; and the most ridiculous contradictions were obtruded as articles not only demonstrable, but of self-evident certainty. The exemption of the Priests belonging to the Papal multitude from the operation of national laws, transformed the whole state of society; and the claims which they made, to adopt their own language, consisted of the following with innumerable other similar assumptions. "Angels in heaven *dare* not aspire to the authority of the Priesthood. The Hierarchs,

the Priests of the church create their Creator, and have power over the body of Christ: the Priesthood walketh hand in hand with the Godhead, and Priests are Gods surpassing as much in dignity the royal office, as the soul surpasseth the body; and the power of Priests is so great, and their excellency so noble, that heaven depends on them. Joshua stopped the sun, but Priests stay Christ; the creature obeys Joshua, but the Creator obeys the Priest; and whatever God is in heaven the Priest is on earth." All this blasphemy a true Papist most conscientiously believes, and consequently when the nations were under the Romish ecclesiastical despotic dominion, it is obvious that "the people who sat in darkness, saw *not* the great light, and to them who sat in the region and shadow of death *no* light sprung up."—The history that we shall detail, will unfold all the abominations which this abhorrent principle invariably produced. In usurping the sole authority, as God's vicegerent, to distribute the kingdoms of the ten horns, without earthly interference or opposition; the Popes excited and nurtured an almost unceasing combustion among the European nations. Every species of disorder raged in consequence of this anti-social machination. The Sovereigns of the people were excommunicated, anathematized and dethroned, with all the overwhelming coercion derived from the power which pretended that it could "do no wrong," and with all the intimidating sanctions which a catalogue of celestial names, the Pope's supposititious adherents could impart. One monarch was ordered to embody an irresistible force, that he might be enabled to drive another from his dominions; while his subjects were forbidden upon pain of immediate death for disobedience to papal mandates, and a transfer to purgatory or the quenchless fire, to any defence of their own country against the ruthless devastations of sanguinary invaders; whose peremptory orders directed them to execute the Pope's curse, by fire and sword, unpitying massa-

cre and universal destruction. From the effects of these combined despotsms when in actual exercise, the ten horns of the Beast frequently, in character and similitude, approximated a general Aeldama, a vast field of blood, equalled only by the degradation of ignorance in which the people were entombed, and by the almost incredible corruption of manners, which like a pestilence involved in its ravages all classes of the popedom, from the Man of Sin through every gradation, even to the lowest and most silly Devotee who superstitiously crossed himself with holy water, or idolatrously chaunted, " Ave Maria Regina cœli—Hail Mary, Queen of Heaven."

The prominent features of the Mother of Abominations when exhibited in detail furnish a hideous display of the state of the world at this period, and should excite our unfeigned gratitude to God, that we have not been delivered over to her abhorrent sway. In what a most degrading vassalage the human intellects and sensibilities were enchain'd during the uncontrouled reign of this terrestrial Vicegerent of Satan, we who have never witnessed scarcely the most minute example of its intolerance and oppression can form no very accurate idea. Nor would the painful scrutiny of the past be of so much importance, if the dignified moral lessons which it inculcates were not so impressive and beneficial: but when the examination produces all those awakenings of soul which attract the believer to "the throne of grace;" and when humiliation in the retrospect, for the extreme depravity of our ancestors, is conjoined with triumph in anticipation, that the Usurper shall be dislodged from his odious government, and that he "who is exalted Prince and Saviour," shall possess undivided and illimitable authority over all the tribes of men; we shall engage in the review, invoking the celestial benediction, that our labour may "not be in vain in the Lord."

The principal characteristics of the Roman Apostacy.

From the Apostolic epistles we deduce, that even in the first ages of Christianity, a corruption of evangelical truth was attempted, and that it in some measure succeeded. "Worshipping of Angels," anti-evangelical "voluntary humility and neglecting of the body," had been partially introduced; all which Paul denominates "*Will-worship*." In the second century commenced the monastic opinions concerning celibacy; the partial institution of Fasts and Feasts; and the improper use of the sentence of excommunication. During the third age, the memorial of the Martyrs was solemnized, oblations for the dead were instituted, the sacraments were deteriorated by the practice of the *trine* application of water, and signing the forehead with the cross in Baptism; and consecrated bread was preserved in a chest, that the Eucharist might be carried in procession to the sick and dying. Additional degrees of ministers with peculiar vestments to each order were arranged and appointed; and in consequence of the severe persecution under Valerian, the solitary mode of life was adopted. After the establishment of Christianity by the triumphs of Constantine over all the idolaters, the corruption already existing was augmented by the collection and preservation of Martyr's relics, to which great honour was appropriated; by the pilgrimage to Jerusalem; by the enlargement of the monastic system; by an additional number of festivals; by the increase of the rites and ceremonies with which the worship of God was encumbered; and by the substitution of human traditions for the Gospel of Christ.

After these defections had completely trammelled the souls of men; Pictures and Images were introduced into the Houses of prayer, and gorgeous Altars were erected. The doctrines and practice of Romish Penance were partly embodied in the ecclesiastical regulations; the deceased Martyrs were commemorated by feasts at their Tombs; the dead were addressed as objects of prayer; and a species of worship was offered to the supposititious remains of those who had formerly died for their "testimony to Jesus." In the sixth century the Lord's supper, at Rome and her immediate dependencies, was transformed into a sacrifice, and Mass for the living and the dead; the clergy were exempted from the civil jurisdiction by the Emperor Justinian; indulgences were at this period allowed; the picture of the Virgin Mary was carried about in solemn procession; and the unextinguished wax-lights, before statues, images, pictures, and upon the altars in the churches, were also enjoined. The year 606 is remarkable; being the era when Boniface Bishop of Rome, appropriated to himself the titles of Universal Bishop and Supreme head of the church; and almost immediately after this usurpation, the Pantheon at Rome, the ancient idolatrous temple of all the Gods, was opened and consecrated to the worship of the Virgin Mary and all saints. The sacramental elements were elevated on high for adoration; the marriage of priests was pronounced unlawful; the invocation of saints was admitted; and to consummate the wondrously accelerating ignorance of the senseless multitudes, it was authoritatively determined and decreed, that divine service should always and in every nation be performed in the Latin tongue alone:—this event happened in the year 666; thus most curiously, lucidly, and exactly determining the application of John's prediction. These events were in the succeeding generations followed by the solemn sanction of the image-worship; the introduction of private masses; abstinence from certain meats; novel pil-

grimages to churches ; and the canonization of saints. At this period, during the ninth and tenth centuries, the abomination of desolation was seated in the temple of God. The ecclesiastical rulers were nothing but human monsters ; and the precise wonder of the apocalyptic vision was seen, for a most abandoned woman became Pope. At the commencement of the tenth century, the doctrine of the corporeal presence of Christ in the eucharistic bread was publicly maintained ; the Beads were invented ; and the Baptism of Bells authorized : in short, this and the following centuries are peculiarly infamous in the annals of the world for their superabounding ignorance and vice ; and for the disputations between the Popes and the Emperors, and the Candidates for the Papacy, which perpetuated an almost ceaseless ferment throughout all the dominions of the Beast. To display more effectually the stupidity of the European people of those generations ; they admitted all the preposterous absurdities involved in transubstantiation ; implicitly believed in the phantoms of purgatory ; united most cordially in the prayers and masses which were offered for the ransom of the souls ingulphed in that ideal receptacle of the dead ; while they admired and confided in the certainty and efficacy of the most bungling counterfeits and impostures, as the genuine miraculous effects of merciful Omnipotence.

Among the remarkable events of the twelfth century, the establishment of the Canon law appears prominent ; this was a digest of all the decretals and laws promulgated by the earliest councils and by the first Popes, and their successors in every age ; and having received the pontifical sanction, being an essential part of education in all the universities, and forming the rules of practice in every Spiritual Court, it aggrandized the papal power to its utmost terrestrial plenitude. By this artifice, the cup speedily subsequent was denied to the Laity in the Eucharist; Transubstantiation was definitively established ; and

Auricular confession was primarily, but peremptorily, absolutely and irrevocably enjoined. Notwithstanding the total separation of the Greek church from the Roman communion : the organization of the Augustine and Carmelite Friars, and the Franciscan, with the Dominican Monks, sustained the dignity and claims of the spiritual despotism. At the commencement of the fourteenth century, the church was governed by Boniface, the inventor of the Romish jubilee, a monster, of whom it is narrated, “ that he entered the Papacy like a Fox, governed as a Lion, and died like a Dog.” In this death-like condition of intelligence and religion, the greater portion of the nominal disciples of Jesus remained; episcopal tyranny was exercised without the smallest restraint ; and the pride, luxury, blasphemy and licentiousness of all orders of men associated with the apostate Hierarchy, were predominant and uncontroled, until the Lord roused Luther to commence that fight of faith, which has produced a totally new system of affairs. Of the wretched state of the people and of the necessity of a thorough Reformation, one fact alone is ample evidence. Leo the tenth then Pope, only two years prior to the publication of Luther’s propositions against Indulgences, used to boast among his Atheistic companions, that “ *Christianity was a profitable Fable.*” If such was the Head of the Church, what must the Members have been either in faith or purity ?

This concise retrospect of the progress of the Papacy induces the inquiry—whence did such abhorrent corruptions spring, and by what means were they supported ? After the victories of Constantine had exterminated the ravages of persecution, during the season of peace and prosperity, and especially by the boundless liberality of that Emperor, the ministers of the church were elevated to high earthly rank, profusely supplied, and magnificently attended. Hence, was their desolation : this principle was not diminished by the irruptions of the Northern Barba-

rials, or the consequent decreasing revenue attached to their offices. Covetousness and ambition were paramount ; and all the principal iniquitous practices which we have briefly enumerated, only tended to whet the insatiable voracity that characterized the ecclesiastical rulers and their subordinate agents. The Romish traditions and observances were artfully contrived to promote the acquisition of wealth by the chiefs of that apostacy. Purgatory, and Masses for the dead, were the most profitable pursuit in this vain world ; for what donation could be too large to deliver their friends from purgatorial torments ; and how could they sufficiently repay those powerful Intercessors, who alone could liberate them ? and as all these effects were produced, according to their own statement, by the departed saints of their own order, prayer to the dead, however impious, became a necessary adjunct of the system. The Indulgences and Pardons also were well adapted to amass wealth : for a price was fixed for every crime which could be committed ; and the payment of the tax absolved the transgressor from all punishment by human laws, and from all danger, as they averred, in the world to come. For the same object, were invented the doctrines of supererogation, the superabundance of the Saints' merits, and the worship of Images ; because it was of no use, as they promulgled, to address the Virgin Mary or a Saint without a large oblation ! If we subjoin to these methods of pilfering the deluded multitudes, the sale of permissions to celebrate the Jubilees, and the necessity of valuable offerings to be presented to the Saint to whom they made their pilgrimages, we may justly coincide with an old Popish Commentator upon the Apocalypse ; who declared, that “ the Merchants of the earth, spoken of in the eighteenth chapter of that book, are Priests who sell prayers and masses for money, making the House of prayer a house of merchandize.”

But their inordinate ambition is equally perceptible with their immoderate avarice. Every machination

was adjusted to produce this result. By transubstantiation, it was affirmed, that they transmuted a morsel of bread into the real flesh and blood of the Redeemer ; thus exalting the Priests above the Angelic hosts in dignity ; the cup in the Sacrament of the Supper was confined to the Clergy, that they might be more highly reverenced ; and their worship was performed in Latin, that the Priest who could mutter the jargon might be esteemed as of a superior order of intelligences. Auricular confession involved a virtual surrender of all personal and mental independence ; and absolution for sin placed every one who confided in the Priest's authority, as it respected his individual peace, social comfort, and reputation in the world, entirely under this tremendous jurisdiction. All which was almost inseparably compacted together by the exemption of the clergy from the civil law, and the influence of that thunder which accompanied the excommunications of a Pope supreme and infallible.

The encouragement of ignorance constituted another source of the long continuance of the Romish corruptions and superstitions. Very few of the Priests understood their own mass-books ; the sacred volume was scarcely if ever seen by a vast majority of the ecclesiastics. Even at the period of the Protestant Revolution, Carolstadt was a Doctor of Divinity, eight years before he had even read the Scriptures ; and the highest dignitaries of the church were profoundly ignorant even of the existence of the word of God. A genuine Papist walketh in darkness ; “ mystery and Babylon are his badge ; blindness is essential to him.” In Italy at a former era, an order of Friars existed, who were denominated the *Brethren of Ignorance* ; these solemnly swore, that they would not read, know or learn any thing. Popery sprang from Ignorance and Barbarism, and it has been nurtured by the same odious principles. The departure from the primitive rules and spirit of the Gospel ; the frauds which were multiplied beyond credibility ;

the depression of the civil powers, by excommunicating and deposing the highest officers of the states; and the wondrous sanction given to every species of vicious abomination, all guaranteed the stability of this woful superstructure, which in its ruin will eventually crush all its adherents.

That all ranks of persons should combine to support so monstrous an anomaly as that which we have now contemplated, is to the highest degree astonishing. Emperors, Kings and Princes with their inferior Ministers all united, and almost without cessation, to uphold this wretched despotism; the watchmen upon the walls of the church became supine and stupefied, until they were nearly overwhelmed in an irrecoverable carnal-security; and the mass of the people, to gratify their unhallowed passions by unrestrained indulgence, and to delight their senses with pomp and amusing ceremonial exhibitions, joined their energies to maintain a system, which substituted the form for the substance, and “the pageantry of devotion” for internal sanctity. Thus gradually evangelical doctrine was corrupted, the morals of society degenerated, and papal usurpations extended to their widest possible boundary; so that the once “faithful city became a Harlot.”

A more distinct notice of the grand points in the Papacy, than this cursory enumeration contains, is requisite to enable us to realize the importance and necessity of the change, which, through the divine blessing, was effected by the Reformers.

The foundation of the Roman Hierarchy, is the supremacy of the Pope over all the church; which, according to the most famous Canonists, is the very substance of Christianity. By this prerogative he alone is empowered “to convene councils; to ratify their decrees, to ordain Bishops; to enact ecclesiastical laws; to hear appeals, to correct censures; to bind and loose in every difficulty; and thus becomes the monarch of Christians;” the belief of which assumption, they affirm to be indispensable to salva-

tion. But this position is evidently a mere absurdity; contrary to the dignity of the Redeemer, invalidated by the scriptures, and opposed in every age, from the primary exhibitions of episcopal arrogance at Rome, until Leo's triple crown was divested of all the reverence and dread which had previously been its inherent concomitant.

By this change, the whole government of the church appointed by the Gospel was subverted; the people were despoiled of their rights; and the most atrocious enormities were perpetrated with impunity.

Connected with this usurpation, is the pretended Infallibility claimed by the Pope, combining a supreme Potentate on points of jurisdiction, and a Judge from whom no appeal exists on topics of controversy. This stupendous claim however, has always been a source of strife; some writers have deposited the celestial attribute in the Pope individually; many have transferred it to a General Council; while others have devolved it upon the Council and the Pope, in unison. It seems at length to have been the decision of a large majority of the disputants, that it is the immunity of the Pope to decide the true sense of scripture, and all articles of faith, because he cannot err. To develope the irrationality of this dogma; it is only necessary to remember, that among the Popes have been Heretics of every degree, from Arianism to Atheism—now it is impossible to believe that a privilege belonging to God alone, could have been communicated to those who blasphemously denied, the existence of a Deity, and the immortality of the soul.

“The first article of their theology was, that there is no God; the second, that the history of Jesus Christ is falsehood and imposture; and the third, that a future life, and the resurrection of the dead are mere fables.”

But they were not erroneous in sentiment only, they were most outrageously abominable in practice: during the dark ages, and peculiarly for one hundred

and fifty years after Pope Joan, the man of sin as embodied in the ruler of the church, manifested all that was execrable, and like the old Dragon his Master, infernal. “The Popes, with the college of cardinals, and the whole host of the clergy, were abandoned to all kinds of impurity, and to every species of enormity and crime, so that they resembled monsters rather than men; and instead of being head of all the churches, she is not worthy to be accounted one of the smallest toes of the Church’s feet.” If this be insufficient to abrogate the claim of the pretended successor of Peter, a third fact must for ever obliterate it; more than one Pope has existed at the same time. On a variety of occasions, two and three Popes have exercised this appalling power; anathematizing each other and their mutual adherents, with the same acrimony which they evinced towards those witnesses who prophesied in sackcloth, all the ten horns of the Beast having thus been infallibly and simultaneously accursed; and “filling Europe with the misery of their contentions.” To these considerations, may be added the wondrous discrepancies among the Popes in succession; so that one has annulled the canons which his predecessor decreed; thus establishing an infallibility of palpable contradictions.

The pleas on behalf of the infallibility of councils are equally invalid; for it is the incontestable deduction, certified by the proceedings and decisions of every large assembly of every name and denomination, collected for ecclesiastical purposes of jurisdiction and legislation; since the period when Constantine became sole undisputed Master of the ancient Roman empire, that the principles of corruption are inherent in those bodies, and that with few exceptions, the same motives impel them which originally engendered the Mother of abominations, *avarice and ambition*. Whether therefore we scrutinize the pretensions of the Popes alone, or of councils only, or of both these would be “Lords of God’s

Heritage" in conjunction, we arrive at the same conclusion; that they are intruders upon Immanuel's inalienable prerogative, as the Sovereign Judge of all. It hence follows, that this fundamental position, by which all the apostacy is defended, is without the shadow of reality. A universal visible church is merely an imaginary phantom; even were it an existing body the Bishop of Rome can offer no claim to be its head; the office even of Pope is an irrational, "unscriptural and very pernicious usurpation, a most audacious and impious assumption, which distinctly avows, that the Redeemer is either absent from his people, or negligent of their interests, or incompetent to supply and protect them." What a daring impostor thus to nullify the Mediator's office, and the Saviour's promise! and as to the pretext of an impossibility of error in decision; infallibility is needless in itself, contrary to our state of probation, renders the Gospel ministry an unnecessary institution, and would be of no use, unless all the disciples of the infallible Judge were endued with the same liberation from ignorance and error. When with these considerations, we connect the discord between the Popes, the impossibility of determining who possesses this mysterious authority, and the certainty that these pretenders to infallibility, Popes and Councils, have in every age almost uniformly departed from the "Scriptures of truth," we, like the Apostle John, are ready to "wonder with great admiration," at the sight of this "Mystery, Babylon the Great, who reigneth over the kings of the earth."

By the doctrine of transubstantiation which declares, that after the Romish Priest at the Eucharist has pronounced the words, "Hoc est corpus meum, this is my body," the bread and wine disappear, and the real body and blood of Christ are substituted; every dictate of scripture and reason are subverted: and yet this most incomprehensible and contradictory of all human absurdities, we are commanded to believe, or we shall be accursed. This is one of the cor-

ruptions of the Lord's supper; another is, that the body and blood of Christ are really and properly sacrificed in every mass, which by a renewed presentation of it to the Father, is a propitiation for the living and the dead. "The Mass is not only a sacrilegious profanation, but a total annihilation of the Lord's supper, for it includes most insulting blasphemy to the Redeemer; obliterates the cross and passion of Christ; and prevents us from reflecting upon the death of the Saviour, and consequently deprives us of the benefits which it was intended to bestow." A third deterioration of this Sacrament, consists in a denial of the cup to the people; but this destroys the very nature and object of Christ's institution. It was designed by our gracious Saviour to "shew the Lord's death till he come." The Popish interpretation and practice completely conceals and extinguishes this grand purpose of the appointment.

That unseen region, Purgatory, owes its visionary existence, to this deterioration of the communion: This was a most valuable land to all the parties concerned in the traffic; for it enriched the selling Priest, and comforted the stupid purchaser. It is delineated by some as a station exactly equi-distant from heaven and hell; by others, nearer the regions of wo; but by all, it is represented as a state of comparative torture, because its residents are excluded from Paradise. Into this receptacle of the dead, all Catholics, we are assured, who have not obtained a sufficiency of merit for their admission into heaven, immediately enter after their dissolution. In this wretched condition, they were doomed by the Monks and Friars to continue, without hope of deliverance; unless the certain specified sum was paid for masses and prayers for their redemption: hence originated an almost incredible anomaly; the departed saints, the besotted multitudes were taught to believe, interceded for the living; and notwithstanding they were addressed in the language of prayer by those

in the body for their assistance ; yet it was equally requisite for the survivors to make oblations and implore mercy for them : still this most unaccountable medley of odious pilfering and ignorance produced neither disgust nor astonishment ; although if the most obtuse reflection had been even momentarily admitted, it would instantaneously have been perceptible, that this procedure decided the possession of heavenly joy, not by faith, repentance and holiness, but by the ability to satiate the rapacious demon of covetousness. As a necessary consequence of this inaneuvre, all restraint upon vitiosity was removed ; and the soul was represented as secure for eternity, provided an ample price was paid for present absolution, and future ransom ; thus combining the robbery of their deluded votaries in both worlds.

In immediate conection with these topics, is the dogma which they promulge concerning the works of supererogation and Indulgences. This asserts, "that some holy men have performed more good works, than God requires of them, or were necessary to secure their own salvation, and that this surplus merit is deposited in the treasury of the church of which the Pope holds the keys, that he may confer portions at his pleasure upon those who are deficient in good works." This stupendous heretical theory, obviously sanctioned the doctrine of Indulgences ; which is farther sustained by the positions, that punishments remain after sin forgiven ; that there is a purgatory ; and that these merits of supererogation, may be and are applied by the church. This system was regulated by the utmost exactitude of calculation, and transformed the whole Hierarchy into a "great Custom House for sin." Yet this is also pronounced an obligatory part of the faith of every Papist ; and that which is extremely surprising is, that notwithstanding the sale of these Indulgences, formed the basis of the glorious Reformation ; they are yet vended and purchased with

almost undiminished solicitude, throughout all those countries which still sincerely adhere to the Beast, and “receive his mark in their foreheads.”

Pilgrimage to the tombs and the images of the dead saints, that the devotee might obtain the benefits of their intercession in heaven on their behalf, through the application of a large donation to the Priest, the guardian of his statue on earth, is another of the impositions with which the Roman Apostate has burdened the church.

Extreme unction, or the anointing of the sick with oil as they are departing from this world, after all hopes of the patient's recovery are extinguished, is a most deceptive and soul-killing ceremony. It is represented as a Sacrament by which Grace is conferred, sin remitted, and the sick are comforted; and the sentence of anathema, is definitively pronounced against all those who deny that the ancient gift of healing from which the practice was professedly adopted, had not been transformed into a sacred and sure passport for the dying into the kingdom of heaven.

Auricular confession and the prohibition of marriage to the Priests have been thus forcibly described. “The immeasurable confidence poured by all the individuals of his charge into the bosom of one man; and the almost absolute influence which it gives him over them; must be engines which an unprincipled Priest can turn to the utmost dreadful purposes of intrigue and villainy. Not only the virtue and happiness of individuals, but the vital interests of families and often of mighty kingdoms, have thus been subject to the management of a confessor, and sacrificed to his bigotry and wickedness. These things are now for the most part shrouded in secrecy; but when the day shall arise, that “will bring to light the hidden things of darkness”—what depths of iniquity thus concealed, will it not disclose! The forced celibacy of the clergy, in combination with the practice of private confession, often proves the

occasion of criminalities which poison the very springs of domestic virtue, and which the degraded state of public morals, in the countries where they prevail, scarcely urges to disguise. On this crying abomination, many members of the Roman communion have complained often and vehemently, but in vain. By the decrees of councils, the dispensation of popes, the decision of canonists, and by the general practice of the church of Rome, the concubinage of Priests is adjudged a less offence than their marriage. But why is this anti-scriptural and iniquitous law thus permitted to pollute the world? Because it cuts off their clergy from family attachments and patriotic connections; because it more closely intwines their personal feelings with the interests of their order; because it thus makes them an army of devoted Janizaries of the Pope; and because it powerfully attracts into the coffers of their church whatever property the Priest may acquire."

Two additional particulars must be illustrated to complete the catalogue of those more obvious contradictions to the word of God which elicited the protest of the early Reformers against the Roman Hierarchy: *Ignorance*. This was developed in two forms —the prohibition of the Scriptures in the vernacular tongues; and the invariable and universal adoption of the Latin language as the vehicle of devotion. "Search the Scriptures," is the injunction of the Redeemer; but the Pope has placed them in the prohibited catalogue. If the reason be asked, why the people are precluded from a perusal of the sacred volume, the reply is easy—the Hierarchs desire to promote the ignorance of the multitude; and are perfectly convinced that if the inspired records were generally examined, their own abominations and superstitions will be fully discovered. Hence, one of their most famous defenders candidly urges as an argument against the translation and circulation of the Bible; "that when the people see that things are required by the Church of Rome to be done by them, as if

they were of Apostolical command, and yet cannot find a word of them in Scripture, they will be inclined to murmur." The principles, which Rome inculcates concerning divine truth, are repugnant to all intelligence. That Church decrees, that their traditions are of identical authority with the written word, and of equal validity with the gospel and epistles of the Apostles and Evangelists; that the unlimited perusal of the divine oracles in the common languages of the country is injurious; and that the Bible as interpreted by every individual's construction, is not adapted to all capacities; that it does not reveal all the truth requisite to our salvation; that it is not sufficiently certain for a sure confidence; and consequently, that it has *not one* of the qualities necessary to constitute the rule of faith. With these impulses and views, it excites no surprise, that all the remaining energy which the Pope and his agents possess, should be exerted to the utmost against the present endeavors to disseminate the knowledge of the wonderful works of God, by means of Sabbath Schools, and the distribution of the "glorious Gospel of the ever blessed God." Their ignorance became the mother of their devotion, "and to seek information was heresy."

But this even would have been ineffectual, had they not conjoined to it the performance of all their devotions in a dead language; and this fact while it lucidly fulfills John's prophecy, completely debarred all hope of change or amendment. The Latin was, and is, as little understood by the Priest, as by his auditory; and it is the decision of the learned among them, upon that part of Paul's epistle to the Corinthians, when he forbids the use of an unknown language, that "it is not necessary to understand the words of Prayer; it is enough that people can tell that this holy orison is appointed them by the church; more is not requisite." The Egyptian darkness, which still hovers over all those parts of the world where the Roman superstitions and apostacy predom-

inate in full vigour, is therefore a natural consequence of their unmeaning worship, and their total destitution of the light and the truth. In this absurdity, Popery commenced; by its effects, that system has been perpetuated nearly 1200 years; and it will be demolished by the universal diffusion of the Bible in all the existing languages spoken among mankind.

Idolatry.—The appropriation of divine worship to creatures; to the Virgin Mary, to Angels, to departed Saints, to the reliques of Saints, to the cross, to the sacramental wafer, to images, to statues, and to pictures: as it is one of the most obvious, so it is one of the most heinous properties of that “falling away” which is connected with a submission to the Beast. “He is an idolater who exalts any thing beyond the measure of human honour, as if it were of divine sublimity,” this was the declaration made against the ancient Bacchanalians; and to prove its application to the Papists, we shall examine the parallel between the Pagan and Christian Romans.

Both parties acknowledged and adored one supreme God, but they superadded inferior objects of worship; the heathens denominated their heros, demons; and without doubt justly—the Catholics designated their intercessors, as angels and saints; but the difference is merely nominal.

The old Greeks and Romans and Barbarians formed images and Statues, for each of their imaginary Deities—the majority considering them merely as representatives and symbols of their Gods: very few of the Papists, probably, if they were seriously examined, would say that their Agnus Dei, or crucifix, or image, was truly and vitally what it appeared externally to be; yet they bow down to them, serve them, and honor them with religious ceremonies.

Polytheism pretended to distinguish between the worship appropriated to Jupiter, and that which was offered to the minor idols: so the Papist contrives to exculpate himself from the imputation of being an Idolator—by expunging the second commandment

from the decalogue; and by a frivolous plea, that he worships God directly and absolutely; but the saints, reliques, &c. indirectly and relatively. What difference is perceptible, between Israel's sin, who danced and played before the Calf; and the Papist's festivals and processions, around the crucifix and the Agnus Dei?

The veneration and invocation of angels were an ancient transfer from Paganism to Christianity, or Paul would not have reproved them in his epistle to the Saints and faithful Brethren in Christ at Colosse; but these are expressly enjoined by the Councils, and forms of prayer have been composed for each saint's worship. This is part of every Papist's creed, which is pronounced to be infallibly scriptural; and which every officer in the Roman Hierarchy, from the Pope with his triple crown to the meanest Janitor in a convent, all swear that they believe. "The saints reigning together with Christ, are to be *worshipped* and *prayed* unto; for they do offer prayer unto God for us, and their reliques are to be had in veneration. The images of Christ, of the blessed Virgin, the mother of God, and of other Saints, ought to be had and retained, and due honour and veneration ought to be given them." We, in this Republic, feel little or no aversion from the Papacy, because we fear it not: but our security from its cruel fangs, diminishes not its odious qualities, nor will it impede its certain destruction. That you may comprehend something of the idolatrous attachment to the Virgin Mary, listen to the impiety of their most oracular writers. She is entitled "the Queen of Heaven, to whom the King of Kings, the Heavenly Father has given half of his kingdom: God hath divided his kingdom with the Virgin Mary: All things and persons serve to the Empire of the Virgin, even God himself: and no preference exists between the Mother's milk and the Son's blood: from her fulness, the whole sacred Trinity receives its glory;" and when dying, they close their mortal course by these words, "O blessed

Virgin, Mother of God, into thy hands I commend my spirit." But more of this horrid blasphemy must not be quoted.

The whole world was subdivided among the Saints. All the diseases of the body; every mechanical employment; all kinds of business, with the persons engaged in them, were allotted to the different invisible celestial Protectors; and mercy, grace, pardon, protection, deliverance, and all temporal blessings, are supplicated from their benevolence. Of this idolatry we have a curious exemplification in the city of Padua in Italy. St. Anthony was the Patron of Hog-drivers. A chapel is there erected to his honour, in the interior of which is this inscription under his image :

Exaudit, quos non audit et ipse Deus.
"This Saint hears those whom God himself doth not hear;" and this is the general Popish dogma; that prayer offered to the Saints and the Virgin Mary, will be more efficacious and prosperous than if addressed to the Supreme; consequently, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is excluded from devotional regard.

Not only is idolatrous worship manifested towards human persons dead, but also to created things. One of the canons asserts, that "the sacred bodies of Martyrs and others living with Christ are to be worshipped by Believers, and the relics of the Saints are to be had in veneration." The worship of the cross is an essential part of Popery, the very mark of the Beast and his image; and every piece of rotten wood, in a Priest's hands, is metamorphosed into a remnant of the true cross on Calvary. Several pieces for the devotees to kiss, have been exhibited even in this Union; so that the quaint remark of an old Puritan is not hyperbolical; "had the wood of the cross grown from the first day it was set in the earth till now, and borne crosses, it would not have filled so many carts, as that which now is in several parts of Christendom given out and adored for the true cross

of Christ." Respecting the Sacramental Bread or Host, it is thus infallibly determined ; " all the faithful people of Christ, do give to this Holy Sacrament, in their veneration of it, the worship which is due to the true God :" and their practice accords with the canon ; for when the Priest elevates the Host, he and all others bow down and adore it; and this idolatry is exhibited in these states, equally as in Peter's Church at Rome. Images, Statues, and Pictures receive all the adoration from the Papists which the Bacchanalians presented to their blocks of wood and marble. These are the words of the law ; " the images of Christ and the Mother of God, who was always a Virgin, and of other Saints also, are to be had and retained, and due honour and veneration are to be paid to them : and the honour which is given to images is referred to the Prototypes represented by them ; so that by the images which we kiss, and before which we kneel, we adore Christ and reverence his Saints, whom those images represent." One of their expositors denominated Angelic, and of undeniable authority, declares, that " the same honour is due to the image as to the original ; and therefore a crucifix must be adored with the same adoration which we offer to Christ." As an unavoidable result of this doctrine, they ascribe the augmentation of Faith and good works to the images ; they pray to them for an increase of grace, and to blot out their sins ; they fly to them in all danger as a refuge, and confide in them as their most powerful Saviours.

The Lord instituted two Sacraments, but the Papists have augmented that number to seven ; so that in addition to the evangelical appointments, they enumerate these mysteries, the merely visionary offspring of their own corruptions. Confirmation of persons arrived at years of discretion by the imposition of a Bishop's hands—Penance, or what Paul calls, " neglecting of the body"—Extreme Unction, by which it is pretended the sick obtain remission of sin, and deliverance from disease, or the salvation of

the soul—Ecclesiastical orders, comprising Beadles, Readers, Exorcists, Acolothysts, Sub-Deacons, Deacons and Priests, all of which they affirm that Christ himself had been; and the ceremonies used at the initiation into each of which, they assert, cause invisible grace—and Matrimony; and by their laws concerning this ordinance of God; their prohibitions, dispensations, and regulations, merely for the sake of amassing money; they transformed the world into a “den of abominations.”

A condensed summary of our principal objections against the Romish system of corrupted Christianity, shall close this catalogue. The Papal Hierarchy has no sanction or authority for its existence from the sacred volume; but is clearly described and directly condemned, by Daniel, Paul and John, from its evolution to its final tragic catastrophe. By its operation, the essential principles of individual religion are demolished: for it denies salvation to all who do not practice their superstitious ritual, expunges the right of private examination and judgment on religious topics; it “prohibits liberty of mind, speech, writing and printing: it defends its dogmas by chains, dungeons, racks and flames: it debases the soul and character of man: it is the foil of education, science, improvement and reason: and it spreads over the whole frame of society, the net of cherished ignorance and abject submission”—combining the most solemn exterior of “sanctity, with crimes, the atrocity of which would make even a savage to shudder;” and engendering the most obdurate and unimpassible infidelity and irreligion. Absurd, pernicious, and unscriptural doctrines are enjoined as articles of faith, by the Beast; who also enacts laws and ordinances, both of discipline and worship, by his own usurped authority; denouncing the irrevocable anathema, and the torments of the everlasting abyss of woe, upon all those who deny his assumed claims, and who refuse to submit to his unhallowed commands and government.

We have already been reminded of some of these unholy appointments—ecclesiastical officers ; the canonization of the dead ; and the establishment of numerous feasts and fasts ; with a most tiresome catalogue of frivolous mummeries, all tending to insult reason and to burlesque Christianity !—We have also perceived that the importance, usefulness, and necessity of divine revelation, are totally superseded by the Papal traditions. Besides, the Roman Hierarchy encourages the vilest Despotism of every species ; for it prostrates reason and conscience, and consequently fosters the most absolute private and public tyranny. This is evinced by their excommunications, auricular confessions, monastic institutions, the pretended rights of the church, and by their tremendous and ceaseless persecutions—the “Mother of Harlots is drunken with the blood of the Saints, with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus.”

The whole system which we have thus briefly depicted, is therefore a manifestly audacious innovation on the religion of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and destructive of all our fundamental principles; which assert “the sole legislative authority and supremacy of Immanuel over the faith and the consciences of men; the unrestricted use of the sacred volume, and its sufficiency as the rule of religious belief and obedience; and the unlawfulness of human dictation in matters purely belonging” to the salvation of the immortal soul.

After this cursory investigation of the constituent materials of the grand “falling away” predicted by Paul, and our examination of the qualities of this “man of sin, the son of perdition;” who can resist the sensibilities excited by the impressive comparison, which is exhibited between the countries degraded by his sway, and the lands which the beams of the Sun of Righteousness irradiate and cheer. Two devotional principles are hence enkindled in every heart, which is in any degree animated by Christianity—*gratitude* and *prayer*.

How thankful should we feel to that God in whom "we live, and move, and have our being," that our residence has not been determined by his providential arrangements in the dominions of the Beast! You will remember, that the Papal system bears now a very different exterior from its garb during the period which we have contemplated; and especially in the Protestant countries where it exists, and is tolerated. Its grosser and more repulsive appendages are necessarily banished from observation; and yet in this respect, a wide diversity is discoverable between the Roman adherents in this Republic, and those who dwell amongst the Reformed in Europe. In the very nature and situation of things around us, with every prospect which the human mind can anticipate, it is almost impossible that the enormities of that departure from the living God, can attain any permanent or extensive influence in this Union. Notwithstanding this conviction, we know, that many instances have occurred in these states, in which the genuine character of the Beast has been developed, in spite of all the political and moral restraints which confine him within very small limits. We, in reference to our social and national regulations upon ecclesiastical topics, display to the world a condition previously unknown in the history of mankind. The religion of Jesus Christ our Lord, is liberated from every fetter, disconnected from all terrestrial associations, and left to exert its own authority and energy, independent of governmental sanction and support. Within our precincts, no Pope fulminates, his Legate's anathemas are merely subjects of ridicule, no Dominican is armed with inquisitorial prerogatives, no legalized murderer stands ready to complete an Auto da Fe; and even a Jesuit's envenomed cunning, malevolence and villainy, find in our state of society, and the principles which govern it, a silent but perfectly efficacious antidote. Who can be sufficiently grateful for the light and the truth which we enjoy, for the sacred

privileges which we experience ; and especially when we subjoin, that as far as mortal perspicacity can extend, perpetuity is inscribed upon the present condition of our christian possessions ; with the super-addition, that they will continually multiply, in number, influence and expansion, until the morning of that illustrious day, when “all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of God.”

But if we do in some measure justly appreciate the value of our own immunities ; if we are in any degree capacitated to comprehend the wondrous contrast between the deluded devotees of the Beast, and the sincere enlightened followers of the Lamb of God ; and if we exult with rapture in the prospect of that delightful millennium, when darkness and ignorance, infidelity and irreligion, superstition and idolatry shall all be seized by the Angel who shall “come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand,” and who shall lay “hold on the Dragon, that old serpent who is the Devil, and Satan,” and shall bind these unhallowed destroyers of the peace of mankind with their Author “a thousand years, and cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he shall deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years shall be fulfilled ;” then we cannot need any argument to enforce the urgent necessity of those restless implorations, which shall ascend to “the throne of grace by day and by night,” that the great Head of the church would without delay, make “Jerusalem the praise and the glory of the whole earth.”

That this felicitous universal reign of “the Prince of the Kings of the earth” is rapidly approaching, the spirit of the times in which we live, undeniably prognosticates. We have seen that in the year of the Christian era, 534, Justinian proclaimed the Bishop of Rome Chief of all the churches upon earth ; which in fact was one of the grand primary events that conduced to the establishment of the Papal

Hierarchy: add 1260 years to that period; and we have a simultaneous rebellion against the authority of the Beast, not only in that political earthquake, the French Revolution; but in the general commencement of the monthly meeting for special prayer, the organization of Missionary Institutions, Tract and Bible Societies, and the great excitement among the Protestants, which has produced that ceaseless exertion of Christian philanthropy, that explores every attainable district to disperse the treasure of the Gospel—and to proclaim the “glad tidings of great joy, Christ and him crucified to all people.” In this holy employ, let us, every one without exception, also participate; remembering that the God whom we invoke, is a God hearing prayer; that no sounds are more acceptable in the court of heaven, than the devout, fervid, sincere petitions which in their object commingle the glory of Immanuel, with the redemption of sinners; and that no duties more effectually promote our own peace and growth in grace, than the quickening effects of that charity which circumscribes within its sanctified sphere, the present evangelical consolations and harmony, and the future unalterable blessedness of myriads of perishing sinners, destined to an immortality of existence. Let us therefore “pray for the peace of Jerusalem;” and continually urge at his throne, the all-important and exhilarating supplications uttered by the Psalmist of old; “God be merciful unto us and bless us; that thy way may be known upon earth, and thy saving health to all nations; let the people praise thee, O God, let all the people praise thee; God shall bless us, and all the ends of the earth shall fear him. Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, and let the whole earth be filled with his glory.—Amen and Amen.”

The means by which the Papal apostacy was sustained.

Although the system of corruption which we have portrayed was artfully constructed to defy external assault, and combined within itself the materials calculated to maintain its existence with undiminished energy, yet like all other terrestrial superstructures, it was too frail to withstand the revolutions of time. It is a curious analogy, that the ancient Roman civil despotism was supported about the same period of duration, as prophecy declares, that the modern ecclesiastical tyranny shall triumph ; and as it comprised the lapse of several generations from the primary evolution of the Beast's features, until their complete display in the "Mystery of iniquity," so three centuries have already revolved, and the demolition of the Dragon's successor has not been consummated. We are hence induced to inquire ; by what wondrous agency, a government so odious, irrational and mischievous, so derogatory to Jehovah, and so debasing to man, during many hundreds of years, and nearly over the whole of Europe, could have been authoritatively founded and irresistibly established. It is obvious, from the delineation of its fundamental qualities; that although all its parts tended to promote its own stability, yet, so stupendous and extensive a mass of abominations in theory and practice must necessarily have demanded exterior assistance.

The deterioration of evangelical doctrine, the degeneracy of the moral standard, and the usurpation of spiritual power by the "Man of sin," which

are the three grand constituents of Popery were gradually developed. To illustrate this subject, it may be remarked in general, that when the Church of Christ had survived the tempests of Persecution, and enjoyed repose under Imperial patronage, earthly grandeur was desired by the Bishops, especially of the principal and metropolitan cities; and it is said, that after Constantine had enriched the Clergy with such immense revenues, a voice was heard in the heavens, saying, "This day poison is poured into the Church;" whether this fact be true or not, that dread result has been exhibited. It has already been evinced, that ecclesiastical power and emolument, with their concomitants, pride and voluptuousness, were inseparably conjoined to the prevalence of the Romish doctrines concerning Purgatory, Masses for the dead, Indulgences, Pardons, Taxes for sin, Jubilees, Absolutions, and all the other train of inventions by which this medley of craft, adapted to every kind of persons, was continued. Of the ignorance which constituted another cause of the rise, sway and progress of Babylon the great, undeniable instances are upon record, which almost defy credibility. With the demolition of the Western empire: the Arts, Sciences, and Languages were totally neglected. One of the Synods commanded the Clergy, who could not say, Domine miserere nostri, in Latin, to pray, Lord have mercy upon us, in their own language. Luther states, that at the period of the Reformation, the Arch-Bishop of Mentz, accidentally finding a Bible, after reading in it, declared, "I know not what this book is, but it is all against us:" and the great Reformer avers, that even he was twenty years old, prior to his perusal of the sacred Scriptures.

The preference of Human traditions to the primitive rules and institutes of Christianity, involved an additional aid to the cause of Popery. One of the decisions of their Law is, that the Decretals of the Pope are of equal authority with inspired Revelations;

and it is a general opinion, that it is preferable to lose the law of God than the canons of the Pope. To sanctify the astonishing mummary contrived by the prime devotees of the Beast; every possible cheat, fraud, falsehood and deceit were invented; fully exemplifying Paul's prediction; his "coming is after the working of Satan, with all power, and signs, and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness"—comprising feigned Revelations, counterfeit visions, supposititious and forged miracles, pretended relics and imaginary saints. "If the people will be deceived," said one of the Cardinal Legates to the people who thronged to ask and receive his blessing, when he was concerned for their silly devotion and bigotry, "in the name of God, let them be deceived." In fact, the Papal Apostacy originated partly in this source, and was perpetuated by its energies;—it was a combination, as themselves attest, "of Forgery and Falsehood, Lies and Fiction, Impostures and Religious Juggles, Holy Cheats and pious Frauds." The four nails by which the gracious Redeemer was suspended on the cross, had incalculably multiplied. That Arch-Bishop of Mentz, who was totally ignorant of the existence even of the Gospel, boasted and pretended to exhibit, "the Flame of the Bush, which Moses beheld burning." In Holland they displayed for show "a leg of the Ass on which Christ rode into Jerusalem." At Isenach in Germany, Luther states, that he saw an image of the Virgin Mary with her child Jesus. When a wealthy person came thither to pray, the child moved away his face from the sinner to his mother, as if he refused to hear his prayer; and the Suppliant applied to the Mother, to crave her mediation and intercession. If the person gave liberally, the child turned to him; and if he promised to increase his donation, then the child was very friendly and affectionate, and extended his arms to him in the figure of a cross. The Image was hollow; and behind it stood one of the monks who directed its motions;

while the stupid votaries of the Idol confided in its approbation and displeasure, as the supernatural effect of Divine providence, which declared the will of God through the instrumentality of this diabolical Pageant. 1.

One of the worst effects attached to the deceptions practiced by the Papal writers, is the system which they had consecrated; not only to forge legendary tales, and constitutions, laws and canons, in the name of the Apostles and their immediate successors of the earliest Christian antiquity: but they also cancelled, adulterated, altered, and vitiated as far as was necessary to sanction their abominable traditions, the various works of the ancient Authors, the copies of which escaped from the recesses of the Monasteries into the hands of mankind; hence, it is often extremely difficult to decide upon the genuine truth, and to distinguish it from fabulous imposture.

Universality of profession has long been the plea of the Papist in behalf of his anti-christian system; yet in the authorized Popish translation, this is the annotation on Revelation 13: 1. "This Beast is the universal company of the wicked, whose head is Antichrist; and the same is called Babylon." But "all the world wondered after the Beast:" so that the allegation, numbers and multitudes, by which it is attempted still to sustain the Papacy, is manifestly a proof, that the system of corruption denominated religion, which is at Rome, is that beast which "goeth into perdition."

The depression of the civil authorities and the supremacy over all the Sovereign powers within the dominions of the ten horns, were the grand machinations by which the Dragon's Representative secured and maintained his exaltation. To the meanest ecclesiastical adherent of the Papaey, merely as such, was attached a dignity, superior to that of the most magnificent civil Potentate; and as a regular deduction from this rebellious dogma the Pope

decreed for them a total exemption from all jurisdiction in the common courts of judicature. One of the arguments used to prove this position, was derived from the Mosaic law, "thou shalt not plow with an Ox and an Ass." Those in spiritual Orders were Oxen; while the Laity were Asses; and consequently, it was a degradation for a Father Confessor to acknowledge his own criminalities before a temporal tribunal. Hence, it is an authoritative decision among the Papists, which has often been practically exemplified, that "rebellion against the national power, is not treason in a Popish Clergyman, because he is not subject to its sway." However much circumstances oblige its partizans to conceal this anti-social principle in modern ages; the doctrine is still maintained, and has been publicly asserted, even in this Union; so that Popery is ever one and the same, an incurable pestilence to the world.—The old Puritan inference, drawn by the early Reformers, is therefore incontrovertible; that a thoroughly bigoted Papist cannot be a good citizen, because he is bound by a foreign allegiance, paramount to the claim and law of the land in which he resides.

The doctrine established by the Lateran Council in 1215, that Popes possess authority to depose the executive authorities, to absolve the people from their oaths and obligations, to dispossess the civil governors of their offices, and by force to subject the nations to tyrants of their own nomination; has been often illustrated by actual example in the history of the ten horns of the Beast. One modern instance is too impressive, not to be cursorily noticed. In the late Neapolitan attempt to obtain "the Rights of Man, it is probable, that the same "*un-Holy Alliance*," who had previously despoiled, devastated and dismembered Poland, would not so speedily and effectually have crushed the rising temple of Freedom, had not the intimidations and Bulls of the Tenant of the Vatican, "the Beast who hath two

horns like a lamb and who spake as a dragon," debilitated the energies and decomposed the unity of the patriots, by rousing all their superstitious alarms of excommunication here, and beyond the grave, their dread of purgatory and wo everlasting. The mystery is not that Pius VII. should still blasphemously arrogate this attribute of the Godhead; but that a protestant Monarch, a popish Emperor, and a Greek Tzar, a Trio naturally and essentially discordant, should combine and claim the unhallowed co-operation of Satan's grand visible terrestrial vicegerent, to consummate their schemes of despotism, and their opposition to the progressive melioration of the besotted devotees of the Anti-christian Apostasy, is an anomaly, which can be solved only by the recollection; that ambition transforms its desires into necessities, that Royalty sanctifies every crime however enormous, and that the variance between Herod and Pontius Pilate, could be removed only by the scorn and crucifixion of Immanuel.

Nothing could be more agreeable and acceptable to the votaries of vice, than the Papal system in its actual operation. Heathen and Antichristian Rome were exactly assimilated:—the former was originally an asylum for outlaws, a refuge for Profligates, and the residence of ruffians; the latter was a sanctuary for the abandoned of every possible class. The ancient metropolis was built on fratricide for its corner stone, Romulus having slain his brother, Remus; and Popery was authoritatively erected upon the murder of the Emperor Mauritius—the usurper Phocas, who butchered the whole Imperial Family, expiated his aggravated iniquity by the establishment of the Man of Sin, as a commutation for his slaughter, and as a compensation for Papal absolution.

It is evident from the history which will subsequently be reviewed, that as the Roman Apostasy commenced in bloodshed and violence, so in a great degree it is indebted for its existence, to the same diabolical machinations. Like its sister imposture

invented at Mecca, it has augmented its disciples, principally by force. The Arabian Apollyon employed the sword and military coercion ; fire and faggot were the instruments of conversion introduced by "him who sitteth in the temple of God, as God." Compulsion and cruelty have augmented the disciples of the western Antichrist ; so that oaths, and covenants are phantoms, when their rage is to be exercised upon a denounced Heretic. Persecution is an essential characteristic of the papacy, and so revengeful is its temper, that if it can glut its revenge with blood, by no other means, it will exercise its carnivorous and insatiable appetite, even on its own deluded votaries ; of which, the simultaneous murder of every Frenchman in the Island of Sicily, when the bells rang for evening prayers, afford a modern and memorable testimony. Hence it may be added, in the language of a late distinguished opponent of the Roman Hierarchy, "he who can *choose such a religion*, deserves to be within its grasp, that it may be his punishment, as well as his crime."

One of the most inexplicable of all the inquiries connected with this subject, is, how men so scandalously outrageous and vile, as was a large majority of the Popes, in fact, such proverbially profligate, profane, impious, lewd murderers, that they have no counterpart in society except among the Cardinals, and the chief retainers of the Apostacy ; could have been supported during so long a period ? One solution only can be adduced—the universal degeneracy inclined all orders of the people "to embrace evil doctrines, and to engage in false worship ;" while the easy commutation for their transgressions by means of auricular confession, penance, and the tax for absolution, muted their energies to maintain a system, which indulged their vicious propensities to their widest range, and quieted their consciences by the guarantee of pardon, security and peace.

In the more extended investigations of this period, it is manifest that the most inimical persons, the most

discordant purposes, and the most conflicting events, by the ceaseless cunning, and artifices, and exertions of the Hierarchs and their agents, lost their contradictory qualities, and were amalgamated into one machine, whose perpetual motions invariably tended to the same object; the exaltation of the "Man of Sin." Some of the dignified orders of society succumbed to the Papal claims from superstition; others from servility; many from expediency, and the majority from terror. Its long protracted elevation and supremacy, may also be partly attributed to policy; "Princes and Emperors, that they themselves might attain to more arbitrary sway, suffered the clergy to use their liberty to an excess. They often needed their assistance, and found it necessary to indulge, and permit them to tyrannise in spiritual causes, that they might exercise temporal despotism; until they could not restrain them from usurping the civil power." But this connivance and aid would have been insufficient to fortify so stupendous an edifice of every diversified evil, which like the "smoke out of the bottomless pit, darkened the sun and the air," had not the forced and unnatural celibacy of the Priests, who were dispersed throughout the ten horns of the beast, embodied around the Pope, a universal and incalculable army of inseparable adherents; whose licentiousness, luxury and pride could not otherwise have been satiated; and had not these same Monks and Friars obtained paramount and irresistible influence over all descriptions of the people, from the highest to the lowest, through each intermediate grade, by being the authorised depositaries of every individual's character, secrets and reputation, in consequence of the information imparted at private confession. The grand stamina of the Romish Apostacy however, consisted in the facility with which the majority of the people in the various nations imbibed those erroneous doctrines which sanctioned their depraved inclinations, and in their attachment to that pompous ceremonial which rendered their supposi-

tious devotions and sensual gratification. Like their ancestors they would have worshipped any Pageant exalted before them; “at what time the Chaldeans heard the sound of the cornet, flute, harp, sackbut, psaltery, dulcimer, and all kinds of music, they fell down and worshipped the image which was set up” by Nebuchadnezzar. Thus splendour and music excited the infatuation of the ignorant and seduced modern Babylonians; so that “all ranks and degrees of persons clubbed to support the Romish delusions; and every one contributed his earnings, some more and some less, to manufacture this *Golden Calf*.”

But it is necessary to develope in their extensive ramifications, the more potent and efficacious causes of that support by which the Beast attained and perpetuated the plenitude of his supremacy; and they may all be classed under four general denominations—*Artifice*—*Terror*—*Enthusiasm*—and *Persecution*.

I. Artifice.

The temporal supremacy of the Popes originated in their adhesion to the image-worship, when that idolatry was opposed by all the imperial authority of Leo. That magnificent ceremonial established by the successors of Jupiter’s devotees, so strongly attracted the attachment of the deluded multitudes, that they promised the “Man of Sin,” all their support, in discarding the government of the Constantinopolitan Emperor. To sanction this proceeding—after Pepin had murdered the king of France, he transferred to his sole independent jurisdiction, the domains in Italy which have since been considered the Pope’s patrimony.

By various frauds, increasing in impudence and number, as opposition to the papal authority displayed itself; and by transforming every event into a coadjutor to their designs, they finally established their odious despotism.

One of their manœuvres, was a systematic interference in all the political affairs of the different

European kingdoms. The grand object of solicitude was, that the nations should continue in a ceaseless division and contention. The Roman Pontiff, all the discordant parties professed equally to revere, and to his interposition they all appealed. Hence, every emergency of this kind augmented his power; and by rendering him in universal practice, the final Arbitrator of all the royal disputes, the Potentates elevated him, by their own admissions, to a dignity which far transcended their own; and this enveloped with all the spiritual majesty, with which ignorance and idolatry combined, had encircled God's terrestrial Vicegerent, as he was blasphemously denominated, eventually rendered measures beyond the ingenuity and power of man to contrive, indispensable to his demolition. As the Pope's favour became a grand object of strife, it was of course disposed of, as policy, avarice or ambition dictated. By this cunning, peace and war, national prosperity and adversity, equally promoted the vigour and perpetuity of the mystical Babylon.

Nearly at the same period, during the ninth century, the whole ecclesiastical system in Europe, was changed; both with respect to its interior and external administration. Constantine had maintained his uncontrouled authority in the principal topics connected with the order of the church; and notwithstanding all the mutations and revolutions of four hundred years, including the irruptions and settlement of the Goths, Huns and Vandals, in all the countries of Europe; Charlemange claimed and exercised supreme jurisdiction concerning the election of a Pope, and the inferior clerical appointments; and also with regard to the introduction of novelties into the ancient system. This power, however, the European kings gradually sacrificed, until the Pope had grasped the prerogative, to fill every official vacancy, not only without the approbation, but in direct contradiction to the various national governments.

Prior to this era, also, the Bishops possessed considerable influence in the regulation of the church, and their sanction had been pronounced necessary to authorize the adoption of a novel dogma, or a new ceremonial; but this privilege, if not entirely abrogated, was so enfeebled, that the voice of these officers has subsequently been of little or no importance. In addition to this enlargement of the Papal controul, the councils, which had been either statedly or occasionally assembled in the provinces or nations, were disregarded, and the respect which had been offered to their decisions, declined; so that the only effectual barrier to the unrestrained exaltation of him "who sitteth in the Temple of God, as God," was completely extirpated. By these continual accessions of authority, the Popes at length, having become inflated with their prosperity, and arrogant beyond all measure, enjoined upon all the devoted agents of the apostate Hierarchy, to promulge the preposterous doctrine, that the Bishop of Rome, was constituted by Jesus Christ, Supreme Governor, Legislator, and Judge of the universal church upon earth. To these usurpations, however zealously and ardently defended, great opposition was excited by various learned persons, who were acquainted with the sacred scriptures, and with the primitive history of the church: notwithstanding, all their resistance was vain; and it became necessary to invent some mode, by which so palpable a transformation of the ancient regimen might be defended. The blindness of the people assisted the design, and the absolute independence of the Roman Pontiff, was the unavoidable consequence. A large number of the most ingenious and corrupt partizans of the papacy, were employed to forge public conventions, acts of councils, and decretal epistles, with similar records; from which it might be infallibly demonstrated, that in the Apostolic age, and from that period to the ninth century, without interruption, the Popes had always been clothed with the same su-

preme spiritual majesty, as that in which they were then decorated. With the most ostentatious triumph these fictitious writings were adduced ; and tended in a high degree, especially the fabricated proceedings and decisions of a supposition council, alleged to have been held during the fourth century, to enrich and aggrandize the papal Hierarchy.

But whenever it appeared advisable to restore any ancient observance, which was adapted to sanctify the pretended rights of the Roman church, or to augment the dominion of its Pontiff, no scruple was admitted respecting its legality. Hence, those ecclesiastical Councils which had in a great measure vanished from the other nations, were sometimes held at Rome, because there they could be transformed into a body, whose acts would only subserve the pontifical usurpations. By the operation of this sanction, all the spurious decretals, with every other fictitious monument and record necessary to consummate the design, were incorporated among the ecclesiastical laws. "The history of the following ages verifies, in a multitude of deplorable examples, the disorders and calamities which sprung from the ambition of the aspiring Pontiffs; by their impious frauds they overturned the ancient government of the church, undermined the episcopal authority, engrossed the revenues ; and by aiming perfidious blows at the thrones of princes, endeavoured to lessen their power, and to circumscribe their dominion : until in the twelfth century, not only the claim of sovereign terrestrial power was advanced, but also assumed and exercised, by Pope Alexander III. who erected Portugal, then a province, into a separate kingdom, and invested Alphonso with all the dignity and external pomp of regal authority.

H. Terror.

The increasing gloom which the papal system diffused through every district and department of the nominal church, sanctioned the introduction of every

absurdity, which could degrade or stultify the intellectual faculties. Among the Celtic nations, the Druids, their idolatrous Priests, had been excessively venerated, especially the chief, or arch-druid. The reverence which those barbarians had been accustomed to feel for their Pagan spiritual director, was easily transferred to the Roman pontiff, whom they regarded as his successor under the Gospel dispensation; and the Beast perceiving the advantages which would result from the possession of the august prerogatives that his Heathen predecessor had enjoyed, produced a mass of ancient history, and a multitude of overwhelming arguments from the feigned religious authors, which secured his title to these extraordinary acquisitions.

That stupendous and horrible dogma, which filled all Europe, with war, rebellion and massacre, from age to age, originated in this druidical superstition. It was contended, notwithstanding all its shocking and pernicious tendencies, that all persons who were excluded from the Romish communion, either by the Pontiff or any of the inferior Bishops, thereby forfeited, not only their civil rights and immunities as citizens, but also all title to the common claims of humanity. Several of the Emperors and Kings, were thus anathematized, which filled Europe with war and desolation.

From the period when Constantine ruled, excommunication from the church had been accompanied with many distressing results; and particularly among the Barbarians, who had confided in the old Druids, its effects were extremely appaling. The true origin of the extensive and horrid influence of the European and Papal excommunication, and the unnatural power associated with it, must be imputed to this corrupt transfer from Paganism to Christianity. “Upon the pretended conversion of the uncultivated nations to the Gospel, these new and ignorant proselytes, confounded the excommunication in use among christians, with their own practice, which had been adopted by the Priests of their imaginary Gods, and be-

lieved them to be similar in nature and effect. The Roman Pontiffs were too artful not to encourage and countenance this error; and therefore employed every mean to gain credit to an opinion so well calculated to gratify their ambition, and to aggrandize the episcopal order. Excommunicated persons indeed, had been considered in all places, objects of aversion to God and men; but they were not divested of their civic rights, or of the common privileges of human nature; much less were the kings or princes, on account of exclusion from the church, supposed to forfeit, on that account, their official stations and territories. But from the eighth century, in Europe, excommunication acquired that infernal pre-eminence which dissolved all connections; so that those who were excluded from the communion of the church were degraded to a level with the beasts. Under this horrific sentence, the king, the ruler, the husband, the father, even the man, lost all their privileges, the affections of society, and the claims of nature." What could resist a sentence thus consecrated, and supported by all the numbers, energies and arms of the national power and general combination?

It was not the actual horrors which visibly succeeded the sentence of excommunication alone, that debased the mental and corporeal capacities of the people, but also the phantoms promulgated respecting the fire of purgatory: these chained the terrified victims of the Antichristian Despot in inextricable vas-salage. The apprehensions of eternal torment, of that worm which never dieth, were trifling and evanescent, contrasted with the momentous and perennial dread of that region of fire which was ever present to their sensibilities and imaginations. The besotted crowds were instructed to believe, that from hell, deliverance at death would assuredly follow, provided they had purchased a sufficiency of prayers from the Priests, and had paid the desired commutation for the supererogatory works and intercession of the saintly patrons: but from the tortures of purgatory

it was impossible, under any pretext, to realize any exemption. The artifices which were displayed to enliven the acuteness of the public perception on this topic, almost defy credibility. All the public harangues were little more than delineations of this invisible country ; interspersed with the most ridiculous narratives, and with the most stupid pretended miracles, wrought, as they affirmed, by the Priests, to release the sufferers from their misery ; thus evincing the reality of that region, and developing their mysterious influence and connection with that tremendous state of wo.

III. Enthusiasm.

The aberrations of the human mind from the evangelical standard, in consequence of the general destitution of the scriptures, displayed themselves in a vast variety of absurdities and profligacy. Two species of infatuated mania were seized by the Hierarchs as capable of being advantageously employed by them to sustain their Babylonish superstructure.—One of them was early pressed into the service—*the Monkish system.* When this practice commenced, it was merely a flight into the desert, and a temporary abode in solitude, that the storms of malignant and insatiable persecution might be evaded, until they had dissipated their fury. But the cunning of the Pontiffs speedily perceived, that the monastic life and vows might with great facility become an irresistible engine to maintain their assumed supremacy. Erroneous opinions respecting the superior sanctity of a life in celibacy, originally added to the recluses ; philosophical whimsies concerning the purer and more elevated spirituality of a life of retirement and contemplation, enlarged their numbers ; while the independence of the various classes of Monks, the jurisdiction over whom in their several dioceses, had been taken from the respective Bishops by the Popes, rendered their lives one continued scene of sensual indulgence. To these may be added, the universal belief which prevailed, that the monastic order in-

volved a peculiar and very high degree of sanctification.

Notwithstanding all the corruption which characterized the Convents and the Nunneries, they maintained their ascendancy over the benighted multitudes ; and when we remember the ignorance even of all the adherents of the Monkish institutions, except the few chiefs of the Orders, and the comparatively small number of the initiated Agents, who secretly propelled the main spring of the machinery, we cannot be surprized, that those who were induced to commingle all that was dignified and delightful in this world, with the Pope's passport to Heaven, as the only guarantee of joy in the world to come, should have enthusiastically yielded themselves to the support of a religion so highly esteemed, so easily fulfilled, that admitted every vicious indulgence for money, and which insured an entrance into the kingdom of heaven to all who could purchase the preliminary papal absolution.

But one of the most astonishing proofs of the liability of the human mind to be led astray by a sudden fantastic excitement, is discoverable in the history of the croisades, which most powerfully assisted the Papal supremacy. After the Mohammedans, during a long period, had retained pacific possession of the Eastern part of the Roman empire ; about the year 1000 of the christian era, a plan was formed to recover the ancient land of Judea, from the Mussulmen. It was declared reproachful to the christian nations, that the enemies of the cross should rule over the country hallowed by the birth, ministry, passion, and triumph of Immanuel : and it was pronounced just and necessary in the professors of christianity, to retort upon the Arabian scorpion locusts, the reproach, injuries, persecution, and calamities with which the professed believers in Jesus had been tortured by their Apostate conquerors. Accordingly, an attempt was made by Sylvester Pope, at the close of the tenth century, to inflame the European nations against the

Mohammedans; but at that period, the effort was nugatory. Afterwards, Gregory, probably the most audacious tyrant who ever ruled either in church or state, resolved in person to conduct a war for the extension of the Roman church in Asia. Political occurrences having forced him to postpone the execution of his design, it remained dormant until the year 1093, when all Europe was almost instantaneously electrified to the utmost elevation of enthusiastic rage, by the preaching and exertions of Peter the Hermit. He had witnessed with anguish unutterable, the agonies and indignities to which the pilgrims who visited Jerusalem were continually subject. On his return to Constantinople, he had invoked, ineffectually the interference of the Patriarch there, and at Rome of Urban then Pope. Instead of feeling any discouragement at their repulses, he began to peregrinate all the countries of Europe, inciting a holy war against the infidels; and pretending to exhibit a letter from heaven, addressed to all true Christians, to deliver their brethren, galled by Mohammedan oppressions. Thus was formed and prepared, the bold and apparently impracticable design, to conduct into Asia, from the utmost western extremities, a force sufficient to extirpate and for ever exclude the devotees of the Impostor of Mecca from the Holy Land.

When the epidemic madness thus excited, had raged during a short season, and a universal, simultaneous and most vehement desire was exhibited for the conquest of Palestine, and the carnage of its Infidel inhabitants, Urban the Pope, discovering that all the materials were ready prepared for the long meditated expedition, assembled at Placentia, in 1095, a council consisting of more than three hundred thousand persons; on which occasion, Urban and Peter endeavoured with all their zeal and ingenuity to excite the multitudes to the conflict. After a short interval, a second and more numerous assembly was held at Clermont, which included a large

proportion of the princes, prelates and nobles, resident within the ten horns of the Beast. Urban and the Hermit here renewed their inflammatory appeals to the infuriated passions of the people, until at length the whole assembly, as if impelled by an irresistible superintendence, exclaimed, "It is the will of God!" These words became afterwards the signal of battle, while the cross was the distinctive badge, which every volunteer in the cause wore, both for his ornament and protection.

Ignorance and superstition at this period, were so profound, that aided by the private military spirit which was universally extended, "all Europe was torn from its foundation, and seemed ready to precipitate itself in one united body upon Asia." The discontented nobles, the oppressed artizans, the impoverished peasants, and the restless monks, all enrolled themselves for this service; to decline which was infamy, being branded as cowardly and impious. A considerable proportion of the most valuable European possessions, lands, houses, gold and silver, was transferred to the church, either as bequests in case of death, or as a commutation for the pardon and guarantee of heaven, which the Pope and his agents assured to all who died during the croisade. "Old and young, men and women, priests and soldiers, monks and merchants, peasants and mechanics, all eagerly assume the cross, as an expiation for all crimes." Finally, all the preparatory arrangements having been completed, a motley half crazy multitude of enthusiastic bigots, calculated to number 300,000 men, commenced their desolating pilgrimage, "during the course of which the most enormous disorders were committed by men inured to wickedness, encouraged by example and impelled by necessity."—These commanded by Peter the Hermit, proceeded towards Constantinople; and trusting to Heaven for supernatural supplies, as they had made no provision for their subsistence on their route, "were finally obliged to obtain by plunder, that which they vainly

expected from a ceaseless miracle ;” this conduct enraged the inhabitants of the different countries through which they travelled, until they eventually assailed the disorderly licentious multitude, and slaughtered them almost without resistance. The more disciplined forces followed : and having passed the straits of Constantinople, united with the others, and encamped on the plains of Asia, an army of 700,000 croisading warriors.

The rage for the conquest of the Holy Land did not cease with this expedition : it continued during nearly two centuries, and involved eight successive croisades. Not less than two millions of people are calculated to have perished in these various attempts to overthrow the Mohammedans in Judea.

The conduct which these Croisaders exhibited, must unavoidably have ruined even the best cause. They were in one ceaseles internal feud and dissension ; and “ the horrid cruelties which they committed must have inspired the Turks with the most invincible hatred,” and rendered their resistance most furiously obstinate. When Jerusalem was captured, all the inhabitants of both sexes and every age, were massacred without mercy and without distinction. Barbarians inflamed with religious enthusiasm alone, could have acted like them. After this terrible slaughter, “ they marched over heaps of dead bodies towards the holy sepulchre, and while their hands were polluted with innocent blood, sung Anthems to the Prince of Peace : and their infatuation overcame their fury, for these ferocious victors wept aloud before the supposititious tomb of the Redeemer of Mankind. But in 1204, still greater absurdity and wickedness were displayed. The croisading frenzy infected the children, thousands of whom were conducted from the houses of the parents, of whom a part perished in the utmost misery, and the rest were sold by their pretended guardians as slaves to the Mohammedans.

Notwithstanding all the aggrandizement which the

Hierarchy received from the transfer of their wealth, which the deluded Hosts confided either to the protection or the support of their spiritual Despots; and although in the plenitude of its dominion, nothing appeared capable of diminishing its boundless sway, yet the result of the croisades after the final expulsion of the Europeans and their descendants from Syria, by the capture of Acre, was in many respects favourable to the western nations. The Arabians of that period, were much more refined and polished in their manners, and were surrounded with a high degree of magnificence in their style of living, when contrasted with the degraded and impoverished mode of existence, at that period, general throughout Europe ; and from this era, may be dated a considerable improvement in the character and condition of the inhabitants of the Imperial ten horns; as those who fled back to their original residences had imbibed a taste which emulated the splendour of the Easterns, by whom their temporary predominance in Palestine was finally extirpated.

IV. Persecution.

An enlarged detail of the various cruelties perpetrated through the instrumentality of this Papal determination to possess Supreme terrestrial jurisdiction would combine a considerable proportion of the European history during three centuries. Although from the establishment of the "Man of Sin," the witnesses commenced and prolonged their prophesying in sackcloth, yet the doctrine had not been widely promulgated or generally practised, that it was lawful or evangelical, to destroy human life for a rejection of the Romish traditions. "Persecution is the spirit of Popery;" but at that period it had been encompassed by restraints, of which even all the domineering principles of the haughty Pontiffs did not venture to attempt the demolition. But from about the year 1200, when Gregory had centered in the Pope an unlimited and almost undisputed prerogative to dethrone Emperors, dispossess Kings, banish Princes, and degrade

Prelates; when the hardships of the papal usurpations were more acutely realized, and the odious characteristics of the Roman Beast were developed in all their debasing, vindictive, and appalling qualities; a large and extensively diffused augmentation to the numbers, piety and learning of the opponents of the Romish apostacy almost simultaneously was manifested. It was determined therefore if possible, to crush the impending audacity, which would dare to trample upon the Beast's authority.

Two measures were eventually adopted, to silence all present murmurers, and to terrify others from all future commotion. "Christians did not always assume the badge of the cross to annihilate infidels: the madness of Bigotry, and the spirit of persecution" produced a croisade for the destruction of the servants of Jesus. In the southern provinces of France, particularly, resided considerable multitudes of persons who had become very obnoxious to the Popish church and clergy, on account of their aversion from the prevalent doctrinal errors, and the universal ambition of those who filled the ecclesiastical orders; and at length, they refused to acknowledge as ministers of the holy religion of Immanuel, men totally destitute of humility, meekness, self-denial and philanthropy. Innocent III. Pope in the earlier part of the thirteenth century, alarmed at their principles and opposition to his claims, with that of the subordinate papal adherents, resolved to extirpate them by force, or convert them by intimidation. A croisade was proclaimed, indulgences granted, pardons issued, absolutions distributed and Heaven promised to all who would engage in the execrable design; by these means a very formidable army was marshalled. The innocent Albigenses, Waldenses, and their Associates, by whatever denomination they were known, were pursued by their insatiably cruel persecutors, and myriads expired by the swords of these blood-hounds. Their cities were pillaged and razed, their inhabitants were butchered with all the

insensibility of those who were so benighted as to believe, that in martyring those "of whom the world was not worthy," they were really doing God service; for the besotted Priests like incendiaries, generally commenced the work of devastation by enkindling the conflagration in which the towns and villages were consumed. The infernal fury that prevailed on those occasions, may easily be estimated, from one instance which occurred during this holy war. When the city of Beziers was taken, among the Waldenses was a number of persons, most devoutly and inalienably united to the papacy. At that capture, sixty thousand inhabitants were upon one occasion put to the sword; some who commanded were desirous to spare the true Sons of the Church who had resided among the enemies of "the Man of Sin;" but his holiness' Legate fired with zeal for the mother church, cried out, "*kill them all! for the Lord knoweth them who are his.*"

During these "great tribulations," it is supposed that at least one million of Waldenses were slaughtered in France alone: "when exquisite punishments availed little, and the evil was exasperated by the remedy which had been unseasonably applied, and their number increased daily, at length complete armies were raised against them; the event of which was, they were slain, put to flight, despoiled of their goods and dignities, and dispersed into all countries, but not convinced. The scattering of these people only diffused their faith; which afterwards appeared in Switzerland, Bohemia and Britain.

But it was speedily discovered, that the power of an armed force, embodied in military array, was totally insufficient to exterminate the light which was so rapidly and secretly diffusing on the subject of the Pope's genuine claim to the character of Antichrist. Armies could depopulate towns and villages, but could not easily enter into that minuteness of scrutiny, which investigated every householder's library

and heart. A new machine was therefore invented, which should not only coerce the bodies, but also enslave the souls of men. The persons who began to dissent from the Romish superstitions were dispersed in several parts of Europe, and much as they differed from each other on many other points of theology, yet on one topic they were altogether unanimous, and similarly defended their system by arguments deduced from the sacred scriptures. They all promulgated "that the public and established religion was a motley system of errors and superstition; and that the dominion which the Popes had usurped over christians, as also the authority which they exercised in religious matters, were unlawful and tyrannical." Raymond, of Thoulouse, and other independent nobles, encouraged these dissenters from the church of Rome; until Innocent authorised some of the Monkish rabble, among whom was the famous Dominic, "to extirpate heresy, in all its various forms and modifications, without being at all scrupulous in the use of any methods which might be necessary to effect this salutary purpose. These persons were assisted by that innumerable swarm of vermin, the mendicant Friars, who, like the Egyptian frogs, "came into the houses, and bedchambers, and ovens, and kneading troughs" of all the people. To these Monks were allowed every possible privilege, to travel according to inclination, to converse with all persons, to instruct in every place, and in fine, by their sanctimonious exterior, they so imposed upon all orders of men, and so highly were they venerated, that to wear a part of a Friar's rejected wardrobe, or to be interred in a Mendicant's cemetery, was the highest object of universal solicitude; until their influence became so irresistible, that scarcely a transaction, from the Prince's council on national affairs, through every ramification of society, even to a beggar's extreme unction, escaped their personal notice and particular interference. Of these every-where present supporters of the Roman Pontiff's authority, which they de-

monstrated against all civil potentates, and against all the inferior orders of the Hierarchy, with incredible ardour and obstinacy, and astonishing success, four tribes existed ; the Dominicans, thus denominat-ed from Dominic ; the Franciscans, from Francis ; the Carmelites, who pretended to be successors of Elijah, who prophesied on Mount Carmel ; and the Augustini-ans, who were nominal adherents of Augustine. Against these Mendicants, many persons offered their arguments and their expositions of scripture, but in vain ; the Pontifical supremacy defied all opposition, and until the Reformation by Luther, they remained uncontested Masters of all Europe ; desolating this world by their intrigues and ambition, and depopulat-ing heaven by their errors and abominations.

After Dominic had commenced his exterminating system, it was ascertained to be so profitable ; that a general system of religious espionage, the *Inquisition*, became the object of fond attachment. But from the earliest period, the people displayed a formidable opposition to a contrivance which committed the reputation, property, liberty, and life, not only of the father and husband, but also of the mother and wife and children, to the third and fourth generation, to the jurisdiction of a tribunal, always secret, invariably unjust, and ever murderous. The Pontifical supre-mcy was, notwithstanding so vast, that it was finally de-termined, “a council of inquisitors, consisting of one Priest, and three laymen,” shall be erected in *every ci-ty*. These “*heresy-hunters*” were bound *by oath*, “not only to seek for heretics in towns, houses, cellars, and other secret places, but also in fields, woods, caves, &c. Thus commenced the *infamous Inquisition*, which was instrumental in destroying such myriads of Her-etics, some by terror, for grace divine alone could withstand the diabolical ingenuity of their torments ; and the majority by fire, being transported, it may be evangelically hoped, to that world of joy, of which the Lord of life and glory had said “where I am, there shall my servant be.”

The Inquisition, thus sanctioned by all the spiritual terrors of the Papacy, and by all the arms of the national Governors, was eventually established as an infallible Judicatory; of course, its power was resistless, and its cruelties, for it manufactured every possible instrument to torture, most horrific. These courts ordinarily comprised three Inquisitors: query, as the quorum of many ecclesiastical Protestant tribunals consists of "three Lords of the Inquisition;" were their number and their practice derived from the same source and bull?—the Inquisitors were absolute judges, from whose decision, no appeal on earth existed; but this, as it precluded all hope, did not torment the *falsely accused delinquents* with expectation of subsequent deliverance. That we may in some measure comprehend the odious nature of this infernal invention, listen to a summary of its proceedings. The Lords of the Inquisition directed a class of persons called *Qualifiers*, who by order of their masters, examined the crimes of their prisoners; with them were united *Familiars*, who were solely occupied in searching for culprits. All complaints were secret, and condemnation almost uniformly succeeded the accusation. The supposed offender was generally seized at midnight; and all the bonds of relationship, all the claims of humanity expired, when they became the subjects of that infuriated bigotry which swayed this tremendous tribunal. No intimation was ever given of the party who adduced the charge; and a denial insured, either the highest degree of intimidation by the exhibitions of the torture, or the most exquisite laceration and torment actually inflicted; all intended to coerce the individual to acknowledge that guilt, which would then apparently justify the barbarity of those punishments, that followed the definitive judgment to the fire, which these human Monsters pronounced.

Wealth, "booty and beauty" constituted the grand recommendations to inquisitorial inspection. Pov-

erty and ugliness had no charms for those voluptuaries ; and if ever they formed a part of an Auto da Fe, an act of Faith, the title desecrated by their merciless conflagrations and ignominious displays, it was merely a hypocritical mask, to conceal their yast confiscations ; and their galaxy of confined female youth, first by fright, induced to submit to the Inquisitors' caresses, and then murdered after concupiscence was satiated. If terror, or pain, or mental debility, arising from the agonies which the wretched prisoners had experienced, or promises of deliverance and life had seduced the miserable creatures into a confession of the criminalities alleged against them ; immediately, the supposititious culprits were adjudged, with great ceremony, to be delivered over to Satan, through the medium of previous racking, and subsequent exterior odious disguise, decapitation and fire. In short, no tongue can detail, no mind imagine, and no heart even feel, the tremendous horrors which dwelt within the walls of Dominic.

This despotic and sanguinary tribunal, however, excited the revengeful tempers of many persons, and in some parts of the Beast's dominions it was found impracticable to introduce its abominations. "Conrad, the first German Inquisitor, was a victim of that wrath, which his merciless measures" had roused ; and the "Lords of the holy Inquisition" often experienced exact retaliation from the resentment of the oppressed multitudes. "But so resolutely determined was the Popedom upon universal domination, and so exasperated at the smallest exhibition of resistance to its usurped authority, that no measure was neglected which could enforce its claims, and sanctify its jurisdiction, and establish its power." The Mendicant Friars, dispersed in every city, town and hamlet, were continually on the alert, to discover heretical and disaffected persons ; and assimilated to their master, Satan, they assumed every possible shape to execute their abominable em-

ployment. At one period, they were like ravening wolves, prowling into every house, to complete the malignity of that adversary, Abaddon, who “as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.” Anon, they were transformed into Angels of light, seducing where they could not terrify ; and by every artifice endeavoring to persuade persons of their own discontent with the Hierarchy, that they might receive some acknowledgement of similarity of feeling and opinion ; on which to transmit an accusation to the Dominican demons incarnate, who contrived the compound execrable mysteries, which filled the gloomy vaults of the Inquisition, with groans and every mortal wo, and the upper rooms with agony and pollution. So keen were their perceptions, that not only a word, which dishonoured the Inquisitors or the system, became the signal of proscription ; but certain appearances of the countenance were represented as infallible indications of the mind and heart ; and he who could not exult in the murder of his Father, or Child, or Brother, or in the rape of his Wife, or Mother, or Sister, was suspected, apprehended, and if not himself transferred as fuel for the combustion, was most assuredly and irreparably ruined, especially if he was known to be opulent. But it is still more astonishing, that many of the civil Rulers should, in their various countries, have permitted the Inquisition to erect a tribunal, and to prepare instruments of torture and death, not only independent of the national jurisdiction, but paramount to all law, and whose inconceivable barbarities, the Princes of Europe, when they were crowned, solemnly obliged themselves by oath to execute. This eventually constituted a permanent croisade ; so that from the commencement of the thirteenth century, until “the ever-blessed Reformation,” all the horrors of the first ages were renewed ; and the wretched Waldenses, Albigenses, Leonists, Lollards, and the other genuine christians, by whatever epithet distinguished, realized the same fate, from “the Man of Sin,” and his subordinate

agents, ecclesiastical councils, and *un-Holy Lords of the Inquisition*, which the primitive Christians had experienced from Nero, Domitian, Trajan, Galerius, Dioclesian, and the other Imperial Roman Barbarians who had issued their various edicts to exterminate the terrestrial kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

We have thus briefly investigated the most ostensible causes, which combined to perpetuate that stupendous despotism, Popery. In the history of our inundane affairs, who can avoid feeling rapture in the prophetical contemplation, that the period is rapidly approaching, when this mountain of corruption shall disappear from the world; who ought not to rejoice, that she who "saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow," shall be utterly destroyed. John saw the "mighty angel who took up a stone like a great mill-stone, and cast it into the sea, saying; Thus with violence shall that great city, Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all: and the voice of harpers and musicians, and pipers, and trumpeters shall be heard no more at all in thee; and no craftsman of whatsoever craft he be, shall be found any more in thee; and the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride, shall be heard no more at all in thee; for in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth." Let us not by fictitious sensibilities, attempt to sympathize with a system of incurable depravity! When we oppose the Romish pestilence and Apostacy, we are only contending against a contrivance, which is derogatory to God, and degradation to the human family; which tyrannizes with divine assumptions, over the bodies and souls, and brutalizes all the faculties of men. But all the artifices which the Friars contrived, all the terrors which the Inquisition circulated, all the delusions which the adherents of the Beast promulgated, and all the tortures which general military ravage, and more

individualized persecution could disseminate, by the superintending providence of God, were rendered instrumental to the birth and growth of that spirit of resistance, which burst forth in all its forceful ebullitions, when the third Angel cried “with a loud voice, if any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever.”

Righteously, therefore, does every christian feel alarm at the resuscitation of a system, which formerly covered Europe with gross darkness, and filled it with misery and vice. That within the Protestant portion of the ten horns of the Beast, the Papal cause is increasing, admits of no doubt; and no other mode to counteract it apparently exists, but the tuition of youth in elementary knowledge, and the dissemination of the sacred volume by means of the Missionaries.

But from this review, we may derive some valuable instruction. How great is our privilege, that we dwell in a land, the illumination of which renders all Jesuitical machinations to delude us, ineffectual!—How vast our obligations to the great head of the church, who has delivered us from the dread of Papal excommunication, and the mysterious horrors of that Purgatory, which diminished all the energies of mankind, and which peopled the aerial regions and the dormitories of the dead, with the most terrific spectres ever present, and ever inimical!—How superior is our allotment! a crazy enthusiastic Monk cannot now subvert the foundations of human society, that a fiend-like despot may be aggrandized to god-like pre-eminence. How enrapturing the thought; that ere long, neither the Russian with his Knout, shall trammel man within his superstitious absurdities; nor shall a Turk with his Bastinado, bow him to profess the delusions of Mohammed’s apostacy; nor shall a Spanish Inquisitor, while he racks vitality

from the heart, extort blasphemy from the mouth ! Their arms shall be withered for ever ; and the great multitude shall all combine in the extatic chorus, “ Alleluia ; for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.” Amen.

*The two witnesses who prophesy, “clothed in sackcloth,”—
and the events which produced “the ever-blessed Reformation.”*

Connected with the establishment, progress, and final overthrow of the apostate Hierarchy, contrived by the “Man of Sin;” John in Patmos beheld the characteristic features of the witnesses who should commence their prophetical opposition to the Papal perversions of evangelic truth, almost simultaneously with the consummate evolution of this appalling despotism. The prediction recorded in the Apocalypse 11: 1—14, is a condensed narrative of the successive testimony, which in all ages has been promulgated, with various energy, against the enemies of the unadulterated gospel of Jesus. It has been already intimated that the mystical number 666 can be applied to nothing but the Latin church; and it is not a little remarkable that Irenæus, the disciple of Polycarp, nearly 500 years prior to the developement of this congeries of abominations, concluded from his scriptural researches, through divine illumination, that Rome would be the seat of the Beast. This is a plain, complete, and the only applicable exposition of the subject, which proceeds from the very earliest antiquity; for Irenæus affirms, that this was the decision of them who saw and conversed with the beloved Apostle; and consequently it is not improbable, that he was permitted to communicate this interpretation on his infallible authority, that the fulfilment of the prophecy in subsequent ages, might render the facts connected with it more remarkable. One public circumstance, the Papal ordinance, that all the services of the church should be in the Latin tongue, which

was authoritatively promulgated in the year 666, seems to determine with undeniable accuracy the application of the mystery.

In addition to this authenticated event, the appearance of a regular dissent from the exactions and mandates of the Roman ecclesiastical tyranny, cannot be traced to a more distant period, than the era, when the worship of God, through the universal banishment of the vernacular languages, became a mixture of unintelligible incomprehensible gibberish, and of solemn ceremonial mummary. To illustrate the nature of that prophecy which the witnesses pronounced against Babylon the Great; and to mark the different periods of their manifestation—they may be divided into two classes; individuals, and societies.

I. Individuals.

The controversy respecting Images, it has been already evinced, produced a vast protest against the Romish idolatrous bulls. Emperors, Councils, and a large number of Prelates dispersed in their various dioceses, endeavoured to resist the introduction of this Pagan corruption; but in vain: the Dragon and the Beast eventually triumphed. Clement and Samson, two Culdees in Scotland, were excommunicated, for their aversion from the Pope's supremacy, Image worship, Masses, and the Celibacy of the Priests. After these, arose Bede, in England, who displayed the Romish corruptions with great boldness and animation. Alcuin, in France, in consequence of his detestation of Idolatry, and his resolute irrefutable arguments against that monstrous fiction, Transubstantiation, was arraigned several years after his death, and branded as a Heretic. Agobard in France, also stedfastly resisted the introduction of the Images, and as a consequence, his writings were condemned to the flames. Claudio, in Italy, vehemently defended the truth against the Pagan Christians; and, through the divine benediction, so successful were his labors, that it is probable the seed which he strewed, afterwards sprung up among the valleys of

Piedmont, and produced that abundant harvest of Christians, the immortal Waldenses.

In the ninth century, John Scotus, for his acute resistance to the introduction of the Papal corruptions, was murdered in England by his own Students when instructing them at Oxford. Bertram in France, and Maurus in Germany, fearlessly but without success, also wielded "the sword of the spirit which is the word of God" against "the son of perdition." Haymo an Anglo-Saxon, Fortunatus and Hulderic Germans, Lupus and Remigius Italians, and especially Hincmar, openly defied the Pope, and trampled with scorn upon his bulls and decretals.

Of the tenth century, scarcely a vestige remains; the Papal advocates describe this period, "as the most debauched and wicked, the most illiterate and ignorant since the coming of Christ; the Popes during 150 years were more like Apostates than Apostles. Christ then appeared to be in a very deep slumber when the ship was covered with waves; and disciples were wanting, who by their cries might awaken him, being themselves all fast asleep." However, some few like lights shining in a dark place, remonstrated against the prevalent degeneracy and superstition. Smaragdus, a Saxon, confuted many of the Popish errors; Alfric in England was very zealous against the corporeal presence; Bernet in Scotland resisted the attempt to legalize celibacy; and at Oxford many persons pronounced the Papacy to be Antichrist.

Notwithstanding the following age was ingulphed in a darkness equally gross with that which enshrouded the prior century; and amid all the croisading enthusiasm, much effect accompanied the energetic writings and exertions of a few renowned individuals. Berengarius in France, so effectually counteracted the doctrine of Transubstantiation, that immense multitudes rejected this cardinal dogma of modern Popery. Bruno likewise strenuously engaged in the conflict for his support; Damasius in Italy,

pointed his spiritual weapons against the Beast himself in his pride and majesty : Fulbert and Ido in France, and Anselm in England, co-operated in the same warfare, by promulgating a considerable proportion of evangelic truth.

Thus ended the almost impenetrable gloom of the “obscure, iron and leaden age ;” for during the twelfth century, the morning’s dawn upon the ten kingdoms is perceptible. The number of the witnesses indefinitely multiplied. Fluentius in Italy was menaced with the utmost terror, for preaching, that “Antichrist had entered the world.” Bernard with all his bigotry, loudly vociferated against the prevalent corruptions, and most eloquently demonstrated, that the Apocalyptic Beast was the Latin Pope. Arnold of Brescia, for the resistless force with which he combated the monkish heresies, was burnt at Rome ; and his ashes were committed to the river Tiber, to prevent the people’s veneration of his character and virtues. Peter de Bruis and Henry, in consequence of their doctrines, so offensive and inimical to the Papacy, were martyred ; the former by fire, the latter by imprisonment for life. To which names may be added Joachim of Calabria, who fervently taught, that the then Pope was that Antichrist, “who is exalted above all that is called God, and worshipped.”

Almaric, in the next century, suffered death, for denying Transubstantiation and Image-worship; and because he had declared himself against the Hierarchy, his bones were burnt after his martyrdom. Grosthead of Lincoln was so inveterate an opponent of the Papacy, that he was denominated “the Maul of the Romans ;” and when “he was excommunicated by the Pontiff,” he defied him and his anathema. To these may be subjoined, Matthew Paris and John Scotus, whose testimony against the frauds, pomp, tyranny, follies and superstition of the Apostate Hierarchy, hastened the progress and expanded the influence of the light and the truth. But these

men, great and valuable as were their labours, were much obscured by the irradiations of Wickcliff, “the morning star of the Reformation.” In him, every Christian hails a Brother; every good citizen a distinguished Philanthropist, and all who are engaged in the promulgation of the gospel, one of their earliest Coadjutors. Notwithstanding all the important effects produced by his writings and preaching, his strongest assault upon the citadel of papal delusion was displayed in his translation of the holy Bible into the English language. He remained safe amid every storm, and finally died in peace; but about forty years subsequent to his death, his bones, or those of some other person were burnt by order of the council of Constance. From this period until the thunders of Luther and his Brethren reverberated, the opponents of the Beast augmented in number, diligence and hardihood. Sawtre a preacher, and Cobham a noble, were burnt in England for the sake of the truth. Jerome Savanarola experienced the same miserable punition at Florence, because he urged a reformation in the church; and the murderous arm of persecution was raised to extirpate every individual who dared to dissent from the predominant authority. Many in Bohemia, France, Germany and England, both by their preaching and writings, assailed with ceaseless and unintermitting vigour, the traditions and practice of the popedom; and vast numbers of persons were called to seal the truth with their blood. But of all the single personages whose talents, influence and virtues attracted the most distinctive attention at that era, and in every posterior age, John Huss and Jerome are the chiefs.

John Huss, in consequence of his decided superiority of genius and intelligence, had been appointed rector of the university of Prague; and from the influence which this elevated station gave him, his fulminations against the various abuses and impositions of the Romish church attracted unbounded

attention and commanded general credence. In consequence of his denunciations against the Hierarchy he was excommunicated at Rome, and having been precluded from preaching, could only instruct by his written works. The infamous council of Constance enjoined his attendance before them, to declare his faith; which summons he obeyed, having been provided with an imperial passport guaranteeing his personal safety; and where he arrived, attended by John de Chlum and other grandees of dignity and virtue. He was speedily accused, arrested and imprisoned. The imperial authority was violated, the Emperor's promise annulled, and after every perversion of decency, and every mockery of justice, he was consumed in the flames. Jerome had gone to Constance to defend and support his friend Huss, but perceiving that no benefit could result from his interposition, he escaped; but prior to his arrival at Prague, he was seized, and conducted back in chains to Constance; where he experienced every possible indignity. Bound to a post, with his hands chained to his neck, he remained ten days supported only with bread and water. After some time he was introduced to the council, and by menaces and promises was induced to retract his sentiments; but being through divine grace, reinstated in his fortitude, he boldly declared his repentance for his former dereliction, and being condemned, followed his friend Huss in the chariot of fire, to that glorious region, where "neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat."

H. Societies.

The origin of those associated Christians who combined to resist the papal usurpations, is lost in the gloom of that midnight which enveloped the church after the elevation of "the Man of Sin" until the twilight of intelligence re-appeared, about 250 years prior to the Reformation.

These early protestants seem to have been a branch of the eastern Paulicians: and were primarily

denominated the Cathari or Puritans, because they were “not conformed to the world;” afterwards being condemned by a council at Albigia they were called Albigenses, and as their principal residence was near Lyons in France, they were designated as Leonists; and of them the following remarkable testimonial is recorded by a Dominican Inquisitor general. “Among all the sects, which still are or have been, there is not any more pernicious to the church, than the Leonists. First, because it is older; for some say it has endured from the time of Sylvester; others from the Apostles—second, because it is more general; for there is scarcely any country where this sect is not—third, because they have a great show of piety, live justly before men, and believe ‘all things rightly concerning God, only they blaspheme the church of Rome and the clergy.’” But their history during five hundred years after the commencement of the witnesses prophesying in sackcloth is either buried in almost total oblivion, or has not yet been minutely discovered. From that period, they appear in more prominent features, and their principles, doctrines, character and sufferings constitute a very interesting portion of ecclesiastical annals.

The Waldenses enjoy the pre-eminence. They were much invigorated and their unity cemented, by the acquisition of Peter Waldo, probably the first of the reformed propagators of the Bible: a merchant, by whose labours and zeal about the year 1170, the Gospels and other parts of the Scripture, with other pure writings of antiquity, were translated and dispersed in the French language. Their interior economy it is unnecessary at large to detail; it is sufficient to observe, that in all the predominant and essential articles of Christian faith, they believed with Galvin the Genevan Reformer. Of their Christian attainments and practice, the following facts will afford convincing evidence. During a fiery persecution in Merindol and Provence; a monk was despatched to convince the heretics, as they were

calumniously named, of their errors, that the authorised barbarities might cease. The preaching Friar speedily fled from his mission in disgrace, candidly acknowledging, that during his whole life he had not known so much of the scriptures as he had been taught in a few days during his conferences with the heretics. Another missionary avowed, that he had imbibed more of the doctrine of salvation from the replies of the Waldensian children in their catechisms, than from all the instructions of the Sorbonne university at Paris. Lewis XII. king of France, overcome by the clamorous importunity of the Dominicans, commanded two dignified persons to investigate the character and lives of these anathematized Christians. After their research, they reported, that "in visiting all their parishes and temples, they discovered neither images nor Roman ceremonies, but that they could not perceive the smallest trace of the crimes with which they were charged ; that the Sabbath was most strictly and devoutly observed ; that their children were baptized according to the rules of the primitive church, and instructed in the articles of christian faith, and the commandments of God." Lewis having receiyed this testimony, affirmed with a great oath, "they are better than myself or my people."

The miseries which they endured for the sake of the Lord Jesus, were of the most acute nature. It is improper to describe the barbarous indecencies with which they were agonized ; and too painful to unfold the perfidious hypocrisy and malignant baseness, which accompanied the scenes of carnage and desolation that invariably attended the march of three hundred thousand armed men, instigated by avarice and superstition, and of the moveable dungeons, in which Dominic and his myrmidons, incarcerated their victims, prior to their ascent to Paradise, in the chariot of fire. One fact in its connection with posterior history, will evince the extent of their woes, and the unutterable folly of persecution. During the first 20

years after the establishment of the Inquisition, the infernal havoc among the followers of the Lamb had been so boundless, that at that era, some of the more considerate French Bishops, requested the inquisitorial Monks to postpone their arrests and imprisonment of the people, until their Grand Master in iniquity, the Pope, had been informed of the numbers who then were apprehended ; for whom, they declared it was impossible for them either to provide ample subsistence, or to procure stone and mortar, sufficient for the erection of prisons to confine them. “The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church ;” for notwithstanding from this period until 1530, three hundred years after, the incessant oppressions and persecutions of Antichrist worried these sheep with unrelenting tortures, which they sustained with admirable constancy, patience, and fortitude ; at the commencement of the reformation, nearly one million of persons were known to profess the religion of the primitive Waldenses. “Here is the patience of the saints ; here are they who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus : blessed are the dead who die in the Lord, that they may rest from their labours, and their works do follow them.”

As a regular consequence of the unceasing deprivations and dangers to which the Waldenses were exposed, those who could fly, escaped into other regions; where in secrecy, they might worship God according to their own conscientious dictates and the word of truth. Of these the Bohemians and Moravians formed themselves into a compact body ; and after the murder of Huss and Jerome, under the command of John Ziska, a man of most inflexible resolution and undaunted courage, resolved to defend themselves against persecution, and if they were molested, to maintain their rights, by force. After a long contest, in which every act of horrid cruelty was perpetrated, the Roman policy prevailed ; part of the warriors was cajoled into submission to the Pontiff of Satan ; while the remainder, thus enfeebled, became the

prey of imperial armies and the inquisitors' chains. Yet they survived the tornado : immense multitudes united with Luther and Calvin and Zuinglius ; and a few who retained their predilections for the customs and economy of their ancestors, in modern times, have emerged from obscurity, as those pioneers of the Missionary cause, the Moravians or United Brethren.

In England, these old Protestants were originally reproached by the epithet Lollards ; and in a later period, as Wickliffites : and it is not a little remarkable, that the family-likeness among these pilgrims scattered in Piedmont, Bohemia and England, should have been so uniform ; for in all the prime qualities, and in all the distinctive features of the children adopted by God into "the household of faith," they were identical. They abjured the Papacy ; despised human traditions ; adhered solely to the oracles of God ; rejected all the superstitions which had been incorporated with the Christian system ; exemplified all the devotion, meekness and purity of the followers of the Lamb ; and knowing in whom they had believed, and that he was able to keep that which they had committed to him against that day ; patiently submitted to every excruciation, which hell-inspired ingenuity could invent, and raging malignity inflict.

It would have been easy to amplify this catalogue, but our limits preclude enlargement. Truth is uniform ; to it with some exceptions and additions, the opponents of the Papacy generally bowed ; the experience of Christians is very much assimilated in all its grand peculiarities, in this they were but *one* ; their testimony, although it was almost coeval with the exaltation of "the Man of Sin," to whom the dragon gave "his power, and his seat, and great authority," was nearly identical, although affected by the continual mutations of 350 years ; and our modern arguments against the Papal Hierarchy, are nothing more than repetitions a little varied, of the original resonations of the everlasting gospel which

the angel whom John saw flying in the midst of heaven, “preached unto them that dwell on the earth;” thereby verifying with indubitable certainty, that the individual and associated witnesses, whom we have already enumerated, with their assistants, are “the two olive-trees and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth.”

This view of that glorious army of confessors who in every age contested the usurpations of Antichrist, necessarily involves the question; with what success were their efforts attended, or to comprise a larger circle of enquiry, what were the more immediate visible causes which effected the partial demolition of the sway of the beast, who “had two horns like a lamb, and spake as a dragon? They may be classed in two divisions.

I. Internal.

1. *The great schism in the popedom, by the divine superintendence, manifestly enfeebled the energies of the Apostate Hierarchy.* It commenced in the arrogance of the then haughty Pope, and the boldness of Philip, king of France. Boniface informed Philip, that he as well as all other princes were obliged, by a divine command, in all political, civil and religious affairs, to submit to the papal authority.—With the utmost contempt, Philip retorted on the pontiff in this style; “we give your fool’s head to know, that in temporals we are subject to no person.” The Pope immediately declared, that Jesus Christ had subjected the whole human family to his authority, and that every man who disbelieved this dogma, was excluded from all possibility of salvation. In reply, the French king employed Nogaret, the most intrepid and inveterate enemy to the Popes, who appeared before Luther, to publish a catalogue of accusations against Boniface, including a mass of crime, and who demanded a council to dethrone the spiritual tyrant. A sentence of excommunication against the king and his adherents followed; upon which Nogaret with a small force surprised the

unwary Pope, and during the short period of his capture, displayed to him the most marked and insulting indignity; but he was rescued, and speedily after his return to Rome, died of rage and anguish at his disgrace and disappointment. His successor reversed the anathema against the French king, but having filled the papal chair during a short period only, an adherent of Philip's was elected Pope, who removed the seat of the papacy from Rome to Avignon in France, where it remained during 70 years. At this period began the grand separation; for after the election of Urban to the papacy, many of the Cardinals offended by his arrogance, withdrew from Rome, and elected another Pope, Clement, who resided at Avignon; from this era, until the council of Constance annulled the authority and prerogatives of all the Popes, by the election of Martin, the Hierarchy was involved in a dissension, which filled all Europe with distress, calamity and dismay. Two or three Popes, supported by some of the horns of the Beast, maintained one ceaseless contention; and each agitated the world with his thundering anathemas against the other and all his associates. Notwithstanding the extinction of all sense of religion, and the most scandalous profligacy which even pretended not to concealment; the authority of the Popes received a blow incurable; and multitudes believed, that the Gospel of Christ required not such a temporal and abhorrent supreme head: these, after this deadly wound was healed, doubtless furnished much of the materials for the fiery martyrdom.

2. *The degeneracy of the ecclesiastical orders* constituted another prominent reason of that excitement which filled all Europe with commotion, when Luther enkindled the torch of truth, to irradiate the gloomy recesses and arcana of the Monkish system. "That word, *Reformation*, said Martin, is more hated at Rome, than thunderbolts from heaven, or the last day of judgment."

In the re-action of human affairs, it is not a little marvellous, that those same vices and enormities which introduced, aggrandized and established, eventually obstructed, diminished and undermined the Papacy. Cruelty and slaughter gave energy to the popedom; and their ravages enkindled that enmity and opposition, which have been assailing it with forceful and incessant success. Avarice and ambition impelled the Monster in his ascent, and secured the acquisition of the triple crown; and the inordinacy of both which was subsequently developed, taught men to feel, then to think, and finally to rebel against a jurisdiction, which robbed all the comforts, and palsied all the efforts of civil society, and which rendered Christianity a burden instead of rest; and the anticipations of that “life and immortality brought to light by the Gospel,” a source of never-failing gloom and anguish.

Men will submit to the yoke to a certain degree; but when their chains are too heavy, they become furious and break them. Every sensible person anticipated a moral concussion. One of the Cardinals addressing the Pope respecting the mission of a legate to England, to demand money to supply his magnificent voluptuousness, said, “Holy Father, we treat Christian kingdoms as Balaam used his ass: I am afraid they will imitate her; she, by the severity of his blows, brayed most horribly, and so will they.” The prediction has been fulfilled. If to these are subjoined the shameless impurity, the notoriously unmeasurable perfidy, their puerile superstitions, and their traditional absurdities; we shall feel no surprise, that combined with other causes, which even the Pope in all the boundless plenitude of his power was totally unable to control, the progress of the light and the truth received an impetus lasting and irresistible.

II. Exterior.

Some of these causes have already been incidentally noticed. But in addition to the flood of human

literature, the tide of which continued to swell and accelerate its progress—the warring witnesses, who fought “the good fight of faith”—the silent but inextinguishable impulse given by the partial glimmerings of illumination imbibed by those who returned from the croisades—the melioration of their tastes respecting terrestrial comforts—a comparative tone of independence of character, resulting from their long enjoyed semi-freedom, connected with their unrestrained licentious, undiciplined mode of life, while on their pilgrimages, and during their residence in the Holy land—and the opposition exhibited by successive princes, especially after the daring defiance of Philip to Boniface, and the high prerogatives assumed by the civil potentates at the council of Constance—three other events in their combination, decidedly introduced a new era in the history of the world ; and in a very lucid degree, developed the wisdom of Jehovah in his providential government, and the mercy of Immanuel in the direction of that “church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.”

1. *Typography.*—This art was discovered about the year 1440, and its universal adoption, has revolutionized mankind. Now it has become, in the plastic hands of fervid Christians, a machine, which like the miraculous tongues of the Apostles, proclaims to all people in their own “tongues, the wonderful works of God.” The first purely evangelical Reformer, a printed *Bible*, appeared in 1450. But even this invention, which scorns all human eulogy, would have been circumscribed in its utility, if the Turks had not driven the superior Greeks into the Latin provinces.

2. *The overthrow of the Constantinopolitan Empire.*—When the Turks had captured the imperial city, Constantinople, they speedily conquered all the European possessions belonging to the Greek Emperors. To avoid the calamities which they saw impending over their native land, multitudes of the most learned Greeks fled into Italy, and Germany, and transpor-

ed with them the intellectual treasures which had so long been immured in the monasteries, and other depositories of learning. These, through "the establishment of the press, were quickly disseminated in all countries, and excited an unquenchable thirst after knowledge; so that the ancient Latin and Greek languages became the objects of general study, and none of the higher orders were contented without the perfect acquisition of those tongues which then formed the chief avenue to all intelligence. This connected with the diffusion of the sacred scriptures, not only enlightened, but also purified the principles and characters of men. Notwithstanding this conjunction of fortunate events, the progress must have been very slowly gradual, had not the adventurous Columbus unveiled to astonished Europe nearly one half of our globe, which until his first voyage across the Atlantic, had been totally concealed, from human observation and intercourse.

3. *The discovery of America.*—This event filled Europe with universal enterprize; all the nobler qualities of the heart, and all the dignified capacities of the mind, in their combined refinement and energy, which had so long continued dormant under the iron yoke of Antichrist, here found ample room for display. It was impossible, in the very nature of things, that after marine voyages so long protracted at such great distances, with novel books as their only resource for amusement, and where the Pope's name had never been heard; men should not realize some feelings of that superiority, the consequence of their being so long uncontroled, which would take advantage of the first concurrence of things, and determined them to escape from shackles, in which their own superstitions no longer confined them.

But the investigation of these topics, constitutes no part of our design: it is sufficient for us to know and rejoice, that *now* it would be equally easy to confine the rays of the sun, as the illumination of stereotype; that ere long the intelligence communicated by the

christian Greeks, of the 15th century, to the residents in the Beast's domains, will be superabundantly repaid by the Protestants; when in the primitive houses of prayer, at Constantinople, the Mufti shall no more mumble his delusions, nor a worshipper of images chant his Litany to the Virgin Mary; and that the western hemisphere, having imbibed the spirit of that religion, for the sake of which the Puritans peopled the then wilds of New England, will endeavor to promulge the influence of that gospel, until all nations "shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; and they shall sit every man under his vine, and under his fig tree, and none shall make them afraid."

Here let us pause to admire the stupendous administration of the High and Lofty One, who inhabiteth Eternity." Upon what minute events, often depend the most important effects. In our period of the church, we are almost lost in wonder, that so simple, so obvious, and so effectual a plan to diffuse the savour of a Redeemer's name, as the promulgation of the bible in every language, had never been practically adopted, until within the last 20 years; and yet those institutions, organized to diffuse the scriptures, which transcend all possible estimation, originated in a request for a donation of a few Welsh New Testaments. The only solution of the difficulty, according to our partial survey, is, that prior to the stimulus imparted by the French revolution, every attempt to deliver the nations from their vassalage, would have been inefficacious; and therefore, instead of encouraging, would have paralyzed all future exertion. May not the same general principle of illustration be applied to demonstrate the superintendence of the all-wise Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, in reference to the causes which produced the splendid illumination, that irradiates, with a halo of almost celestial glory, the countenances of them who primarily resounded the blast of denunciation against "the Son of Perdition," and which it may be presumed will

never cease to reverberate, until the Angel shall cry “mighty with a strong voice, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen”!

To us, the type in its continual use is become, not merely a luxury, but an absolute necessary of life; and no proposition is more incontestable, than the fact, that Popery could not have existed had the Booksellers’ shelves been loaded with the purer works of the pristine Christian Authors. At this period, when the ear of bigotry is inaccessible by a Missionary’s voice, the eye of superstition is often assailed by the printed truth; and the heart evinces, that it is vulnerable by the shafts of the Gospel conveyed in its own vivifying power, or through the medium of a religious tract. Why, do we in vain ask, did no type founder exist prior to the middle of the fifteenth century? Why were all the plains which in this Union now teem with inhabitants, permitted to remain only as hunting ground for the roaming Aborigines of the Forest? It would be as easy to reply to the question; why does the wind differ in the vehemence of its motions, or why does it blow at one period, and not at another? The sovereignty of the supreme and ever-blessed God, who directs all things for his own glory, and the general welfare of his creatures, is the sole reason which can be given for these diversities of experience; and that benevolent jurisdiction is not less exhibited in the revelation of those discoveries which benefit man; but likewise in so concatenating the series of events, that “all things may work together for good to them who love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.”

This view of the past, while it imparts the most lofty ideas of the divine wisdom and power, is also calculated to imbue us with the most illimitable and unshaken confidence in the completion of all those prophesies which yet, as far as we can judge, remain not consummated. We have seen the visions of six seals completed; we have heard the sound of

six angels, and are convinced that all their dread blasts have been wofully realized ; we have witnessed the evolution of the first and second woes ; and we have meditated upon the prophesying of the witnesses in sackcloth, and upon the proclamations of the first and second Angels against the Anti-christian system ; it remains, that we now join in humble adoration with them who sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, “great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty ; just and true are thy ways, thou King of Saints.”

THE REFORMATION.

Antichrist, in conformity with his audacious claim, having exercised his prerogative in partitioning the lately discovered East Indies, and the Columbian continent between Portugal and Spain : and having by persecution reduced to temporary silence the clamours of those who detested his Hierarchy ; all the kingdoms of the Beast appeared willing supinely to acquiesce in the enormous mass of absurdity, and to submit without a murmur, to all the exactions which a mandate from the Vatican inculcated. Neither the corruption of the inferior clergy, nor the restoration of literature ; nor the avarice, the ferocity, even the bestiality of the Popes, Alexander, Julius and Leo ; nor the inexpressible abominations of the Monks and Nuns ; nor the depraved and miserable condition of the nations, impoverished and vitiated by the ecclesiastic adherents of these papal fiend-like monsters, produced at the commencement of the sixteenth century a solitary complaint so loud as to be heard, or sufficiently energetic to be regarded.

This death-like repose, and it is scarcely possible to say which of its characters is most astonishing, the Pontifical temerity in exercising its usurpations, or the slavish infatuated submission of the people, was suddenly interrupted by the inflexibility, the intelligence, and the virtue of a monk of Wittemberg, who like puny David, commenced the battle against the Goliath of the uncircumcised Philistines, and triumphed.

The prophetic history of this period, is recorded in Revelations 14: 9—13. In 1517, Tetzel, a Dominican monk, travelling through Germany, for the purpose of selling indulgences, granted by the Atheistic Leo, which secured to the purchaser, the remission of all

sins past, present and future, however enormous, innumerable and aggravated. The impudent Friar, in the course of his journey, arrived at Wittemberg, where Luther, at that period, was Professor of Theology ; there, with a boundless insolence of manners, and an indecency of style which cannot be repeated, he detracted from the power and merits of Jesus as the Redeemer of mankind ; and iniquitously boasted that “he had saved more souls from hell, by these indulgences, than Peter had converted.” The deceptions which he propagated, exhibit the shameless and bold frauds that he practiced upon the fears of his audience ; “the moment the money tinkles in the chest, your father’s soul mounts up out of Purgatory.”

The intrepid Martin, roused to the just standard of christian indignation, on the thirtieth day of October, 1517, published ninety five propositions, in which he pronounced the indulgences delusive, and declared the Pope a participant of the guilt. The press aided the cause ; for within fifteen days, Germany was filled with the publication, in which commenced the rupture that has despoiled the triple crown of its dignity, and obliged “the Man of Sin, to surrender a large portion of his predominance.

These propositions which simply investigated the extent of the Papal power concerning the remission of sin, excited the utmost rage of Tetzel, who replied, and was supported by a number of other Dominicans, who resented this attack upon their order. Against all these adversaries, Luther maintained his sentiments, “the common people heard him gladly :” and his success was so great, that even the indifference and contempt of the voluptuous Leo were electrified : and he commanded Luther to appear before Cardinal Cajetan, “either to retract or to suffer punishment.” Luther refused the former, and escaped from their menaced condemnation. Several attempts were made to cajole the Reformer into submission ; and so circumscribed were his views, that if the Lord had not permitted his enemies to proceed to the

most outrageous opposition, the truth would have been retarded in its progress, if not altogether concealed. Public disputations, at which vast numbers of the most learned men were present, continually recurred, and tended to the dissemination of the truth. In 1519, a famous controversy was held at Leipsic, and in the course of the debate, Luther's arguments demolished “the authority and supremacy of the Roman Pontiff ;” and which was more important, added to the holy contest, a most renowned fellow combatant, Philip Melancthon.

During the following year, the religious dissensions, having continually and rapidly increased, Leo the Pope, consented to the importunate demands of the Dominicans, and issued his bull against Luther, condemning his writings to be burnt, and commanding him to retract his errors, within 60 days, upon the menace of excommunication. This Papal arrogance decided the Reformer; without delay, he performed the most splendid action, in fortitude and daring, recorded in the annals of the world. He appealed from the Pope to a general council, and stigmatized the Atheistical sensualist, Leo, “as a rash, iniquitous tyrannical judge, a hardened heretic and apostate, as Antichrist, the enemy and opposer of the sacred scriptures ; and a proud and blasphemous despiser of the Church of God.” He directed a large fire to be kindled, into which, in the presence of the University of Wittemberg and immense multitudes of spectators, he contemptuously cast the bull of excommunication, the Papal decretals, and the whole canon law ; thus declaring his resolution to defend himself against all the attempts of his enemies. To justify this noble and extraordinary measure, he selected thirty of the most blasphemous positions respecting the Pope's authority, and with the addition of some comments, printed and universally dispersed them ; and as a consequence of the light which they diffused, and the spirit of resistance to the ignominious vassalage, under which the people had so long groaned ; notwith-

standing a continual succession of Papal fulminations, against Luther, no person would execute the Pope's command for his seizure and death.

In the year 1521, was held the diet of Worms; before which assembly, consisting of all the Princes, Nobles, and Ecclesiastical dignitaries of the Empire, Luther was summoned to attend. The elector of Saxony, Frederic the Wise, procured from Charles the Emperor, and other Princes, a full protection; and every possible precaution was used to guard the Reformer's life. Accompanied by several of his friends, he proceeded towards Worms, at a short distance from which, Spalatinus, the Elector's Secretary, wrote to him, advising his return: in this situation, with the Pope's condemnation, the Imperial mandate to seize all his writings, the utter malignity of every Romish adherent of all ranks, and the fact that even the public faith could not deliver John Huss and Jerome from the voracious cruelty of the Inquisitors, continually forcing themselves upon his notice—all the magnanimity and fearlessness of the mighty champion for the gospel was developed, when he uttered the wondrous declaration, that "he was lawfully called to appear in that city; and thither he would go in the name of the Lord; though he should be obliged to encounter at Worms, as many devils as there were tiles upon the houses of that city; this would not deter him from his fixed purpose of appearing there; that fear was only a suggestion of Satan, who apprehended the approaching ruin of his kingdom, by the confession of the truth, and who wished to avoid a public defeat before so grand an assembly, as the diet of Worms."

The highest personal vanity might have been sated by the homage paid to him during his residence at Worms. His habitation was continually crowded with princely visitors; and his dignity and fortitude conspicuously appeared, when he was introduced to the Diet. Two inquiries were propounded to him by Eckius in the name of the Em-

peror ; one was, whether he acknowledged the publications issued in his name ? the other, whether he would defend or retract their contents ? On the following day, in reply ; the Reformer admitted the books to be his writing ; and with christian animation, most energetically maintained the doctrines which they promulged. 1. Eckius, after Luther had spoken during two hours with the visible approbation of a large proportion of the numerous assembly, passionately exclaimed, that he was not summoned to state his doctrines ; they had been already condemned by former councils, whose authority was unquestionable ; he was only required openly to say whether he would or would not retract his opinions." Luther's memorable retort to this authoritative insolence decided the reformation : " my answer," said the invincible champion of truth, " shall be direct and plain. I am not bound to believe either the Pope or his councils ; for they have often erred, and often contradicted themselves. Therefore, unless I am convinced by the word of God or reason, my belief is so confirmed by the scriptures which I have produced, and my conscience is so determined to abide by the Gospel, that I neither can nor will retract any thing ; for it is neither safe nor innocent to act against a man's conscience." Closing with the intrepidity, resolution, and confidence of a servant of Jesus, who like Moses " endured, seeing him who is invisible." " Ich stehe hier : Ich kann nicht anders ; Gott hilf mir. Here I stand ; I cannot act otherwise ; God help me : Amen."

After this public exhibition of the Reformer's inflexibility and learning, he remained at Worms a short period : during which, incredible exertions were made by all the grandees of the Empire, secular and ecclesiastical, to induce him to recant. With the combination of superior intelligence and evangelical humility, he thanked them for their attentions ; but his

constant unvarying, unalterable declaration was, that "he was ready to do any thing, except to deny the plain word of God."

When he was pronounced by the bigotted devotees of the man of sin "incorrigible and a contumacious heretic;" it was proposed to Charles to imitate the example of the council of Constance, and by a violation of his imperial guarantee of safety to Luther, to exterminate the author of the pestilence; as they denominated the progress of the light and the truth. This Charles refused, stating, "I should not choose to *blush* with Sigismund:" for John Huss, when he closed his defence before that infamous gang assembled at Constance, fixing his eyes on Sigismund the Emperor, said, "I came voluntarily to this council, under the public faith of the Emperor now present;" while the guilty deceiver incompetent to resist so forcible an exhibition of his crime, "*blushed*, and bore the countenance of a traitor."

The decree immediately was adopted by the Diet in the Emperors name; denoucing Luther as an obstinate, excommunicated criminal, depriving him of all civic privileges, prohibiting any person from protecting him, and commanding all the people to seize him, as soon as the 21 days allowed him to return to Wittemberg, should have expired. "He who sitteth in the heavens laughed, the Lord had them in derision." Frederic concealed the Reformer, from the fury of the tempest; on his return home, he was seized by several masked friends, and transferred to the castle of Wartburg as a place of security; this scheme it is believed, was sanctioned by Charles; and it tended eventually in a most remarkable degree, to the progress and establishment of the Reformation. His time, in this Patmos, as Luther designated it, was very busily occupied, in writing consolatory letters to his friends, in publishing confutations of his adversaries, and especially in translating the New Testament into the German language. Thus the Lord overruled the mysterious exile of the chief captain of

the Protestant cause, and rendered it the means by which the Gospel was diffused in the vernacular tongue ; long ere it could otherwise have been completed, from the want of leisure, and the immensity of labor, in which those indefatigable servants of Jesus were continually engaged.

A circumstantial narrative of the progression of events which conduced to the final pacific settlement of the change introduced by Luther cannot be introduced in this summary view. In general, it may be remarked, that the measures which were adopted gradually proceeded from surrounding events : no plan had been systematized, and as the illumination increased, so the demolition of the Papal superstitions followed. During Luther's absence, Carolstadt, one of the Professors in the University, attempted to abolish the mass ; to remove the idol images ; to destroy auricular confession, and the invocation of saints ; and had persuaded the Monks to depart from their monasteries and to marry ; thus completely changing all the ancient doctrines and discipline : although these measures were congenial with Luther's views, yet he complained of them as rash and precipitate. At the same period, Henry VIII. wrote a volume in defence of Popery against Luther ; and from this fact, the Protestant British kings derive their Popish title, Defender of the faith ; with which Leo, who was an Atheist, honored the licentious Despotic Papist Henry ; and which all his successors, Papist and Protestant, notwithstanding its absurdity, have continued to appropriate to themselves. In his answer, Luther exhibited the most profound contempt for his kingship ; with great asperity ridiculed his unlovely person, and displayed the wretchedness of his arguments with most biting sarcasm. Henry complained of the insult ; but the Reformer only menaced him with additional public exposure of his ignorance and silliness if he would not continue silent. How short sighted is man ! little did the haughty monarch suppose, less did the humble Preacher anticipate, that

within the lapse of ten years, this same Defender of the Faith would exterminate the Papal supremacy throughout England and Ireland. In 1522, the German New Testament was disseminated, and edicts were immediately issued against its diffusion : this opposition roused the dormant lion ; for Martin in a volume, instantly attacked the Princes who published those decrees against the Gospel, and pronounced them impious tyrants. The University of Paris also condemned Luther's doctrines, but the Boanerges of the Reformation animadverted upon their decision with as much acrimony and scorn as if he had been trampling upon the meanest ignoramus. Controversies with kings and Universities naturally excited universal attention ; and added to Luther's fame and influence ; while multitudes in various parts of Europe rejected the shackles of the Antichristian hierarchy.

Several Imperial diets were successively held ; one at Nuremberg ; two at Spire ; in which all the attempts of the Papists to crush the accelerating progress of the truth were providentially counteracted. In the second diet at Spire, in 1529, four of the German Princes and fourteen cities protested against one of the decrees of that body ; and hence originated the general designation of all those who renounce the superstitious communion of Rome, and reject the papal supremacy, Protestants. At Augsburg, in a subsequent diet, the famous Lutheran confession was presented and produced astonishing effects ; convincing the ignorant, deciding those who wavered, confuting all opponents, and reanimating the friends of evangelical truth. The disputationes between the parties continued to increase, until at length it was deemed advisable to form a confederacy at Smalcald, to resist if necessary, any attempt to force the protestants to submission by military coercion.

A peace was concluded favorable to the protestants in 1531 ; but the adherents of the different principles were so decidedly opposed, that all attempts effectually to accommodate were fruitless. The proposition

to summon the council of Trent having received the decided rejection of the protestants, Charles the emperor determined upon war, to subdue them to his will and the Pope's spiritual authority. After much commotion and many severe trials to the protestant champions; the elector of Saxony surprised the emperor, and reduced him to the inevitable necessity of terminating the deplorable calamities which had so long afflicted the empire, by a treaty of peace enacted at Augsburg, in 1555; which unchangeably established the glorious Reformation. By this compact, it was authoritatively and irrevocably determined, that "the protestants shall be entirely free from the Roman pontiff's jurisdiction; and are permitted to conduct their own ecclesiastical affairs without controul; that all the inhabitants of the empire shall judge for themselves on religion, and unite with either church according to the dictates of their consciences; and that all persecutors upon a religious pretext, shall be legally tried as enemies of the empire, invaders of its freedom, and disturbers of its peace and harmony."

In Switzerland, rather earlier than Martin Luther commenced his opposition to Tetzel's abominations, Ulric Zuingle had expounded the scriptures in truth, and censured the errors of the Apostacy. The authority and supremacy of the Pope, he rejected, with almost all the anti-christian farrago, anterior to the period of Luther's liberation from the minor trammels of the papacy. The Swiss reformer was a man of the most enlarged intelligence, and possessed of vast penetration and sagacity, accompanied with a resolute spirit of gospel heroism which knew no dread, and through the exercise of which, he, at once, disentangled himself from educational prejudices and the absurdities with which he had been deluded. His most noble qualities were called into ample exercise by the same cause which excited Luther's opposition to the Pope. A most abandoned monk from Italy, named Samson, was selling his indulgences to sin in Switzerland in 1519, with the

same impudent effrontery that Tetzel had displayed at Wittemberg. Zwingli opposed him with the most strenuous exertions and correspondent success.—Aided by the independent state of the cantons, their views of civil freedom, the impossibility of impeding his cause except by exterior force, which the convulsed state of Europe precluded, and by a host of teachers who promulgated his pure tenets of truth to a people already prepared to receive them with inconceivable avidity; in a few years, the Pope's supremacy and the stupid credulity of the people through the blessing of the Holy Ghost upon their instructions and writings, were banished from nearly all Switzerland; and so effectual was the purification, that probably in no part of the Reformed domains, Scotland excepted, has pure and undefiled religion maintained its power over its professed disciples more constantly than in the Swiss Protestant cantons.

Two circumstances, however, connected with these Reformers must not be omitted. The disciples of Luther and the adherents of Zwingli differed upon a very important topic, "the manner in which the body and blood of Christ are present in the Eucharist." All the disputants denied the dogma of transubstantiation; but Zwingli maintained that the sacramental elements were merely symbols intended to excite the remembrance of our Lord's death: on the contrary, Luther maintained, that the body and blood of the Redeemer were really a constituent part of the bread and wine. It is scarcely practicable to comprehend what the primitive Lutherans understood by this principle; but if any idea can be deduced from the "senseless jargon" which Luther himself uttered on this subject; it would appear, that his doctrine was, if possible, more preposterous than even the Romish monster, transubstantiation. By these divisions, the cause of civil and religious liberty was much hindered; the parties having forgot to "keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace."

To this deplorable dissension must be added the internal commotion in Germany and its bordering countries, excited through oppression and enthusiasm; which was very prejudicial to the cause of the Gospel. Myriads of fanatical seditious persons arose in various parts of the Empire, and having concentrated their force, desolated every district through which they marched, exhibiting a causeless and most unfeeling barbarity. At length, the enthusiast Munzer having been appointed chief of the rabble, the contest assumed a religious character. They promulgated sentiments at utter variance with all individual decorum, domestic peace and social order; and notwithstanding the Protestant Chiefs exerted all their influence against this faction, the Papists employed the inferences deducible from their conduct, as a weapon with which to kill the sacred cause of Christ. Among these infatuated marauders, we discover the first systematic attempt to oppose the primitive church with regard to the ordinance of baptism. Their sentiments were, that magistrates and taxes were needless; that the baptism of infants is an invention of the devil; that all things should be common stock; and that as the kingdom of Christ was at hand, all earthly government was unnecessary. Hence they were called Anabaptists, as repeating the ceremony of Baptism. However, it must be admitted, that from the force of prejudice and example, the spirit of persecution raged against many of them, not for their sedition, although they were arrayed against the state, but merely for pretended religious opinions, the result of error and ignorance; and probably neither Luther nor Zwingli can be perfectly exculpated for having been ingulphed in the Romish doctrine, that heresy respecting the predominant religion, was cognizable and punishable by the civil Magistrate.

In 1521, the light of the resuscitated Gospel shone upon Denmark. Christiern II. a most furious tyrant was solicitous to exterminate the Romish supersti-

tions from among his subjects; the Lord thus directing his ambition to burst the barriers of spiritual vassalage for his people. After his exile, for his cruelties raised a conspiracy against him, and forced him to leave his dominions, Frederic his successor, issued an edict, declaring every Dane at liberty, either to adhere to the Roman tenets, or to profess the doctrine of the Protestants without molestation; and permitted the marriage of the clergy. Thus stimulated, the Reformers most zealously and successfully promulgated their opinions; and Christiern III. the following king, having suppressed the odious episcopal authority; having despoiled the ecclesiastical voluptuaries of their enormous wealth; having returned to their original owners the property of which they had been divested by every species of artifice and stratagem; and having organized a platform of religious doctrine, discipline and worship after the model established at Wittemberg, convoked a general assembly of all orders in the state, who solemnly sanctioned the royal measures, and thus within twenty years, with little commotion, the dragon's beast with all his authority and jurisdiction, was de-throned in the kingdom of Denmark.

During the civil dissatisfactions excited by the cruelties of Christiern the Danish king; the Swedes having refused longer subjection to the Danes, elevated to the royal office, Gustavus Vasa; who had imbibed the doctrines of the Reformation, and who perceived their importance to the people of his dominions, if they could be introduced and established. Every measure which this patriot adopted was equally wise and successful. In him the Bible Societies hail a powerful coadjutor: he primarily commanded that a Swedish translation of the Scriptures should be universally diffused. When the minds of his people had become in some measure illuminated, by the perusal and exposition of the oracles of truth; he appointed a public disputation at Upsal, in 1526, in which Olaus Petri, the Protes-

tant champion obtained a splendid triumph over the cavils and follies of his opponent : the publication of this renowned debate confirmed the minds of all who were attached to Luther's cause, and with astonishing rapidity multiplied the converts to the truth. Against these innovations, as they were denominated by the devotees of the Hierarchy, the Popish ecclesiastical dignities most vehemently roared ; they had grasped nearly all the possessions of the country : their revenues, power and influence far transcended that of the executive government ; their debauchery and opulence were commensurate ; and they easily perceived the inevitable consequences which would succeed the beams of light, that were then winging their course into every hamlet and cottage of the kingdom.

Nothing was necessary, but some trifling occurrence which the Bishops were ever ready to seize, to transform the kingdom into one universal Aceldama, where between the Protestant attachments and the Popish bigotry, the ancient hierarchy might be enabled to infix themselves more firmly in their terrific sway. At this crisis, in 1527, Gustavus summoned a general convocation of the senators, bishops, nobles, clergy and the commons ; in which he proposed by the chancellor the reformation of the church. The Bishops having previously entered into a solemn compact to defend the Pontiff and the craft, with one voice rejected the royal proposal, and thus stimulated a universal negative from all the votaries of Antichrist. Immediately after their clamour had subsided, Gustavus entered the assembly, and avowed his determination to resign the government and migrate from his country, rather than rule a people enslaved by the Pope, and more controlled by episcopal tyranny, than by the laws of the land. This decided the commons, whose love for Gustavus in consequence of his having liberated them from the Danish bondage, knew no bounds ; for they instantly menaced the refractory bishops and their vassals with the

popular vengeance, if they did not without delay, submit to their sovereign ; and thus the Beast's "power and great authority" in Sweden were effectually, completely and irrevocably exterminated.

The crooked policy of Francis I. king of France, impeded the influence of the protestant cause in that nation. Persecution and toleration continually succeeded each other, until during a number of years that vast country resembled a charnal house : one benefit however followed, even the terrors of the French king's murderous edicts, it transferred Calvin to a place of security, where he employed all his mighty genius in sending abroad the light and the truth. The history of the French Huguenots will constitute a future theme.

Had not the secular power supported the tottering edifice, the papal doctrines and authority would have been demolished, even in the Netherlands, such prodigious numbers of protestant Christians arose, that persecution at last induced the seven united provinces to revolt, and become independent of the Imperial and Papal jurisdiction.

In Italy, the progress of truth was arrested by the Inquisitors, who perpetrated so many murders, that the Reformed exiled themselves into the regions where the gospel and its professors were unmolested; although that engine of hell could never enter the kingdom of Naples. By the same process, the influence of the reformation was not experienced in Spain; for the "Lords of the Holy office" there reigned triumphant, and every spark of the gospel was extinguished. Charles the Emperor himself, it is supposed, died a Protestant; and of twenty four ecclesiastics, his associates during his voluntary solitude, after his abdication of the honours of Emperor of Germany and king of Spain, not one escaped immediate death; for as soon as Charles expired, the Inquisition seized, and either burnt, strangled or poisoned every one of them. From that period to the present day, the history of Spain in

connection with Christianity is like Ezekiel's vision, "a roll of a book written within and without, with lamentation and mourning and wo."

Notwithstanding all the attempts to eradicate the seed sown by Wickliff and his successors in England, the pure truth was tacitly admitted by many of the Lollards, all of whom avowed their attachment to Luther's opinions as soon as they were promulgated in the island. The success with which Luther combated the weak arguments of Henry, aided also to inspire a great veneration for the man who trampled with equal scorn, upon a Pope's dread anathema, a King's authoritative volume, and a University's solemn decretal. Henry having become disgusted with his queen, made a pretext, that as she had been his brother's widow, the marriage was illegal; and finding it impossible to obtain the society of Ann Boleyn unless by marriage, he appealed to the Pope to annul his matrimonial covenant with Catharine his wife. The Pope was afraid to comply with Henry's request, lest he should affront Charles V. who was Catharine's nephew; and equally dreaded a refusal, on account of the king's wrath: delay, equivocation and duplicity afforded the only mode of escape from the dilemma. Henry was long tantalized with hope that the Pontiff would accede to his wishes; but having at length obtained an almost unanimous decision, that the marriage was unlawful, and the Pope having forbidden him from marrying Anne, he defied the papal excommunication, banished the Pontifical legate, rejected the Pope's communion, as head of the church, and by elevating Cranmer to the Archbishoprick of Canterbury, encouraged in many respects the reformation. In 1529, the usurpations of the clergy having excited very strong complaints, the House of Commons attempted to restrain the impositions of the ecclesiastical orders; their dissolute lives and insatiable avarice strengthening the murmurs against them. The power of Wolsey, as Pope's legate was nullified, and thus all

the clergy who obeyed him, became at once guilty, and were obliged to purchase pardon at a vast sacrifice of their wealth. Many Festivals were immediately abolished; images, reliques and pilgrimages were destroyed; abbeys and monasteries were desolated; the orders of Friars, Monks and Nuns were suppressed; and the Bible was translated and partially dispersed. But the progress of the Reformation in England was very small during Henry's reign; for he enacted by law the most contradictory tenets, so that Papists and Protestants were consumed in the same fire; the former for denying Henry's supremacy over the church; and the latter for not believing transubstantiation. The grand object attained at this period was, the cessation of the Pope's authority; and although in the doctrines, little alteration was perceptible, yet in the forms of worship an obvious difference existed; much of the exterior idolatry was removed; and the most strenuous partizans of the hierarchy, the Monks and Nuns, being divested of their revenues and habitations, lost that influence among the ignorant multitudes, by which the Romish superstition and corruption had been sustained.

By the death of Henry, his son Edward was exalted to the English throne, who became the brightest ornament, and the most effectual support of the Protestant cause. He encouraged literature; maintained Cranmer, Ridley, Hooper, Latimer and their brethren in their exertions; opposed with all mildness, but energy, his power to the ancient superstitions; dispersed the scriptures, and established a regular missionary system through the island. After a reign of six years he died, and was succeeded by Mary, a furious merciless bigoted fanatic; who restored as far as practicable, the whole papal corruption; and whose whole reign during five years was an incessant exhibition of every infernal quality. Her persecutions ceased with her death; and Elizabeth her sister, overturned the fabric, and reinstated

the ecclesiastical polity as it was when Edward departed to glory.

The progress of the truth in Ireland was similar to that of England, and attended by the same revolutions and vicissitudes. Archbishop Brown, after Henry's rejection of the Pope, exerted himself with indescribable diligence and vigour to eradicate the idolatrous superstitions. He overthrew the images, burnt the relics, abrogated the absurd ceremonies, and procured a general denial of the Pope's jurisdiction in that island.

The revenues of the monks were confiscated, their convents destroyed and themselves banished. In this situation the protestant affairs continued in prosperity until the death of Edward; after which Mary had resolved to extirpate the Reformed in Ireland, but her death delivered the professors of the truth from utter desolation: although four-fifths at least of the Irish have continued from that period to be justly numbered among the most silly and sanguinary of all the devotees of the Beast which goeth into perdition.

In Scotland, the effects of the light diffused by the Reformers were long imperceptible; notwithstanding, about ten years after Luther's first public opposition, the number, zeal and talents of the Protestants had become so formidable to the papal hierarchy, that a considerable persecution, accompanied with inquisitorial powers commenced: but the national discord and confusion were favourable to the progress of the Gospel. The first Legislative act against the papacy, permitted the people to read the scriptures in the vulgar language, yet this law was soon counteracted by the ascendancy of Beaton, the Romish Cardinal. Regal and hierachal tyranny having excited universal dissatisfaction, the Protestants increased their exertions and courage. At this period, arose the immortal Knox, whose labours never ceased until he was banished. Notwithstanding every obstruction, the protestant cause proceeded, until 1557, when the

first covenant was signed by vast multitudes of persons, with some of the most distinguished dignitaries of the kingdom at their head; the feudal system which then existed in Scotland powerfully augmenting their unity and force. By this compact all the idolatry of the Antichristian system was denied, and the influence and wealth, and mortal existence of the covenanters were pledged in support of the word of God. They were denominated the *Congregation of Christ*; to distinguish them from the Papists, whom they very opprobriously but very scripturally denounced as the *Congregation of Satan*. In this situation, neither party daring to commence the warlike attack, the contest remained until the death of Walter Mill, the last sufferer by martyrdom, through the papacy in Scotland. Indescribable horror seized all the Reformers when they heard of his execution, and the contrast between the barbarity of the Papist Archbishop, and the Christian meekness of the tortured disciple of Jesus. From the period of his death, the Reformation extended its flight with the utmost velocity to all quarters of the land; irresistible was its force and universal its progress. The Reformation in Scotland finally involved a national contest which through the divine benediction, was closed in the shouts of triumph by Knox and his victor companions. In no portion of the ten horns of the Beast was the predominance of popery so completely overthrown as in Scotland; every particle of the whole abomination which could be discovered, from the Virgin and the crucifix exalted in a cathedral, to a forged decretal immured in a Monk's cloister; from a Cardinal's pompous benediction before the Court, to a Friar's blasphemous absolution in his own cell, were, with equal evangelical avidity sought, and with similar christian indignation obliterated. To verify the efficacy of their labours at that period, history records that Scotland has ever been pre-eminent among the Europeans, and a counterpart to the primitive Puritans of New England, from that era to the present generation,

for all that illumination, fortitude, purity, and philanthropy which their solemn leagues and covenants, in the name of the Gospel, so eloquently demand.

The Reformation, notwithstanding the activity of its authors and the zealous energy of its adherents was admitted into a very minor proportion only of the ten horns of the Beast. In France it was afterwards almost totally extirpated—in Poland, its influence was always very feeble—in Ireland, its blessings have been perpetuated solely by the overwhelming authority of incessant military coercion—while in the larger portion of Europe, Turkey, Russia, Spain and Portugal, the German imperial territories and Italy, the entrance of evangelical truth has hitherto been successfully obstructed. A review of the combined powers of darkness which at that period were opposed to the extension of the pure doctrines of the Gospel, will constitute the subject of the ensuing lecture.

The opposition to the Protestants and the Reformation,

A rebellion against satanic authority, so sudden, so forceful, and so extended, as that produced by the varied partizans of the Reformation, could not be admitted, without an attempt to subjugate those who thus rejected the Beast and his mark on their foreheads. Power is seductive, and it is a lamentable proof of human degeneracy, that very few individuals recorded in the annals of nations, have been found truly qualified to direct its energies. The Reformation was a luminous flood, at once traversing the darkness of the European hemisphere; for it shed the light and the truth, with the rapidity of the tempests flash, and with the warmth and the permanency of a Midsummer's clear and brilliant day. Hell and its minions stood awhile indifferent; at first they were stupid, next vacillating, then blustering, and finally having recovered their malignity, they resolved to crush the seed of the woman who was destined to bruise the serpent's head. The providence of God is lucidly developed in the various means by which the church of Christ, the ark of refuge, has been preserved amid the storms and commotions of the troubled ocean of mortality.

Nothing in the record of individuals can be more interesting than a review of the lives and transactions of the Reformers. Luther, Calvin, Zwingli, Knox, Craumer, Brown, and their numberless adjutants in the holy war, could always say with propriety, "there is but a step betwixt me and death;" and notwithstanding their earthly existence was protracted until after nearly 300 years, we are enabled to say, they died precisely at that moment, and each of them in that manner, which sealed the rectitude of their cause, and constituted the anticipation of its eventual

triumph. Our limits admit not even the most minute reference to those christian worthies ; but evangelical sensibilities recur to them in the fondest retrospect, and indulge the hallowed prelibation of mingling the communion of heaven with the gospel giants of those days. 1

Our inquiry at present, involves the contest between the sons of God and the slaves of Diabolus, or rather, the various artifices by which the latter attempted to counteract the energetic assaults of the Reformers upon the strong holds of "the Man of Sin." The machinations of the grand adversary of good, against the progress of the truth by the Reformation, may be generally classified either as carnal or spiritual ; combining the policy of this world with the exterior of evangelical religion.

I. External.

Resistance to the truth was thus exhibited in various forms, and the servants of Jesus contended with the Romish hierarchy, always without secure dependence on terrestrial co-operation, ever with the certainty that Babylon would repel.

1. *War.*—The royal power was excited against the friends of "the rights of man"—many years elapsed, during which a contest, general, bloody, and malignant, raged in Germany ; the sole cause, an attempt to destroy Luther and his disciples. In Holland and the Netherlands, a civil warfare was protracted until the battering ram of truth, shivered the odious Spanish Philip's sway over the Dutch, into atoms. Scotland was desolated with one almost ceaseless commotion during nearly 20 years ; the partizans of the Beast stedfastly grasping and defending their usurped jurisdiction. The tower of London still contains one of the most mournfully splendid trophies of the Reformation ; the vast exhibition of the instruments of torture intended for the torment of the English Protestants, if they would not submit to the

1. Appendix XI.

Papal supremacy, provided the infernal Armada had been victorious in their attempt.

Vast changes succeeded the destruction of the Romish assaults. Scotland shouted victory, and she is Protestant—England sang the song of triumph, and she is a chief glory among the nations of the earth—Holland defeated the Romish janizaries, and she is reformed ; while northern Germany having discarded the trammels of the Dragon and his princely associates, has remained a mighty mound over which the waves of superstition have ineffectually endeavoured to roll.

2. *Persecution.*—At the commencement of the Reformation, the spirit of Abaddon appeared. For a Protestant, the sentence of death was instantaneously promulgated ; and if tangible, his tortures followed. All the wars of Europe in which so many myriads perished, were waged merely against the Gospel, as proclaimed by the Reformers. In Bohemia, during thirty years, among the Hussites, all the fury of earth and all the malevolence of hell were unchained ; the human blood which was there effused, comprised such a wondrous destruction of the human family and such a vile terrestrial extinction of Christians, that one of the historians of that period assimilates the blood of the martyred Bohemian witnesses, “ to the plenty of waters of the great rivers of Germany.” In Hungary, Lithuania and Poland, the effusions of the Christian vital fluid were not less copious ; so that a large part of Europe was “ deluged with Protestant blood.” Thus that religion which had so long irradiated the countries in which the Waldenses had resided, was almost suppressed, and the witnesses were slain. It had been predicted by Daniel, ch. 7 : 20, 21 ; and by John, in the Apocalypse, Revelation 13 : 7 ; and the cause of Christ in those nations has never since recovered its influence. The murders perpetrated by the Spanish governors and deputies in the Netherlands were so atrocious and repulsive, that neither superstition of the most idolatrous cast, nor

degradation of the most servile meanness, could longer submit to a tyranny bestial in morals, and infernal in mischief. Alva, the Don of butchery, himself boasted that during the five years of his government, eighteen thousand persons had been formally, that is by slow paced legal condemnation, burnt for heresy—but these were few, contrasted with the multitudes, who were slaughtered by his armed myrmidons, *ruffians by trade, and cruel from impiety*, dispersed through all the borders of the land. But the design failed; for the Prince of Orange, with Egmond Horn, both of whom were murdered, raised the standard of resistance to the despots, and after an unequal warfare, in which, through the blessing of God, the Protestants triumphed, the Dutch destroyed the prevalence, and constructed a barrier to the return of Popery which has hitherto been found effectual; for the Synod of Dort stand pre-eminent among the defenders of the Gospel of Christ.

France largely participated in the horrors of persecution. Within the first 30 years, after the treaty of peace, by which the Protestants were secured in Germany, nearly the whole generation of Huguenots was martyred in the Gallic dominions.

These Christians on the south of the water, were the exact counterpart of the Puritans on the northern island. They were men who loved, enjoyed and practised the truth, in reference to eternity. No painter can depict the torment, no poet delineate the agony, and no *Preacher* describe the complicated scenes accompanying the departure of these, “of whom the world was not worthy.”

A million, at least, of these Calvinistical Huguenots, including members of the Royal Family and persons of all grades in the kingdom, during the pilgrimage of one race, were consigned by Papal cruelty to the invisible world. The cause finally triumphed in the access of Henry to the throne; but he became a Romish adherent; and yet, because he was a tolerator of his Protestant friends, he died by the dagger of a

Russian, who had been previously absolved from sin for the perpetration of his crime. Throughout the astonishing occurrences of modern ages, few events are more interesting than the siege of Rochelle and the Bartholomew massacre. In the city of Rochelle, the protestants concentrated, and against their courage, and their devotion, in vain did Popery rage and contend; the Huguenots resisted and triumphed, after a display of fortitude altogether romantic, and a series of suffering which, for the sake of humanity, it could be wished were merely a fabulous tale.—But the Papists, although vanquished, were resolved, if possible, to govern; and obtained by deception, that which could not be seized by force. Having seduced the chiefs of the Huguenots into a belief that they were disposed to be amicable, the Pope's devotees contrived the general and simultaneous extinction of all the enemies of the papacy.

It was enjoined by Charles IX. then king of France, that on the twenty fourth day of August, 1572, a Lord's day, when the bells rang for morning prayer, an indiscriminate slaughter of all the Protestants should commence; the Popish military suddenly rushed into the streets of Paris, and murdered every person who was suspected to be a Huguenot; the king himself from the windows of his palace encouraging his armed bloodhounds, and with his own musket, for amusement, shooting the wretched and defenceless Christians who attempted to escape from this lawless violence. Day after day these ravages continued, and were extended through all France, until the Savages themselves were satiated with the streams of human blood. Two circumstances strongly develope the peculiar excitement produced by this wondrous persecution. At Rome, and generally among the Papists, a special day of thanksgiving was observed for the destruction, it was hoped, of the Protestant cause in France. In England and Scotland the horror excited by this merciless despotism was unbounded. Elizabeth the Queen with all

her public officers and domestic attendants was robed in the deepest mourning ; and when the French Ambassador attended to offer an apology for this unprovoked and lawless murder of Elizabeth's friends, the palace exhibited the utmost display of gloom ; blackness and silence accompanying him, until the haughty and justly offended Queen uttered the menace which frightened the Papist tyrant, and expressed her abhorrence in a style of dignified sensibility that overwhelmed the Ambassador with shame and confusion. Some of the Scotch preachers made it the subject of pulpit discussion, and so inflamed the hearts of the people with hatred to the papacy, that this event tended in a high degree, by the insuperable aversions which it excited, to establish the Reformation ; while the tenor of the declarations which were uttered by the Scottish Reformers with respect to Charles, the author of the massacre, almost involved the spirit and force of prophecy ; especially in the exactitude with which the denunciations pronounced against this "most Christian King, and eldest son of the Church," were subsequently fulfilled.

In the present British dominions also, the rage of Rome was directed against all the witnesses who confronted the Beast's supremacy. Henry VIII. was not strictly a religious persecutor ; his cruelties were exercised upon the principle, that his authority alone was paramount ; and however absurd his exactions, that every person should be forced to obey them. But this partial exculpation of that haughty Despot cannot be applied to Mary ,his Daughter ; she was literally an insatiable leech for the blood of the servants of Jesus. Before her incorrigible bigotry, all that is lovely and dignified was prostrated. Infancy and old age ; persons of the most exalted rank and the meanest son of wretchedness ; of the most pitiable ignorance and the most enlarged illumination, and of both sexes, were grasped as tares, and in bundles burnt.

Within the catalogue of modern martyrdom, noth-

ing can be discovered more impressive than the last earthly days of the primitive Anglo-Puritans. The defences of the truth which were offered by Bradford, Hooper, Taylor, Philpot, Ridley, Latimer and Cranmer, rank very high among the noblest efforts of Christian genius; in fact the very meanest of those who were doomed to suffer in the papal furnace of fire, upon their examinations, triumphantly and with the utmost simplicity, confuted all the learning of their domineering adversaries and tormentors. During Mary's reign, some very peculiar instances of the judgments of God upon the persecutors of his people occurred, which form a very stupendous contrast, when reviewed in connection with the imprisonment and deaths of the heroes of the gospel. Many of the dungeons in which the saints were literally intombed alive, were like the jail at Philippi, the house of God and the gate of heaven; while the palaces of their infuriated judges were the abodes of the furies: very few indeed of the prime instigators and executioners of the sentence of wo upon the Redeemer's disciples, escaped a death marked by the signal infliction of the divine vengeance and exact retribution. 2.

In Scotland, an attempt was made to introduce the Inquisition, or a court invested with similar power; but Hamilton the President having been executed for high treason, that tribunal of mischief was extirpated. Subsequently however, the Papists having recovered their energy, and the Man of Sin having despatched an inflammatory Bull and commission against the Protestants, "great numbers suffered in the flames." But the seed of truth which had been sown was incorruptible, being the pure word of God, which liveth and abideth forever; and it speedily burst forth in all the force and luxuriance of an evergreen, hardy, verdant and healthful; and having been watered by the dews of heaven, it expanded its foliage and brought forth fruit a hundred fold to the *praise* and glory of redeeming grace. The Scotch Protestants felt as if every

family had been bereft of an inmate, when George Wishart was precipitately consumed in the fire ; and the martyrdom of Walter Mill inspired a resolute determination which eventually demolished the papal authority in Scotland. 3.

The situation of Europe, and the activity with which Mary engaged in the destruction of the English Protestants, so engrossed her attention, that she had not leisure, for a long period, to inquire into the state of popery in Ireland. But as Brown, the archbishop of Dublin, persevered in denying the Papal supremacy, and in exterminating the whole mass of mummary within his diocese, which he had commenced during the reign of Henry, and continued with augmented vigor while Edward lived ; it was finally resolved towards the latter end of Mary's bloody career, that a species of the inquisition armed with all possible authority should be erected in Dublin ; and for this purpose, a furious hell-hound, named Cole, received ample powers. Few events recorded in ecclesiastical history, more lucidly develope the impotence of man, and the perpetual interposition of God on behalf of his church in their last extremity, than the subversion of this odious project. The Irish Protestants had been doomed by Mary and her privy Council to total extinction, and wrath to the uttermost was prevented from being effused on them in consequence only of a very singular display of divine Providence. Cole, "flushed with the expectation of success in this glorious enterprise, travelling to the sea-coast to embark for Dublin, stopped for a short time at Chester. During his stay, the mayor of that city, not less furious than Cole for the papal dogmas, visited him, and the Commissioner appointed to inquire into all kinds of heresies and schisms, exulted in the most noble and pious commission with which he was invested, and displaying a leather case, here, said he, "is a commission which shall lash the heretics of Ireland." This declaration being made in the hearing of the woman

who conducted the business of the inn, from a number of motives, for she was deeply interested in the protestant cause, she resolved to seize an opportunity if possible to defeat Cole's mission and object. After the interview with the mayor had closed, Cole respectfully accompanied him to the door; the mistress of the house secreted the odious commission of evil, and in its stead inclosed a pack of cards. The would-be Inquisitor, without examination, returned his package to the trunk, and on the next morning sailed for Ireland. His arrival and object were immediately announced to the Lord Lieutenant; upon which he was invited to a meeting of the council. With all official pomp, he appeared in the chamber of audience, and delivered his credentials to the secretary. The paper was opened, when to the utter astonishment of the secretary, he saw only a pack of common playing cards, with the knave of clubs grinning at him. Cole was chagrined to the lowest depth of contemptible humiliation, but having recovered from his surprise, he averred that he had received from the queen a genuine commission, but how it had been exchanged, it was altogether impossible for him to ascertain. "You must return for another commission," said the Lord Lieutenant, and with facetious sarcasm added, "we will shuffle the cards in the interim." Prior to his obtaining the second commission, Mary was summoned to give an account of the deeds done in the body, at the bar of God, and Cole has remained from that day to the present, an object of ridicule and detestation." Upon what trifling contingencies, according to our estimation, often depend the peace of nations and individual prosperity, this fact most lucidly and feelingly illustrates; and we are impelled to admire the wonder-working arm of Jehovah Jesus, the great head of the church, who thus supremely controuls the mischievous devices of men, and so directs, that all their most sagacious conspiracies to perpetrate evil become nugatory, and their wisest plans to disseminate misery and iniquity are rendered abortive.

II. Internal.

It would be altogether impossible to condense into any comprehensible form, a narrative of all the secret combinations by which the destruction of the Protestant Chiefs was attempted. One instance may suffice ; for they are so similar in their nature and operation, and mark so brilliantly the goodness of God to his church, that every emotion of gratitude must necessarily be excited. The reference is to Luther. From the publication of the sentence, by which the Diet at Worms pronounced him a vagabond whom any person might with impunity murder, his life during nearly 30 years, was the continual object of secret and open assault. Every method which hellish ingenuity could devise was adopted to murder him : poison and assassination in every multiform disguise ; artifice and force in every species of marshalled array ; previous pay, large promises, and perfect absolution for the crime, all were embodied against him ; but impotent were their efforts and useless their machinations ; for Martin died at Isleben, the place of his nativity, in his own bed, in the triumphs of faith. This is not a solitary instance of a superintending Providence in connection with the life of the servants of Jesus. The memoirs of Zuinglius, Calvin, Knox, Cranmer, Brown, and their illustrious compeers, abound with similar attestations to the ceaseless malignity and secret hostile attempts upon the mortal existence of the luminaries of the Reformation.

It was proper to hint at these private minor attempts to obstruct the truth as it is in Jesus ; but two schemes were devised and successfully adopted, which under any other circumstances, and prior to the invention of printing, without a miraculous intervention of God, must have totally demolished the Reformation.

1. *The Council of Trent.*—To quiet the clamours of the Protestants, to impede the progress of illumination, and to silence the murmurs of the discontented

among the Papists, it was determined to convoke a general council of the church ; but as it was summoned by the Pope, regulated by his legate, and entirely at his controul, the Protestants refused to acknowledge its authority and purity. At intervals, during twenty five years, this council remained in nominal session ; the pretext, to devise measures for the restoration of the church to its pristine apostolic character ; the design, to defend the Papacy against the Protestants, and to exterminate the glorious Reformation. The external or the interior history of this famous Council must not be detailed ; for every species of abomination originating in the corruption of man or Satanic temptation, this horde of ferocious voluptuaries stand pre-eminent.

This council, as we have already understood, is now the grand and infallible authority among the modern Papists ; and how highly it deserves this unlimited jurisdiction over the consciences of men, may be understood from its acts and decretals.

The council of Trent assembled under the auspices, and was sanctioned by the authority, of Charles V. the Emperor ; and having triumphed over the Protestant Princes, nothing less than the complete overthrow of the Reformation in Germany was anticipated. “ But there is neither council nor might against the Lord ; his purpose must stand, and he will do all his pleasure : ” the *plague* entered the city, and the Papists dreading this enemy, fled ; and the council was virtually dissolved. After a long interval, the council was re-assembled ; and its decisions have solemnly sanctioned the most offensive and detestable qualities of the Papacy. The more ostensible points of debate between the Protestants and the Papists, and concerning which the former expressed their abhorrence, have been ratified as infallible doctrines of the Gospel ; the corruptions of faith, and the ambiguity of the rules concerning practice, were enlarged and multiplied ; the utmost scorn and vituperation were expressed against the Reformers and

their doctrines ; the latter were pronounced accursed ; and they who believed them were excommunicated and anathematized with “ bell, book and candle.” Among the topics particularly, which the council of Trent have deliberately confirmed, and in the most deceptive form, are the doctrines of purgatory, the invocation of saints, and the worship of images. One other point they have with more candour promulgated, that the scriptures alone are not a sufficient rule of faith and practice ; and hence, the present Pope has lately issued his bulls against all those who tacitly admit his supremacy, whose names are recorded in the catalogues of the Bible Societies ; and has quoted the decision of the council of Trent, to sanction his enmity against those who disperse the word of God. But we may rejoice ; his philippics are three centuries too late to be effectual ; the gospel of Christ must “ have free course, and will run and be glorified.”

No doubt can be momentarily admitted, that this infamous council constituted a very efficient portion of that rampart which Popery erected against the assaults of the original Reformers, and that it is still the strong hold of “ the Man of Sin.”

2. *The Jesuits.*—Ecclesiastical dominion has always been supported by the various orders which it has engendered ; and the monastic clans were ever the buttress of the Papacy. From their primary abuse to this period, they have invariably constituted the efficient means by which the Pope maintains his sway and influence. By them, the devotees of superstition are trained and preserved in order. The defection of so many of the different classes of Friars and Nuns, through the operation of the truth proclaimed by the Reformers, with the obloquy which was attached to those sons of corruption, urged another attempt to organize an efficient force to guard the Vatican from demolition. To heal the wounds and to restore energy to the dilapidated hierarchy, was an object of indispensable necessity and of most urgent import-

ance. A Spanish soldier, Ignatius de Loyola, equally illiterate and fanatical ; but bold, ingenious and active, became the tool of some of the Papal adherents at Rome, and appeared as the author and head of a new society, called after the usual name of the Saviour of mankind, the order of Jesus, or Jesuits.

The progress of this fraternity presents a subject of real astonishment ; within a few years, they were agents of darkness throughout the greater portion of the globe ; and as their principles were adapted to all people and all circumstances, they speedily engrossed a sway in the affairs of mankind almost incredible. They professed but one object, to maintain and extend the papal authority—they made one vow, “to go without deliberation or delay, wherever the Pope shall think fit to send them”—and they all acted upon one system, to accommodate themselves to the passions, prejudices and habits of those whom they wished to proselyte. As a natural consequence of these combined motives to action, their system involved every possible abomination. It would be improper to delineate the doctrines upon which they acted—every thing with a Jesuit was metamorphosed upon the broad basis of expediency. Vice and virtue, truth and error, religion and idolatry, good and evil, lost their distinctive qualities when brought within the operation of a Jesuit’s legerdemain. By a ceaseless activity, these servants of Satan interrupted the progress of the Reformation, and in every subsequent age have been the most inveterate enemies of godliness, and the most restless enemies of mankind. Their impudence and vice finally produced their nominal extirpation, but they only passed into a new form, as almost all the Papists of ecclesiastical rank now in existence are either secretly Jesuits, or avowedly the brethren of St. Sulpicius, which name they assumed to conceal their outrageous enormities. The temper and spirit of these Jesuits might be easily known from the dispositions of the Popes by whom they were fostered. Clement VII. was a man of such perfidious principles,

that no person professed to confide in him ; a wretched Judas, who laughed at all idea of honour, or probity or fidelity. Paul III. was a monster familiar with crimes which the house of prayer must not even hear ; but we may understand something of his character from the fact, that he nominated two of his illicit children, cardinals of the church, when infants. Julius III. immediately after his elevation to the Papedom, transformed an infamous boy who fed his monkeys, into a cardinal ; and having been reproved by the other members of that college, for introducing a creature among them without learning, merit, or virtue, he impudently inquired, “ what virtue or merit they had found in him, that could induce them to place him, Julius, in the papal chair ?”

The character and spirit and actions and destiny of the Jesuits were delineated with almost prophetic perspicacity, by the Irish Reformer, Brown, a few years only after their pristine appearance. “ There is a new fraternity of late sprung up, who shall call themselves Jesuits, who will deceive many, after the manner of the scribes and pharisees. Among the Jews they shall strive to abolish the truth, and shall come very near to do it. For they will turn themselves into several forms ; with the heathens a heathen, with the atheist an atheist, with the Jews a Jew, with the Reformers a Reformer, purposely to know your intentions, your minds, your hearts, and your inclinations, and thereby bring you at last to be like the fool who said in his heart there is no God. These shall spread over the whole world, shall be admitted into the councils of princes, and they never the wiser ; charming of them, yea, making princes reveal their hearts and the secrets therin, and yet they not perceive it ; which will happen from falling from the law of God, by neglect of fulfilling the law of God, and by winking at their sins ; yet in the end, God, to justify his law, shall suddenly cut off this society, even by the hands of those who have most succoured them, and made use of them ; so that, at the end,

they shall become odious to all nations : they shall be worse than Jews, having no resting place upon earth, and then shall a Jew have more favour than a Jesuit." This is an accurate portrait, and the anticipation has been realized ; but it is not irrelevant to observe, that one of the grand demonstrations of the unchangeable and genuine spirit of Popery is discoverable in the fact, that after the Jesuitical order was authoritatively demolished, half a century since, in consequence of abominations which even Romish corruption could not calmly tolerate, Pope Pius, the present usurper of divine prerogatives, has again embodied this band of deceivers, for the avowed purpose of sustaining the almost prostrated Hierarchy, and the debilitated " Man of Sin."

These constituted the machinations by which the reform of the Church was primarily counteracted. Heresies of various kinds were also invented or renewed and extensively promulgated ; and as they proceeded from the additional freedom imparted to the human mind by the destruction of the adamantine chains with which the human energies had so long been fettered, they were imputed to the Reformation, and furnished a ceaseless subject for Popish stigma and reproach. This will be illustrated as we progressively review the various denominations into which modern christians have been divided.

The Reformation is an epoch too remarkable and interesting to be slightly noticed. Combining a most stupendous moral concussion, it excites inquiries respecting the effects of so vast a resolution in mundane affairs. As the ostensible source of all the improvements in individual character and in national manners, so obvious when contrasted with the ferocity of the ages anterior to the sixteenth century, " the shaking of the nations" produced by the blast of the third angel's trumpet, the glorious events connected with the history of the Reformers, have received much less consideration, and excited much less affection, than from their intrinsic importance they indubitably deserve.

If it be asked, what blessings have followed the Reformation? the reply is immediate—they may be classified in three general applications.

1. As individuals, the tribes of mankind have been benefited by that splendid event. The degradation and barbarism which are portrayed in the annals of the middle ages, are in a great measure excluded from those countries where the benignity of the christian religion has effused its delights. Gross darkness covered the people; they verily sat in darkness, and groped in “the valley of the shadow of death;” nothing could possibly be more inhuman in principle, ferocious in sensibility, and depraved in conduct, than the multitudes who were directed by a Papal mandate, and menaced with a Friar’s excommunication. Before this tremendous jurisdiction, every energy, both corporeal and mental, vanished into thin air, equally vapid and feeble; and man became a mere tool, to perpetrate atrocities too monstrous to be detailed, and to promulge absurdities too contemptible even for ridicule. Of his rights and duties, he was profoundly ignorant; all genuine concern for his destiny was absorbed in the sentence of pardon proclaimed by his Father Confessor; and as there was no restraint upon crime through fear, iniquity rolled throughout the nations in an unintermittent overwhelming flood. By the Reformation, an impetus was given to all the moral machinery of the world; the immunities with which God has inalienably invested the rational creatures whom he has formed, then were developed in all their freshness and value; and the nations which before had submitted to have the remuneration of their labours unnecessarily filched from them, by the exactions of their spiritual task-masters, now began to learn and to experience the superior advantages of active life, untrammelled by a Jesuit’s craft, and not subject to ceaseless robbery by the myrmidons of the Inquisition. But it is not solely in the ranks, as a member of civil society, that the blessings of the Reformation are developed,

it is also in the spiritual improvement of men. Who can arrest the alternations of the tide ? Who can change the order of the celestial orbs in their incessant revolutions ? If this surpass the utmost stretch of mortal capacity, how much less impotent is he, who would now strive to impede the march of the christian kingdom, to universal extent, and imperishable influence ? Freedom has engendered activity, this has fostered improvement, and in religion and morals it has furnished the most splendid evidence of its sway and success.

By the accelerating progress of divine truth, men have become more intimately acquainted with Jehovah, and with his requisitions upon the human family. The distinctions between good and evil have become more obvious ; idolatry has bowed before the spirituality of "pure and undefiled religion," like "Dagon fallen upon his face to the ground, before the ark of the Lord"—practical irreligion in all its diversified forms, as sanctified by priestly absolution and papal indulgence, has in a great measure subsided—and the grand doctrine, that man is a responsible creature at the bar of God, has been luminously exhibited in all its application and force. "The nations which sat in darkness have seen the great light."

2. Men in their associated national capacities have been wondrously benefited by the Reformation. This is evident to all who understand the history of the Roman empire prior to the discovery of the typographic art. Grandeur in the feudal ages among the Nobles who composed the ten horns of the Beast, ordinarily combined a gorgeous exhibition of unveiled vice with the iron armour of devotees, always ready to plunge into any warfare which a papal bull had previously consecrated.

Our rapid sketch cannot even enumerate the various advantages which have attended the resuscitation of the Gospel from the sepulchre in which the Dragon and his worshippers had entombed it : but two general effects may be recorded.

The principles of government among the nations have been extensively reformed. Centuries elapsed and the same abominable dogma remained as infallible, that the members of the human family should be transferred with the soil. As one example will elucidate the operation of the whole, it is needless to multiply instances. William the Norman, claimed a right to the kingdom of England ; his demand was denied and resisted ; he transported an army from France to England, and having been permitted by God to murder the *staff* of the nation, he forcibly ruled over the people whom he had thus enslaved. One of the conditions stipulated between him and his principal marauders, was, that the whole land, with all its inhabitants, should be subdivided into districts, according to the proportionate aid which each brought to complete this general devastation. Accordingly, the land and its appendages were allotted to each Chieftain according to compact, and all the residents upon the soil were also doomed as slaves to toil for their invaders. *Human cattle* were thus degraded, bought, sold and exchanged, scourged, starved and murdered, during several generations, with nearly the same impunity with which a modern Nabob of Virginia or Carolina or Georgia exchanges or raffles for his Negros, or sells his own children by the pound at the flesh market, or with his hickory staff gradually demolishes mortal existence. These practices were then universally authorized, but that period in Europe has passed away ; the glorious effulgence of the sacred oracles has diffused a lustre with regard to personal privileges, which it may be confidently presumed can never more be obscured.

Although some remains of the feudal system still exist, it is demonstrable, that its total destruction is not far distant ; and that to the Reformation, we are chiefly if not altogether indebted for the triumph of liberty over the Gothic despotism of the dark ages.

The other social advantage that has resulted from the renovation of Europe, which commenced in

the sixteenth century, is discernible in the increased industry of the inhabitants, and the consequent multiplication of their comforts. Ignorance of the arts and sciences, and of all mechanical philosophy, was universal and apparently incurable ; for all the reigning customs and principles of society were prejudicial to the melioration and enjoyment of the people. " Could any greater restraint be laid upon industry, or any obstacle more insurmountable be opposed to it, than the idle monastic life, by which a large proportion of the most potent and vigorous inhabitants were withdrawn from the activity of useful labour ; who also consumed in the utmost prodigality the proceeds of the others' employment ? Wherever the Reformation has been adopted, the superfluous festivals, costly pilgrimages, and all those institutions which encouraged indolence, have been abolished ; the activity of the inhabitants has been indefinitely increased ; the impoverishment of the nation by the imputation of indulgences from Rome ceased, and prosperity has attended every species of business." Thus, even in our secular national relations, the change effected by the instrumentality of the primitive Reformers, involves all that is dignifying to individuals, prosperous to the community, and beneficial to the world.

3. But it is within the boundaries of the church of Christ, that the nobler and more sublime privileges of the Reformation have been developed and enjoyed. At the commencement of the sixteenth century, " the temporal authorities possessed but a small degree of power in their respective dominions : the highest potentates were subject to the mandates of the clergy, their own inferiors. In general, the ecclesiastics displayed no obedience to the civil authorities ; and if the princes complied not with their insolent demands, and did not profusely enrich them with magnificence and wealth, every attempt was made to excite rebellion. Religion always furnished them with a pretext for disobedience to the govern-

ment, and for their impositions upon the people. Exempt from taxes, and payments towards the necessities of the state, they engrossed, almost in every country, more than one half of the national revenues; and for a King to oppose the hierarchy thus apparently impregnable, was assuming the danger of banishment from his territories, and personal martyrdom, besides the indiscriminate slaughter of all those who adhered to him. But the clergy not only domineered over governments, they also much more odiously usurped jurisdiction over the community. Their commands were irresistible; and through auricular confession, the secrets of all hearts were exposed to their investigation. Examination, or research, or personal inquiry was not even supposed to be admissible; and a word or a doubt respecting either of their absurd or corrupt dogmas, invariably insured speedy death, unless favour could be obtained by a large pecuniary bribe. Under this galling yoke, in this most humiliating vassalage of body and soul, the Europeans during several centuries had hopelessly groaned until at length they became insensible to their own degradation. But finally the merciful Providence of the omnipotent Jehovah raised up the instruments to exterminate these impious abominations, and to overthrow this horrible tyranny."

The ecclesiastical changes which have flowed from the execrations of the Reformers, three centuries ago, comprise a large circle of advantage to the human family in general, but peculiarly so, to the inhabitants who resided in the domains of "the son of perdition." Devotion in its external forms has been inconceivably purified; the mummary of the Romish ritual, and the pageantry which absorbed every spiritual feeling have disappeared, that the more simple worship of the heart might be introduced; and this is obviously the grand source whence proceed all the refinements of religious character which so luminously distinguish the present from the former ages. However imperfect may be our attainments when accu-

rately compared with the extensive requisitions of the divine law, and the impressive exemplary standard of the gospel of Jesus, yet, from the commencement of that period, when crucifixes, statues, pictures, images, cloisters, abbeys, convents and idolatrous processions were countermanded and destroyed, until this day, notwithstanding all opposition, a constant progress to that perfection of “fellowship with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ,” which shall so exquisitely adorn the latter-day glory has been demonstrated. Of this general spirit, no illustration is more lucid and lovely, than the modern attempts to disseminate the knowledge of evangelical truth, “from sea to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth.”

The influence of popery and of its head has obviously declined. Altho’ in numbers, probably the present Pope can form a catalogue of nominal adherents as large as his Predecessor could have framed during the fifteenth century, it must be remembered, that the irresistible power over the people, which the former pretended Vicegerents of God indubitably possessed, has almost entirely disappeared. Neither Governors nor the people regard, obey, or enforce a papal bull; the injunctions are despised, the menaces are ridiculed, and the vision of Bunyan’s dream is literally fulfilled; the Pope sits at the entrance of his gloomy and cruel den, grinning at the Pilgrims, as they pass; he can only rail, for he is now too impotent to seize and destroy. What a vast superiority does this fact alone impart to modern ages! What a subject of triumph does this involve, that folly is not credited, and duty neglected through the dread of a papal curse! Printing has laid “the axe to the root of the trees;” and ere long “the ten horns of the beast, shall hate the Mother of abominations of the earth, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire.”

Nothing could possibly be more utterly at variance with common sense as well as with religion, than the

positions, that every person who does not believe as the Pope prescribes, shall be anathema, and then burnt, the earthly symbol of the transfer to the everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels ; and that, with heretics thus condemned, all faith, every promise, and all covenants may be infringed. These doctrines, we know, are still believed as infallible by those who submit to the decisions of the council of Trent ; and while the Dragon's Beast possessed all his great power and authority, it is not astonishing, that the fiend of persecution exercised his sway without controul. Modern papists acknowledge, but they cannot practice their creed. Notwithstanding that a vast variety of irreligious intolerance has been exercised in different countries since the establishment of the Reformation, yet the diminution of that evil has been gradual ; and it is believed, that an extensive desolation systematically organized, now to extirpate by force the Protestant cause, if it could be commenced, which is dubious, could not be protracted longer than would be required to transmit the mournful intelligence to the other nations. Torture and death for the sake of a good conscience, in this age have become so abhorrent, that it is hoped the nations have buried this outrageous fury, the offspring of Babylon, in the tomb of annihilation ; and although eventually it may be resuscitated for a short period according to the prediction, Revelation 11 : 7—11 ; nevertheless, its present paralyzed condition justifies unfeigned rapture ; and urges with overwhelming force, ceaseless and devout thanksgiving to Jehovah, for the inestimable immunities which we have derived instrumentally from the Fathers of the reformed church.

All the other privileges which have accrued to us in consequence of the contest in which our ancestors in the faith and hope of the Gospel engaged and conquered, are rendered incalculably more valuable by the avenues which it opened for the establishment and increase of literature. In this view, we

are taught to admire the mystery of divine Providence, which combines events that, in their primary occurrence, appear to us to have no connection, and yet in subsequent periods unfold that they were indissolubly cemented. Of what utility to mankind comparatively would have been all the literary treasures brought by the Greeks into the Roman boundaries, after the capture of Constantinople, had not the types so rapidly and so extensively diffused their partial illumination? and in an ecclesiastical reference, even the discovery of printing would have been of inferior importance to the church and the world, without the rejection of the papal supremacy. The eloquence of Demosthenes and Tully, the songs of Homer and Virgil, the histories of Herodotus and Xenophon, and Sallust and Cæsar, the criticisms of Quintillian and Longinus, even the morals of Socrates, and Plato, and Cicero, and Seneca, and Antoninus would have been promulgated among mankind in vain; in a fleeting admiration of the genius of the dead, would have evaporated all the benefits which Greece or Rome could have elicited. Revealed truth alone could remove the darkness of the moral world, dissipate the mists of idolatry, and the fogs of superstition; and they wisely judged, that the grand object was to consecrate typography to the multiplication of the Bible in the vernacular language: and it must not be forgotten, that this resolution involved the most daring rebellion against the Pope's authority, and the most presumptuous defiance of all his intimidating menaces. The more enlightened and artful dignified supporters of the antichristian system were perfectly convinced, that the occlusion of the sacred oracles was indispensable to the permanency of their tremendous jurisdiction. Every species of torment and death was denounced against the owner and reader of the word of God, except certain individuals, who were permitted to garble it for the nefarious purposes of sanctioning error; so that the volume of inspiration was altogether unknown; and the publi-

eration of it in Hebrew, Greek and Latin, would have aided the holy cause of pure religion in a very small degree. God himself doubtless imbued the original translators of the scriptures with the hallowed desire to impart the blessings of revelation to all the nations in their own tongues; and this has been in every age the most effectual mode by which Anti-christ has been enfeebled. But it is irrefragable, that as the advantages of printing would have been exceedingly circumscribed without the secession from the papacy, so the progression of truth must have been slow and confined had the propagation of books been limited to manuscripts.

The vast increase of learning has been of indescribable use to the church in other respects: controversies upon almost every topic successively arose; and wherever the Protestants had been enabled to grasp the key of the closets that contained the writings which had been incarcerated in the silence of the monasteries, they dislodged them from their dark and dreary abodes; and thus embodied scripture, reason and antiquity against the claims of Rome; while the excitement produced by this incessant collision rendered it necessary for the prominent warriors in the literary conflict, to arm themselves with all the panoply which the store-house of learning could furnish. Hence, has succeeded the multiplication of Colleges, with all the minor institutions by which the reign of dullness has been so successfully combated, and the supremacy of the Roman Pontiff so effectually and generally disregarded. But as a reference to modern times is anticipation of our farther review, this enumeration of the vast enjoyments social and moral, which originated in the erection of the standard of the Redeemer's cross, as the rallying point to "all them who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity," must be closed.

This retrospect enforces one important admonition; *improve your advantages.* Remember the toil, the privations, the anxieties, the opposition, the

dangers, and the deaths with which the Reformers whom we have commemorated were constantly enveloped ; and demonstrate your exalted sense of their philanthropy to man, and devotedness to God, by emulating their virtues, and by evincing your high estimate of their labours, in an active and sedulous discharge of all the duties to which your superiority of condition as men, as citizens, and as christians with unmitigable urgency calls you ! Thereby will you prove your title to be numbered in the catalogue of those august worthies, and exhibit that gratitude to God which you should ever nourish, when you contemplate the value of that truth which “ hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.”

*So let our lips and lives express
The holy gospel we profess,
So let our works and virtues shine,
To prove the doctrine all divine.*

*Thus shall we best proclaim abroad,
The honours of our Saviour God,
While the salvation reigns within,
And grace subdues the power of sin.*

*Religion bears our spirits up,
While we expect that blessed hope,
The bright appearance of the Lord,
And faith stands leaning on his word,*

*The Greek and Roman hierarchies—the Lutherans, and
the established church of England, during the sixteenth,
seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.*

As the civil world, equally with the kingdom of the Redeemer, has assumed a totally different aspect, since the sixteenth century ; so it is necessary to conduct our review, if we would accurately comprehend the subject, in a totally different form, and to distinguish the modern church, not by periods of time, but by associations of christians. These general divisions will consequently comprise—the ancient hierarchies, *Greek and Roman*—the primary secessions from the popedom, the *Lutheran*, the *Episcopal*, and the *Presbyterian*—the anglo-Puritans and their descendants—the most interesting and important theological controversies—the minor denominations—the American churches—the modern union of christians to promulge the gospel of Jesus—and the anticipations of faith, in reference to the scriptural prophecies which are not yet consummated.

It would be preferable to enumerate the major part of the different sects, as severed by doctrine, discipline and ceremonies ; but as it is impossible to reduce the conflicting materials into masses upon these general topics, we shall endeavour to illustrate the characteristics of the modern believers, in their sectarian origin, distinctions and progress.

We have already witnessed the partial triumph, and the legal establishment of the Protestant cause in Germany, the North of Europe and the British dominions—therefore from that period our investigations must commence.

I. The Greek Church.

In modern ages, this large body of nominal Christians may be described in two divisions; those who acknowledge the patriarchal authority of the Bishop of Constantinople; and those who dissenting equally from the Greek and Roman Pontiffs, are directed in their religious doctrines and institutions solely by their own ecclesiastical officers, independent of exterior jurisdiction. Of these various devotees of superstition, nothing of any interest has been recorded since their subjection to the Turks. They are confined in the most servile vassalage to their priests—the patriarchs of Constantinople, Antioch, Alexandria and Jerusalem exercise unlimited sway in all those regions to which their jurisdiction extends; and those dignified offices being entirely at the control of the Grand Seignior, it often follows, that they are filled, not by the friends of religion, but by him who can present the largest bribe for the appointment. Two circumstances alone, in the modern history of the Greeks demand notice; the attempts which were made to unite them with the Papacy, and the overtures which were presented by Melancthon to the Constantinopolitan Patriarch for an union with the Protestants. Insuperable difficulties however instantaneously appeared; the difference in religious sentiment was utterly irreconcilable; the external forms and the absurd idolatrous ceremonies of each hierarchy were so dissimilar, that it was impracticable to amalgamate them; and the invincible obstinacy of both the parties to their antiquated customs and traditions, proclaimed that every expectation of harmony was delusive. The ignorance and the stupid infatuated prejudices of the Greeks, in favour of the system bequeathed to them by their ancestors, also formed an insurmountable barrier to consociation with the Protestants; in consequence of which, their degradation, bigotry, and darkness continue almost without diminution. Of all the chiefs of the Greek church, one only deserves a distinct

memorial in this summary; Cyrilus Lucar patriarch of Contantinople, who was murdered by order of the grand Turk in the year 1638; and as it is generally understood, in consequence of his protestant predilections. Urban VIII. then Pope, undertook the arduous labour to eradicate the deep-rooted antipathy which the Greeks had so long indulged against the Papists. The ingenuity of Jesuitism was never more keenly tested, and the duplicity of its professors was never more plainly but artfully developed, than in the final endeavour to incorporate the Greeks with the Roman anti-christian hierarchy. To conciliate the Eastern friends of Christianity, the Jesuits declared, that no alteration in their Eastern doctrine or ceremonial observances was proposed, because these were of little importance; and they only wished to demonstrate to the Greeks, that the Constantinopolitan opinions and worship in all essential points were assimilated to the creed and ritual of the Romans.

By this manœuvre, the Jesuits proposed to convince the Eastern adherents of the gospel, that they had been always actually, though not in profession, *one* with the Papists; and that their only solicitude was to unfold the truth in its certain meaning, not to urge upon them the denial of that religion which they had received from their predecessors.

This scheme was maintained by a numerous host of the Jesuits; all of whom, in their innumerable volumes, without cessation proclaimed, that the Greeks, Russians, Nestorians, Armenians, and every other minor denomination, of the Eastern descendants from the primitive ages of Messiah's Kingdom, differed from the Pontifical order, only in a few unmeaning ceremonies, and in a small number of unimportant metaphysical terms, by which their phraseology was distinguished.

The abomination of this disingenuous and corrupt device, was clearly discerned by Cyrilus, who, from personal acquaintance with the Protestant churches and the Romish hierarchy, was perfectly competent

to decide upon the propriety of their respective claims to unity with the Greeks. Without hesitation and fear, he boldly avowed his aversion from the papal system both in doctrine and devotion; decidedly asserted his attachment to the Reformed or Calvinistic opinions and discipline; and proposed to banish from his own church, as far as possible, all articles of faith and all ceremonies in worship which were incompatible with the purity and simplicity of the Gospel of Christ. Rome beheld with astonishment and malignity this daring assault upon her authority, and this irresistible counteraction of her influence and designs. An enemy of this dignity, fortitude and power could not be tolerated; accordingly, the Jesuits, under the sanction of the French Ambassador, at that period residing in Constantinople, suborned a gang of false witnesses, who accused Cyrilus of high treason against the state, and through the perjury and malice of the Jesuits, he was slaughtered. His successor in the patriarchate, who had been the Jesuits tool to destroy Lycar after some time, notwithstanding his partiality for the papacy, was removed from this world by the arm of tyrannic violence; and as Parthenius, the following Patriarch was a decided opponent of the corruptions and ambition of the Popedom, all subsequent attempts, either to exterminate the Bishop of Constantinople appointed by Mohamed's successor, or to combine the discordant hierarchies, which the Jesuits contrived and adopted, have totally failed in execution. The exertions of the Protestants also, on a subsequent occasion, to form a coalition with the Eastern professed disciples of the Redeemer, were nugatory, in consequence of their profound ignorance and bigotry; which fact most impressively instructs us, that until the illumination of Christianity is generally diffused among them no hope of their improvement can rationally be admitted. The late "shaking of the nations" among the Greeks, is a future subject of discussion.

H. Mystery, Babylon the great.

After the complete organization of the Jesuits, they were despatched to all the accessible regions of the globe, professedly to convert the nations to Christianity; but really to extend the Papal jurisdiction, and to procure those revenues from a distance, of which, in Europe, through the Reformation, the hierarchy had been despoiled. It is unnecessary to review these various attempts to extend the pontifical dominions; they were characterized by every principle, which contradicts the purity, the candour, and the philanthropy of Jesus. The researches of modern Christians have verified the fact, that these efforts of the Romish congregation for the propagation of the faith, whether by Jesuits, Dominicans, Franciscans, Capuchins, Carmelites, Sulpicians, or by those of any other Monkish denomination, have only tended to render the heathens subject to their sway, more artful and mischievous, but not less Pagan.

The papal system occupies a vast space on the map of prophecy; it is indispensable therefore, briefly to delineate its modernized condition.

1. *The Doctrines.*—These have been maintained in all their corruption. Papists of the present day, in nothing differ from their ancestors of the leaden age: they contend for the authority of the Pontiff's decisions as equivalent to the demands of divine revelation: they deny the utility and importance of the sacred oracles: they plead for the perfection of human nature: they disregard the necessity of the Holy Spirit's influences: they derogate from the value of the Redeemer's work, as the sole Mediator between God and man; they implicitly bow down to the Pope, as visible God on earth; they have contrived to render the truth of Christianity doubtful; and they combine a fallacy of opinion, and a barbarism of feeling and action, with a pertinacity, not less than that which they exhibited, who justified the Inquisition in all its horrors. Of this truth, a recent fact is irrefragable evidence. During the fruitless

rebellion in Ireland, about twenty five years since, the Northern Protestants arrayed themselves in all their force, to procure from the British government, the recognition of their inalienable rights. It speedily appeared, however, that the Papists mingled civil and religious questions in their prospects; and in the ebullitions of triumph arising from primary success, the ostensible chieftains scrupled not to declare, that the extinction of the enemies of the church, would naturally follow the exclusion of the English predominance. The descendants of the Covenanters, of course, withdrew from persons who had resolved upon this outrageous close to their attempt to recover civic freedom; and the Irish still grovel in penury, and groan beneath military coercion.

But this result might rationally have been anticipated from that wondrous corruption of moral principle, which has been introduced into the boundaries of the Romish Hierarchy, by the Jesuits. It must not be forgotten, that the present rulers of the Beast's domains; are generally of this tribe: "who diminish the guilt of transgression, disguise the deformity of vice, loosen the reins to all the passions, nourish corruption by their dissolute precepts, and render the way to heaven, as easy, as agreeable, and as smooth as possible."

It necessarily follows, that the practice of the clergy and people could not be amended, while they admitted these defiling tenets; and the annals of the papal regions testify, that in every nation where popery has hitherto predominated, and where it still rules without control; the utmost debasement of character is exhibited without remorse, and that nothing can meliorate their degraded condition, but the light of evangelical truth, and the individualized application of the gospel of Jesus.

2. *The Controversies.*—The most famous, extensive and permanent disputation, originated in the doctrines and morals of the Jesuits. So abhorrent was

the corruption of both, which the disciples of Loyola introduced; that decent persons of the Romish communion could not admit the boundless depravation of theoretic truth and practical decorum, which these vile debauchees affirmed and promulgated.

A second controversy arose respecting the nature and necessity of divine grace, in which the Dominicans and Jansenists defended the doctrines of Augustin, and the Jesuits supported the old Pelagian opinions: this contest agitated France and Spain particularly, during more than a century; and was finally ended, partly by the tergiversation and subtlety of the Popes, and by the intervention of force, accompanied with persecution against the Jansenists in every varied form.

It is unnecessary to represent the intestine discord which has continually raged among the adherents of the Hierarchy in an augmenting ratio since the period of the Reformation:—the consequences of these collisions are of more importance. The influence of the system has been wonderfully impaired, and the temporal authority of the Pope is merely “the shadow of a shade”; still it is undeniably, that the heterodoxy of doctrine, debasement of morals, and superstitions of worship, are diminished in a very small degree in those countries from which the entrance of the Protestant or Reformed principles was originally excluded. To this may be subjoined the fact, that the lives of the Popish clergy, in the dominions of the Man of Sin, are not by any means purer than in the dark ages; but rather, that the Priests are infidel Epicureans.

3. *Opposition to the Protestants.*—This is the most interesting portion of the Popish history, since the actual and authoritative settlement of the Reformation in the different nations in which it was introduced. As to the pretended attempts to propagate the Christian faith among the heathen, they have been attended with little success, and with no melioration of the professed converts; they are consequently altogether unworthy of review.

"Rome, long accustomed to dominion, and bloated with insolence, contrived schemes, engaged in cabals, excited commotions, with uninterrupted and mischievous industry, to oppress the Protestants, and to extinguish the light of the glorious Reformation. The resources of genius, the force of arms, the seductions of promises, the terrors of the most formidable menaces, the subtlety of disputation, the influence of fraud, and the arts of dissimulation ; in short, all possible means, open and concealed, honest and disingenuous, were employed for the destruction of the Protestant and Reformed churches."

In the Austrian dominions, commenced the oppressions and persecutions of the seceders from the Papedom. The most sacred obligations and treaties were violated ; while in Bohemia particularly, a resolute military resistance was organized, which was displayed in the election of a Protestant king, and the rejection of the Austrian authority :—but this event which, if it had proved successful, would have been almost tantamount to the demolition of the Papacy, was, by a mysterious Providence, rendered abortive. James, king of England, refused to aid the new monarch, although Frederick had married his daughter : and the Papists were aided by John, the Lutheran Elector of Saxony—exhibiting this remarkable anomaly : a successor of that Elector who had defended Luther against the Pope and Charles V. combined in the cause of popery and persecution against the reformed Protestants, gloriously asserting their Christian privileges, and the rights of conscience. Speedily after, the Emperor virtually abrogated the former treaty of Augsburg, by which the privileges of the protestants had been solemnly guaranteed and sanctioned with the national faith ; for he issued an outrageous ordinance, denominated the *edict of restitution* ; by which the reformed were commanded, without delay to restore to the Monks and Jesuits, all the property secured to them by the *religious peace*. This edict was enforced by sanguinary

russians in military array, encouraged by the enthusiastic, covetous, malignant and merciless Friars and Jesuits, who attended to encourage the rapine and butchery, and then to grasp the spoil.

When the misery and depopulation which flowed from this iniquitous tyranny were reported to the Emperor, the royal barbarian calmly replied, “*malumus regnum vastatum, quam damnum* ; I would rather that the kingdom should be deserted, than damned.” The Lord, however, animated Gustavus of Sweden, to defend the liberties of mankind against this imperial blood-sucker ; and although he died during the war, yet his spirit survived him ; until after the lapse of thirty years, the nations having exhausted their treasures and their energies, this ardent contest which had been prolonged with the most unrelenting animosity was terminated. The result of the war was a refusal of their religious privileges to the Protestants ; but they obtained a restoration of the property of which they had been illegally divested.

In Hungary, Poland, Germany, and in the vallies of Piedmont, the protestants, at different periods, experienced every variety of suffering. All the ebullitions of papal fury were occasionally exhibited ; and as often as impunity permitted, confiscation, imprisonment, and carnage, with all the horrible appendages attached to the devastations of a lawless undisciplined gang of armed fanatics, stimulated by sensuality and plunder, were the wretched allotment of the faithful followers of the Lamb.

In Spain, the insatiable cupidity of the Inquisitors and their agents for the wealth of the descendants of the original Saracens, finally produced an edict from the bigotted tool of Rome, their king, that all the Moors without exception, should be immediately banished from his dominions, and transported to the coast of Barbary ; from that period, the Spaniards have been the most debased, and servile, and stupidly superstitious of all the European nations ; in short, nothing but generations of ignorant, deluded, lazy,

corrupt, cruel, priest-ridden devotees, without one noble human characteristic.

The Huguenots of France experienced the desolating force of the papal storm. Henry IV., a Protestant, had finally attained the throne of France; but to obtain the undisputed possession of his government, he became a *nominal* papist. To protect his Protestant friends, by whose instrumentality he had vanquished all opposition; he promulgated the famous *edict of Nantz*. In consequence of the advantages secured by this royal instrument and declaration, the Protestants enjoyed every possible immunity; they possessed fortified places as a pledge, for their rights; and public lands were allotted, as revenues for their ministers of the gospel, and the pay of their garrisons. During twenty years under this pacific system, the Huguenots increased prodigiously in numbers, wealth and influence. After Louis XIII. had attained the years of maturity; Cardinal Richelieu, a furious, bigotted, Jesuitical son of the Mother of Abominations, proposed to the king that the privileges granted to the Protestants by the edict of Nantz, should be withdrawn; and deceitfully intimated, that the peace of the kingdom, and the prosperity of the church were inseparably connected with the revocation of that decree. Accordingly, Rochelle the chief fortress was besieged, and the garrison having been reduced to starvation, were obliged to surrender; after thirteen, out of eighteen thousand of the inhabitants, had been immolated as a sacrifice to the papal Moloch. Argument, persuasions, sophistry, and bribes were all in vain used to seduce the protestants into the embrace of the Mother of Harlots. Perfidy having been found inefficient; brutality and power were tried to coerce and destroy those "of whom the world was not worthy." Inhuman laws dictated by bigotted rage, oppressions invented by infernal malice, and cruel persecution in its utmost barbarity overwhelmed "the household of faith." Legions of dragoons with unintermitting

sury and expedition accompanied the Jesuits to make converts, or to participate in the croisade ; some became idolaters, others migrated, flying from their families, friends, and home ; but these were few, contrasted with the myriads of the believers, who, animated by the fortitude of Christianity, feared not them “ that kill the body,” but most heroically and constantly witnessed a good confession.” At last, fatigued with minor cruelties ; Louis XIV. regardless of all obligations, and “ all laws, human and divine,” exemplified the cardinal doctrine of modern popery, “ no faith is to be kept with heretics ;” for in 1686, he annulled the edict of Nantz, thus depriving the Huguenots of their conscientious privileges, and enjoining upon them an immediate subjection to the Man of Sin, and the reception of his blasphemies.

More than two millions of people were by this measure, divested of all the enjoyments and pleas of common humanity. Those who were impeded from migrating to other countries, were exposed to every indignity, and were assailed with all the barbarity, which a Jesuit’s diabolical malevolence, and a professional murderer’s cruel licentiousness combined could invent and inflict : they were burned on the Lord’s day in multitudes, when assembled for divine worship ; if they endeavoured to escape, they were tossed into the fire at the point of the bayonet : they were roasted singly and in small companies before slow fires— they were gibbeted alive, and left to starve and be devoured by carnivorous birds—they were drowned as food for the fishes—they were suffocated by the most tedious modes of strangling—they were racked until their whole frame was dislocated ; then they were permitted to live maimed, displaying every possible species of corporeal mutilation ; or after having been thus reduced to poverty and helplessness were banished to England, Holland, or Germany, there to remain mementos of *Papal benevolence*, and Christian consistency and fortitude.— The earlier scenes of the French revolution exhibit

a wondrous re-action in human affairs : and a righteous retribution upon the antichristian hierarchy for the direful calamities which they effused upon the Huguenots.

After the edict of Nantz had existed nearly 100 years, having been granted by Henry, who was murdered by the Jesuits, his second successor revoked it; and about 100 years subsequent to its being annulled, the second successor also of him who abolished that charter of liberty and religion, beheld the French portion of the Beast's domain alienated from his sway ; and heard the Popish Infidels pronounce the sentence, which condemned him to a violent death, similar to that which his protestant predecessor had realized from their traitorous ancestors.— These analogies are too remarkable to escape the notice of an observer of divine Providence.

In Sweden, Denmark, Holland, and the Swiss protestant cantons, no attempts of importance have been made to restore the “ Son of perdition :” but in Britain every machination was contrived. The destruction of the whole legislature by gunpowder, involving the King and his son, was a Jesuitical plot to usurp the sovereignty. Charles I. was no more than a semi-protestant, with very strong attachments to the Papacy ; and his successors after the protectorate of Cromwell, who, in truth, consolidated the protestant religion, was not only a disguised Papist, but treacherously sold himself to the apostate hierarchy for money, and by treaty secretly engaged to re-place the whole anti-christian corruption. The Lord in his mercy to that nation, permitted William III. to dispossess the next tyrant, James, who was an avowed adherent of the Pope ; and from the revolution in 1688, no scheme to establish the Beast's supremacy, except two trifling endeavors to recover the throne for James' descendants, has hitherto been executed.

Before this review of the Papal system is terminated ; it is necessary to remark, that since the Reformation a large number of persons of superior intelli-

gence has appeared among the papists, especially in France; and that the effect which might have been anticipated was displayed: the mere Philosophers, despising the solemn mummeries of the priesthood, became Infidels; and the illuminated Theologians were almost Protestants; hence, the temporary overthrow of the antichristian fabric in that nation, must be attributed to the gradual accessions of knowledge, which in various modes penetrated the Egyptian darkness, until its blaze emitted splendors too potent for the silly devotees; and which, instead of producing the ordinary effects of light, larger capacity and a more extended sphere of usefulness, stupefied them with its magnificent rays, and struck them with infatuation.

III. The Lutherans.

The standard compendium of doctrines that all the Lutherans professedly adopt, are the Confession of Augsburg, the articles of Smalcald, and Luther's catechisms; which are essentially in unison with the Helvetic and the Reformed creeds of faith.—With respect to the ceremonies of worship, many disputes arose, which were at last compromised by a compact, that every congregation might adopt its own ritual, provided that every rite palpably erroneous and superstitious should be excluded; from this cause, a vast diversity in the exterior forms of devotion subsists among the Lutherans; some retaining a considerable portion of the Romish pomp, while others approximate the simplicity of the reformed institutions. Considerable difference of opinion is discernible among the followers of Luther respecting the mode of church government: strictly, it is neither an episcopacy nor presbyterian, except in Sweden and Denmark, where the episcopal authority is merely a *name*; and hence, they are dissimilar in their sentiments and practice; combining a species of episcopal superintendence in one district, and in another section, a ministerial parity assembled synod, without jurisdiction over the separate con-

gregations. The Lutherans generally incorporate liturgies or forms of prayer in their external devotions: but these differ in their matter and extent, although uniform in doctrine and object: they also celebrate a variety of festivals, introduced from the catalogue of superstition, to memorialize past events and the deceased saints; but in the number of these, they disagree, and in this Union, it is believed, they are generally omitted. But in nothing is the character of the Lutheran church more disgraced than in the extreme laxity of ecclesiastical discipline; this topic affords almost ceaseless pain to the faithful ministers of the gospel, and is a constant subject of reproach among the Papists, even in Europe: yet from late scrutiny, it appears, that in this aspect that denomination gradually meliorating. Respecting the changes in the Lutheran church, they have been scarcely perceptible; it has preserved, including the minor delineations already enumerated, amid the fluctuations of Europe, an almost uniform similarity to its general portrait, as determined by the original treaty of religious peace at Augsburg; and with respect to its geographical boundaries, except the Lutheran churches founded in these states, it has neither received enlargement, nor experienced restriction to any extent, or of any magnitude.

The benefits of the Reformation in merely a literary view, were extensively enjoyed by the Lutherans, and they have largely contributed to the mass of knowledge. Upon theological subjects, they have furnished a vast fund of invaluable matter for the improvement of mankind: but it must not be omitted, that the modern Lutherans have very materially diverged from the belief of their ancestors. Luther and his co-adjutors, Zuinglius and his contemporaries, Calvin and his associates were indubitably united in principle, except in church government, and the manner in which Christ is present in the Lord's Supper. On two fundamental points of the gospel, many of the European christians have totally apos-

tatized from the truth as it is in Jesus, as well as the doctrinal interpretation of the primitive Reformers. By considerable numbers of the moderns who nominally belong to that church, the divine character of Jesus Christ is peremptorily denied, so that they have gone astray into the error of Socinus: and the doctrine of justification by faith, which Luther proclaimed *articulus stantis vel carentis ecclesiae*, the article of the church, by which it stands or falls, has been obscured by the propagation of Pelagius' heretical delusions.

The controversies which have arisen in the Lutheran church, since the death of that Reformer, were attended with baleful effects. In 1548, Charles V. issued an edict called the *interim*, containing all the principal doctrines of Popery, masked under an ambiguity of expression which admitted of as many explications as interpreters; and of course, equally objectionable to an illiterate bigotted Papist, as to a conscientious enlightened Protestant. Melancthon, all whose other dignified characteristics were deteriorated by a timidity which knew no bounds, and by a supposititious expediency, always shifting as the continually varying events required, adapted his equivocal conduct to the emergency; and avowed his opinion, that in matters indifferent, the imperial edicts should be obeyed. This principle in ordinary situations might have been admissible; but in this dilemma, it was almost tantamount to a dereliction of the Protestant cause. Among the things *indifferent*, this most estimable but pusillanimous man, to evade the wrath of the Emperor, inscribed, *justification by faith alone*; *the necessity of good works to salvation*; *the number of the Sacraments*; *the papal and episcopal jurisdiction*; *extreme unction*; and a large proportion of the idolatrous ceremonial indissolubly intertwined with the Papal system. These admissions produced a long and violent contention, denominated the *adiaphoristic controversy*; which was the source of prodigious discord; and in its effects was extremely prejudicial.

to the progress of the light and the truth. To this cause, may be imputed all the controversies which successively disturbed the harmony of the Lutheran church during 100 years, and also the inefficacy of every attempt which was made to unite the disciples of Zwingle and Calvin with the adherents of Luther. In the early part of the seventeenth century, the latter lost two princes from their body : the landgrave of Hesse and the elector of Bradenburgh ; who were dissatisfied primarily with the doctrine of consubstantiation, and afterwards with the aberration of the Ministers from their acknowledged standard of theological doctrines. A subsequent attempt to combine in fraternal bonds the two general divisions of the Protestants, engendered great disputation and was attended with no success ; and a reform, or return to the principles and morals of the pristine Reformers, which was introduced by the Pietists, as they were contemptuously denominated, although it produced great temporary excitement, finally disappeared without much actual advantage. It must however be mentioned, that the establishment of the Bible Societies has already effected a very important change in the Lutheran church ; and that in the Prussian dominions, very lately, the Lutherans and Calvinists have formed a general union, which may eventually concatenate these dissentients into one compact body : but these topics belong to researches connected with the history of the Church during the present generation.

V. *The established Church of England.*

The measures of Henry VIII. with regard to the church, only tended to exterminate the Beast's ecclesiastical authority. By law, the Pope's jurisdiction was totally abolished ; but the antichristian errors remained, hence Luther jocosely remarked, that "Henry killed the Pope's body [his supremacy, but saved his soul] the false doctrines." During the King's reign ; the prohibition against the marriage of priests was annulled ; masses were forbidden ;

the communion in both kinds was administered ; the popish altars were removed ; the images were expelled from the churches ; the Scriptures and the forms of prayer, with the whole service of the liturgy were publicly read in the English language ; continual amendments were introduced into the whole ecclesiastical polity, and the progress of the Reformation was unceasing and irresistible.

“One sinner destroyeth much good.” Edward having been translated to Paradise, his sister, appropriately called, *Bloody Mary*, reversed all the legal enactments ; repealed all the evangelical ordinances : displaced all the married ministers of the gospel ; restored the whole mass of superstitious ceremonies ; re-established the papal authority in all its terrific majesty ; and eventually promulgated the great excommunication against all those who possessed the lands of the Monks and Nuns and Friars, provided they were not surrendered without delay to their former occupants ; thus resuscitating the iniquity which had been entombed. The consequences of this latter measure, had it been carried into effect, no person can divine ; as a large portion of the confiscated domains had been so transferred, that it would have involved the kingdom in one general commotion and confusion. She died, prior to the adoption of the measures necessary to accomplish her design ; and the elevation of Elizabeth to the throne, dissipated all the schemes and expectations of “the unclean spirit, who like frogs, come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet.”

Although these vicissitudes appear to us most stupendous, yet the then existing system admitted of such changes with the utmost facility. The distinction between Protestantism and Popery was then scarcely discernible : for the unenlightened multitudes had never seen the Bible ; they perceived nothing, but the identical buildings called churches, with the same men arrayed in their gorgeous drapery;

they heard the same prayers mumbled over in their usual order ; and their ignorant capacities were too obtuse to comprehend discrepancies without a difference. Except the comparatively few ecclesiastical dignitaries, the mass of the clergy and laity were impelled solely by the arbitrary mandate of a tyrant armed with the means of irresistible coercion. Many persons commenced infuriated Papists with Henry ; became Semi-Protestants in accordance with his opposition to the Pope ; were almost reformed Puritans under Edward ; exhibited the highest features of Dominican malevolence while Mary swayed ; and under Elizabeth, lived and died staunch Episcopilians of the established church of England. This marvellous and mysterious masquerading can only be satisfactorily unravelled, by the recollection, that the characteristics of both systems as then exhibited and felt, were immensely different from their influence and operation at the present era ; and that self-interest was almost universally the sole spring of action.

Elizabeth discovering that the predominance of the Protestant religion was indispensable to her personal safety, and the security of her throne ; at length directed, that all ecclesiastical affairs should be re-appointed as in the reign of Edward. But the Queen was a Semi-Papist in her principles and practice ; for she long retained the most senseless and infantile appendage of the Romish idolatry, the crucifix with the lighted tapers perennially burning before it ; she affected to be vehemently incensed against all the married preachers of the gospel ; she would never hear any sermons, but during the popish season of *Lent*, and in short preserved, as far as it was possible for her to perpetuate the resemblance, all the exterior pomp, and superstitious apparatus of the Apostate hierarchy : the same authority, and the same diocesan episcopacy which the Roman pontiff had ordained, was scrupulously retained, and have been as invidiously and pertinaciously prolonged even until this generation.

Among the abominable measures which this *she Pope* enacted, for Elizabeth was not less tyrannical in England, than Hildebrand at Rome, the *act of uniformity* is pre-eminent: by the operation of this law, every person whether of the clergy or laity was obliged to conform to her requisitions in doctrine or worship, or was exposed to the imputation of heresy, with the assurance of this termagant's displeasure. By her directions, the censures of the Pope in the liturgy were erased, and the corporal presence of Christ in the bread was tacitly admitted; the various sacerdotal vestments, the marks of the Beast were prescribed; the several orders of the clergy were established; the cathedral services, fasts, festivals, the sign of the cross in baptism; the reading of the apocrypha; the divine right of the Bishops; with a vast catalogue of the Romish trumpery were all incorporated in the national church as essential to her existence. These however were opposed by the Reformers without effect.

The men who were designated as Puritans, had migrated from England to Germany speedily after Edward's death; and these imbibed an unconquerable predilection for the purer and more simple forms of worship, adopted in Switzerland and at Geneva. After Elizabeth's accession to the government, they returned to England, trusting that they should enjoy peace and liberty of conscience as a remuneration for their sufferings; but the Queen's haughty temper and Popish attachments disappointed their anticipations. The first source of discord was the papal garments; these the Puritans wisely judged ought to be banished, as they were always associated with the remembrances of popery, and served to prolong its controul over the ignorant multitude, who were more easily deluded by sensible magnificence, than affected by spiritual truth. As the continuance of controversy invariably amplifies its original boundaries, so these disputers were speedily involved in contentions upon a more important subject, the mode of church

government; and as this has been the barrier between the modern episcopalians and almost all the other existing denominations; it is necessary to develope precisely the topics of alteration.

The first English Reformers contended, that only two offices existed in the church by Christ's appointment; that of Bishop or Presbyter, for the words are synonymous in the New Testament, and that of Deacon. But since Bancroft propagated his fallacy, that the Bishops in England are an order superior to priests, *jure divino*, by divine right; the English Episcopal church has denied the validity of the ordinations of all other preachers, except the Papists; thus exhibiting a novelty on earth; a church excommunicated by the Pope from whom they profess to derive their authority, and for whose speedy destruction they constantly pray; and at the same time, declaring that all who unite with them in rejecting the papal sway, and the anti-christian abominations of Rome, have no part in the covenant of mercy; and if it were possible to exceed this almost incredible absurdity, it is found in the fact, that, neither the Episcopalian in Scotland and Ireland, nor those in the United States, are recognized by the English hierarchy as true sons of the Church; none of them being legally admitted into an English pulpit or benefices, without re ordination by a Prelate who boasts of his regular descent from Pope Joan.

The Episcopalian under Elizabeth contended, that the removal of corruption and the extermination of error from the church was the prerogative of the governing civil magistrate—this principle the Puritans flatly denied; and affirmed that it was the sole duty of the officers and members of the church to effect the necessary reformation. This was interpreted, to imply a want of allegiance to the tyrannic Queen's supremacy.

Elizabeth's commissioners affirmed that in all questions of theology, respecting doctrine and discipline, not only the scriptures, but the writings

of the Fathers of the primitive ages ought to be adduced as oracular. In reply, the Puritans declared; that the sacred oracles are the only standard of truth, and the sole directory of worship; and that neither ancient institutions nor human writings however valuable, except as evidences of facts, are of any authority, upon subjects which the word of God alone can decide. This was stigmatized as rebellion against the divinely appointed rulers of the church.

These pretended successors of Peter asserted, that the Romish hierarchy was a true church; that the Pontiff of the Vatican was a lawful and veritable Bishop; and that the persons ordained by him were duly authorized Pastors of the church. This position was evidently necessary to justify their semi blasphemous titles—*your Grace, most reverend and right reverend Lord and Father in God*, and also to secure their *terrestrial dignities and princely revenues and power*: thus deriving their honour and emoluments, by uninterrupted succession from “the Prince of the Apostles.” On the contrary, the Puritans reproached the apostate system, as a mere political contrivance of spiritual despotism, altogether alien from the gospel; the head of it as “Antichrist and the Man of Sin;” its destructive doctrines and discipline as idolatrous, and diametrically opposed to “pure and undefiled religion;” and consequently, they discarded all communion with it, and considered all similarity to it in theory or practice, as dangerous, and a flagrant departure from genuine Christianity.

The episcopal controvertists alleged, that the form of church government established by Constantine and his successors was more perfect than that which had been instituted by our Lord and his Apostles—the Puritans repelled the unholy insinuation; and maintained, that every necessary ecclesiastical rule was revealed in the New Testament the only standard of order, discipline and devotion.

Elizabeth’s sub-tyrants proclaimed, that things in themselves *indifferent*, which are neither enjoined

nor prohibited in scripture ; particularly external ceremonies of worship, the robes of the ministers, forms of prayer, religious festivals, with other similar institutes, might be authoritatively enacted by the civil magistrate ; and that disobedience to such regulations was an act of rebellion against the state. In reply to this position, the Puritans retorted, that it was an indecent usurpation to impose as indispensable, that which the Redeemer had revealed, and which the Hierarchs themselves admitted to be *indifferent* ; and especially that those rites and ceremonies which had already been incorporated with an idolatrous system, and the use of which revived and perpetuated superstitious impressions, instead of being estimated as *indifferent*, should be discarded as anti-evangelical and impious. This was pronounced contempt for the regal and episcopal jurisdiction.

To enforce uniformity and obedience to these claims, a court was established called *the high commission* ; armed with spite and myrmidons, to subdue the conscientious and refractory Puritan. They were authorized to extort answers to every inquiry which they propounded, by the rack, or any other torture or imprisonment—their sentence was perfectly arbitrary ; and they exhibited in the audacity of their impositions, as articles of faith, and in their refinements of cruelty, all the iniquitous barbarity and appalling torments of a consummate Dominican Inquisition. One circumstance connected with this subject, stamps the ecclesiastical governors of that period with indelible infamy ; that the Puritans whom they robbed, starved, scourged, mercilessly afflicted, imprisoned, exiled, hanged or burnt, most sincerely believed all the articles of christian faith, publicly established and promulgated, as the theological creed of the English nation. Hence at the period of Elizabeth's death, the people were scarcely more reformed from Popery, than when Mary assumed the government.

The doctrines of the established church of England are decidedly calvinistic ; and no persons of contrary opinions were admitted to officiate as Ministers among them, until the latter end of James' reign.—This monarch, it had been hoped, would moderate the arrogance of the episcopal claims, and afford peace to the persecuted Puritans. A few years prior to the death of Elizabeth, he publicly declared that “the English liturgy was an evil said mass ; wanting nothing but the elevation of the host,” and having charged all the Scotch to stand stedfast in the presbyterian faith, he added, “as long as I brook my life I shall do the same.” But immediately after he was established king of England, his popish predilections were developed ; his motto was, “*no bishop, no king* ;” and a resolute design to introduce popery was evinced. Every measure which the ecclesiastical usurpers supposed was accommodated to eounterract the Puritans was adopted : the Calvinistic doctrines were denied—high-toned arminianism was substituted—the objectors to the antichristian characteristics of the established church were persecuted in every possible form—treaties with the Popish princes were ratified for the most abhorrent objects, the overthrow of civil and religious freedom ; and as if the royal and episcopal governments had resolved to secure the effusion of divine wrath upon themselves and the nation, they issued “*the book of sports* ;” by which all persons were commanded “immediately after public worship on the Lord’s day, to engage in “*sports and pastimes, revelling and drinking*,” to verify that they were not Puritans.

Charles I. proceeded upon his father’s system, and sedulously endeavoured to extend the royal prerogative above all law ; to subject every person to the episcopacy ; and to restore the national church as nearly as possible, to the exterior appearance stamped upon it by the Dragon’s Beast. To accomplish these objects ; he attempted to introduce the episcopal hierarchy into Scotland by military force ; the

Puritans were disgraced with every species of personal indignity, and tormented by every kind of suffering ; and the most farcical portions of all the ceremonial buffoonery practiced at Rome, were publicly embodied in the legalized ritual by Laud, Archbishop of Canterbury. These outrageous proceedings, in connection with the attempt to exterminate the Reformation in Ireland in 1641, by the butchery of the Protestants ; which was sanctioned if not absolutely commanded by Charles ; and during which slaughter, it is supposed not less than 100,000 Protestants were massacred in the most inhuman and execrable forms ; eventually excited resistance in arms. After a civil contest, which continued with prodigious fury during several years, which desolated the kingdom through all its departments, and in which, Laud and his principal coadjutors were executed under the forms of law, or died in battle ; Charles himself was beheaded ; and a military government controled the affairs of the nation.

To evince the necessity of this change, however deplorable were the means by which it was effected ; it is not superfluous to state, that Laud and his inferior agents, promulgated that *the Pope is not Antichrist—in the church of Rome is no hazard of damnation—no idolatry exists in that church.* Crucifixes, altars and images were erected in the houses of devotion, and adored ; the invocation of saints was pronounced lawful ; the seven Sacraments and all the orders of popish ministers were declared scriptural ; extreme unction was affirmed to be laudable ; purgatory was maintained ; the corporal presence of Christ in the wafer was defended : the superstitious celebration of festivals was asserted ; the most licentious abuse and profanation of the Lord's day was regularly inculcated by the Ministers, enjoined by law, and practiced by the episcopal royalists, under severe penalties ; sermonizing was contemned as unnecessary ; and the Liturgy which Charles and Laud endeavoured to impose upon the Scotch nation was filled with the venom of

popery. The temporary demolition of the regal and episcopal supremacy exterminated the poison.—During Cromwell's protectorate, the puritans increased in numbers, opulence, learning, and influence ; and firmly laid the corner stone of that temple of freedom in Britain, which no subsequent machinations of despotism have been sufficiently powerful to subvert and raze : and it must also now be admitted, that the revolution of affairs which occurred from the death of Charles I. to the inauguration of his son, was indubitably necessary to deliver the nation from papal gloom, and the debasing fetters of an absolute monarchy.

Charles II. was established upon the throne of his ancestors ; and one of his first laws was an “act of uniformity,” enforcing upon all ministers, to subscribe “to all and every thing contained in the book of common prayer ;” declaring the ordination of all the Puritans null and void ; and requiring them to submit to be re-ordained by the bishops. This outrageous “violation of all laws, human and divine,” ejected 2000 of the most pious, enlightened, and laborious preachers from the national church ; who suffered every species of contumelious injury and deprivation for their adhesion to the principles of the gospel of Christ. To avoid the suspicion of Puritanism and Non-conformity, the religious principles and devotions of their friends were caricatured in the theatre, and ridiculed in the church ; and the Court and Clergy, with their adherents then first denominated Tories, to avoid the charge of hypocrisy, exhibited the utmost debauchery of manners, and a heterodoxy of sentiments which can scarcely be classified. With few exceptions, it was a sceptical indifference on points of christian doctrine ; while the standard of morals was little superior to that which Cicero had promulgated. The retrogression to the Romish apostacy was gradual ; and had James been equally artful as Charles, it might have succeeded : but the Lord graciously permitted “Judas to display his cloven foot,”

before the national hierarchy had imbibed a sufficient attachment for his Satanic majesty, voluntarily to submit to his jurisdiction. James, after a short reign, abandoned the government to William of Holland, who had married his daughter, a decided reformed Protestant. Since that period, the established church of England has preserved much similarity of character; which was never more accurately delineated, than by the famous Lord Chatham; "*We have a Calvinistic creed, a popish liturgy, and an Arminian clergy.*" At present, however, the condition of the British episcopalians is meliorating; their doctrines from the pulpit are becoming more consistent with their thirty nine articles, and a higher strain of evangelical unction is commingling with their expositions of the gospel; the number of faithful zealous ministers rapidly augments, who combine a liberality of sentiment, and an urbanity of intercourse with the descendants of the Puritans, unknown to former generations; that Laodicean lukewarmness which had overspread the whole establishment during more than a century, is gradually disappearing; and the freshness and vigour of active exertion to promote and extend the spiritual kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, begin to unfold themselves in a copious emission of the terrestrial fruits of righteousness, with the verdant foliage and enchanting blossoms of a blissful immortality.

*The reformed churches of Switzerland—Geneva—France
—the Vandois—Bohemia—Poland—the Netherlands—
and the established church of Scotland, from the Refor-
mation to the commencement of the nineteenth century.*

It has already been recorded, that among the dissenters from the Romish hierarchy, who appeared at the commencement of the sixteenth century, an important division in sentiment existed upon three general topics: the nature of Christ's presence in the Sacrament of the Supper; the external forms of devotion; and the mode of church-government. The doctrine and practice of Luther and his disciples on these subjects, constituted an insurmountable barrier to general union, and hence arose the various bodies, although not equally restricted, accurately denominated Presbyterian.

When the scattered adversaries of the Pope commenced their spiritual warfare; they were in a great degree ignorant of the subjects which afterwards excited such violent controversies among them; and it is probable, that they were principally interested in one point only, *their secession from the apostacy*; for however widely they subsequently differed; in their invincible antipathy to the Man of Sin and his antichristian abominations, they all were unanimous. But when the success of their primary opposition permitted them to review all the diversified traditions which the gospel condemned; an inquiry arose respecting the extent to which reform should be limited. The Lutherans and English episcopalians, from a variety of causes which have been narrated, were arrested in the work of renovation; but the churches

generally designated as *reformed*, not being obstructed by the same impediments, enlarged their views and purification; with an inflexible resolution if practicable, to assimilate the modern church to the primitive apostolic exemplar.

This august system was originally adopted by Zuingle in Switzerland, who decidedly and equally opposed the transubstantiating absurdities of Rome, and Luther's not less preposterous consubstantiation. He was also determinately averse from all the ceremonial insignificant appendages to devotion, which the Roman Pontiffs had successively consecrated; images, altars, wax-tapers, exorcism, and auricular confession; and the whole episcopacy was virtually abrogated by the tendency of his doctrines. Calvin, quickly after the death of Zuingle, removed to Geneva; and extended the theory of the Swiss reformer, until it assumed nearly the same conformation which it still displays; the spiritual character of the Lord's supper, the total exclusion of every attempt to impress divine truth by the medium of the senses alone, and the perfect equality of all the Ministers of the gospel. To these points was superadded the institution of presbyteries and synods, to whom was confided a high degree of legislative and judicial authority in the government of the church.

In minor doctrinal principles, in some forms of worship, and in unimportant ecclesiastical regulations, the churches, enumerated as reformed, varied; but in every essential characteristic they were uniform; and notwithstanding they recognize different authorities as standards; the French, Genevan, Helvetic and Bohemian confessions, the articles of the Synod of Dort, and the Westminster Assembly's Confession of Faith, may be easily admitted by all those who receive Calvin's Institutes, as a correct explication of evangelical truth. Consistory and session, classis and presbytery, synod and assembly, are merely divers appellations for the same bodies, who exercise similar powers in their churches, with one

distinction only; the Scotch Presbyterian hierarchy and their descendants claim a more unlimited jurisdiction over their congregations, than that which the others assume. This usurpation arising probably, from the supremacy which the civil law allotted to them, and their total exemption from persecution, since William's accession to the throne of Britain.

1. *Switzerland*.—The churches which were primarily collected, in consequence of the labours of Zuingle and others in the Swiss cantons, have retained much of their original character; and amid all the commotions of three centuries, have evinced a great degree of stedfastness and purity. At present, they rank among the most efficient and active propagators of the sacred oracles on the European continent. One remarkable proof of their christian principles is evinced by the fact; that although from the period of the reformation, they have been divided into Reformed Lutherans and Papists; yet after the first collision subsided, they have all remained “at peace among themselves;” thereby demonstrating, that the love of civil liberty extirpates the spirit of religious persecution; that even their ancient popery was of the mildest form; and that their modern attachment to the truth has not exterminated their evangelical philanthropy.

2. *Geneva*.—The church of Geneva and the theological college which Calvin established in that city, long maintained an undisputed pre-eminence: but after the lapse of a century, it began to decline; and latterly has been the temple of error. A departure from christian truth, approximating open infidelity, during a series of years, has been the avowed character of those who teach where Calvin lectured, and who read heresy where that mighty reformer enforced the gospel; so that even at this period, it may be said in the bewailing language of the tearful Jeremiah, “how is the gold become dim, how is the most fine gold changed! the stones of the sanctuary are poured out in the top of every street.”

3. *France*.—The history of the Huguenots in France has been almost narrated in the review of their tortures. From the revocation of the edict of Nantz, the reform of religion in that nation has been virtually crushed. Those who remained in their native country were preserved from total extinction merely by their obscurity. After the revolution in 1789, they began to appear in public, and during that tempestuous season were exempt from anguish, on account of their religious profession. Napoleon, while he directed the French government, not only tolerated, but extended to them all possible encouragement; so that “the word of the Lord had free course and was glorified.” Their peace however, was of short duration; for after the second restoration of Louis XVIII., the sanguinary arm of their imatical oppressors was raised against them, and all the atrocities of the most execrable periods of popish severity were again perpetrated, with the avowed purpose, to extirpate those descendants of the primitive Huguenots. The infuriated monsters were arrested in their iniquitous progress, through the interposition of the British government, which was irresistibly demanded by the English Dissenters and Scotch Presbyterians; the force of whose christian philanthropy nothing could check, until their reformed brethren in France were partially reinstated in their toleration;—thus restoring 570 congregations and nearly two millions of Protestants to some of their privileges, and peace.

4. *The Vaucluse*.—The Vandois, who are descended from the ancient Waldenses, still reside in three small vallies, at the foot of the Alps which separate France from Piedmont. Persecution in various forms oppressed and terrified them; although not to the same extent, as that which the Huguenots experienced. Oliver Cromwell menaced the kings of France and Sardinia with his wrath; if they dared to pour out their irreligious fury upon these sons of the primitive Dissenters from the Popedom. Intimidated by this

Independent, they ceased from their diabolical project. William III. of England granted to each of the ministers among the Vaudois, an annual salary of 400 livres, which was regularly paid by his successors until 1797; thus maintaining the cause of Christ, among those, almost unknown christians, for the trifling sum of 1200 dollars per annum. When Napoleon governed France, all possible protection and encouragement were administered to the inhabitants of these Alpine vales. The property of which they had been despoiled by the Papists was restored, and the salary of each pastor, if it amounted not to 1000 francs, was supplied from the national treasury; ordered avowedly and expressly, to reimburse them for the loss of the English donation, the transmission of which the war had doubtless interrupted. During the reign of Napoleon, in the possession of their civil and religious liberties their temporal concerns prospered; "the word of God grew and multiplied;" and they fancied that perpetuity was fully inscribed upon their enjoyments. But "vanity and vexation of spirit" are the characteristics of all sublunary affairs; the supremacy of their friend was demolished; the pretended *legitimates* vanquished the supporter of the Protestants, and the rights of conscience; and the votaries of the Beast resumed their outrageous violence and devastations. The Vaudois were again pillaged; their churches were closed; Papists of the vilest order, without virtue, probity or intelligence, were commissioned to rule over, or rather to worry them; and all kindness to the Protestants was denounced, "under pain of excommunication," by the Popish priests, who were appointed by the instrumentality of the *un-holy alliance* to convert or torment these lamb-like members of "the household of faith." Notwithstanding all their anticipated triumphs, these idolaters who bear "the mark and name of the beast," eventually discovered; "that there was one place in Europe, where the oppressed could appeal; and where as long as public justice lingered in the old

world, acts of atrocity could be stamped with infamy, and men who were suffered to remain unpunished, could be visited with public detestation." The English Dissenters heard the groans of their distant suffering christian brethren ; they appealed to the British government for a resumption of the former payments in salaries to the Ministers of the vallies of Piedmont ; and relying upon that efficient patronage, they exerted themselves to obtain anew for the Vaudois, "their enjoyment of those civil and religious rights, of which, by ignorance, intolerance and injustice alone, they had been deprived." At the same time, that most august institution, which now stands the vanguard of the noble army of European christians who are contending for the evangelical and social "rights of man," "*the Protestant Society for the protection of religious liberty,*" publicly avowed their unalterable determination, that if necessary, "they would contribute to their aid ; that they would invite all wise and good men to imitate the conduct which the best and wisest of their ancestors had displayed ; and that they would collect a fund for the Vaudois, which should permanently mitigate their evils, preserve their widows from famine, and their Ministers from despair ; and cause their children, and their children's children, amid their glens, and dells, and rocks, scarcely pervious to a foreign foot, and in their humble churches, at the hours of prayer, long to continue to repeat the praises and the supplications which their parents had so often uttered, that God would ever bless with peace and with prosperity, the church and the world." Although we are separated by the Atlantic floods from these gospel warriors ; it is enrapturing, to remember ; that the grand charter of evangelical truth and freedom, which in these states sways unrestricted by national regulations, has been adopted by the descendants of the primitive witnesses who prophesied in sackloth ; and although the Vaudois include a population of about 25,000 souls only ; yet that in London, a host of the pacific combatants of the

Redeemer, allied by bonds and covenants which time cannot corrode, and which distance cannot enfeeble ; are always ready, vigorous, and on the alert, to intimidate the Dragon's Beast with all his authority ; and to defend that sacred cause, which includes the present comforts, and which guarantees the triumphant everlasting felicity of all those “ who follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth.”

5. *Bohemia*.—After the persecutions in Bohemia, which were ended by the peace of Westphalia ; the Protestant cause declined ; and comparatively few vestiges are now visible of that glorious host, who so long and so successfully resisted the Papal impositions, except as they have appeared in their modern Moravian descendants.

6. *Poland*.—In Poland, the light of the Reformation early diffused its lustre ; but its glory was soon tarnished by the propagation of innumerable errors, respecting the character, offices, and work of the Mediator ; and the eclipse gradually extending its gloom, the influence of the truth was of minor efficacy. The late commotions and disunion of that unhappy nation, will probably be in some measure beneficial ; as they have transferred a large portion of its territories to a Protestant Prince ; and the present generation view with an extremely abhorrent countenance, all attempts at religious coercions. Peacefully to permit the adversaries of the Romish hierarchy to worship God, and to promulge the glorious gospel in the vernacular languages, will most effectually demolish “ that great city, which ruleth over the kings of the earth.”

7. *The Netherlands*.—The blessings of the gospel were diffused among the inhabitants of the Netherlands, not long after the secession of Henry VIII. from the Popedom. Charles V. engrossed by the tumultuous concerns of his wide-spread dominions, very slightly interfered in the religious changes of the Belgic provinces. But his son, Philip, discerning the spirit of liberty and independence which the low

Dutch had imbibed through their liberation from papal vassalage, resolved to destroy it by the most violent oppression. By his command, the inquisition was erected, armed with the most extensively tremendous authority, and denouncing unlimited vengeance against all the reformed. Cruelty and anguish at last exasperated all orders of the community; the nobles associated to obtain by force the repeal of the tyrannical and merciless decrees which Philip had issued against them, and the unequivocal restoration of their religious rights and liberty; while the ungovernable and irritated multitudes proceeded in a more summary manner to obtain redress. They razed the monasteries, burnt the images which were placed in the churches, and having emitted their rage against the officers of the inquisition, expelled them from the country. Philip transported a large army from Spain, to reduce the revolted provinces to the most debasing subordination. His general, the Duke of Alva, commenced his sanguinary career, by an indiscriminate slaughter of all those who were opposed to the Pope; 18000 of the reformed were hanged by the common executioner, during his command. The conflict was finally terminated in the triumph of the seven northern united Belgic provinces, and the Genevan system became the established religion; with a universal toleration of all who obeyed the government, and who disturbed not the public tranquillity.

From that period, the internal history of the Dutch churches comprises no important circumstance, except the events connected with the Synod of Dorts. The controversy which eventually agitated the united provinces, and which so deeply interested all the European reformed churches, originated with Arminius, at that period, in the year 1590, and subsequently, theological professor at Leyden. Having imbibed sentiments at great variance with the Calvinistic doctrines respecting the nature and subjects of divine predestination; the extent of the Redeem-

er's atonement; the efficacy of saving grace, and the perseverance of the saints; he resolved to publish his newly adopted theory. Those who adhered to the ancient faith of the reformed Dutch church, resisted the attempt to disseminate these opinions; the contest extended its rage, until all the provinces were enveloped in the combustion. During this period, Arminius died; but the contention was prolonged by his disciples, who, perceiving their exposure to persecution, as a consequence of their departure from the national faith, presented a remonstrance to the states, imploring toleration. This, with other circumstances, entwined national politics with the ecclesiastical discord. Maurice, the stadholder of Holland, widely differed from some of the most influential men in the republic; among these, were Grotius and Barnevedt, who were united with the Arminians: nevertheless, he endeavoured to promote forbearance and concord among the disputatious ecclesiastics, and refused to inflict any penalties upon the Remonstrants, as they were then denominated although a formal toleration was denied. Several conferences were held, and other pacific measures to reconcile or quiet the restless theologians, were in vain adopted; until the States General, dreading the political consequences of this internal fury, assented to the request of the Calvinists, and convoked a national Synod. at Dort, in 1618; in which assembly, were present deputies from the Belgic provinces, England, Switzerland, Hesse, Bremen, and the Palatinate. Episcopius, at that period, professor of divinity at Leyden, a man of profound learning and great capacity, appeared to defend the Arminians, and commenced the synodical proceedings by an ingenious, temperate, and eloquent address. All the objects for which the synod convened, were immediately after excluded; it had been previously decided, that the Remonstrants should open the conference, by evincing the truth of the Arminian doctrines from reason and scripture. This mode they rejected, and

proposed to refute the Calvinistic system prior to the establishment of their own articles of faith; this order of proceeding was refused by the synod, upon the general principle, that in all controversies, the disputant is obliged to demonstrate the rectitude of his own sentiments, before he can confute the opinions of those who dissent from him. As the Synod were immovable in adhering to the order which had been antecedently prescribed, and the Arminians were unalterably determined not to comply with the arrangement; after every expedient had been tried in vain, to induce them to exhibit and defend their own sentiments, as it was impossible for the Synod to proceed in the duties which they were enjoined to fulfil; the Remonstrants were expelled from the Synod; and their writings being afterwards examined, they were declared " guilty of pestilential errors, and condemned as corrupters of the true religion." Religious persecution is ever identical. In consequence of this decision of the Synod, the Arminians were excommunicated, as "enemies of their country and of its established religion;" and all the evil effects of intolerance, supported by the civil magistrate, ensued. From every office of honour and emolument, they were ejected; their ministers were precluded from preaching; and all their congregations were destroyed. To these enactments, obedience was peremptorily, and without doubt conscientiously refused; but resistance to this ungodly mandate only augmented their vexations; as ignominy, fines, imprisonment and expulsion, were successively their allotment. To escape from these otherwise unavoidable miseries, many of the Arminians migrated into the neighbouring states, and especially into Holstein: but after a few years had elapsed, Frederic, the successor of Maurice, annulled the sentence of banishment; invited the exiles to return to Holland; re-established them in their former peace, honour and enjoyments; and guaranteed their security by an unrestricted toleration.

The Arminians of that period excited just aversion: they proposed to enlarge the boundaries of the church so as to include all those who simply assented to the truth of the Holy Scriptures; and it is indisputable, that many of them were almost Socinians and Pelagians. After their toleration, the remonstrants apparently declined, as many ecclesiastics of the established church coalesced with them in opinion; while, in fact, their doctrines and spirit were rapidly, although secretly extending their influence. From the middle of the seventeenth century to the present era, the Reformed Protestants in Holland furnish no interesting annals; they have preserved an uniformity of exterior features; but an insipid formality of devotion, a lukewarm lifeless unconcern for vital godliness, and an indifference to evangelical truth, have generally pervaded their congregations. This aberration of theological sentiment is the more remarkable in the Hollanders, on account of their proverbial identity and adhesion to antiquated principles and forms; and the solution of the mystery can be derived solely from the fact; that a defection in doctrine has been the prominent and unvarying characteristic of all established churches. The Lutherans retain, at present, little of their Founder's system of divinity; the modern clergy of the Episcopal church of England altogether, and almost universally deny their own articles and the creed of the Reformers; a large majority of the Genevan Ministers are very little superior to philosophical infidels; the church of Holland has lost much of its purity of doctrine; and in Scotland, the venom of heterodoxy has diffused its malignant effects, through every part of "the ancient kirk;" thus verifying all the truth of the Lord's declaration, "my kingdom is not of this world;" and cautioning us against that unhallowed, impure, and debasing admixture, which admits the interference of terrestrial governments in the administration of the affairs of the church.

8. *Scotland*.—The insuperable aversion of the Scotch from the Papacy, and their equally ardent attachment for the Presbyterian system, may be imputed to two circumstances connected with the introduction of the Protestant principles into that country. The last generation of Romish priests in North-Britain were renowned for perfidy and cruelty, so inveterate, that the record of their treacherous barbarities cannot, even now, after the lapse of 300 years, be perused without the most indignant emotions. Their detestable enormities enraged all classes of the commonwealth ; whose exasperation was increased by the remembrance, that all the calamities which they suffered, were augmented by the devastations of a French Popish army introduced into the land, intentionally to abridge their civic rights, and also to confine them in spiritual bondage. The nobles and grandes maintained the Protestant cause by military force ; while the mixed multitudes razed the altars, destroyed the images, removed all the monuments of idolatry from the churches, and demolished vast numbers of the monasteries : acting upon the oracular adage pronounced by Knox, “ the best way to keep the Rooks from returning, is to pull down their nests.” When the French army retired from Scotland in 1560, the dismayed Popish Priests either accompanied the troops, their sole defenders, to France, or from timidity altogether ceased to mumble their masses and idolatrous ritual ; so that, in fact, the whole kingdom was almost totally deprived of the regular institutions of the gospel ; for when the first Genevan Assembly met, 5 months after the treaty with France was signed, six preachers only were present : consequently, the Protestants experienced no effectual opposition, in universally establishing the system which Knox had imbibed at Geneva.

The rise and progress of the established church of Scotland require a historical detail, in addition to the cursory notice, which has already been devoted to

that interesting topic. (1) James V., King of Scotland, on account of his partiality to the popish ecclesiastics, zealously persecuted the reformed ; and the inquisitorial fires were universally kindled. Patrick Hamilton was honored by God, as the instrument to introduce the principles of the Reformation ; and in the 24th year of his age, 1527, he became the Scotch proto-martyr ; “ his youth, learning, virtue, magnanimity, and sufferings excited the strongest attachments of the people. Alexander Campbell having insulted him at the stake to which he was bound, in readiness for the fire ; he reminded him of his traitorous duplicity, and solemnly cited him to answer before the judgment seat of Christ ; the persecutor, a few days after, having been seized with madness, died ; to the entire conviction of the witnesses, that Hamilton was innocent and consumed for the truth.” General indignation pervaded the whole kingdom ; and the reformed multiplied with astonishing celerity. Seton, the king’s confessor, himself a Papist, boldly propagated, that “ not one true and faithful Bishop existed in Scotland ;” but for the sake of his personal safety, he was obliged to depart from the kingdom. In 1533, Henry Forrest was burnt for declaring that “ Hamilton was a pious martyr, and that his principles were defensible.” In addition to this *abominable* heresy, he owned a New Testament in the English language.

In 1539, Russel and Kennedy were burnt at Glasgow, the latter being not 18 years of age ; just before the fire was kindled, Kennedy, having been encouraged by Russel, uttered his triumph over mortality in this transporting language : “ Now, I am ready, I praise my God ; Death, I defy thee.”

Beaton, the Cardinal primate of Scotland, was an insolent, perfidious ecclesiastic ; without justice or pity ; inordinately haughty ; inhuman, crafty, superstitious and profligate. By him a court of Inquisition was established, and Hamilton, an ambitious, blood-

thirsty monster, was appointed to superintend its transactions; whose sanguinary assiduity would soon have filled all the prisons in the kingdom, with the noble, the opulent, and the more enlightened among the Protestants; but in the midst of all his fancied successful mischief, he was indicted for a conspiracy to assassinate the King; and Hamilton died as a traitor. "From the year 1540 to the end of 1542, the numbers of the reformed rapidly increased. The clergy twice attempted to destroy them by one act. They presented to James, a list of some hundreds of persons of wealth and dignity, whom they denounced as heretics; and endeavoured to procure their slaughter, by enumerating the immense wealth which he might thus confiscate. So violent was his antipathy against the nobles, and so completely was he influenced by the clergy," that his own miserable death alone, probably obstructed the consummation of their execrable design.

As Mary, his daughter, was a child, the Regency of the kingdom was transferred to the earl of Arran, a Protestant, who encouraged the Preachers to denounce the Pope's supremacy, image-worship, and the invocation of saints; the beneficial effects of which were inconceivably promoted by a law, which was enacted at the same period; that the Bible should be dispersed in the vulgar tongue, and that no guilt should attach to the possession and perusal of the sacred scriptures.

New measures to persecute the reformed were devised; but the political commotions in a great degree impeded the execution of the Cardinal's contrivances until the year 1544; when Beaton entered Perth, and commenced his inquisitorial career by the most abhorrent murders. The aggravation produced by the slaughter of persons of inferior rank, was inflamed to the highest degree, by the deliberate, indecent and appalling barbarities, which attended the seizure, trial, condemnation and burning of George Wishart, the most learned and eminent preacher

whom the Scotch reformed had then heard. The cardinal, with the inferior prelates exalted in a balcony of the tower belonging to the castle, insolently triumphed over the suffering martyr ; neither feeling their own inhumanity, nor comprehending the value of a magnanimous christian. This, it is supposed, affected even the superiority of the saint ; for in the midst of his mortal agonies, he declared that “his haughty enemy would perish in a few days, and be ignominiously exposed in the place which he then so pompously occupied.” The prediction was fulfilled ; almost immediately after the martyr’s exit to Paradise, a conspiracy was formed against Beaton, his castle was captured, himself immediately assassinated, and as the excluded adherents of the Cardinal were anxious to behold him, they who slew him, suspended his corpse from the identical place, where he had so shortly previous exulted in the inconceivable tortures of the consuming Wishart.

In continual vicissitude the Protestant cause wavered, during the civil dissensions which afflicted Scotland ; although the truth probably acquired more stability, yet the reformed professors of it experienced a great variety of persecution. At length, in 1557, the first covenant was formed, by which, all those who adhered to it, renounced idolatry, and devoted themselves to establish the pure word of God. The conflagration of Walter Mill decided the dubious and the hesitating ; the horror was so inexpressible and universal, that it was evident, nothing less than the extirpation of the popish authority, or of the Reformed principles, could restore harmony to the nation. As the emergency of affairs required, one covenant succeeded another, until the Protestant power became so strong, that the Romish party and the French army who had been transported to Scotland to uphold the expiring hierarchy, both being totally defeated, consented in 1560 to withdraw from the realm.

Immediately after this triumph, the legislature assembled ; and without delay, rejected the Pope’s au-

thority, confirmed the reformed confession of faith, and abolished the idolatrous worship. These measures having been legalized, an additional act of Parliament was passed, by which “every memorial of Popery whatsoever found in the kingdom was commanded to be finally overthrown and demolished.”

The civil distractions which agitated Scotland, during many years, produced no material effect injurious to the cause of the Reformation: the extinction of Popery had been so complete, and the national enthusiasm was so fervid, that the papists scarcely attempted to display their superstitions. A remarkable innovation, however, was introduced into the kingdom in the midst of these tumults; the substitution of Episcopacy for the Presbyterian system; but as this change was obviously the result of a combination, between some of the nobility and their sycophantic ecclesiastical adherents, that the former might possess the ancient revenues of the papacy, and the latter the honours which the dignified Monks had enjoyed, it was universally disapproved, and these successors of Pope Hell-brand were continual subjects of reproach, contempt and ridicule.

James VI. having assumed the government of Scotland, commanded all the ministers to acknowledge the king’s ecclesiastical supremacy, and to submit to the episcopal jurisdiction.

This edict filled every district of the land with the most violent disputations. The disciples of Knox peremptorily refused a compliance with the king’s injunction; and contended, that to admit the king to be head of the church was exalting a new Pope, and high treason against Jesus Christ; and that to acknowledge the episcopacy, would destroy the influence and sway of religion and the gospel. This fiery collision of opinion and action existed during the whole of James’ reign. After Elizabeth’s death, he was also enthroned King of England; and his additional power augmented his acrimonious vehemence against the Presbyterians and Puritans, who were

invincibly attached to the cause of civil and religious liberty; and increased his partiality for the Episcopilians and Papists, who maintained his amplest claims to despotic prerogatives.

At an early period after he commenced his reign over the two kingdoms, he resolved to establish the episcopacy in Scotland, and visited his native country for this avowed purpose; but every effort was abortive. All the royal authority, menaces, flattery, and coercion, were inefficient, either to procure a single admission of principle, that he, as king, was invested with any ecclesiastical jurisdiction; or the introduction of the most insignificant ceremony incorporated in the English Episcopal ritual. The result was the same in both countries; additional obstinacy in adhering to their opinions on the part of the Puritans and Presbyterians; and perfect disgust with a monarch, who displayed in equal proportions, puerile versatility, and mental weakness, and tyrannic arrogance.

The church of Scotland continued in this feverish state of discontent, until Charles I. who had ascended the throne on the death of his father James, issued in 1635, a bull of canons appointing re-settlement of the bishoprics in Scotland. Two years after an attempt was made to introduce and read Laud's popish Liturgy in the ancient cathedral church of Edinburgh; but the tumult which it produced, evinced that a repetition of the experiment would be dangerous to the innovators. A universal combination against the royal and episcopal measures was instantaneously formed; which having assumed all the consistency of an open and regular insurrection, issued their commands which were constantly obeyed, and the celebrated *Covenant* was enacted; by this compact, popery and episcopacy were renounced; and to it, was superadded a bond of union, which obliged the subscribers to maintain their cause, against all opposition and to the last extremity. Charles alarmed at this resistance, sent a commissioner to the covenant-

ers, who proposed, to suspend the operation of the royal canons and popish liturgy, and to remove the “high commission,” or bastard court of inquisition; provided, that the Scotch annulled their covenant. The covenanters sternly and scornfully replied, that they should prefer a renunciation of their baptism; and solemnly invited the King’s deputy himself to ratify their engagements. Baffled in all his arbitrary measures, Charles finally summoned an assembly and parliament, for the redress of national grievances and the restoration of general harmony. A counter covenant was also dispersed by Charles and his papistical adherents, for the sole purpose of dividing the Reformed, but it was received with equal contempt and detestation.

The Assembly was convened in 1638. The Bishops were accused of every species of criminality; all the acts of the previous Assemblies and Parliaments in favor of episcopacy were declared null and void; and the universal signature of the covenant was enjoined with the menace of excommunication for disobedience. At this juncture, Charles having resolved to enforce subjection, levied a large army: but when he arrived upon the borders of Scotland, he consented to a peace, and the convocation of another ecclesiastical assembly and parliament. The former instantly proclaimed “episcopacy illegal in the church of Scotland; the canons and liturgy were stigmatized as popish; and the high commission court was denounced as a tyrannical inquisition.” The parliament were engaged in diminishing the power of the monarch, and in ratifying the decisions of the assembly; when the king suddenly dissolved their session, and the contest was recommenced.

Impelled by circumstances, in 1641, Charles abolished the episcopacy in Scotland; and except the agitations produced by the civil tumults in England, the nation enjoyed comparative peace. After the war between Charles and the Parliament had existed during nearly two years, the Puritans implored the

assistance of the Scotch; the result of this confederacy was the *solemn league and covenant*, which effaced all prior obligations, and retained its authority, until the union of the two kingdoms rendered the provisions of that famous instrument nugatory.

The presbyterian system triumphed during the protectorate of Cromwell; but immediately after Charles II. occupied the throne, in 1660, a more violent attempt was made to introduce episcopacy into Scotland, than had previously been exhibited.— From this period, every species of malignant torture was experienced by the inoffensive covenanters.— Sharpe was their deputy to complain to the king of their miseries, and to procure some alleviation of their distress; that unprincipled brother of Judas betrayed his constituents, and for his treachery, was rewarded with the pomp, dignity and opulence of an archbishop. His relentless enmity was unbounded; ten were gibbeted together in Edinburg; many were hanged at the doors of their own habitations; and all these murders were perpetrated solely because these harmless sheep would not renounce the covenant. Charles himself, was eventually induced to command that the incorrigible, those who obstinately adhered to the covenant should be transported to the distant colonies. This order was transmitted to Sharpe, and by him secreted. Amid these persecutions, it had been customary to inflict upon those christians, the utmost severity of excruciation, that they might be coerced to acknowledge as false, that which they believed and knew to be true. Hugh Mac-eail was thus tortured; and so excessive were his anguish and laceration, that he expired under the hands of his tormentors. He died in an ecstacy of joy and christian triumph; uttering his final expressions with an accent, which filled all his auditors with the utmost astonishment.—“ Farewell! sun, moon, and stars—farewell! world and time—farewell! weak frail body—welcome, eternity!—welcome, angels and saints!—welcome, Saviour of the world!—and wel-

come, God the judge of all!"—*Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord!*

These measures were speedily after exchanged for an indulgence; but the people rejected the bribe; and usually met in arms for divine worship: it was therefore resolved again to coerce submission to the episcopal jurisdiction by royal authority. By an ancient gothic enactment, any person who was accused of crime, that did not appear for trial, might be publicly outlawed; and all who held intercourse with him were subject to the same penalties as the delinquent, if guilty. This atrocious regulation was enforced against the covenanters; so that crimes, punishments and miseries were extensively and indefinitely multiplied.

The rage produced by these unintermitting woes, at length was effused upon the malignant renegado, Sharpe, who was deliberately murdered in 1679; in consequence of which, the covenanters experienced a more serious persecution, that provoked them to a second insurrection. Intestine war, with all the additional calamities of religious opposition, was continued with temporary intermissions until the abdication of James; after which the Presbyterian system resumed its unrestricted domination; and has hitherto maintained its pre-eminence in that portion of the British isle; for the first parliament which met after the revolution in 1688, abolished the prelacy and the king's ecclesiastical jurisdiction; ratified the Westminster confession of faith and Presbyterian form of government and discipline; extirpated patronage; and transferred the election of ministers to the heritors and elders, with the consent of the congregations.

From the reformation to the peace made at this period, the church of Scotland had enjoyed but few intervals of real tranquillity. When not in a state of actual conflict with the civil rulers who wished to deprive her of her existence or her power, her situation was so precarious, as to produce a constant

alarm : but her internal and spiritual condition appears now to have been exceedingly prosperous ; it is asserted by some to have excelled every former period in the number of devoted, active, and zealous pastors, and in the superior measures of knowledge and piety among the people.

If we form to ourselves the pleasing representation of the humble presbyters of the Scottish church, labouring with assiduity and perseverance among their flocks in preaching, catechising, and pastoral visits ; and multitudes under their care imbibing divine knowledge and the spirit of the gospel, and adorning their christian profession by a holy life, we shall have a full idea of what was taking place during the early part of this period, in hundreds of parishes and among ten thousands of the people. But peace has its temptations which were powerfully felt, and proved greatly injurious to the purity and prosperity of this highly favoured church.

For however favourable the external state of a community may be, events will occur to embitter the sweets of life, and to furnish trials to the wise and good. Such was the effect of a measure needlessly adopted by the British government in the end of queen Anne's reign. The oath of abjuration, which at the union had been required of Scotchmen in civil offices, was in 1712 imposed on the clergy, under a penalty which involved their utter ruin. Not one of the body was disaffected to the existing government ; but many of them were enemies to an oath except in cases of absolute necessity ; and some scrupled at particular clauses as binding them to express their approbation and support of episcopacy, and preventing them from seeking the farther reformation of the land. So widely were these sentiments extended, that more than a third part of the ministers refused to comply with the requisition of government, and became liable to a penalty of five hundred pounds, a sum which perhaps not fifty of the whole body would have been able to pay. In this distressing situation,

thrust out of the protection of the law, these nonjurors remained from year to year. In 1715, and again four years after in 1719, the subject was brought forward, and the oath with certain alterations commanded to be enforced. The stern principles of the old presbyterians, dictated by conscience, refused to comply; and they continued to the day of their death, discharging the duties of their office with the naked sword of the law hanging over their heads.

Another evil effect of the oath was, that between the ministers who submitted to it, and those who refused it, not only coldness, but an alienation of heart was produced; and at one time but for the wisdom of principal Carstairs, a schism was likely to have taken place in the Scottish church. The people too entered into the subject with the ardour characteristic of Scotchmen in disputes pertaining to religion. Being in general hostile to the oath and its adherents, they viewed with suspicion and dislike many excellent men because they were on the opposite side."

The Tory administration of Queen Anne, also resenting the attachment of the Scotch to the family of Hanover, upon whom the hereditary title to the throne devolved, revived the old law of patronage: by which under certain prerogatives inherent to the possession of the lands, the principal proprietors of the soil were empowered to introduce any minister at their option, without the choice and against the consent of the congregation. This regulation eventually produced the SECESSION. 2.

About the middle of the eighteenth century, Scotland exhibited the marrow of ecclesiastical history—an extensive revival of religion, which took place within the bosom of the church. After a long season of comparative inefficacy, in which ministers complained that they had laboured in vain, a spirit of attention to divine truth was excited through different parts of the country in an extraordinary degree; and multitudes who had been walking

according to the course of this world, were converted by the preaching of the gospel.

This revival first appeared in 1745, at Camberslang, a village in the neighbourhood of Glasgow. During a course of sermons on the doctrine of regeneration by Mr. McCulloch, the minister of the parish, the people began to be impressed in an unusual manner and degree; religion occupied their whole attention; they were convinced that they had not been regenerated, and with the most painful anxiety of soul they inquired, "what must I do to be saved." Seasons of worship were immediately multiplied; and the minister's time was occupied from morning to night in giving spiritual counsel to his awakened flock. The consequences were infinitely delightful: in the space of a few months, 300 persons displayed unequivocal evidences of the christian life; nor did future years give occasion to object, that it was a transitory emotion of religious feeling; for the generality of them continued faithful unto death. The divine flame spread from place to place, and the most zealous ministers, in different parts of the country, had the joy of seeing in their own parishes the same spirit of revival, though scarcely any in an equal degree. Mr. Whitfield who soon after visited Scotland, contributed by his powerful labours to promote the glorious cause.

While the friends of religion rejoiced in this remarkable display of divine grace, it was violently decried and attacked by many of the clergy, as the quintessence of enthusiasm and folly. They spoke and wrote against it; they warned the people against its baleful influence, and displayed a zeal scarcely inferior to that of its friends who believed it to be the work of God. In every revival of religion a similar spirit has been exhibited; the cause of vital piety, however, was not left without defenders.

Unhappily the seceders, from whom better things might have been expected, vehemently opposed the work, publicly testified against it as a delusion of

the devil, and appointed a day of fasting and prayer that by the interposition of heaven it might cease. They conceived that if any great work of religion was to be accomplished in Scotland, it must be by them; and because this revival had not taken place in their communion it could not be from above. Their conduct on this occasion gave great offence and contributed to degrade them exceedingly in the eyes of those who had formerly viewed them with high esteem. When the gospel is preached in its purity, the Spirit of God demonstrates by the influence with which it is accompanied, that he does not lay so much stress upon the peculiarities of an external system as its votaries."

It is requisite only to subjoin; that notwithstanding these defects which have been enumerated; in luminous theology, moral purity, spiritual fervour and doctrinal orthodoxy, the churches of Scotland shine pre-eminent among the reformed Protestants; 3. and although they have not escaped the contagion infused by worldly associations, and the chilling infidelity so predominant throughout the last century; still they concentrate a considerable portion of "the light of the world," and have always been a "city set on a hill that cannot be hid"—*estō perpetua.* Amen.

3. Appendix XVII.

THEOLOGICAL CONTROVERSIES.

From the fall of man, the world has been the theatre of contention; and the permanence of strife to the present day, not only among nations, but between families and individuals, proclaims the lamentable depravity of human nature. If the church betrays the same spirit, we are not to wonder; for some who make a profession of religion are still under the dominion of evil dispositions, and have nothing of christianity but the name and the external garb; while others, the sincere disciples of Christ, exhibit the too evident remains of imperfection. There are, perhaps, but two states of the church from which controversy will be entirely excluded: the one is, that of extreme ignorance, in which men have neither talents nor knowledge to dispute: the other is that of the redeemed in heaven, in which they shall all be perfect in knowledge. Whether it will be so in the millenium, admits of no decision, till the children of that favoured age arrive in heaven, and inform their elder brethren of the spirit and pursuits of those whom they left behind on earth. Till that time, controversies will continue: we may, however, assert, that in proportion to the prevalence of truth and piety, the number will decrease. But it may be laid down as a general rule sanctioned by the scriptures, and confirmed by reason, that wherever an important doctrine of the gospel is perverted or denied, it is not only lawful, but a duty of no mean rank to stand up in its defence."

The diversified collisions of opinion, which have resulted from the freedom of thought engendered by the reformation are of the utmost interest and importance, because they have ordinarily been the founda-

tion, upon which some new denomination of christians has erected its standard. It is desirable therefore, to develope the essential topics which constitute the barriers between the discordant sects, prior to a delineation of their progress and present state. Two of the distinctive subjects of contention are revived from the sepulchre of antiquity, and two are peculiarly modern ; yet under these four divisions, a few non-descripts excepted, may be classified nearly all the predominant dissentients. The former comprise the fundamental inquiry respecting the person of Jesus Christ, involving the disputed points between the Arians, Socinians, Unitarians, and the christian worshippers of Immanuel ; and the inexplicable mysteries connected with the prescience of God and the responsibility of man, ordinarily designated as the Calvinistic or Arminian controversy : the latter include, the various modes of church government, or rather the reasons of dissent from the Episcopacy ; and the dispute upon the mode and subjects of baptism. Without an accurate understanding of the various subjects of debate involved in each of these general divisions, the modern history of Christianity is a perfect chaos ; and the large number of different sects is an inextricable enigma.

A controversy of essential importance has been prolonged during a considerable part of the period since the reformation, relative to the celestial authority of the sacred scriptures. This is the contest between the infidel rejection of revealed truth, and a confidential subjection to that which God commands. Christian faith has been assaulted with every possible weapon ; the malignity of ridicule, the farce of caricature, the array of pretended facts, and the sophistry of false reasoning, have all been displayed in every diversified form against the rock upon which Christ has built his church ; but the puny witness efforts of the assailants have only recoiled upon themselves ; they being similar in wisdom to him, who discharges his pistol against the adamant, which

repels the bullet to the injury or destruction of him by whom it is fired.

During the greater part of the eighteenth century, the machinations of the opponents of the Most High, were incessantly developed in all their force and acrimony. The volcano burst in the French revolution, and illustrated the divine origin, the efficacy, the importance, and the permanency of the Christian system, so as to supersede all future cavil or disputation. All that natural genius, acquired learning, unequalled artifice, paramount corruption, ceaseless falsehood, and infernal enmity combined with resistless human power could attain, was effected ; but the triumph of the Destructionists was short, and of no more stability and duration, than “the crackling of thorns under a pot :” so that the pretensions of an infidel are only remembered with horror; and if now professed, solely excite commiseration, and inquiry, what is the reason that the Blasphemer is permitted to roam beyond the guardianship of his keepers or physicians ? Among all the catalogues of sinners, to the Sceptics may be peculiarly appropriated, two declarations of the wisest of men—“I saw the wicked buried, who had come and gone from the place of the holy, and they were forgotten in the city where they had so done; for the name of the wicked shall rot.”

The following delineation of the Infidels and their principles is necessary, merely as a beacon to warn the thoughtless from the shoals on which so many have been wrecked and destroyed.

“Ignorance of the nature and principles of Christianity is a general characteristic of the deists, and it may be asserted, that few among them understood the gospel sufficiently to be able to form a rational judgment whether it was good or bad, or of its evidence to know whether it was true or false. Upon any other topic, men, who had written against a science of which they had so little knowledge would have appeared ridiculous, and have been ashamed to

hold up their face before society. But the nature of their subject, the scope of their writings, and the facility they gave for the indulgence of every appetite and passion, have procured not indulgence only but favour.

The enemy of human happiness has obtained currency to a maxim on the subject of religion, which is not allowed on any other. If a person has not studied languages or sciences, he does not profess to understand them, and he acknowledges his ignorance. But without having studied religion; he thinks that he understands what religion is, and that he is qualified to speak, to argue, to judge, to decide, and to write upon the subject. How he will write may be easily conceived, and may be seen in the books of the deists, who for the most part understood as little of the principles of the gospel of Christ, as they did of the language of the Chinese.

"The sentiments and temper, which the writings of the deists exhibit, give the attentive reader but too just cause to conclude that Christianity was too good for them, and that they wished for a religion which would be more indulgent to the cravings of their appetites and passions. Scarcely an individual among them can be found who is pleased with the character of God as exhibited in the scriptures. He is too holy and too righteous; they cannot bear the effulgence of his glory. On this account, they strip him of his perfections according to their pleasure, and remove every thing which they dislike; or turning away from him with aversion and dread, they frame an idol to themselves, to which they give the name of God, and which they place upon his throne. An extenuation of the evil of sin is another conspicuous part of deism, and spreads itself over every page. Disobedience to the divine authority loses in the eyes of deists almost all its atrocity, and they behold it with calm indifference. For some vices they stand forth as apologists or advocates; but the whole standard of Christian morals is lowered

by their system in an inconceivable degree. Over the future state they generally endeavour to throw a thicker veil. Uncertainty concerning its existence is frequently hinted at; eternal happiness is never exhibited by them as an object of warm desire: and great pains are taken and most servid eloquence employed to disprove the punishment of the wicked. That pure philanthropy, which burned in the hearts of the prophets and apostles, will in vain be looked for in the volumes of the deists. To promote with zeal the cause of piety and virtue, to improve the moral state of man, and augment his happiness, it may be plainly seen is not their aim. Freedom from the restraints of religion, not a felicity arising from goodness, is the object of their pursuit.

“The manner in which they treat the subject and their opponents, produces a still more intimate acquaintance with their character, and teaches in what degree of esteem, the men, their system, and their writings are to be held. By persons who treat on religion, which is infinitely the most important of themes, there should be a bold and frank integrity that speaks truth with plainness; and if it gives offence, yet from a conviction of duty, submits to any consequences which may ensue. For that integrity in the works of the deist, the reader will look in vain. Most of them profess great respect for Christianity, while its destruction is evidently their object. These Joabs, with apparent cordiality kiss this Abner, while their design is secretly to smite him under the fifth rib. Instead of coming forward manfully to the attack, and professing a just cause of enmity, they lie in wait like the assassin to stab in the dark. Subtle insinuations are whispered into the ear; the shaft of ridicule is artfully thrown; and then it is pretended that the wound which it inflicts is mortal. Pride, arrogance, and conceit are but too prominent in every page; and Christian writers are looked down upon with contempt as their inferiors in talents, in learning, in every thing. The cry of priestcraft is

incessant, and in their esteem efficacious as the shout of ancient Israel, and makes the walls of this ancient city of God fall to the ground. An advocate for deism, who is desirous to make men honour God and love one another, practice virtue, and hate and shun vice; and who discovers an esteem for goodness wherever it is found; who is grieved that the religion of Jesus which exhibits such noble views of God, which tends so much to the improvement of the human character, and presents to the hopes of the believer a state of eternal happiness in every respect to be supremely desired, is yet destitute of evidence sufficient to convince an impartial inquirer—where shall he be found?"

This controversy has been attended with the most desirable effects; it has rendered all additional investigation of the topics in debate, if not impossible, totally superfluous; and Grotius, on the truth of Christianity. Butler's analogy of natural and revealed religion; Halyburton's natural religion insufficient, and revealed necessary to man's happiness; Lardner's credibility, or Paley's Evidences; and Leland's view of the Deistical writers, with his publications on the necessity of revelation, and the authority of the Old and New Testament exceed all human eulogy; and to him who peruses those volumes or either of them, with an unprejudiced mind, and continues an infidel, Paul's words may be justly applied, "if any man be ignorant, let him be ignorant."

1. *The Trinitarian Controversy.*

The contention respecting the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, has assumed different characteristics, at various periods. "After the reformation was established, arianism again revived, but its advocates realized very inconsiderable success. Generally discouraged and persecuted, the majority fled to Poland, where mingled with the Socinians, they continued during a considerable period.

Christians have too often contended among themselves for almost a nonentity ; but in the dispute with the various heretics concerning the divinity of the Saviour they contest for all that is essential to faith, invigorating to hope, and endearing in affection. The deity of Christ is “ the golden hinge on which turns all that is valuable in his religion;” for they who oppose his divine glory, also equally deny his mediatorial work, atonement, justification by his righteousness through faith, his presence with his Church now, and the immediate possession of Paradise after death ; that is, they deface all the distinctive, sublime and consolatory characteristics of christian theology.

Socinus was the first and most distinguished modern who opposed the deity and atonement of Immanuel. Servetus also united with him in despising the apostolic faith ; but the disputants divided among themselves. They all affirmed that the Lord Jesus Christ was a mere man ; but they differed respecting his miraculous conception, and the propriety of honoring him with religious worship. (1.)

The Socinians were eventually expelled from Poland, with such atrocious cruelties, that even the heterodoxy of their principles is forgotten while we peruse the record of their agonies ; and the severance of the Racovian Brethren in a great measure extinguished for a long time the notoriety of their opinions. But in the reign of Charles the first, their dogmas were again introduced to the notice of the Protestants by John Biddle, who still retains “ a high character for morals, talents and learning.” He contended that “ God is confined to a certain place, possesses passions and a bodily shape, is neither omnipotent nor immutable, and that Jesus Christ was a mere man, who was not a Priest for his people, and made no atonement for sin.” To Dr. Owen was confided the honour of consulting this enemy of the truth—his

(1.) Appendix XIX.

"knowledge of ecclesiastical history and polemical theology, was so vast and profound, that although the ancient heresies were revived under modern names he grasped and strangled the snakes with more than herculean powers. The acumen with which he detected the most specious, and the force with which he crushed the most formidable heresiarch, were only surpassed by the accuracy with which he stated and explained the most profound discoveries of revelation, and the sanctity with which he directed every truth to the purification of the heart, and the regulation of the life."

The controversy, at the commencement of the eighteenth century, presented new features; it was first developed in England, in an attempt to explain the true doctrine of the Trinity. Like all other similar endeavours, it was fruitless. "To specify with precision the personality of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, is a task above all human powers; but to maintain and believe the doctrine of Scripture, that the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God, is a totally different object." This abortive dispute to interpret an inexplicable mystery most probably introduced the modern arian attempt to propagate the ancient heresy; the evil effects of which still continue, as among those who were then induced to deviate from the truth are found the ancestors of all the modern Humanitarians, except those, who afraid openly to avow their scornful infidelity, have put on this mask purely to conceal the deformity of their principles, and under the disguise of christians, more effectually to undermine all that is vital and dignified in "the glorious gospel of the ever blessed God."

The tenets of the present heresiarchs upon the divinity of Jesus Christ, are candidly stated by the Patriarch of the sect in a late publication. "Christ was sent into the world to promulge the will of God; to communicate new light respecting religious duties; to offer an example of obedience: by his death, to evince his sincerity; and by his resurrection, to prove

our immortality." Generally they deny, the inspiration of the Holy Scriptures, the separate state of the soul, and the eternity of future punishments. They avow, that "Jesus of Nazareth was a man constituted in all respects like other men, subject to the same infirmities, prejudices, ignorance, and frailties."

The writings of socinians in this controversy are intended to wage war with the Scriptures. He that passes from the one to the other feels that he breathes a different atmosphere, and exists in another world. The tone of scepticism, with which the allies of Priestley speak of every thing in theology, except calvinism, which always inspires them with confident dogmatism, seems designed to expose the certainty which the sacred writers inculcate wherever God has revealed his mind. Exalted esteem and ardent affection for Christ, inspired by the scriptural representation of his person and redemption, and declared to be the vital flame which pervades the living church, is by the socinian writers exchanged for a cold measured expression of respect, extorted by the ardour of prophets and apostles, in defiance of the frigid tendency of their own system. For if Jesus Christ is originally a being of no higher order than ourselves, but in consequence of the office to which he was promoted, was made Lord and Judge of the rest of his species, and rewarded for a few years of trial, with a resurrection to some thousands of years of life and bliss, while the rest of the pious dead are mere non-entities, or at best unconscious lust, it was such an honour and advantage to him, that almost any man of aspiring energy would be glad to enjoy the same privilege by which he would attract envy, rather than merit gratitude. The language, which the socinians hold in this controversy concerning virtue, reminds us only of heathen philosophers: he energy of the human mind, by which alone they suppose it to be produced, proves it to be any thing but that "true holiness," which apostles declare to be the effect of the sanctification of the Spirit; and the

merit attached to it, as the price of heaven, proclaims defiance to those who assert that "eternal life is the gift of God, and that it is not of works, lest any man should boast." So palpable, indeed, is the discrepancy of the two systems, that the more perspicacious and finished polemics on the socinian side, wisely avoid provoking a comparison by a direct quotation from the sacred volume, or by any resemblance of diction; except when the humanity of Christ draws them out to show that they are glad to avail themselves of Scripture when they can, and by which they prove just as much against his Deity, as they would against his priesthood, by adducing texts which declare him to be a king. These writers cannot agree among themselves what idea shall be attached to the Holy Spirit, or what interpretation shall be given to the introduction of the gospel by John; this, with their denial of the inspiration of the Scriptures, the divine influences on the human mind, the miraculous conception of Christ, his impeccability, his atonement, his intercession, the existence of a soul in man, and the eternity of future punishment, serves as an antidote to the poison of anti-trinitarianism, which their talents and boldness would otherwise have more widely diffused. By continual progress in the same road, one rejecting three out of four gospels as fabulous; another despising prayer as nugatory; a third branding public worship with the name of hypocrisy; a fourth opposing the morality of the Sabbath, and even recommending without a blush the pious pleasures of the theatre on the Lord's day; and, at length, a disciple of the same school denying the resurrection and the general judgment, which the others had pronounced the only discoveries of rational Christianity; they have strengthened the antidote, at least as much as the poison; for it is thus rendered manifest, that this new species of Christian philosophy is only infidelity baptized with a christian name.

The investigations connected with this topic have assisted the cause of truth, so as to give it the most

complete triumph ; and nothing more is necessary to convince any person, who studies the Scriptures, that the whole system of theology comprehended within the particulars already enumerated, is totally unfounded and anti-scriptural, than for him to take the Bible without note or comment in one hand, and the Humanitarian expositions in the other, and calmly compare the analogous passages in the Old and New Testaments, with their sophistical, jejune, distorted, and contradictory interpretations. In this case, as in the assaults upon the oracles of God of their fellow labourers, the Deists, the result has been similar ; the confusion of the heterodoxical enemies of the adorable Saviour of sinners, and the augmented conviction, energy, intelligence, and fortitude of them “ who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.”

2. *The Arminian Controversy.*

The question in dispute between calvinists and arminians, forms the gordian knot in theology. The eagerness which some have shown to condemn the gospel, on account of the controversies which alienate men from each other, has only betrayed their own ignorance or prejudice ; for, if the dispute which we have now to record, has formed christians into hostile sects, did it not also divide heathens into different schools of philosophy ? And if the controversy has been more eagerly agitated in modern than in ancient times, it only indicates that christianity has rendered the heart of man more sensible to the importance of his relation to a moral governor, and invigorated his intellect to perceive all the difficulties which attend the investigation of the subject.

To borrow an apostolic simile, the first christians, “ like new-born babes,” had few differences ; for a grateful sense of recent deliverance from ruin attached them to their great deliverer, and to all who were fellow heirs of the same grace ; so that “ the multitudes of them that believed were of one heart and one soul.” But when arianism had kindled the fire of controversy, pelagianism soon followed to feed the

flames. Those who now adopt a modification of this latter system, suppose it to be that of the Scriptures, and, of course, of the first Christians ; but it is undeniable, that Augustine, who took the calvinistic side against Pelagius, was hailed as the champion of the ancient faith. Augustinianism was, from the time of its celebrated father, the creed of the church ; but like the catholic doctrine of the Trinity, it gained such a triumph as extinguished the dispute, and left us much in the dark concerning the sentiments of subsequent ages. That the thick night, which enveloped the christian world during the ninth and tenth centuries, obscured the doctrines of grace, is manifest by the martyrdom of Godeschalcus for maintaining the sentiments of Augustine.

The Waldenses and Wickliffites were charged by the papistical party with holding the doctrines which were afterwards termed Calvinistical ; but the reformation so directed the general attention to other objects, that this controversy was for a time abandoned. Luther, first among reformers maintained the leading sentiments of the pastor of Geneva, in a book entitled, " de Servo Arbitrio," written in answer to Erasmus, who had maintained the Romish doctrine of free-will. While, however, it would be difficult, if not impossible, to find any thing more Calvinistic than these pages of Luther, it has fallen to the lot of Calvin to embody the system, and stamp it with his name. His christian institutes have entered so fully into this most awfully profound department of theology, that they are considered as the standard of these sentiments ; though many who firmly maintain their general truth, consider them capable of a more defensible statement. Calvin saw his system received as the creed of protestants ; for the doctrines which bear his name were adopted, not only in Geneva, but in Switzerland, France, Holland, England, and Scotland.

But it is proper briefly to state the sentiments of the contending parties on these intricate and super-

human topics ; they are commonly called the five points ; election, particular redemption, efficacious grace, freewill, and final perseverance.

The following positions comprise in a summary form the controverted opinions ; but it must be premised, that both parties believe, that justification is by faith alone, without human merit ; and that many of the most famous controversialists differ in minute points and verbal explanations.

1. The Calvinists affirm, that God has chosen a certain number of the human family in Christ, unto everlasting glory, before the foundation of the world, according to his immutable purpose, and of his free grace and love, without the least foresight of faith, good works, or any conditions to be performed by the creature. On the contrary, the Arminians maintain, that the Deity has not fixed the future state of mankind by an unconditional decree ; but determined from all eternity to bestow salvation on those, who he foresaw would persevere to the end in their faith in Jesus Christ ; and to inflict everlasting punishment on those, who should continue in their unbelief, and to the end resist his divine grace.

2. The Calvinists assert, that Jesus Christ by his death and sufferings made atonement for the sins of the elect only. This position the Arminians deny, and contend, that Jesus Christ by his death and sufferings, made an atonement for the sins of all mankind in general, and of every individual in particular ; that however, none but those who believe in him, can be partakers of their divine benefits.

3. The Calvinists believe, that mankind are totally depraved, in consequence of the fall ; and by virtue of Adam's being their federal head, the guilt of his sin was imputed, and a corrupt nature conveyed to all his posterity, from which proceed all actual transgressions ; and that by sin we are made subject to death, and all miseries, temporal, spiritual and eternal. The Arminians reply, 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.

4. The Calvinists maintain, that all whom God has predestinated to eternal life, he effectually calls by his word and spirit, from sin and death, to grace and salvation by Jesus Christ ;—on the contrary, the Arminians contend, that divine grace in the conversion of sinners is not irresistible.

5. The Calvinists believe, that those whom God calls and has sanctified by his spirit shall not finally fall from this state of grace—while the Arminians affirm, that believers in Christ may apostatize and perish in their sins. The controversy on these five points in its present form and features commenced with Arminius in Holland, and continued to rage with much acrimony during the reign of Charles I. in England, and among the Jansenists and Jesuits in France ; and subsequently, it has assumed a very prominent station among the modern theological debates, from its having been sanctioned and publicly adopted as the creed of John Wesley and his followers, which constitutes the present line of demarcation between them, and all the other more numerous denominations of Christians.

This collision of opinion has involved combatants of the highest order. Not to mention Augustine and Calvin—Goodwin wrote with great ardour and ability in defence of Arminianism, and published a volume entitled “Redemption redeemed,” which received the honor of being confuted by Dr. Owen. After him appeared Jonathan Edwards, whose work on the “Freedom of the will,” might have settled the dispute. He proved with what may be called a prodigality of evidence, that from the nature of the human mind *a necessity of consequence* must exist in human affairs, and not only confirmed this, both by the general tenor of Scripture, and a multitude of particular texts, but drove the contrary notion off the field by a *reductio ad absurdum* that is a developement of its

absurdity, so complete, that nothing like an answer could ever be given. The opposite party either shut their eyes, or steeled their hearts against his arguments ; concluding that they could not be true ; because as they said, they contradicted the feelings of nature, the testimony of conscience, and the language of scripture, which all concurred to prove, that we are moral agents and not mere machines.— Hence Fletcher, the ablest of the arminian writers, admits one species of necessity, and contends earnestly for it, in opposition to Edwards, who wrote his book to establish the same kind of necessity. Once, indeed, the Vicar of Madeley seems fairly to face the American, when Edwards contends that every kind of necessity is not incompatible with that freedom of the will which is essential to moral agency, praise and blame ; because God is necessarily holy, devils are necessarily or irreclaimably evil ; yet neither the best nor the worst beings act by compulsion ; the one deserve praise and the other blame. The manner in which Fletcher attempts to answer this would be amusing, were it not a melancholy spectacle, to see such a man attempt to defend himself and others from the force of truth.

The conflict has been lately revived with such intellectual force and holy temper, that “we have scarcely any thing further to expect or wish.” Tucker’s Predestination is a very superior work in a small compass—while Tomline’s pretended refutation of Calvinism has educed investigations which render any further replication superfluous. Williams’ Essay on the Equity and Sovereignty of God, with his answer, and Scott’s reply to that Hierarch, have so triumphantly demolished his prelatical ignorance, inconsistencies and dogmatism, that if accuracy of distinctions, and the practical tendencies of each system morally considered could be impartially reviewed, the disputants must be silent forever.

III. The Baptismal controversy.

To an enlightened and feeeling disciple of Jesus, nothing in the modern history of Christianity is calculated to excite more astonishment and pain, than the almost impassable gulph which ignorance and bigotry combined have contrived to excavate, between the professed followers of the Lamb, upon this *non-essential* department of our common faith and practice. If we contrast the factitious importance given to the divisions of sentiment upon this topic, with its intrinsic moment as revealed in the sacred oracles, we are almost at a loss to unravel the motives in which such irreconcileable separations originated or by what infatuation among *children of the same devotion*, they can have been perpetuated. The calvinistic majority of the *pious* world is so vast, that the minority as to numbers, are comparatively units; and with regard to all the points necessary to salvation, whether they be the doctrines, the obligations, or the duties connected with evangelical claims, however diversified their explications upon minor matters, the whole body are identical. An Idolater lately delivered from the darkness and thraldom which encircle the temple of Juggernaut, might therefore be justly overwhelmed with conflicting emotions, when he primarily understands, that as soon as he has deserted from the camp of the enemy and engaged in the service of Immanuel, the divisions and sectarian proselyting spirit of his new Friends may entangle him in a perplexing labyrinth, from which nothing but the arrest of death can liberate him. The non-intercourse tacitly enacted between the ancient Jews and the Samaritans, is inconceivably more defensible than the modern partition-wall between the adherents of infant and adult baptism; and especially, if it be considered, that the Antipædo-Baptists exclusively, were the prime artificers employed in erecting this anti-biblical barrier not 300 years since; and that they still are the only craftsmen, who in every successive generation, have combined to

append the buttresses requisite to support the unhallowed and tottering fabric. Among the disputants upon this jejune subject, no diversity of opinion exists, respecting the degeneracy and helpless condition of man by nature ; or the necessity, the method, and the value of christian redemption by faith in Jesus, the Son of God ; or the imperious demand of full and persevering obedience to all the Saviour's mandates ; or the destiny of man as an immortal creature, the recipient of endless wo, or felicity everlasting—in the splendid objects of faith, the pure animation of hope, the ardent transports of love, and the peaceful sensibilities of devotion, these sons of strife are indissolubly cemented ; assuredly, therefore nothing less than a “ thus saith the Lord” should be permitted to impede their harmony ; or to interrupt their performance of the eleventh, the paramount commandment, “ Love one another as I have loved you ;” or to extinguish the peculiar heaven-born characteristics of the immaculate Redeemer's similitude, by which an ungodly world can most lucidly recognize their union with him ; for “ all men shall know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.”

The subjects in dispute involve three inquiries—in what mode must water be applied in christian Baptism ?—to whom may the ordinance be administered ?—is the immersion of the candidate, when adult, under water, in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, by a person who himself had previously been plunged when he was baptized, an indispensable pre requisite to reception into the Christian church, and to admission at the Lord's table, which is the capital exhibition of the communion of all saints ? These and all the collateral questions are answered by the reply which is made to the third query ; and the various divisions of the Antipædo-Baptists respond in the affirmative ; while all other denominations of christians since the reformation, and the universal world of believers, prior to the establishment of the church by Constantine, or

the elevation of the Popedom, and excluding the intermediate 900 years of superstitious darkness, unanimously deny the correctness of their unsocial position.

Nearly a century elapsed, after Menno, in 1536, organized his *first* society of exclusive communionists, before his novel opinions attracted any peculiar notice, or opposition; but from the period when the chief topics of the controversy, began to excite public debate and constituted another ingredient in the theological babel, few subjects have elicited such a parade of useless learning, and so large a quantity of acrimonious uncharitableness and vehemence. It is not wonderful, that the grand adversary of God and man should have fanned the flame of contention after it was once enkindled; but how that most abhorrent dogma, close communion, as it is at present held by those who for the sake of distinction, denominate themselves the regular Baptists, could have been invented, credited, and propagated, is among the unaccountable mysteries of human depravity and stupefaction. Latterly, however, the strong holds of dullness and delusion have been battered with gigantic force, by Robert Hall in his terms of communion; and by Dr. Mason in his plea for christian communion;—so that the prospect brightens, and sanctions the indulgence of hope that these mountains of intolerance will ere long “be made low.” A severer censure upon the abettors of this principle and practice, was never uttered, than that pronounced by William Ward, the Serampore Missionary, in his farewell letters; after describing the state of christianity in the United States from his own inspection, he observes, “that he had not discovered in his journeys, one Baptist church which practized open, that is, christian communion.” On the mode and subject of Baptism, the discrepancy is no less singular; the close communionists confine the ordinance to adults by immersion; while their more philanthropical fellow-disciples, are willing to enrol both

the parents and their children, in the service of the captain of salvation; and are unable to discover in the New Testament, either a definite injunction respecting the method in which baptismal water shall be applied, or an authoritative restriction of the ordinance only to adult professors. During the present generation, the controversy has been very keenly and extensively agitated; and it must be admitted, that the modern combatants in behalf of Antipoedobaptism, have been unusually discomfited; at least a very superior and much enlarged spirit of liberality to others, and a fraternity of temper altogether unprecedented in former periods characterize the most enlightened and influential members of the Baptist denomination; which authorizes the anticipation, that ere long the pacific prediction shall be completed in all its beauty, enlargement and force, “Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall not vex Ephraim; and the people shall call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent.” 2.

IV. The controversy upon the Government and Discipline of the church.

The origin of this division among the Protestants, has already been briefly narrated, in the history of the English Episcopalian establishment. From its results, however, it has been attended with the most important consequences; and the extension of the opinions upon which the Anglo-Puritans primarily dissented from the religion enacted by law, has verified several most momentous facts in connection with the progress of pure and undefiled religion. Two hundred and fifty years have elapsed, since the opponents of the national church in England assumed a distinct and systematic character; and their increase has been regular, until they comprise not only the incomparably larger portion of the existing piety in Great Britain; but also, including those who have descended from them, and who adhere to them in theological and ecclesiastical doctrines, at present,

embody the vast majority of evangelical christians throughout the globe. The annals of the Puritans, the Non-conformists, and their modern successors, in connection with the state of religion in our Republics, have demonstrated in a superlative degree the noble qualities of Christianity ; and have evinced beyond all cavil, that the coalition between church and state is destructive of vital godliness, and that all spiritual authority, when supported by the civil power, is a sanguinary, and doubly traitorous despotism, equally injurious to national prosperity, inimical to the bodies and souls of men, and derogatory to the supreme King in Zion.

No complaint has more frequently been uttered by the Episcopalians in every age, and no sounds have been more generally reverberated, than their peeling outcries concerning *schism*; notwithstanding they, at the same time, the close communionists excepted, are the only distinguished tribe of schismatics in the Protestant domains. while they admit the sanctity of Popish ordination, and the validity of the sacraments administered by a Jesuit; they deny the ministry, devotions and covenant membership of all other denominations. Lutheran, Presbyterian and Congregational. The basis on which they erect this alliance with Popery, and their aversion from all other Protestants, is one of the most senseless absurdities which folly, fanaticism or wickedness ever invented to conceal the turpitude of tyranny—*the divine right and uninterrupted succession of Diocesan Bishops.* 3. Hence, it is proper to define the word *schism*, according to its genuine scriptural import.

Schism denotes a separation in heart and affections from those who walk according to the institutions of Christ, or an entire departure from their communion. Who is guilty of this offence ? They who deny that Jesus is the only head of the church, and assume a right to alter, to superadd, or to take away from what he established—not those who as-

sert his sole authority and who plead for the integrity of Christ's constitution. He is not guilty of schism, who associates with persons that acknowledge Immanuel as their Lord, believe the pure doctrines of the Gospel, worship Jehovah as the Son of Man prescribes, and evidence their title to christian discipleship by their philanthropy to them who love the Lord Jesus, and by their separation from the servants of Satan. How can that be schism which consists merely in disjunction from a system which had no existence prior to the year 1560; which bears a resemblance to nothing called christian earlier than the fourth or fifth century; and which in its head and organization is altogether papistical; in very important doctrines, such as baptismal regeneration with all its appendages is radically erroneous; in its worship, services and sacraments is either formal or superstitious; and is totally anti-evangelical in its discipline? Is it schism not to declare unfeigned assent to all the multifarious code imposed even in its abridged form by the episcopacy in this Union? Assuredly, it is full time that this accusation ceased. Schism is an alienation of heart from Christ's institutions, not from man's inventions. They who would impose such fictions on the disciples of Christ, instead of his appointments, are the schismatics, not those who separate from them for conscience' sake.

The sacred scriptures recommend union among christians, with the energy and pathos of divine authority: and while the church remains in its purity, separation from it is an heinous crime. But whatever men touch they defile; and the whole stream of history discovers a tendency to corruption in the best institutions. This takes its rise from the depravity of human nature, which mistakes or dislikes, what God has ordained; and lops off what is displeasing, or adds what appears beautiful and venerable. From this propensity flowed the system of superstition and temporal domination which ended in the abyss of popery.

The reformation arrested this progress of evil, light increased : questions were agitated which sharpened men's minds, and led to the discovery and evidence of many important truths, which had not before engaged the attention of the learned and religious world. These, as they were discovered and believed, formed a part of the mental system, and produced trains of reasoning, modes of sentiment, and rules of conduct unknown before.

In consequence of these advantages, pious and enlightened men learned to examine matters with a more penetrating judgment and nicer discrimination. Their virtue and goodness kept pace with their improvements in knowledge. Little to the honour of the English character at the era of the reformation, the mass of the clergy changed backwards and forwards, shifted with the wind, and moved with the tide. But in a century after, England could boast of a far more enlightened and virtuous clergy, the principles of thousands of whom would not bend with external circumstances, and the changing decrees enacted by the authority of the state. The act of uniformity required them to do what they conceived to be contrary to the honour of the glorious Head of the church, and hostile to the purity and integrity of his institutions. In consequence of this, they made a stand, separated themselves from the establishment, and formed those societies which remain to the present day.

That people may differ about trifles is too frequently seen; and when they break off from the communion of a church on account of these, their conduct is highly reprehensible. But there is an extreme on the opposite side. When men yield, for the sake of peace, to impositions against which conscience revolts, and which conscience condemns as sinful, they merit at least an equal degree of blame. In the midst, between these extremities, there are great and important principles, for the sake of which good men may justly make a stand, and which they may refuse

to part with : and if they cannot otherwise retain them, they are warranted to withdraw from that church which will not allow that they should be retained by private christians in her communion, and by the ministers who officiate at her altars.

Those who stand forward as confessors for truth, claim a high rank among the benefactors of the human race. Their reward indeed may at the time be from heaven alone ; and what they receive from man consist rather in the approbation of succeeding generations, than that in which they lived. To them the world is indebted for the progress which it has made in pure principles, and in the virtues resulting from them : and it is from a succession of such men, that we have derived all our advancement in those invaluable truths which ennable the soul and exalt the character. It may perhaps be deemed improper to inscribe in this list the names of the Apostles of Christ, as their wisdom came immediately from heaven, and their opposition to established systems was by divine command. But their conduct was a stand for principles : and in this respect they take their station at the head of the reformers of the world.

The men who, in different countries, lifted up their voice against the monstrous superstitions of popery, merit the praise of every succeeding age, for their undaunted appearance in times of the most imminent danger, in behalf of these glorious principles of divine truth, which had long been trodden under foot. But they still left much to be done, and a rich harvest of laurels to be reaped by those who should come after them. In England, during the reigns of Elizabeth, James, and Charles the first, hundreds of excellent ministers, and ten thousands of pious laymen exposed themselves to the tremendous storm of arbitrary power and ecclesiastical tyranny ; and rather than yield to what they conceived to be injurious to the honour of God, and his revealed truth, they submitted to the loss of office, of affluence, and their country ; and many sought refuge in the wilds of America.

But it was reserved for the non-conformists to stand forth, as a body, in defence of what they accounted truth and duty, and to suffer the loss of every thing but one—their principles. They are regarded with the highest veneration as the founders of that building which has remained in its original strength to the present day, and appears one of the fairest structures on the face of the earth.

A brief outline of the fundamental principles which all those maintain, who deny the peculiar and haughty assumptions of the professed descendants from “him who sitteth in the temple of God as God” is requisite to elucidate the foundation on which the disciples of religious liberty have erected their spiritual temple, and which they are convinced will at some future period circumscribe the whole world.

“Jesus Christ is the sole head of the church—the sacred scriptures are the only rule of faith and practice—private judgment in all matters of religion is an inalienable right—every man may publicly profess that religion which his private judgment dictates to be from God—the church ought to have no connection with the state, for Christ’s kingdom is not of this world.”

The objections which the Puritans and the Non-conformists originally made to the Episcopalian establishment of England, and which have augmented their force with every succeeding generation, may be subdivided into two classes; those which advert to that monstrous coalition, church and state alone; and those which are equally applicable to episcopacy as a system, whether at Rome, Canterbury or in this Union. The national church of England is the offspring of state policy, created and preserved by the civil government, merely as an additional instrument to oppress the subjects under their sway—the offices and dignities of the national church which are unscriptural and popish—the system of patronage which destroys every evangelical privilege secured to christians in the election of their church officers—and the

tyrannical persecuting spirit of the Hierarchy, demonstrating that she is exactly what she claims to be, the legitimate offspring of that Babylon the great, who was “drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus”—these constitute an insurmountable barrier to the alliance of enlightened christians with that establishment, when worldly interests either in possession or hope, excite no adventitious predilections.

In addition to the sandy foundation upon which the Episcopalian have attempted to erect their superstructure, other principles of opposition are stated; which suffice to alienate all those who are evangelically instructed from Protestant Episcopacy, as it has ever displayed its qualities since Elizabeth and her parliament in 1560, out of the chaos of Popery, by their legislative enactments, gave it a visible form and indelible character.

“The church,” says the twentieth article, “has power to decree rites and ceremonies, and authority in matters of faith;” that is the very deformity of popery without a mask! An unalterable continually repeated form of prayer, is in itself most decidedly objectionable for public worship; for it incapacitates the minister from offering supplications to God extempore, and as the experience of many centuries has universally evinced, generally eradicates the spirit of devotion in the worshippers: this would be an insuperable offence, its being always the parent of lukewarmness and formality, even were the doctrines and spirit otherwise evangelical; but the modern episcopal liturgical service is additionally repulsive: its Popish origin, its tedious length, its tiresome repetitions, its anathematizing, if not contradictory creeds, its errors in the offices of baptism, confirmation, visitation of the sick, and the burial service. These last were never more lucidly and briefly illustrated than in the following anecdote.

“Matthew Mead an eminent non-conformist, was politely addressed by a nobleman, ‘I am sorry, sir,

we have not a person of your abilities in the established church. They would be extensively useful there.' You do not, my lord, require persons of great abilities in the establishment. 'Why so, sir, what do you mean?' When you christen a child, you regenerate it by the Holy Ghost. When you confirm a youth, you assure him of God's favour and the forgiveness of sins. When you visit a sick person, you absolve him from all his iniquities; and when you bury the dead you send them all to heaven. Of what particular service then can great abilities be in your communion?"

The substitution of sponsors for parents, and the sign of the cross in baptism—the imposition of kneeling at the Lord's supper—the restriction of every minister to an immutable form of administering the sacraments—and the almost total destitution of all christian discipline are very strong counteracting impediments to the union of spiritually disposed persons with a system where Laodicean inflation and death-like stupor not only rule, but which antichristian tempers, all its sectarian doctrines and canons are calculated to nurture and perpetuate.

But if all these difficulties could be obviated, one remains; and it is truly amazing, how any pious scripturally intelligent disciple of the Redeemer can submit to it, that is, *the tripartite ordination*. Nothing can be more contradictory to the simplicity and purity of the Gospel, or the analogy of faith, than Episcopal sentiments and practice upon this topic; for it is evident, that whatever ordination may be, the person is introduced by it into the whole ministry of the Gospel New Testament; therefore this bastard popery is utterly destitute of foundation in the sacred Scripture. Thrice must the Bishops hands be laid on the head of the candidate, before it receives all the virtue which they contain and impart. The first imposition makes him a deacon; by this he is qualified "to assist the priest when he ministereth the holy communion, and to help him in the

distribution thereof; and to read the holy Scriptures and homilies in the church; and to instruct the youth in the catechism; in the absence of the priest to baptize infants, and to preach, if he be admitted thereto by the bishop." More than these the deacon cannot do without a second touch. But why is a larger measure of ecclesiastical existence necessary to dispense the ordinance of the Lord's supper than the ordinance of baptism? But after a deacon is transmuted into a priest, a certain portion of virtue still remains in the ordainer: and it is not till the third touch of the episcopal hands that the whole of the virtue is conveyed; and then having drained them dry, all priestly power is conferred, and the person being now a bishop has attained the full stature of a perfect ecclesiastical man: and besides the performance of all the functions, for which he had received authority by his previous ordinations, he has acquired ability to confirm the youth, and to ordain deacons and priests. This ceremonial, however, although most preposterous and indefensible, is a nonentity compared with the matter. In "the form for ordering priests," the bishop having his hand upon the candidate's head, says, "receive the Holy Ghost for the office and work of a Priest; whose sins thou dost forgive, they are forgiven, and whose sins thou dost retain, they are retained." Episcopilians have branded almost all the other disciples of Jesus, except the Papists from whom they plead lineal descent, with the degrading appellation of fanatics and enthusiasts. The utmost flights of the anti-papists, respecting the influences of the Holy Spirit are the coolest sobriety of reason contrasted with this blasphemous assumption; they would really merit the stigma of arch fanatics and arch enthusiasts, did they believe that by the laying on of the hands of presbytery, the gift of the Holy Ghost was confirmed, and the power to forgive sins was received. Certainly the largest portion of the most sublimated essence of fanaticism and enthusiasm, which was

ever seen or known upon earth, is concentrated at an Episcopal ordination. "How dreadful is it that the service by which a person is ordained to the most solemn office should contain untruths!—That a bishop should introduce a person into the priest's office by saying what is untrue, and by professing to give what he knows he cannot give, is sufficient to rend the hardest heart with grief. That the person too, who is ordained, should hear untruths solemnly addressed to him in a highly religious act, and profess to believe that he receives what he knows he does not receive, and what neither the bishop nor any one else can give, is deeply to be deplored by every friend of truth. Such a commencement of the priestly office augurs ill for its future effects. At the consecration of a bishop there is a repetition of the same unedifying scene. The bishop ordaining addresses an untruth to the bishop ordained: the bishop ordained receives the untruth, and professes to believe it as a sacred verity, and to go forth under such an impression to the execution of his exalted office. Infidels have but too much cause to scoff, and to ridicule what is boasted to be the fairest representation of the religion of Jesus Christ.

If any thing more were requisite to develope the true character of this mummery, and burlesque upon the sacred volume, and the gospel ministry, it is discoverable in the fact, that a large majority of the episcopal bishops and priests, from the first organization of the Hierarchy to this present generation, have denied and ridiculed the very notion of any spiritual communication from the Great Head of the church to his followers in the regeneration by the Comforter, the Holy Ghost.

The nature and effects of religious state establishments, have also lately become a popular subject of inquiry: and all those, who from whatever cause they may have opposed the different diocesan Episcopacies, have coalesced, in arraying themselves against the support of the kingdom of Christ Jesus,

by carnal weapons of warfare ; but the living and influential example of these States with respect to the equality of all religious denominations is irresistible ; and aided by the unrestricted energies of the press will most effectually batter down the Jericho of ecclesiastical arrogance and corruption.

It is neither necessary nor practicable to describe all the minor distinctions into which the theological interpretations of divine revelation are subdivided : many sects are separated merely by ceremonial observances, or by differential shades so unimportant, that it is difficult to divine the causes of their prolonged alienation from each other ; and this is peculiarly the case in reference to the prominent and essential doctrines of the sacred Scriptures.

During the present age, the spirit of sectarian bigotry has indubitably decreased in an immense ratio—large quantities of antichristian coldness have been immolated upon the altar of evangelical philanthropy—and a considerable portion of the steam of strife has become mingled with the purer fire for the welfare of men, which is enkindled by a devoted attachment to the honour of Jesus, and a burning zeal for the salvation of souls. But Christianity unfolds a still more brilliant prospect, and encourages us to exult in the approach of that auspicious morning, when our corruption, liability to error, prejudices, and voluntary blindness, the sources of all controversy, shall vanish away, and the irradiations of truth shall be so splendid, uniform, operative and universal, that “ the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevensfold, as the light of seven days.

Hasten, O Lord, that glorious era ! Amen.

*The Independents or Congregationalists—the Baptists—
the Moravians—the Methodists—and the Quakers—
with the minor denominations.*

These divisions constitute the principal bodies of modern Christians ; but to avoid misconception, it is necessary to particularize wherein these terms are applied. No distinction exists between the Congregationalists and the Baptists, strictly so called, either in theological doctrines, or ecclesiastical discipline ; the barrier between these dissidents, consisting merely in the mode and subject of Christian baptism. One fact connected with this topic is truly remarkable ; all the Baptist Churches without exception, have uniformly been organized upon the principles of the Independents : and although these have always been the chief supporters of the Calvinistic standards, nevertheless all those who have associated together to establish their own different explications of Christianity have adopted the Congregational system : thus, the Antinomians when not as individuals, incorporated with any society ; the Universalists of every grade from the Believers in a temporary purgatory and final hell-redemption, to the absolute rejecters of all future punishment ; the General Baptists, of all classes of opinions ; and the offspring of Socinus, whether they be semi-arians, or mere Humanitarians, are in their congregated capacities all governed according to the discipline of the early Independents —and hence, in these States, a perfect misapprehension of the character of the primitive Puritans and their lineal successors has long existed to the great injury of the most dignified men in the Protestant world. I. Many of the Congregationalists occasion-

ally, and the Methodists systematically practice both methods of administering the water in the baptismal ordinance, and to infants and adults—therefore, the system of exclusion is founded upon principles on which they disagree, which of course must be considered paramount to those upon which the parties are at concord. Respecting their numbers, the United Brethren or Moravians are very inferior to either of the other principal sects; but they claim a very distinguished station among the followers of the Lamb, on account of their unwearied diligence, and widely extended missionary efforts, as from their body, primarily appeared those who sacrificed all earthly hopes upon the altar of Christian philanthropy for the souls of men. In doctrinal opinions, they are much in union with the Methodists; and in many of their regulations, there is a great analogy; but the connection which subsisted between the primitive Methodists and the Moravians has long been dissolved; and notwithstanding their general similitude, they are now as completely severed as any other of the modern sects. The differences between the Methodists, the Quakers, and the other denominations are more perceptible and important. It must also be remembered, that many of the English Non-conformists in 1662, were Presbyterians in discipline; but they gradually either renounced or did not contend for their sentiments; and from the oppressions of the tyrants Charles and James; and the investigations and controversies respecting the nature of a Christian Church, the Presbyterians in England gradually declined; and although at the period of the revolution in 1688, they continued more numerous than either the Independents or Baptists, yet the predominance of the Episcopal hierarchy, with the jealousy of the civil government respecting all large ecclesiastical bodies, the absolute impracticability of enforcing the Presbyterian system in its compactness and detail, amplified influence of the Congregational discipline, and increasing repugnance of the English

Dissenters to all ecclesiastical legislative judicatories, has almost totally extirpated them. The Congregations which were originally collected by the Nonconformists of that denomination, are now embodied with the Independents ; or retaining their ancient appellation, without their characteristics, for the sake of the property which has been bequeathed to the minister and the hearers in that house of worship, are become societies in which every species of discordant error may be discovered. This statement, however, does not apply to the churches on the borders of Scotland, many of which are connected with some of the different Presbyteries which have originated in the Secession.

The northern part of Ireland was occupied after the Reformation, chiefly by the Scotch, who established their own church platform as determined by John Knox and his brethren. But notwithstanding their primary success with the Papists, and their steadfast adhesion to the exterior of the Presbyterian system, the Irish section of that denomination, including the English Puritans who united with them, from a variety of causes has never exhibited very prominent symptoms of energy and fertility. The almost incurable prejudices and antipathy of the Papists, the oppressions of the Episcopal Hierarchy, the degradation and wretchedness of the people in consequence of the unceasing devastations occasioned by military despotism, and the departure from the standards of doctrine, all co-operating together have obstructed the progress, beclouded the lustre and blighted the fruitfulness of this part of the Reformed vineyard. Similar causes have tended both in Scotland and Ireland to the diminution of Presbyterial authority. Political expediency ever shifting and temporary, not the oracular prescriptions of the gospel, has so often determined their proceedings, that upon any interesting or important topic, no person of understanding, now anticipates a just decision from the General Assembly of Scotland, or the Synod of

Ulster; if to this we subjoin the invariable persecutions with which they have assailed every man, whose conscience would not permit him to subscribe to their contradictory resolutions, or their outrageous proscriptions, we need not be surprised, that the Congregational tree is at present diverging its branches into all parts of these Presbyterian domains, and with a rapidity and success for which nothing could account, but their well known disregard of their doctrinal confession, and their authoritative assumption over the rights and consciences of Christians. With this illustration upon which it may be necessary again to enlarge, the history of the rise and progress of each sect, and their present condition in Europe, will briefly be narrated.

The Independents.

This communion is distinguished by maintaining that every distinct society of Christians, united for religious fellowship and worship, is, according to the Scriptures, a church, possessed of full powers to regulate its own concerns, and independent of all foreign controul. “There are in the New Testament but two original senses of the word which can be called different, though related; one is when it denotes a number of people actually assembled, or accustomed to assemble together, and is then properly rendered by the English terms congregation, convention, assembly, and even sometimes crowd. The other sense is, to denote a society united together by some common tie; though not convened, perhaps not convenable in one place. Where the word is appropriated, as it generally is in the New Testament, it denotes either a single congregation of Christians, in correspondence to the first, or the whole Christian community, in correspondence to the second. But in any intermediate sense, between a single congregation and the whole Christian community, which has been called the catholic or universal church, not one instance can be brought of the application of the word in sacred writ.”

No way exists of reaching the sense of our Lord's instructions, ' tell it to the church, but by understanding his words as they must have been understood by his hearers. The word is used in the Old Testament in two different but related senses ; one is for a whole nation, as constituting one commonwealth or polity, the other is for a particular congregation or assembly, convened in the same place. Now as the nature of the thing sufficiently shows that our Lord did not employ it in the first of the two senses, so as to require that every private quarrel should be made a national affair, we are under a necessity of understanding it in the last, as regarding the particular congregation to which the parties belonged. Hence, if "the visible church is a congregation of faithful men ;" a national establishment, and even a representative hierarchy must equally be exploded as unscriptural.

This denomination maintains the right of the church or the whole body of christians, to receive or reject their members, and to choose all their own officers ; and their principle, which requires the possession of real religion in a member participating in the ordinances of the Gospel, preserves them from intolerance and persecution ; as none can partake in the regulation of their ecclesiastical concerns, except those who profess to deny themselves, take up their cross and follow Christ. They consider that the Apostolic churches were all Congregational, and so would have continued, had they not been desecrated by the early corruptions, and swallowed up by the spirit of ambitious domination over the consciences of men ; and upon a few fundamental axioms, they build their house, which they assert is founded upon a rock.

The sacred scripture contains the whole of religion ; and it alone has an authoritative power to bind in matters of faith and practice. Nothing ought to be inserted in any creed, or system of religion, which is not evidently to be found in this book. Things not enjoined in the sacred scriptures, they insist, should be left indifferent ; so that Christians may

practice or abstain from them, as conscience dictates or expediency directs. The civil magistrate, they say, has no authority in the church of Christ. The Christian religion is entirely spiritual, and not blended with the smallest mixture of political institutions. Its offices are to be filled, and its duties are to be performed by disciples of Christ, in an individual capacity. It interferes not with the regulations of human government : “Christ’s kingdom is not of this world.” It is fitted to subsist under any government without interfering with their operations. And in the exhibitions of Christianity through the whole of the New Testament not a single hint is ever given, that the civil rulers of the country are at all to interfere with the church of Christ, so as to frame regulations for his disciples, or to exert an authoritative influence in its affairs.

Nothing more, they assert, should be required, in order to Christian communion, than Christ has required ; and all terms of human invention, in addition to Christ’s, authoritatively enforced on the consciences of men by civil or ecclesiastical rulers are exceedingly sinful. They maintain that every man has a right to judge for himself in matters of religion; that all are on a level with respect to the right of enjoying liberty of conscience and of worship: and that each is under equal obligations to yield to one another, for the sake of peace, and in order to the maintaining of brotherly affection and Christian communion.

It has already been intimated, that the Puritans originated in a controversy respecting the extent to which the reformation in the church of England should be extended. The priestly robes furnished the first subject of contention. The garments in which they were commanded to officiate, were worn by the popish priests in the days of superstition, and were considered, both by priests and people, as essentially connected with the wonder-working part of their office, and without which these marvels

could not be done. When bishop Latimer, in the course of his degradation, on being stripped of one of his garments said, "Now I can make no more holy water," he spoke both the sentiments of the multitude and the sentiments of the prelates of the Romish church. The pomp and authority of the diocesan bishops, the number of clergymen who were unable to preach, the want of discipline, and the popish remnants in the system, were loudly censured and a reform was implored. The puritans wrote *admonitions to parliament*, Whitgift answered them, and Cartwright replied; the former was paid for his heterodoxy, by being elevated to the archbishopric of Canterbury; the latter who was the champion for the truth, was remunerated for his services, with poverty, exile and imprisonment. At this period, 1580, Robert Brown propagated his opinions with great zeal in England, and after having been confined in thirty two dungeons and prisons, he fled to Holland, and there established a church. Persecution raged against the adherents of his opinions; they were scourged, robbed, confined, and some hanged; but in vain, the doctrines were immortal, and were diffused with astonishing rapidity.

In 1592, another church was formed in London; these were obliged to change their place of meeting continually, as the high commission searched for them with the keenness of blood-hounds; they were finally discovered, on the same spot where the protestants assembled for fear of the Papist tormentors during Mary's sanguinary government.

Fifty-six of them were sent prisoners to different jails about London, where they had the melancholy consolation of finding many of their brethren confined for the same crime of worshipping God. When they imagined that twelve months confinement had sufficiently broken the spirit of Mr. Smith, they asked him whether he would go to church. He answered, "that were he to do it, he should only play the hypocrite, to avoid trouble; for he judged it utterly un-

lawful." To this one of the commissioners replied, "come to church and obey the queen's laws; and be a dissembler, a hypocrite, or a devil if thou wilt." These much-injured men complain of such treatment as was worthy only of a Spanish inquisition. By these cruelties, many of them perished in prison. On the coffin of one of them, whose name was Roger Rippon, his fellow-prisoners inscribed the words of the royal preacher, "oppression makes a wise man mad." They were beaten, and doomed to still severer confinement, for not attending the service of the established church in the jail, to which they were brought for renouncing that service as unscriptural.

Barrow requested that he might be allowed a conference, to investigate the truth. But this was refused; for it was not truth or reason, but submission, which the persecutors wished to obtain. He, as well as Mr. Greenwood, his companion in suffering, were condemned to die, and were hanged at Tyburn, breathing such a spirit of piety towards God, and such loyal prayers for the queen's prosperity, that when she was told in what manner they died, she discovered a momentary pang of regret.

Shortly after Mr. John ap Henry, was seized and condemned for the same crime. Though he declared, that not a day passed over his head, in which he did not commend the queen's estate to God, his death-warrant was signed by the archbishop. It was immediately sent to the sheriff, who erected the gallows the same day, seized the victim at dinner, and hanged him in the afternoon.

The controversy was continued. Hooker devoted a large part of his life to writing his *ecclesiastical polity*, which contains all that ingenuity and literature can adduce in favour of episcopacy and religious establishments. "The architecture of the fabric resembles Dagon's temple; it rests mainly upon two grand pillars, which as long as they continue sound, will support all its weight. The first is "that the

church of Christ like all other societies, has power to make laws for its well-being ;" and the second, that where the sacred Scriptures are silent, human authority may interpose." But if some Sampson can be found to shake these pillars from their base, the whole edifice, with the lords of the Philistines in their seats, and the multitude with which it is crowded, will be involved in one common ruin. Grant these two principles, and his arguments cannot be confuted. But if a puritan can show that the church of Christ is different from all civil societies, because Christ had framed a constitution for it, while he left them entirely to the exercise of their own wisdom : and that where the scriptures are silent, and neither enjoin nor forbid, no human association has a right to interpose its authority, but should leave the matter indifferent ; in such a case the system would not be more stable than that of the philosopher, who rested the earth upon the back of an elephant, and that upon a tortoise, and that upon nothing." But as error is progressive, so it appeared in this disputation : the primitive Reformers declared, that the episcopal establishment, was merely a creature of state and expedient. Whitgift defended it, because it was conformed to the church in the fourth century ; but Bancroft, boldly proclaimed that the order of diocesan bishops was of divine authority ; which, with the zeal for the ceremonial mummary borrowed from their Romish Mother, displayed by the civil and ecclesiastical authorities, increased the number of Puritans, and rendered all communion and harmony utterly impracticable.

The independents from this period continued to worship in secret, and were often obliged to remove, so that in England they were almost unknown, except from the press, by which they maintained and propagated their principles.

John Robinson gathered a church on these principles at Leyden ; in his apology, he writes, every

particular society is a complete church; and as far as regards other churches, immediately and independently under Christ alone. "Hence they were called independents. The church at Leyden gradually diminished; for while the aged members were removed by death, their children married into Dutch families: it was therefore determined after much consultation, that the younger part of them should remove to America, where they might at once preserve their church from extinction, and afford an asylum to their brethren from England.

The independent divines who had fled to Holland, were allowed to assemble in the Dutch churches, after the hours of the national worship. Here they availed themselves of the liberty and leisure of their exile to study the doctrines of the scriptures concerning church government. But when the change of the times invited their return, and afforded an opportunity for the declaration of their principles, they published an apologetical narration which they presented to the house of commons in the year one thousand six hundred and forty-three. The presbyterians, who were now labouring to establish their discipline, in the place of the old hierarchy, were much offended with this step, which tended to obstruct their schemes. The parliament appointed the grand committee of accommodation, to accomplish an union between the two parties, if possible; but if not, to contrive some way in which the independents might enjoy liberty.

These efforts for accommodation came to nothing: for the presbyterians reflected severely on the independents for asserting that uniformity ought to be pressed no further than is agreeable to the consciences of men, and the general edification. The leading men in the army either avowed themselves independents, or patrons of that toleration, which had been denounced as the idol of this communion.

Cromwell espoused the same cause, and nominated their principal divines to be his chaplains, as well as

to fill the most important places in the universities. As their churches had much increased in England, they requested leave of the government to hold a synod, in order to publish to the world an account of their faith and order. To this the protector consented. The meeting of the synod was held at the Savoy, in 1658. The pastors and delegates of more than a hundred congregational churches being assembled, drew up their confession of faith. It much resembles the Assembly's catechism, but has for an appendix, a chapter on the institution of churches, and the order appointed by Jesus Christ.

Public theological disputations were appointed, but without harmonizing the disputants; and many volumes were issued in this warfare. The most famous work was Calderwood's *Altare Damascenum*; which very much displeased King James. One of the Bishops to comfort him, promised to confute it; he retorted, "Man, what answer can you give, here is nothing but the Scripture, reason, and the Fathers." During Cromwell's tolerating protectorate, little was written upon the subject of church government. From the restoration of Charles II. to the revolution by William, a period of nearly 29 years, the history of the non-conformists in England, of the dissenting denominations, Presbyterians, Independents, Baptists, and Quakers, is little more than a catalogue of atrocious crimes on the part of church and state, and a record of every species of deprivation and agony experienced by the unoffending christians who were the subjects of their unfeeling bigotry and despotism. Exactions, imprisonment, exile to America, denial of trial by jury, conviction upon the oath of a single informer, who received a third of the exorbitant fine, and exclusion from almost all the ordinary modes of procuring subsistence, was the mercy of the Hierarchy towards those conscientious disciples. "Though they were not actually burnt alive, they were intentionally starved to death: but while earth and hell were against them, heaven appeared in their behalf;

scarcely Elijah himself was more immediately fed by Jehovah." Who without horror can attempt to realize that state of society, in which such men as Calamy, Baxter, Bunyan, and Owen, with thousands of others like them were either imprisoned, robbed, or calumniated, and perfectly impeded in the exercise of their ministry? But the abdication of James II. and the settlement of William III. on the throne removed all these evils, and by the act of toleration the various dissenting denominations have continued generally in peace : two attempts only of any importance having been made to demolish their rights of conscience —one, under Queen Anne, which had been adopted by the Parliament, and which would have banished, in its operation, myriads of the best Christians in the islands, to the United States ; but death interrupted all the projects of the infidel and high church ministers then in power, for Anne died on the morning on which the act was to have commenced its operations, and the statute became of no force.

The other scheme was tried about 11 years since ; but during the century which had elapsed from Anne's death, the Dissenters had become so numerous and powerful, that the whole design was frustrated merely by the overwhelming multitude of petitions against the tyrannic measure introduced before the House of Lords, which in one day dashed all the haughty expectations of the Hierarchs into confusion ; and the menace of a remaining indefinite quantity of memorials to the same effect intimidated them so much that they expressed their utter astonishment at the numerical force, opulence, and learning of those whom they affected to despise ; and voluntarily admitting their impotency to effect their object, permitted the measure to be unanimously rejected.

The history of the Independents contains no very remarkable events since the toleration act was established ; their increase has been uniform, and they are now considerably more numerous than either of the other denominations. and it is generally understood

are multiplying with great rapidity. This body of Christians ranks the highest in the catalogue of benefactors to the human family; they have invariably been the ardent friends of the rights of conscience, stern enemies of civil and ecclesiastical despotism under any modification, and by their writings and efforts have contributed more to the illumination and advantage of mankind, than either, if not all, the other denominations united. To the English Dissenters, the world are under inconceivable obligations—to them we owe the flood of religious tracts, which are carrying the everlasting gospel, if a scriptural phrase may without the desecration of Jehovah be appropriated; “upon the wings of the wind”—before their labours exhibited by Carey, Marshman, Morrison, &c. Juggernaut with the Shasters will be burnt, and Confucius and Fo will be forgotten—and while the high-flying Episcopalianists have exerted all their energies with the Papists, to counteract, if not to demolish the institutions organized to disseminate the wonderful works of God in every language, the Bible Societies originally received from the Dissenters in England an impetus which nothing terrestrial will ever be able effectually to derange or obstruct. One circumstance connected with the annals of the Independents and Baptists furnishes abundant matter for scrutiny; by the principles of their constitution, they are not responsible to any extraneous jurisdiction, they have no formally established creed of faith, they have no authorised rules of discipline generally considered as obligatory, they have no standard for doctrine or practice, but the sacred Scriptures; and notwithstanding, no societies in the records of the Redeemer’s kingdom, have maintained or do combine so complete an identity both in theological sentiment and ecclesiastical regulations, as these churches which are only united by the general communion of saints. This unique fact admits of one solution only, their house is built upon the rock of ages; and evinces one truth beyond all contradiction, that persecution for

conscience' sake is as absurd and ineffectual, as it is iniquitous. At present, the essential principles of the English Dissenters predominate throughout the Protestant portion of Christendom, and these confederated states, with the South American Republics, having adopted them as the corner stone of all their political fabric, they may safely be declared inextinguishable, coeval with the existence of the human family, and equally predominant and extensive as the gospel of Christ; until during the Millenium, all sectarian distinctions will be absorbed by "the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace," and there shall be "one God, one faith, and one baptism." In England and Wales, the Independents now number nearly 1500 Congregations; many of them the largest bodies of worshippers in the Christian world; besides a continually increasing extension of their societies in Scotland and Ireland.

The Baptists.

It has already been remarked that those who maintain the peculiar tenets of this denomination, in all points assent to the Independents, except on the mode and subject of Baptism, and the qualification for an admission to the Lord's Supper. During the early period of their history, they were obliged to contend against persecution in all its horrors, but they persevered; and eventually obtained a share of the blessings of legal toleration in Great Britain. The prominent characteristic of the early Baptists was a decided opposition to all literature in their preachers; as an unavoidable consequence of which principle, they continued to maintain but a very minor proportion to the other sects. Since their ministers have blazoned forth in meridian splendor, and especially since their most honourable missionaries at Serampore have astounded the world with the exhibition of the most splendid human qualities, the Baptists have much enlarged their numbers; but their increase has followed, not from their adherence to their principles of exclusion, but chiefly from their departure from

the original dogmas of the bigots of the past generations.

The first Baptist church such as it is at present organized, appears in the history of Menno, nearly 20 years after the commencement of the Reformation ; but this society was so buried among the struggles for freedom and the Gospel in Holland, that the primary interesting remembrance on record is, the detail of their persecutions. From Holland they fled to England, and similar tortures were their allotment under Henry VIII. which they had suffered in the Netherlands. Even under the Protestant ascendancy while Edward was King ; his ministers destroyed the Anabaptists. Mary, with equal greediness exterminated all parties who did not dance before her idols ; and Elizabeth banished and burnt part of a congregation which in 1575 had been discovered in London. From England, they all subsequently migrated to Holland, and were originally all in communion with the first Independent churches established in that republic. The parties at length began to dispute respecting Baptism, and John Smith, their leader, conceiving that there was no person at that time duly qualified to administer the ordinance, to preserve the unbroken succession from John the forerunner of the Lord, baptized himself, and afterwards became the father of the general Baptists.

The Baptists are first noticed as a distinct sect in England about 1608; these sent one of their church to Holland to be baptized ; after his return, he baptized the minister and these two the whole church, consisting of nearly fifty members. The printed works in this controversy commenced in 1618, and during all the changes to which the Puritans were subjected, they experienced their full share of the tyranny and agonies exercised over them by the various despots of the 17th century. Three facts will forcibly illustrate the nature of the faithful sufferings for God to which all the Puritans were exposed ; and the almost miraculous interposition of divine Providence in behalf of the oppressed.

A congregation of seventh-day Baptists in London was disturbed, and the preacher John James, was accused by a despicable wretch of uttering treasonable words. Though it was solemnly sworn by those who were present that the words were never uttered, he was condemned. His wife presented a petition to Charles, who, on hearing the name of the petitioner, said, “O, Mr. James, he is a sweet gentleman.” But he afterwards so completely changed his tone, as to say, “the rogue shall be hanged.” For once the king remembered his promise, and James was sent to join the noble army of martyrs.

Ten men and two women, taken at a meeting near Aylesbury, were required to conform to the establishment, or abjure the realm. Declaring that they could do neither, they threw themselves on the mercy of the court: but as the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel, they were condemned to die. Aylesbury was thrown into the utmost alarm at the bloody sentence; for the rest of the Dissenters, who were the principal part of the inhabitants, expecting that their turn would come next, shut up their shops, and abandoned all attention to business. The son of one of the condemned persons rode up to London, where he laid the case before William Kiffin, who, though a Baptist, had some interest at court. When chancellor Hyde laid the case before his majesty, Charles seemed much surprised, and promised his royal pardon. But as the son was afraid his father would be pardoned after he was hanged, he begged for an immediate reprieve; which having obtained, he returned with sufficient speed to save their devoted lives.

Andrew Gifford was a Baptist minister of high repute in the west of England. At Bristol, the principal field of his labours, he was three times confined in Newgate, and once was hurried away to Gloucester. He had been preaching among the colliers in the forest of Kingswood, where his son, who was the sentinel, was prevented from giving notice of the approach of the informers, by being frozen to the ground. An in-

dependent minister, who, pursued by the same harpies, had been preaching in another part of the wood, lost his life in attempting to escape across a river. But the colliers hearing that Gifford was taken, rose in arms for his deliverance. This, however, he declined, saying, that he would rather leave his cause with God, who, he doubted not, would order all for the best. The justices gave him permission to visit his wife, and to settle his affairs. But the informers, as soon as he reached home, seized him and hurried him away to Gloucester, a distance of thirty miles. Thus it was ordered, that he entered the castle, just as the public chimes announced twelve o'clock at night. When the six months, for which his mittimus had condemned him, was expired, he desired to be dismissed. The keeper objected that it was unusual to open the gates at midnight, to which Gifford replied, that they were opened at that hour to let him in, and therefore why should they not let him out? He was discharged, and the next morning about six o'clock, arrived an express from London, with an order to confine him during life, from which hard fate he escaped by the relentless fury of his enemies, who hurried him away to prison at midnight.

In the British dominions, the Particular Baptists, at present number nearly 750 churches, and the General Baptists 129 congregations, but while the latter rather diminish, the increase of the former is rapid and continual. On the continent of Europe, it is impracticable to form any accurate opinion of them, though it is believed their number is small.

The Moravians.

"The unity of the evangelic brethren," the general name of all the churches and missions usually called Moravians, comprises three distinct classes of members. The first consists of those who belong to the ancient church of the brethren, which conceives itself to be superior in antiquity to all other protestants. In this class also are arranged all those, who, before they joined the unity, were of a communion

different from the two principal protestant churches, the Lutheran and the Reformed. The second class of persons who compose the grand body of the united brethren, consists of those who were educated in the Lutheran profession. The third is formed of such as have belonged to the reformed, or calvinistic protestant communion; who, as well as the Lutherans, are allowed to retain their former connexion. Hence, the title of united brethren designates a body composed of various materials; not amalgamated by a sacrifice of all distinctions in order to conform to any exclusive creeds, but compacted by the adhesive influence of a certain spirit diffused through the whole mass. "Living faith, vital religion, love for the mutual communion of christian brethren, zeal which animates by united efforts to propagate the religion of Jesus, bind together," say they, "these different classes of Christians." This communion must not, therefore, be supposed to resemble an individual, composed only of subordinate members, which have no separate existence; but should be compared to a church, formed of members who all retain their own perfect individuality, though associated by attachment to attain a common object.

The ministers of the unity receive ordination of different kinds, according to the countries in which they labour. They have, indeed, discovered the rare and arduous way of combining episcopacy with liberality, so that if a brother of the ancient episcopal church should be placed in a congregation where the minister has been ordained by presbyters, he will not hesitate to receive from him the Lord's Supper, or baptism for his children. Abhorrence of controversy is characteristic of the united brethren.

To cement the union of the brethren they convoke, at certain periods, synods, which are composed of the brethren who were entrusted, for a time, with the general direction; of those persons who are at present employed in the public service of the community; and of deputies sent by the different congregations. This

council watches over the state of religion, the conduct, education, doctrine, preaching, printing, and appointment to charges in the church.

The members of the church are divided, according to their sex and state of life, into different classes, called church bodies. Unmarried men, and those who are termed lads adolescent, remain in the house of the single brethren. Unmarried women, whether elder or younger, live apart in the single sisters' house. In the more numerous churches there are similar abodes for the widows and widowers. They are under the inspection of an elder of their own sex, and work for their support.

The marriage of the Moravians is always under the direction of the church. If the parties have previously made no choice the elders point out whom they judge suitable : but where an attachment has been formed, it is submitted to their final decision. When unable to determine in any other way, they seek to know the divine will by casting lots, which, however, are considered as deciding only what shall *not* be done.

This community adopts the practice of washing each other's feet once a year, previously to the celebration of the Lord's Supper. The women wash those of their own sex in a place apart ; and the men the feet of their brethren. The dying receive a benediction, and the imposition of the hands of the elders. In some of their meetings they give the kiss of peace, men to men, women to women.

"The crown of glory and diadem of beauty," which adorns the united brethren, is their zeal for the propagation of the Gospel among the heathen. In this noble career they have outstripped almost every other communion ; and though they are neither numerous, nor wealthy, nor powerful, they have accomplished what would have seemed to require the treasures of princes, or the power of sovereign states.

The united brethren are undoubtedly a part of the surviving chain of the two witnesses who have pro-

pheised in sackcloth from great antiquity. In the year 890 Bohemia and Moravia received the Gospel from two Greek monks, who are thought to have diffused pure principles, because, when the emperor Otto united Bohemia to his empire, and brought the Greek Christians under the see of Rome, they succeeded in obtaining for themselves a liturgy in their own tongue, and freedom from several popish corruptions. In the year 1176 the Waldenses arrived in Bohemia, and contributed to the preservation of pure religion. After having combined purity and zeal, with concealment from the rulers of the apostate church, for more than two hundred years, they were discovered, in the year 1391, by the imprudence of two of their preachers, and dispersed by the blast of persecution. Re-animated by the exhortations of one Gregory, in the fifteenth century, they attempted to combine in closer union, and took the name of brethren of the law of Christ. But, perceiving that they were thought to be one of the new orders of monks, they assumed their present title of *unitas fratrum*, the unity of the brethren.

While they were studying truth and purity in the very bosom of ignorance, corruption, and bigotry, the persecution which they endured, induced them to cast their eyes around for an assylum from the dragon's rage. Seeing no retreat within the sphere of their own knowledge, they sent four deputies to travel, and inquire, "if there were any where a living church free from errors and superstition, and regulated according to Christ's laws, with which they might unite." Failing in this research, they resolved that if God should in future raise up reformers of the church, they would make a common cause with them.

When Erasmus began to attract the attention of the Christian world, the united brethren sent their confession of faith to this distinguished scholar, who, with his characteristic indecision, professed to approve, but refused to espouse their cause.

The fame which Luther acquired as a reformer, induced the brethren to send to him John Hom and Michael Weiss. Luther, delighted to find that a people yet remained to co-operate with him, hailed them as brethren, and said, “ be ye apostles of the Bohemians, and I and mine will be apostles of the Germans.” When Calvin became acquainted with them, he also assured them of his fraternal affection. John Alasco is claimed by the united brethren as the first person who carried their principles and worship into England.

At Fulneck, in Moravia, a company of the brethren remained, among whom a considerable revival took place, in the year 1720, by means of Christian David. Availing himself of their new ardor and detachment from the world, and reflecting on the evils which they had suffered from the want of toleration, he applied to Nicholas Lewis count of Zinzendorff who allowed them to settle in his estates in Upper Lusatia. A number of families were conducted thither by Christian David, who formed their new settlement, which they called Hennhutt, or the Lord’s Watch.

Count Zinzendorff, after a time, joined their communion, which, when other protestants were contenting themselves with their own privileges, employed its force for the conversion of the heathen.

Since the death of Zinzendorff, in 1760, the Moravians, with regard to numbers, in Europe, have been nearly stationary—their increase, if any, has been imperceptible; but they have been crowned with great success in their efforts to disseminate the Gospel among the aboriginal Greenlanders, the West India slaves, and the tribes of Caffraria. Their theological system is not very luminous or definite; as they avoid all reference to the grand controverted points in theology. Of their numbers, it is not easy to make any calculation; in England, they have only sixteen congregations.

The Quakers.

The society of Friends, as they designate themselves, originated during the period of the civil commotions in England, excited by the despotic acts of Charles I. To counteract the effects of the numberless misrepresentations in various authors concerning their body, they issued in 1800, a summary of their history, doctrine, and discipline, from which, the following narrative has chiefly been compiled. During the period referred to, in 1649 and 1650, the unsettled state of affairs admitted irregularities even in the forms of law, and the administration of justice, which in a composed state of society would not have been tolerated. Persecution indubitably was armed to arrest the progress of the primitive Quakers; but the parties framed a plausible excuse for their conduct, from the gross imprudencies of Fox and his disciples. It is certain, that under the pretext, however sincere may have been the delusion, of declaring the truth according to the light given to them, they entered the places of worship of the other denominations, and occasioned great confusion. This exposed them to the operation of the civil law for the protection and peace of public worship; and had the magistrates merely enforced the prservation of order, no censure could have attached to them; but the doctrine of religious toleration, was at that period, a speculative notion, held by the enlightened Puritans only, which had not attained its controul and influence over the whole community; and consequently the Quakers experienced sufferings by fines, scourging, and imprisonment.

“ George Fox, was one of the first of our friends who was imprisoned. He was confined at Nottingham in the year 1649, for having publicly opposed a preacher, who had asserted that the more sure word of prophecy, mentioned 2 Pet. i. 19, was the Scripture; George Fox declaring that it was the Holy Spirit; and in the following year, being brought before two justices in Derbyshire, one of them scoffing

at George Fox, for having bidden him and those about him to tremble at the word of the Lord, gave to our predecessor the name of *Quakers*; an appellation which soon became, and hath remained our most usual denomination; but they themselves adopted, and have transmitted to us, the endearing appellation of *Friends*.

Persecution, however, continued; but, when Charles II. on the prospect of his restoration, issued from Breda, amongst other things, his declaration for liberty of conscience, it might well have been expected that Friends would be permitted to exercise their religion without molestation. Yet during this reign they not only were harrassed with the oath of allegiance, which in common with all oaths, they scrupled to take, and by which they often incurred tedious imprisonment, and not unfrequently premunire; but new laws were made, by which even their meetings for worship subjected them to punishment."

Their meeting-house, at Horsley-down, near London, was by an order of council, in the year 1670, pulled down; but they assembled on the ruins. They were insulted and knocked down. One of them, as he lay bleeding on the ground, was so wounded in the head, that the brain was visible. When the soldiers were asked how they could behave so cruelly, they replied, "if you knew our orders, you would say we were merciful."

When the conventicle act was in force, "the behaviour of the Quakers, says Burnet, had something in it that looked bold. They met at the same place and hour, as before. None of them would go out of the way, but when they were seized they went all to prison together, where they stayed without petitioning for release, and when discharged they refused to pay any fees. As soon as liberated, they returned to their meetings again, and when they found the place shut up by the magistrates, they assembled before the doors. Thus they carried their point, for the government grew weary of them, and were glad to let them alone."

The imprisonments were long, often terminating only with the life of the prisoner. In this reign also, the crowds shut up together, increased in many places the common sufferings of confinement; which in some were also augmented by the violent tempers of magistrates, or by the barbarity of jailors. The fines imposed by the new laws were exacted with a rigour that generally oppressed the sufferer, and sometimes left him nearly destitute of household goods; and several families experienced a separation of the near connections of life, by the execution of that law which subjected our friends to banishment.

James II. to favour the religion to which he was attached, suspended the operation of the penal laws against dissenters. Our Friends had their share in the benefit arising from this measure; but it was not until the reign of king William, that they obtained some degree of legal protection.

The doctrines of the Quakers are thus generally stated: "We agree with other professors of the christian name, in the belief of one eternal God, the Creator and preserver of the universe; and in Jesus Christ his son, the Messiah, and Mediator of the new covenant.

When we speak of the gracious display of the love of God to mankind in the miraculous conception, birth, life, miracles, death, resurrection, and ascension of our Saviour, we prefer the use of such terms as we find in scripture; and contented with that knowledge which divine wisdom hath seen meet to reveal, we attempt not to explain those mysteries which remain under the veil; nevertheless, we acknowledge and assert the divinity of Christ, who is the wisdom and power of God unto salvation.

To Christ alone we give the title of the Word of God, and not to the scriptures; although we highly esteem these sacred writings, in subordination to the spirit, from which they were given forth; and we hold, with the Apostle Paul, that they are able to make wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Jesus Christ.

We reverence those most excellent precepts which are recorded in scripture to have been delivered by our great Lord; and we firmly believe that they are practicable, and binding on every christian: and that in the life to come, every man will be rewarded according to his works. And further it is our belief, that, in order to enable mankind to put in practice these sacred precepts, many of which are contradictory to the unregenerate will of man, every man coming into the world, is endued with a measure of the light, grace, or good spirit of Christ; by which, as it is attended to, he is enabled to distinguish good from evil, and to correct the disorderly passions and corrupt propensities of his nature which mere reason is altogether insufficient to overcome. For all that belongs to man is fallible, and within the reach of temptation; but this divine grace, which comes by him who hath overcome the world, is to those who humbly and sincerely seek it, an all-sufficient and present help in time of need. By this, the snares of the enemy are detected, his allurements avoided, and deliverance is experienced through faith in its effectual operation; whereby the soul is translated out of the kingdom of darkness, and from under the power of Satan, into the marvellous light and kingdom of the Son of God."

The Friends by their inflexible adhesion to their principles, obtained from the British government, an exemption which no other denomination in England enjoys, the celebration of their marriages without the Episcopalian ceremonial. To them belong the undivided praise, of being the only community, who in their associated capacity have practically exemplified the peculiar philanthropy of the Gospel of Christ, upon all the questions originating in the three grand pestilences of the human family; national wars; forensic litigation; and involuntary perpetual servitude. Many individuals have successively appeared who united in all their theories; but with the exception of a small modern division of the German Baptists and

Moravians ; it is believed that the Quakers alone, as a society, merit the imperishable eulogy, which belongs to an unceasing combination of effort to impede the ravages of general war, to extirpate the ebullitions of private discord, and to destroy the miseries engendered by kidnapping and slavery. In these points of view, the Friends are the only living professors of Christianity who bear a striking similitude to the millenial philanthropists. How long shall it be, ere a continual display of the most abhorrent spirit of cruelty, revenge and injustice, shall be proscribed and condemned as totally antichristian ?

Upon this topic, the address may be made to almost all other Christians, “ Dost thou approve the Friends’ opinions of the incurable iniquity of Negro bondage, the anti-evangelical nature of legal disputations, and the unmeasurable guilt of wholesale murder by the armed myrmidons of tyrants in the field of battle ? then—“ Go thou and do likewise.”

The Methodists.

This Society which ranks the third in number of all the larger denominations of Christians who dissent from the Episcopalian hierarchy, appeared in 1729, having originated in a meeting held by the Wesleys, Whitfield, Morgan, Ingham, Hervey, and others, in the first place to enlarge their knowledge of the scriptures, and subsequently to improve their own characters by religious conversation and other devotional exercises. The commencement of the Methodists as a distinct body may be properly imputed to the results of George Whitfield’s preaching in the open air : excluded from all access to the episcopal churches, he determined “ to do the service of his Creator, who had a mountain for his pulpit, and the heavens for his sounding board, and who sent his servants into the highways and hedges.”

The society primarily assembled in Fetter lane, but several years elapsed before the increase of their numbers induced John Wesley to summon the first Conference. In the British dominions are two clas-

ses of Methodists ; those who were disciples of George Whitfield, denominated Calvinistic, but these are gradually declining as a distinct body, and are now amalgamating with the independents ; the others, and those to whom the appellation is generally given, are the followers of John Wesley. During several years the early Methodists were all united in one body ; they finally separated, in consequence of doctrinal disputations respecting the five points already stated—Whitfield adhering to the Calvinistic, and Wesley to the Arminian interpretation.

The grand points of distinction between the Methodists and the other denominations are their theological tenets ; their government and discipline. On the former topics, in all that is essential they coincide with all the other bodies of Christians : respecting the latter, during the life of John Wesley, the Methodist societies were the popery of Protestantism. The extinction of nearly all the rights of the members, and the unlimited sway of the preachers have already produced a division both in England and the United States ; which must unavoidably extend, unless the irresponsible aristocracy of the Conferences be removed. But notwithstanding this defect ; to the Methodists is the world indebted for the grand impetus impressed upon the means adopted by the church of God to evangelize mankind. They have also used the typographic art with great sectarian effect ; and it must be regretted, that their measures tend, even in diffusing intelligence, to circumscribe the boundaries of its extent. More peculiarly than any other society, the Friends alone excepted, have they long fostered a bigoted spirit, which is at length beginning to disappear ; but the most curious facts in the history of the founders of the Methodist Societies are, that while they professed to subscribe to the truth of the thirty-nine Articles of the English establishment, they were always opposing them in the pulpit and by the press ; while they professed to believe in the divine right

of episcopacy, they became the most alienated Dissenters; and while they proclaimed their fellowship for all "who desire to flee from the wrath to come," they have organized a sect emphatically distinguished for their dominant proselytism, and their indiscriminate opposition to all who will not admit that Wesley and Fletcher were infallible oracles. This temper however, is gradually metiorating; and in proportion as their ministers of the sanctuary become illuminated, will indubitably be banished from among them. They continue to augment in numbers, learning and usefulness, and now number in both hemispheres upwards of more than half a million of members in their churches. 2

The minor denominations have been nearly included in this review—they are either Calvinists or Arminians; Trinitarians or Humanitarians; Pedobaptists, or Antipedobaptists; in theology; and Episcopalian, Presbyterians or Congregationalists in government and discipline. One body might have been noticed with more distinctness, the *Swedenborgians*; on account of their essential differences, but as the reveries of their founder are rapidly hastening to oblivion; it was superfluous to revive the remembrance of the effusions of delirium, either in the delusions of their author, or the unaccountable correspondences of his whimsical disciples.

In thus briefly narrating the principal associations of existing Christians; we are induced to admire those wondrous dispensations of divine Providence which has even made the strife of sectarians conduce to the extension of his Gospel, and through the restraints of persecution, excited a zeal for the truth, with an amplitude of intelligence and sanctity, which has been augmenting with accelerated force during the last century, until the soberness of christian exertion, has assumed all the noble qualities of crusading enthusiasm, without the smallest admixture of its desolating evils.

This review of the characteristics of the modern sects should impress upon us one important truth; the absolute necessity of evangelical charity. Among the Christians, who have attracted our regards, of all the principle denominations, which believe the "truth as it is in Jesus;" we discover the "lights of the world, and the salt of the earth." Bigotry, prejudice and error, would seize the hallowed roll in which are recorded the names of the departed dignitaries; and erase all those who had not pronounced their party Shibboleth; and of course under their combined and amplified operation; scarcely an individual, according to human estimate, would escape the tremendous blottings, to be honoured as a resident in paradise. The present general co-operation to reform the world, has demolished the barriers which formerly existed to the harmony of Christians. One of the most illustrious triumphs of gospel philanthropy was lately celebrated. Jay, an Independent, preached to the Baptist Missionary Society, in a Methodist place of worship in London; thus branding with utter contempt, and dooming to the same fire, all the thorns of a sectarian proselyting spirit, and all the chaff of bigoted ignorance.

But when we consider that all the party strife of the Missionaries in their own natal soil, is absorbed in an overflowing solicitude to en'lighten the minds and affect the consciences of the benighted Heathen perishing in gloom before their eyes; we are bound to rejoice, that the Episcopalian, and the Congregationalist, and the Moravian, and the Baptist and the Methodist all march in the same ranks, fight under the same banners, and remembering the might and the number of their idolatrous enemies, almost forget that they ever admitted a sentiment or sensation of discord; only anticipating that glorious period when every minor distinction having been removed, all the "righteous shall shine like the sun in the kingdom of our Father." May we cultivate that temper on earth, and realize this enjoyment in heaven, for ever and ever! Amen.

CHRISTIANITY IN THE UNITED STATES.

The landing of the Puritans at Plymouth, combines in its results, the most important and eventful occurrence in civil or ecclesiastical history, subsequent to the Reformation. It is the primary, or in connection with the other republics north of the Potomac, the only existing instance of a nation commencing their social compact with pure and undefiled religion; and animated to the erection of a political edifice from their inextinguishable attachment to religious freedom. The providence of God, which triumphed over the persecutors of his servants, by rendering their rage the means of establishing the oppressed Puritans in a land which should in future become an asylum for the persecuted, demands our grateful adoration. The rapid advancement of the United States in the comforts of civilized life, and the absence of all exclusive establishments of religion, with the attendant prosperity of different communions, render this country so inviting to all who are oppressed for their dissent from a dominant religion, as either to preclude the attempt to re-kindle the flames of persecution, or to mock their fury, by snatching from their rage, all who were intended to feed the fires.

The first American colonists were members of a society of christians in the north of England, who, in the year 1602, entered into a covenant with each other to study the scriptures as the only rule of religion, and to follow this sacred light, rejecting all human inventions, and adopting every institution of the divine word. But finding that it was impossible to pursue with success in their own country, a design

which was so hateful to the reigning powers, they removed to Leyden, in Holland, within about seven or eight years after the first formation of their church. In this place of voluntary exile they enjoyed great privileges and were highly respected; for the magistrates once said to the Walloons, who appeared before them for redress against their brethren, "these English have lived now ten years among us, and we have never had an accusation against any one of them, whereas your quarrels are continual."

But this English church was wounded with the manner in which the Sabbath was kept, or rather was profaned in Holland, against which they found all their remonstrances ineffectual. They perceived also that their children were incorporating with the Dutch families, or else were drawn away by the evil examples of the country. For these reasons they determined to pursue their original design of planting a scriptural church in the world, by removing to America. They agreed that the younger part of the society should go first, while Mr. John Robinson, the pastor, remained with the elder and major part till it was judged proper for them to follow. On a day of fasting and prayer, to implore the divine blessing on their great undertaking, Mr. Robinson, preached to them from Ezra viii. 22: "then I proclaimed a fast there, that we might afflict ourselves before our God, to seek of him a right way for us and for our little ones, and for all our substance." The voyagers then took leave of the land which had kindly received them "as strangers and sojourners;" and on July 2, 1620, parted with their brethren at Delft haven. Their beloved pastor having, like Paul, knelt down on the seashore, and poured out his prayers to God for them, they embraced, and wept in each other's arms, till the wind and tide compelled them to rend themselves asunder, leaving the Dutch, who were spectators of the scene, drowned in tears of sympathy. The vessels which they hired for the voyage, first touched at Southampton, to join those who were coming from

London to accompany them in their expedition. They encountered various hardships and dangers on the seas ; and instead of arriving at Hudson's river, as they intended, they were, by the treacherous compact of the captain with some Dutchmen, who wished to reserve that spot for themselves, conducted to cape Cod, which however the kind providence of God rendered the means of preserving them from the Indians by whom they had otherwise been murdered.

From the cultivated fields of Europe the first colony of a hundred persons arrived the ninth of November, in the year 1620, on the shores of the vast deserts of America, where they beheld a most alarming contrast of every thing which had been familiar and dear to them in their native country. But they had learned, from their pious education, to value the pure ordinances of the Gospel as the first blessings on earth, and to abhor a false and superstitious religion, with impositions on conscience, as the greatest evil on this side of hell. They, therefore, determined to endure the miseries of a desert as lighter than the moral ills of a depraved society, and to encounter the naked savages, whom they less dreaded than the cultivated heathens, who, clothed with the robes of office, had for years abused the forms of law to deprive them of all that was dearest to them in life. The Indians also had been much diminished by sickness before the arrival of the colony, so that those who were left were less formidable to the English, who, after examining the coast, founded, on the twenty-fifth of December, in the year 1620, the town of Plymouth, of which John Carver was made governor.

The first settlers endured vast sufferings from the climate, famine, disease, and the hostile neighbourhood of the Indians. But the accelerated course of oppression drove across the Atlantic fresh bands of emigrants, who sought to share with their brethren the quiet enjoyment of civil rights and religious privileges. The colony was much strengthened. In

one summer fifteen hundred persons landed in the new world, many of whom were possessed of such property as enabled them to add greatly to the comforts of the new settlement. What language can do justice to the delightful affections with which these confessors embraced each other at such an immense distance from their common country, when to the tie of countrymen was added the attachment of fellow-christians and fellow-sufferers in the best of causes ; while the one party hailed the arrival of brethren, and the other smiled to behold Englishmen and christian brethren in the remote desarts which were the native haunts of idolatrous Indians ? As religion was the grand object of their emigration, they first laboured to set up the tabernacle of God, and to establish that mode of worship and discipline which appeared to them exactly conformed to the divine word, and calculated to promote the interests of vital religion. In a few years many congregational churches were formed, and supplied with pastors. For during twelve years of Laud's administration in England, persons of all ranks, ministers and their congregations, "kept sometimes dropping, sometimes flocking into New England."

As the original hives were overstocked, fresh swarms took flight for other spots, where they built new towns and formed additional churches. When, however, the English hierarchy was overthrown, the causes of emigration were removed, and there were not only few accessions to the colonies, but several ministers returned to labour in England. But to such extent had the spirit of emigration risen among the persecuted puritans, that seventy-seven ministers left Great Britain to plant churches in America. In twenty-seven years from the first plantation of the colonies, forty three churches were formed, and in an equal number of succeeding years, eighty churches more rose into existence.

But nothing is so permanently pure, in this state, that it cannot be deteriorated : and even the puritans

who fled from persecution in Europe, could exhibit the same spirit in New-England. Whatever may be alleged in favour of some instances of coercion respecting the practice of a few of the early Quakers; nothing can justify their persecution of the Friends for their principles; and the parties are more censurable for their hardships displayed to the Baptists; yet these aberrations from the Gospel are absorbed in the cruelties exhibited for the punishment of that supposition crime, *witchcraft*. It is but due, however, to our departed ancestors, to record their humiliation, penitence, and bitterness which they subsequently avowed for these outrages.

After recapitulating those sorrowful events, they thus acknowledge their errors and guilt: “We do therefore signify our deep sense of, and sorrow for, our errors in acting on such evidence; we pray that we may be considered candidly and aright, by the living sufferers, as being then under the power of a strong and general delusion. They asked pardon for having brought the guilt of innocent blood on the land.”

The grand controversy which agitated the churches of New-England was that respecting the baptism of the children of parents not in communion with the church; which was eventually compromised by the “half-way covenant;” and to which may probably be imputed the alteration of the Puritan character from that period, and the admixture of the church and the world in all subsequent regulation of purely ecclesiastical concerns. With the extension of their settlements, an equal enlargement of their churches has been realized, so that the Congregationalists constitute a very large majority of the population of all the eastern states; Rhode Island alone, in which the Baptists are most numerous, forming the only exception.

Maryland was also peopled from religious motives. The Irish Roman Catholics who experienced every possible indignity, fled for refuge to the shores of the

Chesapeake ; and there developed the astonishing contrast to all the other adherents of the popedom ; an aversion from persecution for imputed “ heretical depravity.”

Pennsylvania was procured from the British government by William Penn, and by him transformed into an asylum for the Quakers. Civil and religious liberty were the corner stones of his government ; and there all classes of christians speedily found a secure retreat from molestation. The other states having been originally occupied by commercial adventurers, or in consequence of the necessary settlement of additional lands by the augmenting population, or by emigrants from Europe are not included within this review.

The following summary will exhibit the prominent circumstances connected with our ecclesiastical history.

Revivals of the church.—The religion as well as the soil of America, has frequently displayed an almost miraculous transition from the barrenness of a polar winter, to the delights of Paradise. As early as the year 1718, the church at Northampton enjoyed a considerable revival, under the ministry of Mr. Stoddard, who laboured in the Gospel with such a spirit as the Redeemer loves to bless. Three years after, such effects attended the preaching of Mr. Whiting, at Windham, in Connecticut, that the church kept a day of thanksgiving, when a sermon was preached, from which it appears, that in six months upwards of eighty persons, who had been careless or profane, were joined to the church. “The neighbourhood rings of it,” says the preacher, “while the contiguous churches exclaim, what hath God wrought? But why should this spot only be wet with the dew of heaven, and the surrounding country remain dry and barren?”

Freehold, in New Jersey, was the scene of another remarkable triumph of religion. The gospel had been introduced here by Walter Ker, who was driven

from Scotland, under sentence of perpetual banishment, by the iron sceptre of James the Second. After a long life of more successful labours, than it is probable he would ever have enjoyed in his native country, he entered into his rest. His charge became in a few years unhappily notorious for an indecent contempt of religion and morals. Mr. John Tennant, a pious youth, having consented to preach to them for a season, was so shocked with their impiety, that he told his brother, he repented of having engaged to labour among a people whom heaven seemed to have abandoned. But the labours of a month, produced such a change, that he then said, "I would beg my bread to enable me to realize the hopes I have formed." Multitudes of both sexes confessed with tears their former iniquities; and those who remained unchanged, were so ashamed of being thrown into a disgraceful minority, that they gladly retreated from notice.

Two years after his death, the town of Northampton was distinguished by a most remarkable blessing from heaven. The American custom of commencing the Sabbath on Saturday evening, and ending it at six o'clock the following day, was unhappily abused by devoting the remaining hours to parties of pleasure, which completely obliterated the good effects of the preceding solemnities. But towards the end of the year 1733, the profane, haughty, obstinate, spirit of the young, began to be exchanged for a sober, humble mind, flexible to the voice of religious instruction and faithful admonition. They complied with the first recommendation of Mr. Edwards, to snatch their Sabbath evening from worldly pleasures, and devote them to private or social religion.

A village, about three miles from Northampton, first displayed the symptoms of extraordinary solicitude for eternity. The death of a young man and woman, the latter of whom devoted her last moments to persuade others to seek the same felicity which she enjoyed, contributed, together with the funeral

sermons preached on the occasion, to diffuse through the younger part of the town a predominant impression of religion. The peculiar and affecting circumstances which attended the death of an elderly person, produced similar effects on the aged.

Several remarkable instances of conversion now increased and extended the general impression of religion on the inhabitants of the town. One young woman, who had been the principal leader in those practices which had before injured the youth and grieved the minister, came to Mr. Edwards to inform him of a change, which he was at first averse to believe, fearing lest it should serve to encourage others in her former sins. His incredulity was, however, vanquished by the happy evidences which she gave of a divine influence on her heart, and his fears were put to shame by the effects produced on the minds of others, who, convinced that it was of God, fled to seek from him the same mercy. From this time, religion, regarded as the one thing needful, became the only subject of conversation through the whole town; and business was pursued as a religious duty, though in neighbouring places it was reported that the people of Northampton neglected every thing but their souls. Scarcely a person was to be found, old or young, rich or poor, who was not deeply concerned for his salvation, while the greatest opposers became as serious as those whom they had most derided. For several months, each day added to the number of the new converts, so that every house was filled with joy over a child or a parent, such as that which angels feel over a sinner that repenteth. The face of the whole town was changed; seriousness, or benevolent affection and sacred joy, sat on every countenance; places of public amusement were abandoned for the minister's house, where eager inquiries were made concerning the true sources of consolation and the discriminating differences of genuine and false religion. The assemblies of the church were crowded with worshippers, whose

praises are said to have been so much like those of heaven and their attention to the divine word so tremblingly alive, that the most stupid spectator would have been compelled to exclaim “how dreadful is this place, for God is here, and I knew it not; surely this is no other than the house of God, and the gate of heaven.”

By these events, the way was prepared for the reception of Whitfield in America. He came to Boston in September, 1740, and preached his first sermon to two or three thousand persons. The attraction of his manner was such, that, though he declared the most unwelcome truths, and detected every artifice of the depraved heart, the number of his hearers obliged him to preach in the open air. The good ministers who had invited him, saw their most sanguine hopes exceeded in the effects of his ministry on the hearts of thousands.

On his departure, an American Whitfield was raised up to succeed him. Gilbert Tennant came to Boston and produced similar effects by apparently opposite means. With no charms of oratory in language, or in action, but grave and serious as death, he thundered and lightened, surrounding the consciences of sinners with the terrors of the broken law. During the winter of 1740, which he spent in Boston, Mr. Cooper said upwards of six hundred persons came to him under concern for their salvation, and Mr. Webb declared that more than a thousand came to him in the same space of time. William Tennant, also, and other ministers itinerated through different parts of New England with great success.

On Whitfield's second visit to New England, he experienced much opposition. Harvard and Yale colleges denounced him. The press teemed with hostile pamphlets, and ministers formed associations against him. A contemporary ecclesiastical historian of America says, however, “Whitefield came with an extraordinary spirit of meekness and benevolence, ingenuously acknowledging the impropriety of some

of his expressions and censures, but defending his conduct by the highest authority and examples. As he was invited to preach a lecture at six o'clock in the morning he was constantly attended at that early hour by upwards of two thousand hearers."

A law enacted in Connecticut to prohibit itinerant preachers, kindled the flames of persecution; for several were imprisoned for this new crime, and Mr. Samuel Finlay, a minister of the first respectability, and afterwards President of Nassau Hall College, was, for preaching to a presbyterian congregation at New-Haven, sent out of the colony as a vagrant. This infringement on their liberties increased their aversion to those ministers who sanctioned the law, and induced their hearers to form many separate congregations.

In Virginia, the seat of episcopacy, a similar revival was afforded to the church. A principal instrument in the work was Davies, afterwards President of the same college. Towards the end of the year 1740, a few persons became, by reading the divines of the preceding century, exceedingly solicitous for their eternal welfare. Mr. Samuel Morris, of Hanover co. laboured to excite the same solicitude in others, first by private conversation, and afterwards by reading to the more seriously disposed, Luther on the Galatians, with some of the works of Bunyan. A young gentleman of Scotland, having a volume of sermons taken from the lips of Whitefield, at Glasgow, read them at these meetings with such effect, that many perceived their guilt and danger, and wept aloud. They were now obliged to build a reading house to accommodate the crowds which attended, and were soon called upon by the government to declare to what denomination of dissenters they belonged. They knew not what answer to give, as they did not agree with quakers, almost the only sect they knew; till, recollecting that Luther's works had first impressed them, they called themselves Lutherans. As soon as their situation was known in the Presbyterian

states, William Robinson was sent to visit the southern colonies. The new societies were inexpressibly astonished to hear him pour forth from the fulness of his heart, the exact sentiments which they had derived from books, while they were delighted to find that he had in his own experience, a key to the most secret emotions of their souls. Mr. Robinson was equally surprised at the effects produced on the original societies, as well as on the increasing numbers whose curiosity was attracted by the general report; but, after correcting some things in their worship, and introducing prayer as well as singing, he left them to a succession of evangelical labourers.

Alarmed at the indications of a gathering storm, and apprehensive of being sent out of the colony, they applied, in 1745, to the synod of New York for advice and assistance. The assembly sent an address to the governor, by Mr. Tennant and Mr. Finlay, who were favourably received, and contributed not only to dispel the threatening cloud, but by preaching and administering the Lord's Supper to increase the impressions of religion. Virginia was at last visited by Whitefield, who, though accused of seeking popularity in large towns, was hunting for sinners, as he termed it, in the woods of the southern colonies. At length Mr. Davies, after preaching among them for some weeks, was, in 1748, ordained their pastor. He encountered much opposition and ridicule, as the leader of the new lights; but saw many of the opposers first drawn by curiosity, then fixed by attachment, till fifty new families were added to their original number. In seven years after his ordination he had three hundred communicants. He preached at seven different places, was successful in the conversion of many negroes, and saw with delight the same blessings diffused in other parts of Virginia, North Carolina, and Maryland.

So repeated and powerful were the displays of divine influence accompanying the Gospel in America, during this period, that many believed they saw the

dawn of the day of final glory to the church on earth. The church of Christ has scarcely ever seen in any country a period of greater prosperity than America enjoyed at this time, whether for extraordinary triumphs of religion among thoughtless multitudes, for eminence of talents and graces in the hearts of christians and divines, or for valuable publications in the first departments of sacred literature.

In latter periods, these revivals of the work of grace, have been still more extensive, general, and frequent, in various districts of the Union; and our modern religious publications, through redeeming mercy, have been for several years past considerably occupied with the remarkable details connected with the glorious effects of revealed truth, and the preaching of the Gospel of Christ throughout our land.

Literature.—No circumstance involves more eulogy upon the primitive refugees from European despotism and persecution, than their early attempts to establish a collegiate course of education. Within ten years from their first debarkation at Cape Cod; the general court, granted a donation from the public revenue, of 400 pounds, for the erection of a college; which, if all the circumstances connected with it be reviewed, was a prodigious sum. Some time after, John Harvard, one of the ministers, died, and bequeathed his estate and library for the same object. Other public and private benefactions augmented the funds, and Theophilus Gale, author of the famous work, entitled the court of the Gentiles, presented to them his library, an invaluable accession to their literary property—thus, in 1640, before twenty years had elapsed; the formerly uncultivated barrens of the Atlantic coast, were adorned with a splendid institution, which, in connection with the printing-office that commenced its operations nearly at the same era, like the sun in his progress to the meridian, continued to emit with accelerating force the rays of truth, until the triumphs of Puritanism were reverber-

ated in the declaration of Independence. Prior to the Revolution several other literary institutions had attained considerable eminence, and had become extensively useful. Yale college was founded about the commencement of the eighteenth century—William and Mary in Virginia at the same period—Nassau Hall in 1746—and Dartmouth in 1769.

Synods.—These met in New England on several occasions ; the first in 1637, to counteract Antinomianism ; the second in 1646, which established the *platform* of church government ; the third in 1657, which decided upon the subjects of baptism, and the association of churches ; and a fourth in 1680, called the *Reforming Synod* ; as the object was, if possible, to restrain the various departures from christian purity which the colony deplored. Their efforts were of vast influence ; and as no ecclesiastical body was ever collected from nobler motives or for a superior design, so no similar assembly in the annals of the church, was ever more successful in consummating their purpose. It must be subjoined that the established doctrines of the Puritans were Calvinistic, and their discipline and order Independent or Congregational. As the Synods of the Lutherans, Reformed Dutch, and Presbyterian denominations are standing bodies, held at stated periods, it is unnecessary to notice proceedings which are almost invariably uniform.

Distinctions.—As the principal sects have already been described in their prominent characteristics ; it is requisite only to display the existing differences between the American and European christians of the same denomination.

The *Congregationalists* of New England, especially in Connecticut, differ from the primitive and present foreign Independents in one point only ; the consociation of churches. This subject affords four points of consideration—the Independents of the original class allow their ministers to associate for mutual fellowship, and to devise measures to spread the gospel, but they possess no power in that capacity to interfere

in the affairs of the churches, or to authorize candidates for the ministry to preach, or in any measure to legislate for the people of their charge; as they do not admit of any formal compact of churches. The Baptist churches are united in assemblies of delegated messengers, but their occasional associations have not the smallest portion of ecclesiastical authority—the Presbyterians have regularly organized bodies composed of every ordained minister, and an elder from each congregation, who have a legislative authority over all the churches within a certain district, whether it be a Presbytery or Synod, or by representation in the General Assembly; these are clothed with great ecclesiastical powers—the Methodist ministers regularly meet in conference, and possess unlimited controul over all the concerns of the church, but exclude all interference on the part of the members in their societies—but the Congregationalists of New England have adopted a plan which is different from either of them; their churches are consociated like the Baptists, but the ministers only assemble like the Independents and Methodists; and although they disavow all interference in the internal affairs of churches, yet they hold the right to withhold their communion in case of heresy or disorder on the part of any particular church by which the fellowship of christians is dissolved. To them also is committed the examination and introduction of candidates to the office of the ministry: so that the present system of American Congregationalism is neither the perfect democracy of the Independents and Baptists, nor the aristocratic authority of the Presbyterians and Methodists: and it may be safely assumed, that the Congregational, including the Baptist ecclesiastical order and discipline in their spirit and purity, approximate nearer to apostolic and primitive forms than those adopted by any other denominations of christians.

The *Presbyterian* and the *Reformed Dutch* churches adhere to the same standards as their European

brethren. The former to the Westminster Assembly's Confession and constitution; the latter to the articles and canons of the Synod of Dort.

The German *Lutherans* and *Calvinists* are also inflexibly attached to their ancient confession and catechisms and order.

The Baptists are identical in doctrine and government with their foreign members.

The Quakers preserve a uniformity and similarity of character, tenets and discipline with their British Friends.

The American Methodists continue generally in the faith, order, and practice transmitted to them after the revolutionary war, by John Wesley: the difference between them and the Europeans is merely external. In Britain, the conference performs some of those duties which are here delegated to the Bishops—but the irresponsible power to appoint the stations of all the preachers in the connection virtually gives to the episcopate, the uncontrouled direction of all the affairs in their church; the conference being in fact, where every minister depends upon the Bishop for his comfort, merely assemblies for form, convenience, and friendly intercourse. The divisions among the Methodists upon the questions connected with government are not of sufficient importance to demand distinct notice.

The *Episcopalians* universally subscribe the same doctrinal calvinistic articles; generally it is believed, unite in the Arminian interpretation of them; with trifling verbal alterations use the same liturgical order; and are governed by the same canons, as far as their varied relations as residents of different countries admit. It is difficult to discover any discrepancy except in their external administration. The right of patronage in this union being unknown, leaves to each congregation the choice of its Rector; and the power which in England is vested in the king, is here partially exercised by diocesan and general conventions. It must therefore be admitted,

that as all the most corrupt and papistical parts of the English episcopacy, are in these states necessarily excluded ; the comparative want of increase which characterises this denomination, must be imputed to other causes, than the truth of their standard articles, or the sanctity of some of their devotional forms.

The *Papists* in the United States are in general very exactly assimilated to the European adherents of the popedom ; except that they cannot so lucidly develope the characteristics of the Apostacy. They exhibit the same idolatrous ignorance and almost incurable aversion from the truth ; and possess similar malignity and ferocity against all the denominations of Protestants.

The present state of the different sects.—In point of numbers, it is understood ; that the Congregationalists combine the largest proportion of members ; between the Baptists and the various divisions of Presbyterians, including the Reformed Dutch churches, it is difficult to decide, as the latter have not minutely computed their communicants ; the Methodists follow, and are separated only by a very small distance. Each of these four denominations is in a very flourishing condition—their increase in every grace and good word and work, and numbers, is incessant—they are all zealously employed in propagating the knowledge of Christ and Him crucified, in every accessible part of the union, among the Indian tribes, and in various countries of the idolaters ; and an increasing spirit of co-operation in this blessed work among these different christians strongly marks the present period ; and delightfully prognosticates the prosperity of the Republic as well as of the Redeemer's kingdom.

The society of Friends and the Episcopalians, it is believed, if they augment at all, move forward with slow progression ; and not from the convictions of truth, or the result of exertion ; but merely as a consequence of the continual rapidity with which our population multiplies and is dispersed.

Who can remember the prominent events of our history without equal astonishment and gratitude? Scarcely 200 years have elapsed, since the American wilds furnished a refuge for the persecuted Puritans—the spirit of the Reformation then was dying—nevertheless, the Lord inspired the only terrestrial band of christians, who completely understood the nature of evangelical truth and privileges, and who were resolved to adhere to them; to escape into a region, where, under his care, “the little one might become a thousand and the small one a strong nation: the Lord has hastened it in his time.” One mode exists, by which we may practically exemplify our thankfulness to the great governor of the universe—an adhesion to our fundamental principles, and the adoption of every evangelical and pacific method to disseminate them throughout the world. We formally deny the rectitude of all religious intolerance and persecution, never admit their irruptions—we professedly abominate all offensive wars, never provoke national assault—and we declare that all men are possessed of inalienable civil immunities, let us cease to abrogate the privileges of our citizens!—and as the extensive commerce of our Republics in connection with the adaptation of our social institutions to the condition of all mankind, gives the American character an unrivalled influence among foreign nations; it is our most exalted duty “to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord,” by carrying the light of revealed truth, wherever the star-spangled banner is unfurled, and by recommending it to all our fellow immortals, as the sole chart of our freedom, the grand source of our prosperity, the only consolation of man in this world, and the effectual guarantee to all its disciples of felicity boundless and everlasting.

RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS.

The first truly missionary labours were the result of those principles which induced our ancestors to migrate from Europe. Elliott the Apostle of the Indians, Mayhew and Brainerd are the pioneers that opened the path into the wilderness of paganism. A few others who are renowned in the christian annals devoted themselves to this arduous work, among whom Swartz stands pre-eminent; but it is indisputable, that with a small number of individual exceptions, until nearly the middle of the last century, the whole Protestant world was in a state of lethargy respecting the extension of the church; and exhibited an awful insensibility to the value of the immortal souls of the heathen living in gloom, and dying in impenitence and sin.

On the contrary, the age in which we live, is emphatically the era of evangelical philanthropy and zeal. Two societies were formed at the commencement of the eighteenth century to counteract the ignorance of religion in Great Britain and her territories; but their exertions were feeble and almost ineffectual. The Moravians had combined their labours in the arduous work, to demolish idolatry; yet amid the desolation produced by sin, even their noble and successful efforts were almost imperceptible; but within the last 40 years an impulse has been given to christian energy on behalf of our glorified Lord, which it is the acme of corrupt infatuation to attempt to oppose. A very brief notice of the associations organized for the purpose of extending "pure and undefiled religion," will form a proper introduction to our prospective survey of the church of Christ, when the Lord shall say, to all "the prisoners go

forth ; and to all them who are in darkness, shew yourselves."

However awful and bitter were the miseries which flowed from the Revolution in France in 1789 ; it is undeniable, that it has produced a new era in the moral and religious history of mankind. Impossible as it may be for us yet to say precisely, in consequence probably, of our defective chronology, to what tremendous event, 1260 years since, it bears relation ; yet it has excited a large portion of the dormant and careless world to sleepless activity and solicitude.

In its results, it has shaken the whole fabric of the Mohammedan Apostacy ; and has so palsied the power of the Man of Sin, that in the almost perfect quietus of his myrmidons, the Monks and the Inquisition, he has lost if not his will, at least, his potency ; so that divine truth without a veil may be promulgated in "the regions which sat in darkness." The European concussions through the effervescence of christian love, have unexpectedly tended most mightily to propagate the Gospel of Christ. From the restless endeavours of the Redeemer's disciples, a decided alteration must eventually be displayed in Europe : doubtless, the revolution is at a greater distance than our impatience or desires would place it ; and it will be attended with immense difficulties ; but the movements of the Protestant world to counteract the delusions of sin and Satan are now irresistible. Without a remarkable change in the affairs of the Greeks, which cannot rationally be anticipated : the Peloponnesus and the Archipelago, especially as the typographical art is now developing its mysterious wonders among them, must become Reformed. The descendants of the Huguenots are beginning to unfold a high degree of that character which, in the sixteenth century, rendered them the greatest glory of the reformed religion, and the purest church which then existed in Europe. A larger stream of christian blood has been effused in France for the testimony of the truth, than in any other country ; and howeve-

tremendous was the retribution thirty years since; it is a subject of great gratitude, that like the fabled Phœnix, issuing from its ashes, the 2050 former Protestant congregations with their faithful ministers, have experienced a revival, and are arising from the concealment imposed upon them by the revocation of the edict of Nantz.

The seat of the Beast at present, includes the Austrian dominions, France, Italy, Spain and Portugal; but all the Protestant nations are alive; and however secret and Jesuitical the attempts of the Papal devotees, it is hoped the influence of the gospel will interrupt their ungodly designs: notwithstanding, it is truly remarkable, that Popery subsists in all its gloom and malevolence in its ancient domains, and that it is extending its odious leaven among the Protestants, especially in Great Britain, so as to excite very serious and just alarms for the pernicious effects.

The institutions which have been organized to promulge the doctrines of the cross of Christ, may be generally classified; as *Missionary*; *Typographical*; or *Education Societies*.

Education.—The Scotch and the Puritans were the only people among the ancient Reformed who attached to the education of youth its superlative importance; hence their characteristic superiority to the rest of the world in morals and illumination was the natural effect of their general solicitude for mental culture; their example, however, is now very extensively followed.

In many of the United States, elementary learning is the object of legal provision—in Great Britain, Ireland and France, the Lancastrian method of tuition is rapidly enlarging its influence; in the Protestant portion of the continent of Europe, its results are commencing to be manifested; and the instruction of the juniors forms a very interesting and prominent department of the Missionary's exalted and self-denying labours.

If we regard the objects of education in a more serious aspect, we instantaneously discover, that the Sunday-Schools combine a most efficient adjunct to the general endeavours for religious improvement. The beneficial consequences of this system in diminishing the profanation of the Lord's day, in extending the knowledge of the sacred volume, and in forming the juvenile mind to devotional habits, exceed all that imagination can grasp; and facts have amply verified, that the morals of the rising generation are in a very important degree influenced by their attendance at the Sunday-School. Every enlargement of this plan to do good will necessarily be accompanied with the most delightful advantages, until the labours of the Teachers and the studies of the Pupils shall all be absorbed in the splendours of the latter-day glory.

Typographical—This combines two classes of associations: the dissemination of religious tracts; and the Bible societies. The publication of cheap editions of valuable religious books, for sale at a very low price or for donations to the poor is not of late origin; the society for the promotion of religious knowledge has existed more than a century; but its affairs were never conducted with zeal, or with due consideration respecting the actual state of the mass of the community. Mr. Wesley with his usual perspicacity, immediately comprehended the vast influence of the type, and attached to his society a special printing and publishing concern; it disseminated a prodigious quantity of works at a cheap rate; and deducting for its large proportion of controversial divinity, promulgated saving knowledge to a wide extent, among the most ignorant and thoughtless multitudes in Great Britain. To the religious Tract Societies we are principally indebted for the grand and appropriate use of the press; they have seized the weapon by which infidelity and licentiousness withered and polluted the human intellect and sensibilities, and by the immensity and versatility of their

operations have proclaimed revealed truth in every possible form, and suited to all ages, conditions, seasons, occasions and circumstances ; so that it propagates the light and the heat of the oracles delivered by the Sun of righteousness, in the most unexpected and yet resistless manner. Some of the most remarkable events in the history of man are incorporated with the mysterious travels of religious tracts.

A delightful feature of the present era is the accelerating increase of regularly issued religious publications, devoted exclusively to theological discussions and missionary intelligence ; this has transformed the reading character of the christian world : these maintain the truth in all its vivid freshness, and constitute the fuel by which the illumination and the fire of an ardent zeal for God, and an inextinguishable love to man are enlivened to continual brightness and activity. Thirty years ago, it is believed, but two strictly religious magazines were dispersed, the Evangelical and Arminian, and those both in London ; at present it is impossible to enumerate them. It is sufficient to remark, that they surpass in numbers all the other merely literary repositories of intelligence, valuable as many of them undoubtedly are, and that in this Republic equally with all the Protestant countries of Europe, they comprise an essential, and in truth, a necessary portion of the daily mental food of every family which realizes a due solicitude for the glory of God, the salvation of souls, and the amplitude of the church of Christ.

But these powerful instruments to demolish the empire of Satan, are in some measure obliterated ; when contrasted with the irresistible achievements of that most mighty invention, the Bible Society. Twenty years have not elapsed since these institutions were primarily organized ; and already in the various languages spoken by a large majority of mankind, the wonderful works of God, as declared in the sacred scriptures, have been translated. So

stupendous, magnificent and multiplying are the operations of this immense machine, that it is utterly impossible for the pen of the historian to detail its unparalleled triumphs, with a celerity equal to that with which its irruptions into the regions of error, infidelity and idolatry are commenced and sustained ; to one event and that the most splendid in ecclesiastical history, the progress of these institutions bears a striking analogy, and similar effects have partially resulted---the effusion of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost ; and it may be merely subjoined, not only that all the commercial intercourse of nations is now indescribably affected by the missionaries of different sects and countries ; but also that a person who remains ignorant of the diversified modern reports from the Bible agents, and the missionary explorers, within the last 30 years, continues wilfully destitute of a larger quantity of undeniably correct geographical, statistical, and historical information respecting our globe and its various inhabitants ; than all the writers of travels combined, during the prior eighteen centuries, can communicate.

The principal Bible Societies are the British and Foreign—the American—the Russian—the Netherlands—the Prussian—the Swedish—the Danish—and the Paris Protestant, with their respective auxiliaries ; but a very large number of minor institutions are actively employed in more contracted circles to disseminate in their own vernacular languages the word of God ; and these are increasing so extensively and rapidly, that like the children of Israel when the man after God's own heart reigned, we can only pray “now may the Lord God add unto this people, how many soever they be, a hundred fold, and may our eyes see it !” Amen.

Missionary.—Notwithstanding all the joyous effects which have resulted from the labours of Missionaries, it may still emphatically be declared, “the world lieth in wickedness.” Africa, with the exception of a small southern district is a land of gross darkness :

America, the United States and part of the British colonies alone excluded, is either immured in Indian idolatry or Romish superstition : Asia, except where the voluntarily exiled servants of Jesus roam and preach and teach, is “Satan’s seat, where Satan dwelleth ;” and even of Europe, a large majority of its inhabitants are apostates with Mohammed, or stamped with “the mark of the Beast : pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest.” The work performed by Missionaries, according to the present system, is surely modern. Moravians commenced this energetic warfare against the hosts of darkness, seventy years ago ; in 1787, the Methodists established a mission, which confined its labours chiefly to the British West India islands : and thirty years since the Baptists instituted a society, which when contemplated in the feebleness of its original means, the gradually augmenting and incalculable benefits it has produced, or the astonishing extent of influence in the world, which the Brethren of the mission at Serampore have justly attained, we are not only constrained to exclaim, “what hath God wrought ?” but are obliged to admit, that viewed in all the circumstances, no men in modern history have surpassed them in indefatigable exertions, vast learning, exalted philanthropy, and that constellation of evangelical virtues, which have filled the whole christian world with their irradiation.

Nevertheless it must be admitted, that the establishment of the London Missionary Society in 1795, forms the epocha whence to date that unintermitting vigour and quenchless zeal which have subsequently characterized, not only the institutions which had been previously founded, but also those which have subsequently been formed. In the very commencement of that society ; its general basis, including all sects of believers, its imposing patronage, its immense funds, its grand objects, and its liberal spirit excited a perfect concussion among all them who

loved "the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity." Its magnitude of numbers, and immensity of operations soon attracted general attention ; but this was aided by the Evangelical Magazine, which, becoming the vehicle of all religious intelligence ; disseminated the missionary spirit until a flame of devotedness to the God of Israel, in publishing the knowledge of Jesus Christ and him crucified, has been eukindled, which authorizes the expectation that it will never more be smothered, much less extinguished. At all events, now, it would be more practicable to exterminate the slumbering fires of either of the volcanos with a bucket of water, than to extirpate that temper so highly eulogized by the inspired Apostle, "it is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing."

Since that period other societies have been constituted by different denominations ; but their domestic controversial contests are all closed when they enter the regions of idolaters :—the watchword there is, *the Lord or Baal*, and in the momentous strife to rescue immortal souls from present satanic bondage, and interminable agony beyond the grave, they forget sectarianism, and live and "fight the good fight of faith," as brethren.

The principal existing societies and stations for missionaries, with the publications which record their proceedings are comprised in the following catalogue.

The Church Missionary Society have devoted their large funds to promulgate the gospel through the British dominions in India, the western coast of Africa, and to the introduction of christianity into western Asia ; combining the expenditures attached to the translation and printing of the Bible in various languages : they issue a *Missionary Register*.

The London Missionary Society occupy many of the South Sea Islands, Cafraria, Malacca, Ceylon, and Madagascar, with numerous other minor stations in Hindostan. Their Missionary, Dr. Morrison, at Canton, has completed a most gigantic work, the translation of the Bible into the Chinese language, and is al-

so establishing a college at Malacca, to extend the knowledge of eastern literature ; and especially to institute a seminary where the Chinese converts may attain such an acquaintance with revealed theology ; as eventually to qualify them to introduce the gospel of Jesus, into the inmost recesses of the temples, which are dedicated to Satan's earthly representatives, in that immense region of idolatrous corruption. In the islands of the Pacific, the labours of their Missionaries, by the divine benediction, have achieved the most triumphant display of the grace of the Redeemer over the strongholds of Satan, since the Apostolic century : their annals are published in the Evangelical Magazine.

The Wesleyan Missionary Society have employed their energies with great success in evangelizing the slaves in the West India Islands ; but they also have stationed missionaries in India, Caffraria, Ceylon and in the North American British territories : their proceedings are detailed in the Methodist Magazine.

The Baptist Missionary Society have confined their efforts chiefly to British India and Ceylon ; where Dr. Marshman, by translating the Old and New Testaments into the Chinese language, which, in connection with Dr. Morrison's publication, is one of the most eventful occurrences in the history of the translations of the Holy Scriptures, and by printing the sacred volume in nearly all the tongues and dialects spoken by one hundred millions of Hindoos ; by the increasing number of their missionary stations ; and by their education of native converts as ministers of the gospel, they have undoubtedly infused into the abominable mass of Brahminical ignorance and corruption, a redeeming spirit which at some future period by the effectual operations of the Holy Ghost, will develope the most splendid consequences : their periodical accounts and the Baptist Magazine furnish the details of their success as christians, scholars and preachers.

A society has lately been organized by the Protes-

tants of France, who have selected Palestine for the primary field of their labours : and whose strength and ardour encourage the hope, that ere long, they will march with similar brightness and expansion, by the side of their European and Columbian associates ; they have also commenced a publication for missionary intelligence.

These constitute the principal foreign societies, including their auxiliary associations ; in the United States five societies exist for the same august object.

The American Board of Foreign missions was instituted about 10 years since, and already have assumed a very distinguished station among these evangelical labourers. Palestine, the British dominions in Asia, the Sandwich Islands, and our aboriginal Indians participate in the benefits of their philanthropy. Among the latter especially, their progress has been highly important and exhilarating : and they are gradually augmenting in all the capacities to meliorate mankind. It is not a little extraordinary, that the citizens of these states, the soil of which was not cultivated until nearly 1600 years after the Saviour's resurrection, should rank among the first Protestant christians, to attempt the restoration of Messiah's honours in that land, where his godlike wonders were displayed ; and to explore the scenery of Judea, where "Jesus of Nazareth went about doing good." Probably, the most lucid and devotionally affecting description of Palestine from Joppa to the river Jordan, and the most accurate and impressive delineation of the present state of the seven churches of Asia have been furnished by Mr. Parsons lately disembodied and removed to the New Jerusalem, and Mr. Fisk their honored Missionaries. The expenses of this Board are contributed chiefly by the Congregationalists ; they publish the *Missionary Herald*.

The Baptist Board of Foreign Missions, in addition to great exertions to extend the gospel among the tribes of Heathen Indians on the borders of the Republic, have maintained a mission in the Burman em-

pire; where the translation of the Scriptures and the operations of the press have been preparing the way for a large harvest in the Lord's appointed time: they issue the *Latter-day Luminary*.

The United Foreign Missionary Society, composed of the Presbyterian and Dutch Reformed denominations, have as yet, confined their attention to the Indian tribes around us; they occupy five missionary stations, and are very rapidly extending their noble efforts: they print the *Missionary Register*.

The Methodists have also lately established a general society for the purpose of diffusing the knowledge of the Redeemer among the Heathen; and its labours are commencing with their characteristic earnestness and zeal.

A very interesting institution has been organized in this union, which, if properly conducted, may be very influential in improving the condition of the African deserts; the *colonization* society. Although not expressly founded for religious purposes; yet popular opinion has combined so much christian feeling with its adoption and plans, that under the auspices of the Baptist Board of Foreign Missions particularly, the most influential of the first emigrants are decidedly believers in Jesus, and all the measures which the society has adopted tend to the predominance of gospel principles, as the corner stone of the settlement. Should the colony enlarge like the Puritan districts of New England, in its pious characteristics as well as temporal prosperity; it may then in some measure be instrumental to commute by the donation of the Gospel and its blessings, for the numberless and indescribable miseries which through the slave trade, the sons of Africa have suffered from the *civilized* nations of Europe and America.

A christian spectator, who correctly reflects, while enumerating this catalogue of evangelical institutions, cannot avoid acknowledging with gratitude the connection between them, and the most influential characteristic of the present period; that

feature which unfolds a striking contrast with anterior ages of the church, even since the Reformation; the general diffusion of the spirit of grace and supplication for the fulfilment of all those wonders which prophecy declares shall at some future era be displayed, when “they shall fear the name of the Lord from the west, and his glory from the rising of the sun.” The monthly meeting devoted expressly to prayers for the unction from the Holy One to descend upon the church of God; upon the instructions of missionaries and pastors; and upon the illumination conveyed by Bibles and Tracts; and for a larger experience and manifestation of the divine faithfulness in the consummation of the Redeemer’s promises and in propitious answers to the ardent petitions with which “the throne of grace” is incessantly besieged, constitutes a remarkable and an infallible precursor, of the approaching day of the Lord; for it is like the voice of him of old crying in the wilderness, “make straight in the desert a highway for our God; every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain; and Zuir and Jerusalem that being good tidings shall lift up their voices with strength and shall not be afraid; and shall say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God!”

One unexpected effect has been adduced by the progression of the principles upon which the Puritans originally separated from the ancient and modern hierarchs. All the attempts to investigate many portions of our globe, either through commercial cupidity, or by military force have been totally unavailing; but we are at present as intimately acquainted with many of the diversified tribes of men through the missionary researches, as if we had personally inspected, their unsocial habits, and their irreligious principles; for it appears that God has prepared a way for these “sons of peace” where others in vain have attempted to explore; thus overthrowing a very specious objection which scepticism has alleged to

the scriptures, that they contain a system not only of error, but of ignorance.

Infidels have ever affirmed, as an oracular truth, that by the propagation of the Gospel, the civil condition of the human family would not be meliorated; while lukewarm and formal professors of christianity, have also asserted, that the sole mode to evangelize mankind, was by their previous civilization and as no momentous facts, could be adduced against the theory; the enemies of the cross of Christ exulted in the assurance that the Gospel would not become the faith of the whole world. This deception is forever entombed; as no position is now more self-evident, than that which affirms, the indispensable necessity of divine revelation to deliver men from ignorance and brutal degradation, and to elevate them to the grade, sensibilities and character of rational creatures.

The Puritans originally and all the revered missionaries who now promulge "the glorious gospel of the ever blessed God," have consequently most entirely demolished by a practical argument, which the Defenders of the Faith have never duly illustrated and enforced, the deistical assault upon the sacred scriptures, that it is a system of superstitious gloom generating only human deterioration, for they have developed, that the anxiety and exertions to extend the arts and sciences, with all the blessings of civilization, are exactly proportioned to unfeigned zeal in the service of the Redeemer; hence, philanthropy prays, that our modern missionary efforts may be amplified to an indefinite extent, and be impelled by a strong impetus. In reference to this subject, the spread of the Gospel, as the only means to disseminate knowledge, harmony, comfort, morality, and civil and religious liberty throughout our globe; every christian will unite his heart and voice in this hallowed petition to the Father of light, and Lord of peace and truth and law.

God speed the *Press*, in this most holy cause,
Till every Pagan's son shall be supplied;

Obedience learn to Jesus' laws,
And from his word of grace be satisfied !

God speed the *holy men* whose every power
Is exercised in this divine employ ;
And grant their prospects, brightening every hour,
May fill their hearts with enviable joy !

God speed the *cause of missions* through the world !
Still may it cheer its friends, convince its foes ;
Be every idol from its altar hurl'd ;
May every desert blossom as the rose !—Amen.

THE MILLENIUM.

Faith exults in the expansive prospects of christianity. So often, and so accurately have divine predictions already been consummated in their most minute circumstance, that no believer hesitates respecting the unalterable certainty of the final accomplishment of those still more splendid events which are connected with the universal triumphs of the gospel, that in futurity shall constitute the latter-day glory. All the means of communicating knowledge, that the Scriptures contain, are to represent the prominent characteristics of that auspicious period in the history of our world. Types, parables, commands, and promises united their force to depict a spiritual, sublime and felicitous state of mankind, even on this terrestrial globe, of which it may be affirmed in Apostolic language, "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him."

Nothing is more easy than for the ingenuity of corruption to ask questions, involving difficulties of boundless magnitude, and inextricably perplexing. Sceptical cavillers frequently inquire, Why was sin admitted into Paradise? Why have the nations of the earth been immured so long in idolatrous depravity? Why has one portion of the world received the gospel in preference to another? Why has mankind during nearly 6000 years remained in a night of gross mental and moral darkness; and why shall the inhabitants of the seventh millenial revolution of time enjoy a day of unremitting religious illumination? Myriads of questions like these may be propounded; and one reply alone can be given by a creature who is a compound of fallibility and ignorance; but that

answer is in the language of him of whom it is written, "never man spake like this man"—"even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." The mysteriousness of Jehovah's dispensations should teach us awe and reverence; while the conviction that the declarations of God are truth, should inspire us with confidence in him who has graciously assured his followers, that in a paradisaical sense, it shall ere long be proclaimed, "behold the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God."

The predictions concerning the church which appear to have been fulfilled, have been examined; and we have surveyed the present condition of the Redeemer's terrestrial kingdom; our contemplations, therefore, are confined to only one additional inquiry, what are the future prospects of the believer in reference to the glory of Immanuel?

All christians admit, that in the sacred books, God has revealed to us, through prophecy, an accurate description of the christian church, from the morning when "the Holy Ghost was first sent down, from heaven" until the last "trumpet shall sound;" and it is equally undeniable, that three different periods or states of the church are distinctly enumerated.

Of these eras, the first comprising christianity in its progress, until Constantine subverted the Heathen predominance, has elapsed, and its history we have perused—the second extends through the ages of darkness, corruption, and apostacy, and with its properties we are experimentally acquainted, for it exists—and the third presents a magnificent display of purity, intelligence, and prosperity, described in figures, combining all natural, paradisaical, and heavenly beauty, spirituality and enjoyment; extensive as the family of Adam, and pereunial during the revolution of a thousand years. But this last is future; for the predictions of Scripture with respect to the overthrow of all the Anti-christian systems as they are

recorded in the apocalypse, from chapter 14: 14, to 20: 3: obviously remain unfulfilled; and every endeavour to apply part of them to any events posterior to the Reformation has been decidedly futile. An exposition of the following topics will therefore terminate our discussion.

The commencement and duration of the Millennium—Events anterior to the Millennium—The characteristics of the Millennium.

I. When will the Millennium commence; and how long will it continue?—In the Apocalypse, 20: 1—6; John replies to these questions; but our ignorance of the precise period, when Daniel and John's prophetic periods begin, renders all attempts to attain perfect exactitude nugatory. That Daniel's 2300 days, when “the sanctuary shall be cleansed;” and his 1290 days, and 1335 days, and John's 42 months and 1260 days; and “the time, times, and half a time” of both the Prophets refer to the same periods cannot be doubted. It is evident, that those expositors are incorrect, who fixed the commencement of the 1260 years in 476, when the Roman empire was subverted; because the period to which this calculation conducts us has elapsed nearly 100 years, and Anti-Christ still retains his supremacy. They who designate the year 606, when Boniface received the title of Universal Bishop and Pope, seem to err in also antedating the epocha: if any year can be presumed to mark the course of the Mohammedan delusion, it must be the Hegira, but that is sixteen years later than the above era; and it must also be remembered, that, the witnesses' prophesying in sackcloth, did not commence in the eastern empire, until after Mohammed's success over the Arabians enabled him to extend his warlike conquests to the neighbouring countries; and certainly the witnesses did not appear among “the ten horns of the Beast” until 40 years after the military desolations of Apollyon's scorpion-lucsts. Besides, if this calculation be correct, 43 years only remain anterior to the demolition of all

that is opposed to the cross of Christ; which renders the conversion of nearly 20 millions of people annually necessary—but where are the instruments, either Bibles or Missionaries, prepared for this august employment? The last specified date, about 750 is founded upon the fact, that then the Pope was constituted a temporal Potentate—but it must be recollect, that the “Man of Sin, the son of perdition,” is not branded with infamy, and pronounced accursed because he ruled a small portion of Italy in vassalage, but on account of his spiritual prerogatives, and his usurpations in the temple and throne of God; which indubitably were consolidated about the year 666. The grand objection to those periods is that they destroy the distinction which Daniel marks in the 30, and the 45 years after the 1260 years have expired.

It has been a tradition coeval almost with Christianity, that at the end of 2000 years, the Lord Jesus Christ would unfold the period revealed by John in the passage already quoted; and if we reckon the Hegira in the eastern empire, and in the papal dominions, the number 666 as the commencement of the 1260 years we preserve the order of the prophecy, and exactly evolve the distinctive features of the apocalyptic visions. In chapter 16, of the Revelations, five angels in succession effused their vials upon various parts of the Roman empire, denominated the earth; the application of these prophecies in spite of all modern ingenuity, cannot be discovered. The purport of the sixth seems more obvious; as the great river Euphrates assuredly implied the Turks in chapter 9: 14, so in chapter 16: 12, it must be similarly expounded—but if this be correct then the demolition of the Mohammedian government over the eastern part of the empire is distinctly proclaimed, and even the manner of its dissolution pointedly declared; that the power of the serpent horsemen shall gradually die not from external assault, but merely from internal convulsions, until it shall be withered in perfect impotence. Does not the mod-

ern, and especially the present prospective condition of that apostate despotism forcibly corroborate this interpretation? This would transfer us to a period about the year 1832, before all the obstructions to the progress of the Gospel and the return of the Jews to their own land shall be effectually extirpated. After this period will follow the commotions under the seventh vial, then will succeed the slaying of the witnesses; the public regular profession and preaching of the true Gospel throughout the 10 horns of the beast will totally cease; in which persecutions, all those modes of despoiling them of life will be adopted, by which their bodies will be deprived of interment; and so complete will be the apparent extermination of the good seed, and of those who had imbibed it, that during three years and a half, all the governments civil and ecclesiastical will rejoice at the victory by which they silenced the witnesses, whose prophesying "tormented them" in their sins. This event will happen at the expiration of 1260 years from the beginning of their testimony: and the death of the two olive-trees indispensably demands, the general suppression of the Protestants against the Latin church, the manifest, undeniable, and triumphant congratulations of those who hate genuine Christianity over its supposed ruin, and the almost immediate and sudden resurrection of the witnesses.

Immediately consequent to the resuscitation of the witnesses, at the same hour, will be the great earthquake of one of the ten horns; for the "seventh vial shall be poured out into the air and the voice shall cry, it is done;" "the tenth part of the city shall fall, 7000 men shall be slain, and the remnant shall be affrighted and give glory to the God of Heaven;" it is "a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake and so great."

The earliest appearance of the Waldenses being about the year 666, the commencement of the witnesses prophesying must be referred to that period; whence, by the addition of the 1260 years, we calculate

their death near the year 1926 : after which three years and a half will elapse for their apparent extinction, and the earthquake shall separate forever one of the ten horns from the empire of the beast.

Almost immediately after this event ; “ the cities of the nations fall ; ” the former Protestants will again secede from the beast and leave to Rome three principal sovereignties into which the great city shall be divided ; and a storm of hail, some northern irruption, shall so torment and plague men, that they will blaspheme God for the anguish which it generates.

The earthquake is previous to the sounding of the seventh trumpet ; for the Apostle having seen the effects of that convulsion, declares that “ the second wo is past, and behold the third wo cometh quickly : ” which implies that a short period only will intervene between those occurrences ; and that the various changes that will succeed, shall transpire with overwhelming rapidity. *Will the blast of the three wo-trumpets be eq uidistant?* The fifth trumpet was blown about the year 622 ; the sixth about 650 years after ; and the same intercedent space of time, points us to a date, sufficient to admit the temporary death of the witnesses, the earthquake of the tenth part of the city, and the final and complete organization of that horn upon evangelical principles.

The seventh angel sounds ; and great voices in heaven, the multitudes of revived Protestants shout the gloriously triumphant song, “ the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever.” Then the Apostle was called to behold the judgment upon Babylon. Those of the ten kingdoms which separate from her will begin to “ eat her flesh and burn her with fire,” will totally despoil her of her resources and punish her with famine and war.

After the resurrection of the witnesses, the gospel will begin to spread during the remainder of the 30 years, previous to the final battle, with unexampled celerity ; a multitude of the Jews will feel its power;

a desire to return to the land of their ancestors will animate them; and by the removal of the Turkish government, the way will appear unobstructed. In this design, all the witnesses will co-operate. They who are impelled by “the frogs, the three unclean spirits” of devils and of the Mohammedan and Papal apostacies, “with the beast, the false prophet, and the kings of the earth,” will combine against the Lord and his appointed, oppose the saint’s progress, and coalesce to exterminate those whom the Anti-christian conspirators denounce as Heretics. This measure will eventually introduce the concluding and decisive battle; when the enemies of Christ “shall be thrown down and found no more at all;” and it will be truly a war for religion, between the servants of their Lord, for the preservation of their faith and hope, and the agents of hell, irrecoverably to destroy christianity.

The scene of this conflict will probably be in Judea, where the christians and their allied Jewish converts shall be met by the Apostates and Pagans; and when the former shall be reduced to the utmost extremity, the “Word of God, whose name is King of Kings, and Lord of Lords,” shall appear in a personal manifestation; by him the combat shall be determined, and there he shall “make the supper of the great God.” The immeditate result of the conquest will be the settlement of the already converted Jews in their own Canaan; the excision of the Latin empire in church and state; and the restoration of the outcasts of Israel, from the various places of their banishment, triumphing in the doctrines of the cross.

This infallible demonstration of divine truth, in connection with the extraordinary means which shall be adopted without opposition to disseminate the “glorious gospel of the blessed God,” and which shall be accompanied with the effusion of the spirit of grace and supplication among the saints, and the constant benediction of heaven, in the space of the 45 years ensuing, shall transform the moral character of man-

kind ; and regenerate the human family from the least to the greatest. " Every nation shall see the salvation of our God ; the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together ; the Son shall have the heathen for his inheritance ; the whole earth shall be filled with his glory ;" the millennial era shall commence ; and the innumerable hosts of the redeemed in heaven and on earth shall unanimously shout in the most fervid praise, " Hallelujah, the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth." Amen.

Of this glorious state, John says expressly, that it shall continue a thousand years ; and there is no plausible argument offered, why the period should be prolonged by supposing that each year may be calculated as a year of days, so as to make the number 365,000. Besides, if the analogy be admitted, that the six days of creation typified the 6000 years of the world prior to the latter-day glory, and the succeeding Sabbath prefigured the millennial rest ; then the coincidences between all the dispensations of God to the human family, will combine for those sons of illumination and peace, who shall dwell in that universal world of christians, a ceaseless source of certitude, devotion, and triumph.

II. The means by which the Millennium will be introduced. — From the uncertain speculations of "times and seasons," we transfer our attention to subjects which are more obvious and sure. " The grand instrument to change the moral world is *divine truth*." To this the nations were originally indebted for their conversion from pagan idolatry ; by it the Reformation was achieved, and the Protestants "emerged from the dark antichristian abyss ;" and through its operation, " accompanied with the powerful energy of the Holy Spirit, will the Millennium, in all its glories be ushered into existence." In two methods, is divine truth communicated to the soul of man, by the preaching of the gospel and the perusal of the sacred oracles ; and both these means will be adopted commensurate to the grandeur and extent of the object. Many will

arise, like Knox and Whitfield, who by the blessing of God upon their labours, called thousands by their preaching “from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God”—and when the scriptures shall have been translated into all languages and distributed into every habitation, what wondrous effects may not be anticipated from the combined efforts of the Pulpit and the Press, the Bible and its Missionary expositor!—In addition to these mightier exertions, the sacred oracles authorize the anticipation, that a vast increase will be realized from the efforts of all classes of christians; parents and masters of households; instructors of youth; and the governments of the world. 1.

These means will doubtless be employed by “the household of faith” to introduce that august day, when the glory of the Lord shall cover the whole earth, for “many will run to and fro, and knowledge be increased;” but prophecy also distinctly declares, that the immediate power of God will be exerted to overthrow all opposition to the gospel of Jesus, and to develope the way for its universal reception. A correct understanding of the past and present situation of the nations of the earth induces us to conclude, that nothing less than the almost preternatural convulsions enumerated in the highly figurative language of prophecy, could prepare the nations for the transformation which will be exemplified during the Millennium.

Almost the whole earth is now immersed in a profound ignorance of evangelical truth—even of the majority of nominal christian countries, error and superstition in principle, and vitiosity in practice, are the predominant characteristics:—and ambitious offensive wars, with the vilest general oppressions of the people, constitute their prominent features—and in every nation on the globe, with partial exceptions, the consciences of the inhabitants are imprisoned by their despots’ faith, and all freedom of divine

worship and religious opinion is utterly discarded and refused. 2. To exterminate this moral desolation —war with its concomitants, famine and pestilence, in their ordinary devastations, aggrandized probably by the removal of the restraints, which Jehovah has so often imposed upon the ferocity and ambition of the sanguinary pretended legitimates who rule the nations, may effect the successive overthrow of the tyrants; and immure those exalted enemies of God and man in the same indiscriminate ruin. Hence, the vicious will disappear ; good men will be exalted to dignity and power, social institutions will be meliorated, and the rights of conscience, with the inalienable privileges of civil freedom will be universally diffused.

Many other grand events must precede the final establishment of the Millennium. The Protestant churches will display more purity, energy, and zeal—for all indifference to truth, erroneous sentiments, carnal insensibility, worldly attachments, incorporation with the civil governments, and religious restrictions must be totally banished ; while the indefinite effusion of the influences of the Holy Ghost, will excite numberless labourers and general co-operation to disseminate the knowledge of “ Christ and Him crucified.” Hence, will necessarily follow, the destruction of the Koran, the annihilation of infidelity, the extermination of Anti-Christ, the submission of the Jews to the Messiah, and the conversion of the Heathen nations to the faith and hope of the Gospel. How vast the importance, and how immense the extent of that work, which is yet to be performed, anterior to that morning, when “ all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of God !”

*III. The characteristics of the Millennium.—*The figures used in Scripture to depict the blessedness of the period under consideration, so energetically unfold a state of comfort and enjoyment hitherto unknown on earth, since the primeval curse was denounced ; that it is difficult to form any idea of the beau-

teous scene, except probably as it may have been partially presfigured in Palestine during the earlier years of the reign of Solomon.

Notwithstanding all the difference of opinion respecting the nature and extent of the Millennial prosperity, the predictions of divine truth certainly authorize the belief, that an ineffably superior degree of providential and spiritual mercies and delights, to that which is at present known, will then be realized.

Providential acquisitions.—These will comprise an incalculable enlargement of the number of the human family—and a boundless distribution of all the richer benefactions peculiar to this mortal state. The larger portion of our habitable world is probably an uncultivated desert, and even of that which is most numerously peopled, its capacities to furnish food are but imperfectly known. On this topic it is utterly impossible to construct any plausible arithmetical table—one fact in the Jewish history overwhelms all our imaginations: After the division of the twelve tribes into two kingdoms, Judah and Benjamin which comprised a space probably of not more than 1500 square miles, mustered during the reign of Jehoshaphat, one million one hundred and sixty thousand men “ready prepared for war, beside those whom the king put in the fenced cities throughout all Judah.” The largest capacity and powers of computation are lost in the immensity which results from adapting this numerical illustration to the landed surface of the globe; especially when it is remembered that this mighty force was continually stationed in Jerusalem, merely as supernumeraries to all the garrisons with which the borders of the land were regularly guarded. It is admitted, that the provisions adequate to their support were the consequence of a fertility especially bestowed by God, but this is also a peculiar portion of the divine promise attached to the universal spiritual reign of Jesus over the world “in the last days.”

Jolin beheld them who enjoyed the final triumph of Christianity over all the enemies of Jesus and his church, and declares, that they were “a great multi-

tude, which no man could number"—and still more impressively to describe them, he adds, that when they sung the sublime and extatic chorus, "Alleluia, for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth," it was "as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings." May it not therefore be believed, that when the final judgment shall have irrevocably determined the destinies of all mankind, that the proportion of the lost to the redeemed, will be similar to that which exists between the good members of society and criminals, or those who enjoy the exercise of reason and lunatics?

Many characters given of the Millennium in prophecy, develope the sources whence this extraordinary population shall be supplied, and by which they shall be consoled. "Then shall the earth yield her increase." This seems to declare that sterility of soil, blasting seasons, and unpropitious climates shall be unknown; so that unexampled fertility and pleasantness will be experienced. "There shall be a handful of corn in the earth upon the top of the mountains; the fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon; and they of the city shall flourish like grass of the earth—the mountains shall drop down new wine, and the hills shall flow with milk—the wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad, and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose; it shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing." No language can possibly be more descriptive either of the exuberance and universality of all the comforts necessary for mortal existence; or of the immense multitudes who shall participate in these divine benedictions; for who can measure the crop of the vallies if the rock of the mountain is fat and verdant with grain as proverbial Lebanon—who can enumerate the crowds of christian immortals when the grass of the earth is their inspired similitude—who can delineate the beatitudes of that world where the present sterile desert shall be as a garden of roses, and the now uninhabited wilderness shall abundantly resound with the tri-

umphs and hallelujahs of redemption? Knowledge, prudence, diligence, and economy, will then preside; and of course, extravagance, waste, and all frivolous desires for the supply of fictitious wants will be exterminated. Covetousness will be exchanged for contentment; vain and vicious pleasures will be swallowed up in christian delight; pride will be led captive by humility; ambition and pomp will be ridiculed among them whose only strife will be who shall be chief servant; activity will be substituted for indolence; the disposition to amass wealth that our posterity may live in useless, idle luxury will be extinguished by the love of God and trust in his promises, so that the experience of the ancient Israelites will be renewed, “he that gathered much had nothing over; and he that gathered little had no lack”—to which may be added, that by the extirpation of all these evil principles from the human heart, by the melioration of all the civil institutions among men, so as to render them far superior to the Jews in the most splendid days of their national history, in intelligence, virtue, and piety; by the unlimited expansion of an undying philanthropy engendered, fostered and animated by the Gospel; and by the ceaseless benediction of God upon all “the work of their hands”—every country will become a part of the promised land; whence war, pestilence, and famine, shall be totally excluded—for in the days of Jesus, “shall the righteous flourish, and abundance of peace as long as the moon endureth.” It is also predicted as the crown of their joys, that to render the hallowed delights of that magnificent period unintermitting and unalloyed, three special personal privileges shall be superadded, as the ordinary allotment of every individual. They shall be divested of all those anxious cares for the conveniences of life, which now corrode the minds and hearts of almost all the members of the human family, for “they shall sit every man under his own vine, and every man under his own fig tree”—uninterrupted health shall be enjoyed by all, for “there

shall be no more pain, there shall be no more curse ; and the inhabitants of the land, shall not say, I am sick, because his iniquity is forgiven”—and a vigorous, healthful, tranquil, and dignified old age will be the common, if not the universal inheritance of the whole family of man : “there shall no more be an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days; but the child shall die an hundred years old.” 3.

Spiritual enjoyments.—The sacred oracles beautifully delineate the Millennium in several distinct particulars. As the foundation and cement of all the rest, it proclaims universal and undisturbed “ peace on earth, and good will to men”—for “ they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks ; nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more :” with this shall be combined an inconceivably superior degree of illumination—“ for they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, know ye the Lord, for all shall know him from the least to the greatest.”

As a certain adjunct to these blessings, the inhabitants of the world during those centuries will be pre-eminently sanctified—for “ thy people shall all be righteous :” their unalloyed perennial felicity is a necessary consequence—for thus saith the Lord, “ behold, I create new heavens and a new earth, and the former shall not be remembered nor come into mind. But be ye glad and rejoice forever in that which I create, for behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing and her people a joy. And I will rejoice in Jerusalem and joy in my people : and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, and the voice of crying, and they shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the Lord.”

The annals of nations and regal potentates are merely a catalogue of wars ; from the first assembly of kings upon record, Chedorlaomer and the three other royal robbers, through every combination of the

same fraternity, to the existing “*Holy Alliance*,”—the despots of the world have exhibited the same characteristics ; their murders and devastations are the *essence* of ancient and modern universal history. But when the last contest in Armageddon shall have terminated in the capture of the Beast and the false prophet, and in the shouts of victory by the followers of the King of Kings and Lord of Lords ; the unholy machinations which have so long transformed the world into a general slaughter-house will be destroyed ; the pacific spirit of the religion of Jesus will exercise illimitable sway, and all people regulating their intercourse by its prescriptions, the roaring of cannon, and the clashing of swords will not only be odious, but forgotten.

A very considerable proportion of the sanguinary tempers and military spirit which predominate among mankind, especially of that mysterious indifference to eternity, which induces a man voluntarily and incessantly to expose his mortal existence to an immediate and unexpected termination, in a contest with persons whom he has never seen, is the result of that ignorance in which the various usurpers who have attained unlimited authority over the people vanquished by their myrmidons have uniformly immured them. This gloom which has so long overshadowed the nations, after the irradiations of the Holy Ghost shall have been generally dispersed, will vanish : and it may easily be admitted, even from a survey of the modern improvements in all the mechanical and manufacturing arts, in chemistry and medicine, and their continual progression in augmenting the conveniences of life, and the supplies of terrestrial comfort, that these sciences and human attainments in them will be indefinitely extended ; this furnishes an irresistible additional argument for the prodigious augmentation of the numbers of the human family.

But the information to which the predictions of scripture chiefly advert, is that which makes us wise unto salvation, the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ our Lord.

“ The knowledge of the glorious Jehovah : his character and his infinite perfections displayed in his relations, and in his works, and in his word, present him in the most vivid colours before our eyes; and make us acquainted with the greatest and best of beings—of man, his original rectitude; his apostacy from God, and his mournful condition under a load of depravity, guilt, and wretchedness—of Jesus Christ the Saviour of sinners, his incarnation, obedience, and death, and his exaltation to glory, where he sits at the Father’s right hand, as Head over all things to his church, clothed with Almighty power, and boundless compassion—the method of reconciliation with God, through faith in the righteousness of the Redeemer, accompanied with the renewing of the Holy Ghost—of the various duties and exercises of the christian life,—of that highway of holiness, in which the redeemed of the Lord do walk : of the world to come, of the resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment; of the blessedness of the righteous in heaven, and of the misery of the wicked in hell :—These are the outlines of that system with which the world shall be enlightened in the latter days.”

Of this knowledge, prophecy declares, that it will be ineffably more abundant than has hitherto been known, that its effects will be transcendently efficacious and excellent, and that its extent will be most minutely universal, so that as the waters fill the ocean, no habitable spot on the globe will be excluded from its radiance and operations:

“ Through every Protestant land, this divine light will be most abundantly shed abroad. From countries now sunk in Romish ignorance and superstition, will these dreadful evils be banished ; and the same exalted degrees of divine knowledge generally prevail. In Mohammedan kingdoms, the Koran, which for more than a thousand years has deluded, and is still deluding hundreds of millions of the human kind, will give place to the writings of the prophets and apostles. Their mosques will be converted into temples,

for christian worship, and the Imans be compelled to retire, and leave their place to preachers of the Gospel; or themselves become such preachers, and every where diffuse the pure light of evangelical truth: —and so great will be their success, that an equal measure of the knowledge of the Lord shall fill these regions, as is to be found in those which have for ages made a profession of the christian name. On Pagan lands also will the Sun of Righteousness arise, with healing in his wings. Though now they are mad after their idols, with a love which is strong as death, and a jealousy which is cruel as the grave; yet the beams of divine glory darting into their minds from the faces of those messengers of God, who bring to them glad tidings of great joy, will produce such a change in their spiritual state, as is made in the natural world, when the gloomiest and most stormy night is succeeded by the light of the morning, when the sun ariseth, a morning without clouds, and still more beautified by the grass springing out of the earth, by clear shining after rain. All those dark places of the earth, even to its remotest boundary, which are now the habitation of ignorance as well as cruelty, shall be adorned with the brightest rays of divine knowledge: “for their light is come, and the glory of the Lord hath arisen upon them.” So wonderful shall be the change, that if the question should be asked, “Whether is there a greater measure of divine knowledge among the inhabitants of Hindostan and Tartary and China, or in Great Britain and Holland and the United States of America?” it will be dismissed as a doubt which it is impossible to resolve: or if any one venture to hazard an answer, it will be “that they are in all respects on a level; for every part of the earth is filled with the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.”

The prevalence of universal peace, and the general dissemination of saving knowledge will produce a degree of sanctity which the world had never before

seen exemplified. " Holiness is a conformity to the moral perfections of Jehovah—an imitation of his sanctity, rectitude, and benevolence ; consisting in obedience to the divine commands, and involving every duty we owe to God, our neighbours, and ourselves. Its excellence appears in love, worship, subjection, resignation ; in affection for others, and all the peaceful fruits of active benevolence for the temporal and spiritual welfare of the whole family of man ; in self-denial, purity, humility, contentment, and zeal for the divine glory,—all constituting that character which we should possess as rational and immortal beings.

The Gospel, by revealing new relations, has enlarged the sphere of our existence, and the circle of our obligations. Hence, an unspeakably important but pleasing addition is made to the holiness of christians,—comprising faith, love, obedience, and devotedness to the Lord Jesus Christ as our Saviour ; and of reverence, dependence, gratitude, and profound submission of heart to the Holy Spirit, as our sanctifier, comforter, and guide." Prophecy affirms that this elevation of character and purity of conduct, shall pervade " every class of the community, extend over the face of the whole earth" and when it is said, " thy people shall be all righteous," does it not circumscribe within its domains every individual of the inhabitants who shall successively walk the christian pilgrimage during the Millennium ?

If we remember the providential and spiritual blessings which have thus been enumerated, we can easily conceive of the vast accession of enjoyments which shall be experienced by men, in all the diversified conditions of their terrestrial existence. How much more delightful will be the domestic relations, the intercourse of friendship, the harmony of neighbourhoods, and the usefulness of social connections ; when all envy, malice, disputation, anxious cares, and selfishness shall be excluded, and evangelical philanthropy shall reign without obstruction. The labours

of life will then be fulfilled, like the duties of devotion without lassitude or fatigue; and consequently will contribute to the pleasurable emotions of those who are employed in them. If as is usually supposed, with the general renovation of man and his restoration to the image of God, while Satan is chained in the bottomless pit, during a thousand years, the curse denounced upon the earth as the punishment of sin shall be removed, then will our whole world become a terrestrial Paradise, and the garden of Eden be exhibited in all its primeval beauty and magnificence; so that nature and art will conspire to augment the pure delights of the citizens. When to these are subjoined the vast expansion of the mind, and the uncloying and hallowed enjoyments resulting from an ever abiding devotional spirit, and the seraphic exercises of religion, we can without difficulty, although feebly comprehend the felicity, which shall be commensurate with the Saviour's kingdom, in whom all men shall be blessed, and who shall "have dominion from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth."

In thus surveying the perfection of the church of Christ, how illustrious does Jehovah appear in his management of the world! That exalted being who created the world by his power, rules it by his providence. Infinite wisdom and rectitude regulate the universe: and the great Governor is constantly carrying on a plan, which will finally issue in the glory of God, and in the happiness of all his loyal subjects. The long, the constant, and to all appearance, the successful opposition which this government has met with from idolatry, error, wickedness and cruelty, has sometimes shaken the faith of multitudes with respect to its very existence. The groans of innocence, the tortures of the righteous, and the slaughter of the disciples of Christ have tempted even good men to call the proud happy, and to cry out, "I have cleansed my heart in vain." The triumphant efforts of lawless ambition, the extensive conquests of knavery and power, and the domina-

tion of the wicked over prostrate nations—have provoked tens of thousands to exclaim, “Is there verily a God that judgeth in the earth?”

But the Lord reigneth; and although the workers of iniquity do not perceive Jehovah’s presence nor the operation of his hands, the spiritually wise observe these things, and the prudent know that the ways of the Lord are right. His interposition in human affairs, the displays of his mercy and love in the deliverance of his people, and the exertions of his power and justice in the punishment of the wicked have been manifest to them from age to age;—thus the proofs of the righteous government of God have been multiplied from generation to generation. Noah’s preservation in the ark; the call of Abraham from Ur of the Chaldees; the deliverance of Israel from Egyptian bondage, and their settlement in Canaan; their return from Babylonish captivity; the birth of Christ at Bethlehem; the judgments of heaven on the Jews for rejecting the Messiah; the maintaining of the Christian church in existence notwithstanding the opposition of Pagans, and the persecution of Antichrist; and the freedom from its enemies which it has now in part obtained—furnish the fullest demonstration of the reality and excellency of the jurisdiction of God. But while the children of wisdom clearly perceive Jehovah’s hand—what multitudes are blinded and see it not! Yet from those late dispensations of Providence which have shaken terribly the earth, millions of mankind are constrained to acknowledge that “the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.”

But when the Millennium shall have arrived, all the difficulties and objections of men with respect to the government of Jehovah, will vanish as the shades of night before the rising sun. As soon as the seventh Angel sounds his trumpet, the mystery of God shall be finished; the divine government will shine forth in all its lustre; and assembled multitudes in every land will render, in their worship, the homage due to

his exalted name. From the rising of the sun to his going down, the Lord will be king over all the earth. By the love and dutifulness of his subjects, and the communications of extraordinary measures of happiness to all who are under his dominion; the excellency of the ruler and his government will be displayed.

There shall be no more curse; then shall the earth yield her increase; abundance shall every where reign; and contentment, peace and joy, fill the hearts of the people in every nation. Then will this hymn of praise be sung in the loudest strains: “the Lord reigneth, let the earth rejoice, let the multitude of the isles be glad thereof.”

How sublime are the views, which this consummation of the glorious effects of gospel grace imparts, of the redemption of sinners by Jesus Christ! This is the greatest work of God; that which he most highly values, and to which all others are subordinate; that for which all other works were made; and that which will be the grand theme of praise, and infinitely the highest source of blessedness to the saints in heaven through all eternity. Redemption is that method of delivering men from guilt, depravity, and misery, and of restoring them to the divine favour, to the image of God, and to eternal blessedness, which Jehovah in his supreme wisdom devised, and which was accomplished by the incarnation, obedience and death of the Lord Jesus Christ—the brightness of the Father’s glory, and the express image of his person. From the day on which the Saviour died upon the cross, this glorious dispensation, in the faith of which saints from the beginning of the world had lived, has shed its saving efficacy on the souls of men; and wherever it has been received, righteousness, holiness, and happiness have been ever the infallible consequence.

Since the day of Pentecost, when salvation was first proclaimed to the world by the apostles of Christ, with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, it has

incessantly been attacked by potent and bitter foes even to the present day. Jewish unbelief sought to strangle it in its birth—persecuted the disciples of Jesus without mercy; and its champion Saul of Tarsus, rather than be unemployed in a work of blood, kept the clothes of him who stoned to death the first Christian martyr. When divine justice punished the murderers of Christ and of his followers, by the destruction of the Jewish nation, Paganism seized the weapons of hostility to the cross of Christ; and the patient sufferings of thousands under bitter persecutions, united with the hope of glory amidst their sufferings, displayed the grandeur of redemption. Heathen enmity to Immanuel was succeeded by Anti-christian superstition and idolatry, which under a pretext of superior veneration for a crucified Saviour, persecuted the friends of the pure doctrines of the Gospel with a keener hatred if possible than either Pagans or Jews. During Antichrist's reign, it is almost by their blood only that the partakers of salvation can be traced; and in its stream we view with admiration the excellence of its principles, in the meekness, the peace, and the joy with which they endured martyrdom in its most terrifying forms. Since the era of the reformation, the triumphs of redemption have been more numerous and more extensive. Still however the gospel has found adversaries: heresies have obscured its lustre—the spirit of the world has despised its blessings—and the reign of iniquity among the mass of the people professing to be disciples of the Son of God has tarnished its pure and spiritual glory—yet Popery defaces its brightness; and Judaism, Mohammedanism, and Paganism entirely conceal it from hundreds of millions of the human race.

But when the Millennium arrives, the redemption of sinners will be displayed in all its splendour. The divine plan from eternity; the person of the Mediator as God manifest in the flesh; the infinite merit of his obedience, the atonement made by his sufferings

unto death, and his intercession at the Father's right hand ; the blessings resulting from the mediation of Christ, pardon and reconciliation with God, the sanctification of the soul by the Holy Ghost, communion with Jehovah here, and eternal felicity in heaven—will be distinctly understood and cordially received : and are truths that will produce sanctity of character, loyalty to God, benevolence to the whole family of man, harmony in private life, peace between nations, and an extraordinary degree of happiness ; which will be extended with the gospel which produced them, over the face of the whole globe. From generation to generation, the mass of mankind will share in these inestimable benefits, the enjoyment of which will render earth a paradise, and prepare a multitude which no man can number for the blessedness of the celestial state.

The glory of the Millennium is the unrestricted operation of the Gospel of Christ upon every individual, in his personal experience and social relations. Even now, the difference between some persons is so vast, that the contrasts of the latter day can scarcely exhibit a greater distinction. Bring vividly before your imagination, the various Missionaries and the semi-brutal subjects of their instruction. Walk with Carey and Marshman and Ward on the banks of the Ganges, around the funeral pile where the Indian widows are consumed ; and can you conceive of any thing more widely separated than those Eastern Luminaries, and the bond children of darkness whom they strive to enlighten ? Seat yourselves with Campbell and Read and Philip in a Hottentot's kraal, and you must be more besotted than the Caffrarians themselves, if you can not discern the almost incredible effects produced by the instrumentality of Vanderkemp, Kicherer, and their Brethren. From the Northern Esquimaux to the Islanders of the South Pacific, wherever a Missionary works, there the stupendous features of the Millennium may in some measure be discerned : and your own Missionaries

at Brainerd, Mayhew, Elliott, Dwight, Harmony, and Union present an exhibition in contrast with the Cherokees, Creeks, and Osages around them—something like that which the present highest portion of christianity will appear, when compared with the pre-eminent illumination, unalloyed sanctity, and ceaseless consolations which shall characterize that terrestrial day of the Lord, the type of the New-Jerusalem.

Christians of every denomination are urged to labour with all their might, that the principles of "pure and undefiled religion" may be exalted to their utmost Millennial extent and glory. In the methods adopted to introduce the benighted nations of our globe to the faith of Christ, we must co-operate; by our exertions, donations, and influence, and especially by our fervid and ceaseless implorations for the destruction of Satan's Kingdom, and for the predicted amplitude of Messiah's triumphs. Rejoice that you have seen the evangelizing of the world commence, and that you have assisted in founding the divine fabric; add stone to stone with all speed, and animate others also to work diligently, because ere long you shall hear the mandate of the Master; "go thou thy way, for thou shalt rest;" for that season prepare; and although you on earth may not feel the Millennium; you shall be admitted to the extacy of celestial bliss, and there behold the gradual progression of the church to the consummation of its promised glory; contemplate the thousand years as they rapidly and delightfully revolve; and then, after the dissolution of earth and time, you shall exult in the enjoyment of felicity without intermission and everlasting. "*The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.*" AMEN.

THE END.

NOTICE.

The Author regrets essential errata in the work ; they are now irremediable : to obviate hyper-criticism, he therefore states, that he has not deemed it necessary to notice either *literal mistakes*, whether they involve the orthography, or the *syntax* : or *verbal alterations* when the word is merely a duplicate, or a manifest oversight ; or in short, any error which does not affect the understanding of the subject. *The following require correction.*

Page 19 line 2 from the end ; instead of, its complete, &c. read, was the complete and cunning adaptation of the doctrines of the Koran to the depravity, &c.

167 line 37. *After to, insert attempt.*

201 line 1. *For and read a.*

216 line 26. *For supreey, read supremacy.*

250 line 14. *For all, read half of*

257 line 11. *For that island, read his diocese.*

290 line 30. *Insert a colon : after protracted.*

278 line 20. *For imputation, read importation.*

232 line 25. *For they, read the Reformers.*

306 line 9. *After had, insert not.*

322 line 32. *For Genevan, read general.*

421 line 23. *For Zuir, read Zion.*

422 line 38. *For law, read love.*

424 line 10. *After are, insert conjoined.*

430 line 24. *For personal, read powerful.*

438 line 26. *For overshadowed, read overshadowed.*

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Page 6 line 6 from bottom, instead of 37 read, of Ministers.

Page 42 line 12 from bottom, instead of orclae, read last note.

Page 56 line 2 from bottom, after view insert have.

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The nature of these Lectures precluded the introduction of a variety of matter, which might tend to the enlarged comprehension of the multifarious subjects that have passed under review. Defect therefore was essentially combined with the whole plan; but in some measure to obviate this unavoidable characteristic of the design; after the publication of the Lectures had been arranged, it was determined to supply the most obvious deficiencies, by annotations appended to those subjects, which seemed to demand additional explanation. Distinct and concise illustrations were required upon a number of articles introduced; especially to convey to those for whose illumination these lectures were principally delivered, more accurate views of the diversified history of the Church. These notes are still inadequate; but comprehension was one of the prominent objects; and it was neither proposed nor practicable to condense within a short popular course of addresses an expanded view of all that interests in the revolutions which the church of Christ has experienced. The following elucidations however, may have a tendency to excite a desire for more ample information upon the topics of which these Lectures form only a syllabus.

The difficulty with the Author has not been what matter he shall insert; the labour has often been very serious to ascertain what he shall reject; and from the immense mass of materials to select that only which was compatible with the avowed purpose; to embody in the smallest portraiture possible, the multiform features of the ecclesiastical world

since that day, when the followers of the Lamb began "to continue stedfast in the Apostle's doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread and of prayers," until the present period; with a prospective glance over the evangelical landscape, as it is exhibited to us in the delineations of prophecy, when in him who is greater than Solomon, "men shall be blessed, and all nations shall call him blessed; and the whole earth shall be filled with his glory. Amen."

I. Page 7. The Christian religion verified by facts.

The argument introduced in the introductory lecture, merits additional illustration for the sake of those who may never have inquired whether the Sacred Scriptures can be demonstrated to be authentic and divinely inspired. Fact is the most easily comprehensible of all evidence, and its force has thus been very luminously stated.—

"If the facts recorded in the Gospel are uncontested, and if the miracles of Jesus Christ are admitted, then his religion is substantiated by proofs more than sufficient; and without adverting to interminable controversies respecting doctrines, this point involves a general and authoritative decision.

Proofs of facts constitute the most weighty testimony, the most perfect certitude to which the human mind can attain, in things not self-evident: because it is more congenial and proportioned to the feebleness of our conceptions—because the uniform verifications of an ancient occurrence involve truths and principles essential to human nature, and of which the impression is so general, profound and vivid, that they are a prominent part of the basis upon which civil society is founded—because they are less subject to disquisitions subtlety, or artificial ratiocination—because no energy of argument can balance, much less vanquish an undeniable fact—and because an event includes at least to the grasp of our knowledge, the largest fertility of consequences evidently certain and regular. Now, facts thus demonstrate the truth of the Christian Religion: for God infinitely good and holy cannot authorize imposture, or sanction by his concurrence the seductions of the adversary; but by miracles, the apparent suspension of the laws which govern the universe, the power of God is exhibited in the most impressive manner; as it is obvious, that the order established by Omnipotence, can be deranged only by him. Hence whenever prodigies or evident interruptions of the general and pre-established harmony of things are exhibited, God is the author; and therefore every doctrine authorized by the suspensions of the ordinary laws of creation, is truth certified by the Sovereign of the Universe, if it can be evinced only, that the facts in corroboration are indubitable.

It is admitted that Christianity includes principles of faith which stagger all evidence; but mark the wonders which accompanied their original promulgation; and behold all nature obedient to the voice of him who taught them. All corporeal diseases vanish; winds and tempests are instantaneously calmed; the fury of the waves in a storm become a plain on which the human body walks; and the entombed dead arise to natural life.

If these wonders attest the religion of Jesus, one of three inferences must be chosen, a fourth cannot be invented.

It must be asserted, that God sports with the feeble reason of men, and deceives them by the exhibitions of his Omnipotence; this is Atheistic blasphemy—or that the doctrines of Christ are true, since God has confirmed them by the most extraordinary superhuman operations; this is Christian confidence—or that all the mysteries of the Gospel are enthusiastic reveries, because the alleged miracles were never performed; this is the Scowler's infidelity.

But what are the characteristics which place a fact in immovable certainty? It must be possible, involving no absurdity or contradiction—announced not by one person alone, but averred by many cotemporary and ocular witnesses, enlightened, ingenious, sincere, neither deluded nor deceivers—the fact must be interesting in its nature, and public in its exhibition, demonstrating its verity by its connection with subsequent circumstances which originate in that event, and remaining uncontadicted not only by the parties whom it may benefit, but also by those whom it offends; and if it shall have occurred at an ancient epocha, or a very distant country, that it still be detailed without alteration, and in all the genuine integrity of truth.

Apply these criteria to the sacred scriptures. The most stupendous prodigies recorded in its pages, are neither absurd, contradictory nor impossible—every circumstance as narrated, unfolds the actual presence of the writer, “that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you”—and the authenticity of the bible is sustained by traditional suffrage, constant, unanimous, and universal; circumscribing the learning of all generations, the inhabitants of all lands, and the numberless disputants of every discordant sect whether heretical or orthodox. Besides the candour and sincerity of the witnesses clothe the facts in the garb of the utmost credibility. Examine their characters—unimpeached by their implacable foes: unambitious, frank, exposing their own defects: patient, resigned, uncomplaining, having no temporal interest to seduce them, and a mereless death their only remuneration: men whom no historian has dared to contradict, by whose word the world has been transformed, and whose cause martyrdow has constantly sustained. Whether we regard the nature of the facts, or the circumstances regarding their original publication, among their foes, and immediately after they occurred, we have more than sufficient evidence of their indisputable truth and validity; because no events could be more interesting in their nature or more public in their transaction and development.

Every fact is indubitable when others incontestably certain are the necessary effects of it; but with the actions of Christ are indissolubly combined results now existing; therefore the miracles of the Saviour are undeniable. A consequence proves the principle;—streams declare a source; dependence involves an origin: and effects demonstrate a cause. The following most stupendous events either have no assignable cause, or they are inseparably concatenated with the life, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews—the transformation of the world and the conversion of the nations from idolatry to the worship of the one living and true God; and the number and fortitude and the constancy of the Martyrs. Upon this last circumstance, it is retorted, that not the hope full of immortality, but a fanatical delirium, or an ambitious desire of a great name, or their own simple credulity and facility to be deceived induced them to exult in incessant persecution. This reply falsifies all history; for the noblest devotees, the glory of the Pagan Mythology, abandoned their altars, embraced the cross, confuted the sophists, and in their tortures blessed their tormentors.

Thus it is evident, that upon a palpable fact they could not be deceived; so with respect to the miracles whic平 they themselves performed, it was impossible for them to be deluded. Irenaeus assures us that they banished diseases, revealed thoughts, spake in divers languages, and raised the dead to life. Origen, Tertullian and Eusebius, christians; Celsus; Porphyry, and Julian, Atheists, all corroborate this wondrous narrative. To these facts, let a third be subjoined: since the Apostolic era, celebrations and feasts have been uninterruptingly maintained by the disciples. On the first day of the week, they assembled to break bread; and without interruption, that day has continued in every age and country, to be most precisely and rigorously the distinctive festival of Christians for thanksgiving, prayer and repose. The ordinance of Baptism and the Lord's Supper; the certitude of Immanuel's resurrection by the designation of a weekly day to hallow the remembrance of it, are all the consequences of that event; and could not otherwise have been authorized, established and prolonged.

It must be also remembered, that the prodigies displayed by the Lord Jesus Christ, have been authoritatively verified by those who were interested in disproving and denying them. Jews, Pagans and Mohammedans all testify to the truth of the evangelical annals. John the Baptist, the Pharisees, the High Priest, Herod, Agrippa, the seven sons of Sceva, Josephus, and the Talmudists, all admit, that the God of Christians had astounded the earth by "his marvellous works." The innocence of the Redeemer is attested by Porphyry, Celsus, Julian the Apostate; and honour was appropriated to our Lord by Tiberius, Adrian, Marcus Aurelius, Antoninus, Alexander Severus, Emperors;—Pliny, Suetonius, Chalcedius, Phlegon, Thalnus, Macrobius, Lucian, Historians, detail the prominent facts of the Gospel, and the sublime virtues of the primitive christians; while the Koran consists principally of the wonders of Jesus Christ, distorted, disfigured and debased; but never disputed or denied.

That the detail of these facts has survived the lapse of ages without change is manifest; if we consider that the supposition even of any alteration involves the utmost contradiction and absurdity. No period can be specified for the corruption; no motives can be alleged to justify the fraud; no portion can be extracted to develope the forgery, and no persons can be adduced as the authors of the deception. It is contrary to all moral possibility, that any person should ever be so audacious as extensively to corrupt the Gospel; because it could not be the Pagans, the Jews or the Christians: the Heathens felt no interest in the books—the Jews and Christians would have mutually impeded each other; and even had the children of Israel not interposed, the disciples of the Lord could not have executed it. The Manuscripts were scattered from one end of the civilized world to the other, so that the whole body could not combine; a sect however willing was not able; and individuals were totally incompetent: and the allegation that the Christian system has been effectually corrupted to any extent and importance, has never been advanced by any infidel or heretic, at any period, or of any country. With respect to the epoch, it was either previous or subsequent to the first apologies of the earliest writers. But the quotations of Clemens and others are in exact conformity with the acknowledged text; and if it be replied that the change was even prior to that age, then it follows, that the Apostles and Evangelists corrupted their own genuine works; which is a supposition equally as irrational as the declaration of him who averred that the New Testament, with all the ponderous ecclesiastical Authors anterior to Constantine, was manufactured by an Impostor, or by the Emperor's command to sanction his imperial authority.—But as all men act upon views of interest, and a falsification of the volume.

which they themselves esteem sacred must have some motive—it is demanded, in what part of the Gospel can any alteration be discovered? their innocence of character precluded them from deteriorating from the efficacy of divine injunctions;—if they had been deceivers they would not have formed a yoke of severe self-denial.

The mysteriousness of some of the evangelical doctrines would infallibly have ruined their inventors; and an appeal to contemporaries as witnesses for the truth of the most incredible of all events, unless they had heard and seen them, and without the most positive and undeniable testimony of the senses would have been an act of lunacy, not the conduct of artful and cunning deceptions fabricators. To persuade persons that they have seen prodigies which never appeared, and to cite them as evidence of that which never existed, is such an excess of infatuation, that in the nomenclature of human language an epithet has not yet been discovered to express its preposterous and enormous absurdity. Consequently, it is demonstrable, that the evangelical history is an authentic and genuine narrative, celestially inspired, confirmed by divine sanction; and that the history of the church and the world, which is the result of its original promulgation, most urgently claims our attention as secondary only to the imperishable dictates of everlasting truth; which are “the light of our feet and the lamp of our path.”

II. Page 17. The Impropriety of our Juvenile books.

By the exclusion of the history of the christian church from the early course of reading, as an appendage to the sacred volume, a vicious taste in our youth is formed. Having roved among the voluptuous fictions of the fabulous ages; having been charmed with the lascious and intoxicating descriptions of the ancient Bacchanalian and sensual mythology; having imbibed a supposition sanction for their unhallowed and dominant propensities; having been taught to admire above all other personages the characters of the human butchers who tyramized over the nations in antiquity; and having been induced to suppose that the idolatrous Greece and Pagan Rome yield all the literary productions which merit attention; they turn with disgust from records that dispel the licentious phantoms of imagination, and that rivet the mind to the sober realities of the world—they discover no attraction in pages which ever represent the subjects of their semi-idolatry, the Jupiter, the Juno, the Bacchus, the Venus, with all the other fancied abominable rabble of ancient Olympus, as merely different exhibitions of that arch-devil, whom, as the Ephesians said of their idol Diana, all the world worshipped; and because they have no relish: they are dissatisfied with a volume in which every principle of error and delusion is effectually dispelled, and every movement of vice is distinctly reprobated.

In the embellishments with which unprincipled and infidel Authors have attempted to decorate the Alexanders and Caesars of the olden times; the minds of youth often forget the magnitude of their personal crimes and the deluge of misery with which they overwhelmed the nations whither their madness impelled them; hence the inflated juvenile readers become uninterested in the examples of patient suffering, humble confidence and triumphant serenity of the less noisy but more heroic warrior who, through divine grace, conquers himself; and because they hear Homer, Demosthenes, Cicero, Virgil and Horace applauded as without equals, they affect to disdain the writers who have flourished since the Christian era; all whose powers are consecrated to the service of that cause, and the illustration of that book, which alone will survive the final conflagration,

when "the elements shall melt with fervent heat, and the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved." *The attention devoted to the Books generally denominated Classic, is one of the grand sources of that infidelity of principle and vitiosity in practice, which so many of those, whose younger years elapse in the study of them, exhibit.* Let it be remembered also, that there is not less genius, much more useful knowledge, and inconceivably higher edification to be deduced from the *Tinker's Pilgrim*, than from all the *Farrago* of the Augustan age; and one of the best means to aid the cause of "Pure and undefiled Religion," to promote the virtuous principles of our youth, and to assist in the promulgation of evangelical verities, is to invert the present order of study; and instead of first imburing the mind with all the irreligion of the most preposterous Atheism, and exciting an almost inextinguishable attachment to the corruptions of the Bacchanals; to substitute the annals of the Christian church as the introduction to all other general topics, and the primary course in the historical department.

The Author is sensible, that upon this subject he is in the minority; but he has never yet found a Christian classical scholar, who did not lament the baleful effects of those associations of ideas which originated in the ribaldry of the Heathen Mythologists, to which his attention was directed when he was entering the vestibule of literature; and he has often heard distinguished Greek and Latin instructors, expressing their wish for a total change in the books prescribed for initiation into the knowledge of those languages. "It is a consummation devoutly to be wished."

III. Page 23. Did Peter ever visit Rome?

Considerable doubt attaches to the traditional fact, that Peter was martyred at Rome. Eusebius however asserts it as of unquestionable authenticity. No person could have foreseen the base purposes for which it would have been used by the Papists; however, under any circumstances, the whole Antichristian hierarchy vanishes, and leaves not a wreck behind; when its basis is an event that Scripture does not record, and the justest inferences from which render at least improbable.

IV. Page 39. The seven churches in Asia.

The Missionaries Parsons and Lisk in their late research of this evangelical district, describe the present situation of these remains of antiquity. With the exception of Laodicea, the natural destruction is not altogether so complete as prior travellers had induced us to believe; but the exploration confirms the fact, that the spiritual desolation is almost total.

V. Page 42. The independent or congregational system of Church government established by the Gospel.

Primitive Christianity in its regulations, discipline and Officers was speedily deteriorated by the corruption and especially by the ambition of men. However wonderful the anomaly, yet it was elicited at a very early period, after the death of the Apostle John. An occasional, or a voluntary, or an invited or a delegated Association^{or} and Members of Churches assuming no jurisdiction, and exercising no Lordship over the Christian Societies connected with them, is often beneficial, as such meetings promote harmony and combine exertion; but an established, enjoined, and undying body of distinct spiritual Legislators and Judges, under whatever name or by whatever pretext perpetuated, is "the tail of the old Scorpion"

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with all his venom." With regard to Church power and individual privileges: the quaint truth of one of the pristine Puritans could easily be demonstrated. Against the ancient Episcopal Hierarchy, he irresistibly urged, that there was "no consistent ground on which a christian could stand, between membership in an Independent society of Believers, and kissing the Pope's toe." In truth, all the various clerical aristocracies now existing are only bastard modifications of the Papacy; the present situation of things requiring that their most odious excrescences should be either removed or concealed.

In every age, they have displayed similar despotism in rule, absurdity and error in decision, and rottenness of principle, to that which characterized the councils who forged the chains for the minds of the inhabitants of the iron ages. Rules and laws, resolutions and acts, denunciations and canons, creeds and explicatons, replies and amendments, all are framed in these assemblies, not according to the oracles of truth, or the requisitions of equity, or evangelical freedom, or the spirit of the Gospel, but for the purposes of intellectual vassalage, and by the doctrine of expediency: and as an unavoidable consequence, their proceedings are an inextricable maze of endless inconsistencies, injustice and contradiction. But as the history of the church in modern ages will unavoidably record some memorable instances of that wondrous tergiversation and departure from rectitude, which is the most prominent feature of those ecclesiastical nuisances; and as the history of the English Puritans and Nonconformists, and the New England Congregationalists will comprise a general exposition of their platform of church government, the subject is hence transferred to that narrative, as its more appropriate department.

VI. Page 64. Extracts from the Letters of the Churches at Smyrna and Lyons respecting their persecutions.

The church of God which is at Smyrna, unto all the congregations throughout Pontus, mercy, peace and the love of God the Father, and of our Lord Jesus Christ be multiplied.

We have written unto you brethren, of such as suffered martyrdom, and of blessed Polycarp, who signed and sealed the persecution with his own blood. The beholders were amazed, seeing the flesh of the Martyrs rent with scourges, even into the inner veins and sinews, so that the most secret entrails of their bodies, their bowels were piteously to be seen. Beholding again the sharp shells of sea fish, and pebble stones strewed under the Martyrs backs and bruised bodies, with every kind of torment that could be devised. Last of all they were thrown to be torn to pieces, and be devoured of wild beasts. Germanicus valiantly endured and overcame through the grace of God, that corporeal fear of death, grated in the frail nature of man: for when the Proconsul exhorted him to relent, admonished him of his tender years, prayed him to pity his own ease being now in the flower of his youth; he without intermission, desired that with speed he might be dispatched of this cruel and wicked life. Which patience and constancy of the blessed Martyr, and of the whole Christian nation, the multitude of infidels beholding, suddenly cried out, "Remove the wicked, seek out Polycarp." He hearing the report of this cruel persecution, retained the immoveable tranquillity of his mind, and continued in the city, until at length he was persuaded to go aside for a season, where he abode with a few; occupied day and night only in prayer, making supplication after his usual manner, for the tranquillity and peace of all congregations throughout the world. Three days before he was taken, he saw in a vision by night, the pillow under his head set on fire, and

suddenly consumed to ashes; when he awaked, he interpreted his vision to them who were then present, plainly prognosticating that it should come to pass, that his life should be ended, that his body should be burned for the testimony of Christ. When the searchers were at hand, at the earnest intreaty of his friends, he fled thence unto another village, where the pursuers came, who took two boys of that place, and scourged them until one of them confessed the circumstance, and led them to the lodging of Polycarp. When they had entered in, they found him lying in an upper chamber where he might have escaped if it pleased him. But he said: *the will of the Lord be fulfilled.* For he understanding their pretence, came down, communed with them pleasantly and cheerfully, so that they which knew him not before, stedfastly eyed his comely age, marvelling that a man of such years should be taken. He commanded the table forthwith to be covered, meat to be laid on, requested them to make merry, eraved of them the space of one hour for prayer: that being granted, he rose up, went to prayer so replenished by the grace of God, that such as were present and prayed, hearing his devotion, were ravished, and many sorrowed, that so honest and godly a father should die. When he had ended his prayer, they set him on an ass, and brought him to the city being on the great Sabbath day. There met him Herod the justice of peace, and his father Nicetes, who receiving him into their chariot, persuaded him, saying: "what harm is it to say Lord Cæsar, to sacrifice, and so be saved?" At the first he answered nothing, but when they urged him he said: "I will not condescend to your counsel." They perceiving he would not be persuaded gave him very rough language, and tumbled him out of the waggon, to the bruising his shins: but he as though he had been nothing hurt nor injured at all, went bolt upright, cheerful and apace towards the theatre. When he was come upon the theatre or stage, a voice came down from heaven, which by reason of the great tumult was heard of few: *Be of good cheer, O Polycarp, and play the man.*—The speaker no man saw, but the voice was heard by many of us. In the mean time the multitude was in a rage, seeing Polycarp brought forth: the Proconsul demanded of him whether he were that Polycarp, beckoning that he should deny it, and saying: "Tender thine years," with such like persuasions, "Swear by the fortune of Cæsar, repent thee of that is past, say, remove the wicked." But Polycarp beholding with unmovable countenance the multitude round about the stage, pointing with the hand, and sighing, and looking up to heaven, said: "Remove O Lord these wicked." When the Proconsul urged and said, swear, and I will let thee go, blaspheme and defy Christ, Polycarp answered: *Fourscore and six years have I served him, neither hath he at any time ever offended me in any thing; and how can I revile my king who hath thus kept me?* The Proconsul still urged and said, "Swear by the fortune of Cæsar."—To whom, Polycarp: "If thou requirest this vain glory, that I protest the fortune of Cæsar, as thou sayest, feigning thou knowest me not who I am: here freely, I am a Christian: and if thou desirest to know the doctrine of Christianity, appoint the day and thou shall hear it." When the Proconsul said, "persuade this people:" Polycarp answered, "I have vouchsafed to confer with thee." To this the Proconsul said: I have wild beasts to devour thee unless thou repent. Polycarp answered, "bring them forth." Again the Proconsul said: "I will quiet thee with fire if thou regard not the beasts nor repent," to whom Polycarp answered: "Thou threatenest fire for an hour, which lasteth a while and quickly is quenched, but thou art ignorant of the everlasting fire at the day of judgment, and endless torments reserved for the wicked. But why lingerest thou?—dispatch as it pleaseth thee." Uttering these words, he was constant and

cheerful, and his countenance so gracious, that the Proconsul being amazed, commanded the beastie in the midst of the theatre, thrice to cry : " Polycarp confesseth himself a christian." At which saying, the multitude both of Jews and Gentiles inhabiting Smyrna shouted with a great rage, " this is that Doctor of Asia, the father of the Christians, the overthower of our Gods, who hath taught many, that our Gods are not to be adored." Then they cried with one voice, that Polycarp should be burned quickly. Therefore the multitude forthwith carried logs of wood and sticks out of their shops and booths. His hands being then bound to his back, lie, fit for an acceptable burnt sacrifice unto Almighty God, was offered saying : " O Father of thy well beloved and blessed Son Jesus Christ, through whom we have known thee : O God of the angels and powers, and of every living creature and of all sorts of just men who live in thy presence, I thank thee that thou hast graciously vouchsafed this day and this hour, to allot me a portion among the number of Martyrs, among the people of Christ, unto the resurrection of the everlasting life, both of body and of soul, in the incorruption of the Holy Ghost, among whom I shall be received in thy sight this day, as a fruitful and acceptable sacrifice, as thou hast heretofore prepared, often revealed, and now fulfilled, most faithful God who canst not lie. Wherefore for all things I praise thee, I bless thee, I glorify thee, through the everlasting High Priest, Jesus Christ thy well beloved Son, to whom, with thee and the Holy Ghost, be all glory, world without end, Amen." When he had pronounced this Amen, and finished his prayer, the executioners set the pile on fire. The flame vehemently flashed about, framing itself after the form of a vault or sail of a ship with the blustering blasts of wind, compassed the body of the Martyr within placed, as with a wall : and that which was in the midst of the same, seemed to our senses a fragrant and sweet smell, as of frankincense, or some such like precious perfume. At length when the cruel persecutors perceived the fire not to consume his body, they called for a tormentor and gave him charge to lance him in the side with a spear : which when he had done, such a stream of blood issued out of his body, that the fire was therewith quenched, so that the whole multitude marvelled. The centurion caused the body to be laid in the midst, after their accustomed manner, to be burned.

Thus it happened unto Polycarp that was martyred at Smyrna, together with twelve others out of Philadelphia.

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The servants of Christ, sojourning in Vienne and Lyons in France, to the brethren in Asia Propria and Phrygia, who have the same faith and hope of redemption with us, peace and glory and grace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

We are not competent to describe with accuracy, nor is it in our power to express the greatness of the affliction sustained here by the saints, the intense animosity of the heathen against them, and the complicated sufferings of the blessed martyrs. The grand enemy assaulted us with all his might, and by his first essays exhibited intentions of exercising malice without controul. He left no method untried to habituate his slaves to his bloody work, and to prepare them by previous exercises against the servants of God. Christians were absolutely prohibited from appearing in any houses, except their own, in baths, in the market, or in any place whatever. The grace of God however fought for us, preserving the weak, and exposing the strong, who like pillars were able to withstand him in patience, and to draw the whole fury of the wicked against themselves. These entered into the contest sustaining every species of pain and reproach. What was heavy to others, to them was light, while they were fastening to Christ, evincing indeed, that " the sufferings of this present

time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us." The first trial was from the people at large; shouts, blows, the dragging of their bodies, the plundering of their goods, casting of stones, and the confining of them within their own houses, and all the indignities which may be expected from a fierce and outrageous multitude, these were magnanimously sustained. And now being led into the forum by the tribune and the magistrates, they were examined before all the people, whether they were christians, and on pleading guilty, were shut up in prison till the arrival of the governor. Before him they were at length brought, and he treated them with great savagery of manners. The spirit of Vettius Epagathus, one of the brethren was roused; a man full of charity both to God and man, whose conduct was so exemplary, though but a youth, that he might be justly compared to old Zacharias; for he walked in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless, a man ever unrearied in acts of beneficence to his neighbours, full of zeal towards God, and fervent in spirit. He could not bear to see so manifest a perversion of justice; but being moved with indignation, he demanded to be heard in behalf of his brethren, and pledged himself to prove that there was nothing atheistical or impious among them; those about the tribunal shouting against him, for he was a man of quality, and the governor being impatient of so equitable a demand, and only asking him if he were a christian, and he confessing in the most open manner, the consequence was, that he was ranked among the martyrs. He was called indeed the advocate of the christians; but he had an advocate within, the Holy Spirit, more abundantly than Zacharias, which he demonstrated by the fulness of his charity, cheerfully laying down his life in defence of his brethren; for he was, and is still a genuine disciple of Christ, following the Lamb wheresoever he goeth. The rest began now to be distinguished. The capital martyrs appeared indeed ready for the contest, and discharged their part with all alacrity of mind. Others appeared also unready, unexercised, and as yet weak, unable to sustain the shock of such a contest: of these, ten in number lapsed, whose case filled us with great grief and unmeasurable sorrow, and dejected the spirits of those who had not yet been apprehended; who, though they sustained all indignities, yet deserted not the martyrs in their distress. Then we were all much alarmed, because of the uncertain event of confession, not that we dreaded the torments with which we were threatened, but because we looked forward unto the end, and feared the danger of apostacy. Persons were now apprehended daily of such as were counted worthy to fill up the number of the lapsed, so that the most excellent were selected from the two churches, even those by whose labour they had been founded and established. There were seized at the same time some of our heathen servants, for the governor had openly ordered us all to be sought for, who by the impulse of Satan, fearing the torments which they saw inflicted on the saints, on the suggestion of the soldiers, accused us of eating human flesh, and of unnatural mixtures, and of things not fit even to be mentioned or imagined, and such as ought not to be believed of mankind. These things being divulged, all were incensed even to madness against us; so that if some were formerly more moderate on account of any connections of blood, affinity or friendship, they were then transported beyond all bounds with indignation. Now it was that our Lord's word was fulfilled, "the time will come when whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service." The holy martyrs now sustained tortures which exceed the powers of description; Satan labouring by means of them, to extort something slanderous to christianity. The whole fury of the multitude, the governor and the soldiers, was spent in a particular manner on Sauctus of Vienne, the

deacon, and on Maturus, a late convert indeed, but a magnanimous wrestler, and on Attalus of Pergamus, a man who had ever been the pillar and support of our church, and on Blandina, through whom Christ shewed, that those things that appear unseemly and contemptible among men, are most honourable in the presence of God, on account of love to his name exhibited in real energy, and not boasting in pompous pretences. For while we all feared, and among the rest her mistress according to the flesh, herself one of the noble army of martyrs, was afraid that she would not be able to witness a good confession, because of the weakness of her body, Blandina was endued with so much fortitude, that those who successively tortured her from morning to night, were quite worn out with fatigue, and owned themselves conquered and exhausted of their whole apparatus of tortures, and were amazed to see her still breathing, whilst her body was torn and laid open, and confessed that one species of torture had been sufficient to despatch her, much more so great a variety as had been applied. But the blessed woman, as a generous wrestler, recovered fresh vigour in the act of confession; and it was an evident refreshment, support, and an annihilation of all her pains to say, "*I am a christian, and no evil is committed among us.*"

In the mean time Sanctos, having sustained in a manner more than human, the most barbarous indignities, while the impious hoped to extort something from him injurious to the gospel, from the duration and intense-ness of his sufferings, resisted with so much firmness that he would neither tell his own name nor that of his nation or state, nor whether he was a freeman or a slave; but to every interrogatory he answered in Latin. "*I am a christian.*" This he repeatedly owned was to him both name, and state, and race, and every thing; and nothing else, could the heathen draw from him. Hence the indignation of the governor and torturers was fiercely levelled against him, so that having exhausted all the usual methods of torture, they at last fixed brazen plates to the most tender parts of his body. These were scorched of course, and yet he remained upright and inflexible, firm in his confession, being bedewed and refreshed from the heavenly fountain of the water of life. His body witnessed indeed the ghastly tortures which he had sustained, being one continued wound and bruse, altogether contracted and no longer retaining the form of a human creature; in whom Christ suffering wrought great wonders confounding the adversary, and shewing for the encouragement of the rest, that nothing is to be feared where the love of the Father is: nothing painful where the glory of Christ is exhibited. For while the impious imagined, when after some days they renewed his tortures, that a fresh application of the same methods of punishment to his wounds, now swollen and inflamed, must either overcome his constancy, or by despatching him on the spot, strike a terror into the rest, as he could not even bear to be touched by the hand, this was so far from being the case, that contrary to all expectation, his body recovered its natural position in the second course of torture; he was restored to his former shape and the use of his limbs; so that by the grace of Christ, it proved not a punishment but a cure!

Biblias, a woman who had denied Christ, was led to the torture, and though at first she accused the christians of horrid impieties, yet in the midst of her tortures, being aduised, by a temporary punishment of the danger of eternal fire in hell, she recovered from her apostacy, professed herself a christian, and was added to the army of martyrs.

Many christians were thrust into the darkest and most noisome parts of the prison, where they suffered all the indignities which diabolical malice could inflict. Many were suffocated. Others though greatly afflicted, remained alive, strengthened by the Lord, and comforted and encouraged one another to constancy in the christian faith.

Pothinas, bishop of Lyons, upwards of ninets years of age, very infirm and asthmatic, panting after martyrdom was called to suffer. After a great variety of abuse, both from the populace and the magistrates he was thrown into prison and after two days expired.

Those who had denied Christ, were not by their denial of him exempt from persecution. But in their sufferings, they had not the supports, which others who stood firm in the faith, experienced. They went to execution with guilt depicted in their countenances, dejected, spiritless and forlorn. The heathen insulted them as cowards and poltroons and treated them as murderers : thus seeking to save their lives they lost them, and failed of receiving the consolations of the religion which they had renounced.

The heathen denied the rites of interment to those who suffered martyrdom. After having treated them with many indignities, they burnt them to ashes, and to prevent their resurrection, and to deter others from the hope of a future life, cast their ashes into the river Rhone ; adding, "Now let us see if they will rise again, and if their God can help them and deliver them out of our hands."

The following biographical notice is an Appendix to the first section of Lecture IV. Page 70.

Pamphilus was born at Berytus about the year 294. Having made some progress in literature in his native city, he went to Alexandria to complete his studies ; thence he removed to Caesarea where he resided the greatest part of his life, which was the principal witness of his glorious career. He had not dwelt long at Caesarea before his piety and christian virtues shone so vigorously, as to lead the church of that place to elect him as one of its Presbyters. Here it was that he formed that intimate friendship with Eusebius, the Ecclesiastical Historian, which ran parallel with life, and which caused them to concentrate their forces in opposing the blind superstition of Paganism, and in disseminating the knowledge of Christianity throughout the sphere of their exertion.

One interesting part of the character of Pamphilus undoubtedly consisted in his attachment to Biblical literature. Of this we have several valid testimonies : "Pamphilus had," says Jerome, "such an affection for a divine or ecclesiastical library, that he wrote out with his own hand the greatest part of Origen's works, which are still in the library of Caesarea ; and besides I have met," adds he, "with twenty-five volumes of Origen's Commentary upon the Prophets in his own hand writing, which I value and keep as though I had the riches of Croesus." The same writer quotes Eusebius as saying that Pamphilus "diligently read the works of the ancient authors, and continually meditated upon them."

The Cæsarian library which Jerome takes notice of, was founded by Pamphilus himself. Isidore of Seville informs us, that it contained no less than 30,000 volumes. By this information we are at once taught that Pamphilus must have possessed vast pecuniary resources, and an ambition to consecrate them entirely to the welfare of the disciples of the Redeemer ; for we have full authority to affirm, that this collection of books was made merely for the use of the church ; and to lend to those who were desirous of being instructed in the grand principles of christianity. And this is as Dr. A. Clark observes, 'the first notice we have of a circulating library being established.' Nor was the benevolent and philanthropic spirit of this eminent man to be less admired. His hand was always opened for the relief of the necessitous, and his heart ever ready to sympathize with the miserable. If he saw any embarrassed in their temporal affairs, he gave bountifully of his substance to relieve them. He devoted a considerable

portion of his property to these charitable purposes, and lived himself in the most abstemious manner, to render his ability the greater. One of the monuments of his benevolence was the school which he established at Cæsarea, for the free education of youth. No materials remain to enable us to give the plan or state the success of this academy; but, that there was a considerable one formed by his generosity, is attested by the united authorities of Cave, Fabius, and Tillemont.

But the most prominent feature in the character of Pamphilus, doubtless, was his strong attachment to 'the oracles of God,' and his earnest endeavours to propagate them. In the accomplishment of this noble design, all the energies of his mind were united, and his labours were indefatigable. 'He not only lent out,' says Eusebius, 'copies of the sacred Scriptures to be read, but cheerfully gave them to be kept by those whom he found disposed to read them; for which reason he took care to have by him many copies of the Scriptures, some of which were transcribed with his own hand, that when there should be occasion he might furnish those who were willing to make use of them.' Such was the employment, and such were the delights of this amiable man! Is it not to be wished that many who possess, perhaps, as great an ability for action, were aiming at as grand an object as Pamphilus? But another fact, illustrative of this part of his character, is too notorious to be passed over, through his having published by the assistance of Eusebius, a correct edition of the Septuagint from Origen's Hexapla. Undoubtedly, this was of peculiar advantage to the church of Christ; the benefit of Origen's immense labour was rendered more extensive; and if this edition was not the first separate one, it was certainly the most exact. This was called the Palestine edition; and was in general use from Antioch to Egypt, as that of Lueian was from Antioch to Constantinople, and that of Hesychius in Egypt.

But a character so active in the divine cause of Christianity, and likely to do so much injury to Pagan superstition, could not expect to pass through the world free from persecution. 'A city set upon a hill cannot be hid.' A glow worm may be seen but by few; but a star is exposed to the sight of all. But although Pamphilus must have been well aware of the dangers to which his exertions exposed him in such a period of severe persecution, yet the intrepidity of his mind and the goodness of his cause, taught him to brave all opposition, and to relinquish his usefulness only with his life! He was frequently brought before the civil tribunal, and as frequently he witnessed 'a good confession.' On these occasions, the eminency of his station and the purity of his character proved a temporary refuge; but at length he was brought before Urbanus, who 'having first made,' says Eusebius, 'trial of his knowledge by divers questions of rhetoric and philosophy, as well as of polite literature, required him to sacrifice. When he saw that Pamphilus refused to obey his orders, and despised all his threatenings, he commanded that he should be tortured in the severest manner. When he had again and again torn his sides with his tormenting irons, the cruel wretch, being as it were satiated with his flesh, though he had gained nothing but vexation and dishonour, ordered him to confinement in prison.' After having lain in this dungeon for a year and some months, he was called to receive the crown of martyrdom, and thus to seal by his death, those truths which it had been his chief concern to propagate by his life.

How many pleasing reflections does the contemplation of such a character afford us!

1 How vastly superior is Christianity to Paganism, and to all other systems! Have we often beheld its high supremacy in point of *Theory*,—here we may behold its infinite superiority in point of *Influence*! In

Pamphilus we see an individual consecrating all his property for the relief of the necessities of the poor; exerting all the powers of his mind in removing the mental darkness of mankind, and in promoting their best interests; disregarding all the honours of the world, and relinquishing every thing which was counter to his benevolent purpose; all this he did from the purest motives, and without noise and ostentation; and at last he cheerfully resigned his life rather than disown those principles by which he had hitherto been conducted.—Christianity defies Heathenism to give such an instance of pure benevolence.

2. What an excitement shou'd such an example be to modern Christians! Did Pamphilus manifest an unconquerable attachment to the Holy Scriptures? Did he act so extensively for truth, and effect so much good in opposition to all the difficulties which then presented themselves? Was he 'steady to his purpose,' under all the opposition he had to cope with? Did he devote all he possessed to the service of so glorious an interest?—and shall not we "go and do likewise?" Shall we be content by merely admiring his conduct, without treading in his steps?

VII. Page 72. *The origin of Councils, from Mosheim.*

"During a great part of the second century, the churches were independent of each other; nor were they joined together by association, confederacy, or any other bonds but those of charity." Each assembly was a little state, governed by its own laws; which were either enacted, or at least approved of, by the society. But in process of time, all the christian churches of a province were formed into one large ecclesiastical body; which like confederate states, assembled at certain times, in order to deliberate about the common interests of the whole. This institution had its origin among the Greeks; but in a short time it became universal; and similar assemblies were formed in all places where the gospel had been planted. These assemblies, which consisted of the deputies from several churches were called *Synods* by the Greeks, and *Councils* by the Latins; and the laws enacted in these general meetings were called *canons*, that is, rules. These councils, of which we find not the smallest trace before the middle of the second century, changed the face of the whole church, and gave it a new form; for by them the ancient privileges of the people were considerably diminished, and the power and authority of the bishops greatly augmented. The humility indeed, and the prudence of these pious prelates, hindered them from assuming all at once, the power with which they were afterwards invested. At their first appearance in these general councils, they acknowledged that they were no more than the delegates of their respective churches; and that they acted in the name and by the appointment of their people. But they soon changed this humble tone; imperceptibly extended the limits of their authority; turned their influence into dominion, and their counsels into laws; and at length openly asserted, that Christ had empowered them to prescribe to his people *authoritative rules of faith and manners.*"

VIII. Page 124. *Relics.*

Among other circumstances of this kind upon record, the following will amply exhibit the true nature and extent of the superstitious excesses then so prevalent and universal. The possession of one of a fictitious Virgin's teeth called St. Apollonia, was proclaimed to be an infallible preservative against all the complaints incident to the gums, and a certain antidote both to the decay and loss of the teeth. Nothing less than that

which happened could have been anticipated. At first one tooth only was to be found most solemnly deposited and most sacredly guarded in the utmost magnificence in some principal and very distant Cathedral; but in a short time they had been so multiplied by miracles, as the Monks and Friars who sold them impudently vociferated, that every person who could afford the price of so inestimable an amulet, wore one appended to his neck. One of the Bishops, whether from envy at the gains, to make an exposure of the robbery by an experiment; or from Christian indignation at this illusive uncomeliness, to ridicule its silliness, directed, that all the owners of the saint's genuine teeth within his diocese, should deposit them under his paternal care prior to some specified day. At the time appointed, the mass was measured, and in one small district only, to the Saint was appropriated no less than three bushels of Teeth, including the tenants of the mouth which apertain to all the usual domestic animals. This discovery destroyed all confidence in the Saint and her reliques, and the culling of teeth was displaced for some other absurdity, not less contemptible in the intitulated devotee, and not less profitable to the depraved and artful Monk.

IX. Page 196. *Relics and False Miracles.*

The cheat of pretended Relics is well known: for whereas Baronius confesses there were not above four nails of the cross in all, they produce several hundreds of them. And because they know they can be bold with the silly people, the Archbishop of Mentz bragged that he had the Flame of the Bush that Moses beheld burning: and a Leg of the Ass on which Christ rode into Jerusalem was given by a Priest of Rome to a Dutchman. Most of the Romish saints are a cheat, and they do but blush in the Red Letters in the Calendar. And some of those who have the glorious title of Saints bestowed upon them, scarcely deserve the name of Men. But what said the Cardinal Legate when he came to bestow his blessing upon the people that came to see him, and when he took notice of their blind devotion and bigotry? *If the people will be deceived, let them be deceived, in God's Name.* They were pleased with the cheat, and it is not to be questioned that he was so too.

St. Anthony, you must know, has a great command over fire, and a power of destroying by flashes of that element, those who incur his displeasure.—A certain monk of St. Anthony, one day assembled his congregation under a tree, where a magpie had built her nest, into which he found means to convey a small box filled with gunpowder, and out of the box hung a long thin match that was to burn slowly, and was hidden among the leaves of the tree. As soon as the monk or his assistant had touched the match with a lighted coal, he began his sermon. In the mean while, the magpie returned to her nest, and finding in it a strange body which she could not remove, she fell into a passion, and began to scratch with her feet and to chatter most unmercifully. The friar affected to hear her without emotion, and continued his sermon with great composure; only he would now and then lift up his eyes towards the top of the tree, as if he wanted to see what was the matter. At last, when he judged the match was near reaching the gunpowder, he pretended to be quite out of patience; he cursed the magpie, and wished St. Anthony's fire might consume her, and went on again with his sermon; but had scarcely pronounced two or three periods, when the match on a sudden produced its effects, and blew up the magpie with its nest; which miracle wonderfully raised the character of the Friar, and proved afterwards very beneficial to him and to his convent.

APPENDIX.

The following is an Appendix to the third section of Lecture XI. Page 207

THE AWFUL CONSEQUENCES OF PAPAL INFLUENCE AND PAPAL DOMINION.

*Proh Dolor! hos tolerare potest Ecclesia Poros
Duntaxat Ventri, Veneri, Somnoque, vacantes?*

*Have you never seen a Drone possess at ease
What would provide for ten industrious Bees?*

It is amazing that the Christian religion, whose characteristic is love and humility, should be so far debased, as to carry no other marks than those of cruelty and pride; that vows of poverty should entitle men to the riches of the whole world; that professions of chastity should fill countries with uncleanness; that solitary Anchorites should engross the pomps of the city; and that the servant of servants should become the king of kings! but what contradictions are not designing men capable of, when the enlargement of their power is in view? It was with this view that anicular confessions were introduced; that a new hell of purgatory was invented; and the power of creating even their own God, was blasphemously assumed. By these arts, came the secrets of families into the bands of the priests; by these arts, they seized on the purses of whole nations; and by these arts they arrived to be idols of the people, who were glad to part with their estates, with their liberties, and their senses too, to these spiritual usurpers.

Not to mention the follies of other nations, British chronicles can inform us to what a degree bigotry had once prevailed, of which let this instance suffice: John Bab, an author of unquestioned fidelity, who was himself a Carmelite Friar, informs us, in his acts of English Votaries, that in the year 1017, king Canute, by the superstitious counsel of Achel-nutus, then Archbishop of Canterbury, was prevailed upon to believe that monks' bastards were his own children, and that Fulbertus, the old Bishop of Carnot in France, was even then snickred by the Virgin Mary: nor did he stop here, but after having burdened the land with the payment of that Romish tribute called Peter's pence, he went to Winchester, where, by the aforementioned Bishop's advice, he formally resigned his regal crown to an image, constituting it then king of England!

Thus was a mighty king converted to be the tool of his Priests, and thereby became the darling of the Church, whose practice then was, not only to feed upon the spoils of the people, but even to make their monarch a prey to their ambition. And in those times a prince acquired the title of good or bad, not from his conduct in the secular government of his subjects, but according as he was either more or less, a promoter of the grandeur of his clergy. Thus Canute, though an usurper and a tyrant could merit a canonization; whilst king John, from whom was received that great security of their liberties, the Statute of Magde Charta, merely for not encouraging the corruptions and spiritual tyranny of the Romish Church, was branded with the name of Apostate, and forced at length, by an usurping Priesthood, to hold his crown as tributary to the see of Rome. When the kings where thus managed, it is no wonder that the laity followed their example submitting their necks to the same priestly yoke.

The reader will no doubt, be curious to know, how the spiritual societies came to possess such prodigious temporal estates; for the amount of the property owned by the monks, prior to the Reformation, included from fourteen to seventeen parts out of twenty of the whole land of the different nations. The first monks we read of were in the middle of the

third century ; men whom the persecution of the heathen emperors compelled to live in deserts, and who being by a long course of solitude, rendered unfit for human society, chose to continue in their monastic way, even after the true cause of it ceased.

The example of these men was soon followed by a number of crazy devotees, who were so ignorant of true religion, as to think that their way to heaven lay through wild and uninhabited deserts and who, finding that they had not charity enough to observe the precept of Christ, *i.e.* "loving their neighbour as themselves," were resolved to have no neighbours at all ; thereby frustrating the design of Christianity, which was to establish the good of society.

The next monks were a set of worthless, but ambitious wretches, who, having no way of making themselves famous in the world, retired out of it ; where they reverenced idle ceremonies of their own institution, where they pretended conferences with angels, with the Virgin Mary, and even with God Almighty ; not unlike Numa, the high-priest of the heathen Romish church, who abused the people with stories of his nightly interviews in a cave with the goddess *Aegeria*. At length, these holy cheats, to gain yet more veneration, began to practice on their bodies the most cruel severities, till at last they were worshipped by the thoughtless mob as saints : imitating in some measure, the example of that heathen monk, Empedocles, who, to be thought a God, leapt into the burning mount *Etna*.

After this, designing men, who saw how great an influence these pretended Saints had over mankind, took upon themselves the same exterior form of godliness, thereby not only to raise an empty name, as the former had done, but to enrich themselves at the expence of the deluded multitude. From hence flowed those many profitable religious maxims :—" that to give to the Church, was charity towards God, and as such, would atone for a multitude of sins, were they ever so heinous .—that the church was not the congregation of the faithful, as St. Paul fancied it to be, but the body of the priests :—that the priest, though ever so like the devil, was God's representative, and ought to be honoured as such :—that there was such a place as purgatory, and that the prayers of the monks like Orpheus' harp, was the only music that could mollify the tyrant of that place, who being their very good friend, would release a poor soul at any time for their sake :—that* whispering all secrets in the ear of a priest, was the only cure for a sick soul :—that every priest had the power of pardoning all sins except those only which were committed against himself :—that indulgences purchased in fee, could entitle a man and his heirs to merit heaven by sinning :—and lastly, that the priest could by virtue of a hocus pocus, *quit scores with his Creator by creating him.*" These, and such like money-eating tenets, soon drew the whole wealth of the laity into the hands of these contemners of the world, and all its pomps and vanities ; who not only flourished in Egypt and Italy, where they first sprang up, but were spread through all Christendom, and began quickly to vie in power and riches with the greatest monarchs, even in their own territories, till at last, kings and princes themselves, were proud of becoming monks and abbots.

A minute detail of the divers religious orders which swarmed in all parts of Europe is unnecessary, as the portraiture of those who devoured and consumed Britain will exhibit a correct specimen of the whole fraternity.

The Benedictines.—The first of these that prevailed, was the order of the Benedictines, whose rule was introduced into Britain by Augustin the

*There is a beast mentioned by Pliny, whose bite can only be cured by whispering in the ear of an ass.

monk, in the year 596. The founder of this order was St. Bennet, who in his own life time erected twelve monasteries. The rules that this great saint left behind him, although the papists affirm that they were dictated to him by the Holy Ghost, are stuffed with the most trifling and superstitious ceremonies; and his whole seventy-three chapters contain but four wholesome precepts, two of which only, that relate to eating and drinking, his followers observe; neglecting the other two, which are the fundamentals of their order, enjoining humility and poverty; for in his seventh chapter, St. Bennet assigns twelve degrees of humility for his monks to practice; which how well they comply with, you may find by the humble titles of the abbots of Mount Cassin, the head monastery of his order, of which himself was first abbot.

The titles of the abbots of Mount Cassin,—“ Patriarch of the Sacred Religion, Abbot of the Sacred Monastery of Mount Cassin, Duke and Prince of all Abbots and Religions, Vice Chancellor of the kingdom of both the Sicilies, of Jerusalem, of Hungaria, Count and Governor of Campania, and Terra de Lavoro, and of the Maritime Province, Vice Emperor, and Prince of Peace.” In his fifty ninth chapter, the same saint enjoins poverty to all his disciples; and in obedience to this rule, the above mentioned monastery of Mount Cassin so renounced the world, as to be possessed but of “four bishopricks, two dukedoms, twenty counties, thirty six cities, two hundred castles, three hundred territories, four hundred and forty villages, three hundred and six farms, twenty three sea ports, thirty three islands, two hundred mills, and one thousand six hundred and sixty two churches.” This was their holy poverty; and thus you may see how religiously these ten rules have been observed, and how spiritually the followers of St. Bennet retreated from the world in Italy; who were soon imitated in some of these kinds of holy self-denials, by their pious brethren in England, as you may learn from the vast numbers of rich abbeys which the Benedictines were possessed of. These were the humble priests from whom King Henry II. received the discipline of eighty lashes, for having like an undutiful son of the church, dared to contend in power with their patron Thomas a Becket, whose stirrup he had been obliged to hold, whilst that meek Prelate mounted.

As these monks began to be notorious to the world for their obscenities and luxury; in the year 912, Oden Abbot of Cluny, took upon him to correct their abuses, and gave rise to the Cluniacs; who were the same year translated by Alphreda, Queen of England; for who more proper to promote superstition than a zealous ignorant woman! However, to shew how thoroughly these men reformed upon St. Bennet’s followers, especially in point of humility, they were not settled one whole century, before the Abbot of Cluny contested the title of Abbot of Abbots, with those of Mount Cassin.

The next order was that of the Carthusians, first established in the year 1086, in the desert of Chartreuse in Grenoble, by one Bruno, who was thereunto moved by hearing a dead man cry out three times, “That he was condemned by the just judgment of God;” which was a very plain precept for building monasteries! This man professed to follow the rule of St. Bennet, adding therennto many great austeries by way of reformation; amongst others he ordained, that they ought to be satisfied with a very little space of ground about their cells, after which, let the whole world be offered unto them, they ought not to desire a foot more. This, I suppose, they have construed to signify a foot more than the whole world: for their cells, even in St. Bernard’s time, became stately palaces, and their little spaces of ground, stretched themselves into great tracts of land. They first settled themselves in England in the year 1180, and in

a very short time had gained as much wealth by their vows of poverty as any other order.

The Cistercians, so called from Citeaux, where they first assembled, and soon after admitted St. Bernard for their head, from whence they are styled Bernardines, were another reformation upon the Benedictines.

St. Bernard himself founded one hundred and sixty monasteries; who at first would have no possessions, but lived by alms, and the labour of their own hands; which being too apostolick a life for monks, they soon grew as weary of poverty and industry as their neighbours; and in a little time rivalled those, upon whom they pretended to reform, in wealth, luxury, wantonness, and such like monkish virtues. At their first institution, they wore black monkish habits, till the Virgin Mary, out of her great love to these friars, came down from heaven on purpose to reform their dress, as being the most essential part of their order. She appeared herself to their second abbot, bringing a white cowl in her hand, which she put upon his head, and at the same instant, the cowls of all the monks then singing in the choir, were miraculously turned to the same colour. Thus did the Blessed Virgin change the habits of the Cistercians from black to white, as they had before altered their lives, from a sad melancholy retirement, to a merry jovial society; black being no more fit for a jolly priest, than white is for a mourful penitent. Besides, the old monk Satan being represented as black, the Holy Virgin was unwilling perhaps, that her friends should be like him in dress, though they resembled him in every thing else. These locusts swarmed first in England, about the year 1132, and continued there in the innocent exercise of their sanctity; a remarkable instance of which was their poisoning of king John at Swineshead in Lincolnshire, an abbey of the holy Cistercian order.

There was another sort of religious order in the church of Rome, who were called Canons. These were to live in common, and to have but one table, one purse, and one dormitory. But as many of them began to abate of the strictness of their first rules, a new sect sprang up, that pretended to reform upon the rest, and these were called Regular, whereas the other by way of reproach, were styled Secular. They all pretended to have received three rules from St. Augustine, two of which, Erasmus and Hospinian proved to be forgeries, and affirm, that the third was not written for his clergy, but for the use of some pious women, who lived in common under the conduct of his sister. When Canons began, is not certain; but the first Regulars we read of, are those whom Pope Alexander II. sent from Lucca to St. John Lateran. The Regular Canons were so irregular, and guilty of such abominable crimes, that even Pope Boniface VIII. was forced to drive them away, and for the peace of the church, to place Secular Canons in their room. Berners in the year 636, first introduced these Augustinians into England, who strictly followed the example of their brethren of St. John Lateran.

The Præmonstratenses, who followed the same rule with the former, were founded by St. Norbert, about the year 1120, at a place which the Blessed Virgin pointed out to him, and which therefore was Pre-monstre, or foreshewn. These monks, to get a greater esteem in the world after the death of their founder, published, that he had received his rule, curiously bound in gold, from the hands of St. Austin himself, who appeared to him one night, and said thus; "Here is the rule that I have written, and if my brethren observe it, they like my children, need to fear nothing at all in the day of judgment." Indeed these pious fathers, for their great security in the last day, have firmly adhered to one of his precepts, that commands them to love one another. What confirms this suspicion is, their declaration in the year 1273; in which, after having acknowledged

that women are worse than the most venomous aspicks and dragons, they resolved never to have any more to do with them.

The next order is that of St. Gilbert, a little crooked schoolmaster, born in Lincolnshire; who by reason of his deformity, despairing to bring the women to answer his lewd inclinations in a secular manner, was resolved to make religion subservient to his purposes; and to this end he founded thirteen monasteries, containing both sexes together, to the number of seven hundred men, and fifteen hundred women. This order of the Gilbertines, was established at Sempringham, in the year 1148, and was thence called the Sempringham Order; but the disgusting characteristics exhibit such an outrage on common decency, that delicacy compels us to suppress further particulars.

The Mathurines so called from their founder John Matha, were likewise styled Trinitarians, because they lay under an obligation of dedicating all their churches to the holy Trinity; they professed the rules of St. Austin, and added to them several others; amongst which is that remarkable one of riding upon an ass, the only thing in which I can find these godly fathers imitate Christ. They were instituted in the year 1207, and settled in England in the year 1257. The professed original design of their establishment, was for the enlargement of captives; and whatsoever substance fell into their hands, was to be divided into three equal parts, one of which was to be remitted to Christian slaves for their redemption, whilst the other two were to remain in possession of these charitable bankers, as a satisfaction for their great pains in making such a return, which a merciful Jew would have done more faithfully, and for a tenth part of the reward. But two parts in three being too scanty a recompence for the great toil of a lazy friar, these Mathurines, having no other God but money, to approve themselves true Trinitarians to that deity, often cheated the poor captive of his third part, rather than they would divide the substance.

This was the ceremony of the Ass.—In several churches in France, in early ages they celebrated a festival in commemoration of the Virgin Mary's flight into Egypt. It was called the Feast of the Ass. A young girl richly dressed, with a child in her arms, was set upon an ass superbly caparisoned. The ass was led to the altar in solemn procession. *Te Deum* was said in great pomp. The ass was taught to kneel in proper places; a hymn no less childish than impious, was sung in his praise; and when the ceremony was ended, the priest, instead of the usual words with which he dismissed the people, brayed three times like an ass; and the people, instead of their usual response, we bless the Lord, brayed three times in the same manner.

This ridiculous ceremony was not, like the festival of fools, and some other pageants of those ages, a mere farcical entertainment exhibited in a church, and mingled as was then the custom, with an imitation of some religious rites. It was an act of devotion performed by the ministers of religion, and by the authority of the church.

These eight religious orders grasped the greater part of the property in England. Four other monkish tribes held no possessions of their own, but being like the frogs in Egypt in numbers and ubiquity, virtually were masters of the island, as it was deemed a crime equal to sacrilege, to deny them admission to any place which they condescended to honour with their presence.

The Franciscans or Grey Friars, were instituted in the year 1206, by St. Francis, whose first prank of holiness was robbing his father, for which pious act, being disinherited, he, like a true rante, stript himself stark naked, and ran away to a chapel near Assisy in Umbria, where being a beggar himself, he began a begging order; which being founded on

sloth and idleness, drew in so many converts, that St. Francis, even in his life time, saw two thousand convents of his own monks, all mumpers, gypsies, vagrants, and such like persons, taking upon him his profession of sanctity, which agreed so well with their own inclinations. It were endless here to enumerate those many ridiculous and blasphemous miracles with which his lying legend is filled; such as the bearing the marks of Christ upon his body, which were unprinted there by Christ himself; such as his conversing intimately with the Virgin Mary; such as his healing the lame and blind, nay, and even raising the dead to life. Miracles, upon the strength of which, his blind followers have not hesitated to publish him greater than John the Baptist, and all the apostles, and to affirm that a roll from heaven declared him to be the "Grace of God." Nay, they have not been ashamed to call him Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews." Relying upon the sincerity of the author of his legend, I mean Lucifer, whose seat this great saint fills in heaven, who being once abjured by a priest, answered, that "there were only two men marked alike. Christ and St. Francis."

The Dominicans or Black Friars, took their rise in the year 1215, from that Godly Butcher St. Dominick, whose catholick zeal was first manifested in the barbarous croisade which he set on foot against those innocent people the Albigenes, of whom above one hundred thousand were massacred at once, by this saint's instigation; for at a smaller priece of blood he could not hope to purchase a canonization in a church, which was so well stocked with such kind of saints before. To give yet a farther instance of his Christian charity, when he saw how the number of heretics was diminished by his wholesome severities, like a true high-church champion, he listed into his order a set of merciless ruffians, whom he styled the militia of Jesus Christ; whose employment was to cut the throats of all those who were so schismatical as to dissent from him in opinion. It was he also who founded that merciful court of justice, called the Inquisition, nor did he want for miracles any more than his brother St. Francis: for though he had no such bodily marks, yet he received the Holy Ghost with the same glory of a flaming tongue as the apostles did; and whereas Christ being *Verbum Dei*, only proceeded from the mouth of God, St. Dominick was seen to come from his breast. Nay farther, he like St. Paul was ravished into the third heaven, where seeing none of his own order he complained to Jesus Christ of it; who exhibited his mother, the Virgin Mary, cherishing vast numbers of his followers in a manner that delicacy compels us to conceal. This diabolical sect pretended to follow the rule of St. Austin, and multiplied so fast, that in the space of two hundred and seventy years, they had one thousand one hundred and forty three convents.

The Carmelites, or White Friars, pretend that the prophet Elias was the first Carmelite, who obtained of our Saviour at the time of his transfiguration on Mount Carmel, this grand privilege, that his order should remain till the end of the world. The true time of their foundation, was in the year 1122, by Albert, patriarch of Jerusalem, who gathered together a few Hermites, that lived on Mount Carmel, and gave them the pretended rule of Saint Basil. When Palestine was taken by the Saracens, they flocked into Europe, where Pope Honorius IV. altered their habits, and for an indication of their humility, dubbed them Christ's Uncles, ordering them to be called Brothers of the Virgin Mary. Innocent IV. upon their parting with that heretical clause in one of their rules, "that they only ought to hope for salvation from our Saviour," like a true Pope, granted them many immunities and privileges; whose example was followed by Pope John XXIII. he being therunto moved by a vision of the Blessed Virgin, who according to his pretended usual familiarity, accosted his

holiness in these words : " By express command of Me and my Son, thou shalt grant this privilege, that whosoever enters this my order shall be free from guilt and punishment of their sins, and eternally saved." Urban IV. was likewise favourable unto them : as was Eugenius VI. who mitigated their rule, and permitted them to eat flesh, as a reward for their having burned alive one Thomas, brother of their own order, for blasphemously affirming, that the abominations of the church of Rome needed a reformation.

This successive friendship of Popes to them, increased their convents to a number not inferior to that of any other order. And they made such good use of the Virgin Mary's favour in exempting them from the guilt of sin, that Nicholas of Narbona, general of their order, after having reproached them with their hypocrisy and abominations, in the year 1270, retired from their society, being no longer able to bear with their scandalous lives. They passed over into England about the year 1265, and had for their general St. Symon Stock, so called from his living in a hollow tree.

The Austin Friars derive their original from the same person with the Regular Canons, and by the same forgery. In short, their beginning was founded upon this ridiculous story, from their own legends : It happened on a certain occasion, as Pope Alexander IV. lay half asleep and half awake, that the great St. Augustine, though dead and rotten so ne hundred years before, appeared to him under a dreadful figure, having a head as big as a tun, and the rest of his body as small as a reed ; by which mysterious form, his holiness immediately knew the saint, and concluded that he ought to found an order to this Holy Father, whose head could not be at rest in the grave for want of a body. And this gave rise to these mendicant Augustinian Friars, who being confirmed by following popes, increased so prodigiously as to have in a few years above two thousand convents of men, and three hundred of women. They passed from Italy into England, in the year 1252 ; and at their arrival a raging sickness broke out in London, and spread over the whole kingdom, as a presage of the destruction and plague, which these vermin would in time bring upon the nation.

The Hospitalers of St. John of Jerusalem, and the Knight Templars, followed the rule of St. Augustine in many points, but were wholly excluded from the exercise of the canonical office : their vow was to receive, to treat and defend pilgrims, and also to maintain with force of arms the Christian religion in their country ; none were admitted amongst them, but those who were of noble extraction, whilst the religious societies were for the most part composed of the dregs of the earth ; and they acquired to themselves such immense treasure, as procured them the envy and hatred of all orders ; which was the true cause of the total extirpation of the Templars, and contributed to the diminution of the power and revenue of the Hospitalers, who are now called Knights of Malta.

Not inserting therefore these two military societies, we shall find that the number of religious orders amounted exactly to twelve ; two plagues more than ever Egypt felt, and of a much more dreadful nature. For Moses only turned their rivers into blood ; whereas the monks, by their persecutions converted the whole nation into a sea of blood : he sent frogs, lice, and flies into all their quarters, much less troublesome vermin than those mendicant friars, who swarmed in all the private families : he called for murrain upon the Egyptian cattle, and for boils upon the flesh of their inhabitants ; and what were the religious orders less, than the consumers of the substance, and the corruption of the people ? He commanded hail and locusts, which destroyed only one season's crop ; but these sauctified

caterpillars devoured the land for ages together. He caused a darkness which soon passed away; but the eclipse which these men brought upon the light of the gospel, endured for more than twelve hundred years. And lastly, the first-born only, in that unhappy land were slain by the angel of God; whereas in that, then much more miserable country, those messengers of the devil, sacrificed whole families to their covetousness and lust. That men should desire the onions of Egypt is no wonder; but that they should long for its very plagues, is a folly peculiar only to superstition.

The rules of the Nuns were exactly the same with those of their brethren the Friars, in each respective order, to whom they served only as an appendix or house of ease. All that may truly be affirmed of them is, that they were a set of silly superstitious women, who thought it to be a piece of spiritual devotion to be subservient to the monks, though it were in gratifying the lusts of the flesh; and bore to the world the face of chaste christian sisters, whilst, like a Turkish seraglio, they carried in private the teeming marks of the labour of their ghostly fathers.

A plague exceeding all the rest succeeded the Reformation, and was contrived by the Mother of the Abominations of the earth to overthrow the consequences of that glorious event. The Jesuits sprang up in the year of our Lord 1540. Their first founder was Ignatius Loyola, a Spanish soldier, who collecting together all the different Monastic rules of preceding orders, added thereunto some extraordinary ones of his own, particularly this: "that the general, provincials, and superiors of his order, may dispense with all laws human and divine, dissolve all oaths and vows, and free men from the obligation of all rules and decrees." They were called Jesuits, from a pretended vision of God the Father, who appeared visibly to St. Ignatius Loyola, and desired his Son Jesus Christ, who stood by loaden with a heavy cross, to take a special care both of him and his companions, which Christ promised he would not fail to do at Rome. This pestiferous sect multiplied so fast, that in the year 1668, Ribadiniera reckons that they possessed thirty one provinces, twenty one professed houses, thirty three noviciates, ninety six residential houses, and two hundred and ninety three colleges, besides their first college, which they pretend was in the womb of the Virgin Mary. These Jesuits are much the most dangerous vermin of all those who pretend to the name of Religions, inasmuch as they declare, no villainy, no treachery nor cruelty, to be criminal, provided it tends to the benefit of their society. And by this means, whenever a nation is so unfortunate as to be overrun with this diabolical crew, no one member of the community can promise himself a security either to his life, honour or estate. Nay, the person of a monarch is not exempted from danger, when he is once become an object of Jesuitical spleen; as was notoriously manifested in the whole series of the reign of king Henry IV. of France, whose life was many times attempted by these ghostly fathers, before they accomplished their wicked ends. To pass over many others, I shall only mention three of their most remarkable conspiracies. The first was that of Peter Barriere, a soldier, engaged to commit the murder by Christopher Able, curate of St. Andre des Ares, and by Varade, the rector of the Jesuits' College. The former told him, "that by such an act, he would gain great glory, and paradise." The latter, "that the enterprise was most holy, and that with good constancy and courage, he ought to confess himself, and receive the blessed sacrament," which he accordingly did; and being thus Jesuitically prepared, he embarked in the attempt, but, whilst he was watching an opportunity to put his bloody design in execution, was timely discovered, and received the due reward of his villainy.

The second conspirator was Jean Chastel, son to a draper in Paris, and by his own confession, bred up among the Jesuits in their king-killing doc-

trine ; and being persuaded by them, that the murder of king Henry IV. would atone for all his past sins, and merit heaven, he attempted it by stabbing that monarch in the mouth with a knife ; which occasioned this remarkable saying of the king's—" It seems then, that it is not enough that the mouths of so many good men have testified against the Jesuits as my enemies, if they be not also condemned by my own mouth." It was for this fact that these ghostly fathers were banished France, and a column was erected on the very place where the parricide's house stood, in memory of them, and of their assassin disciples.

The last and most effectual regicide, whom these fathers employed, was that bold and bloody villain Ravaillac, who gave Henry IV. his mortal stab, on May 14, 1610, after he had escaped above fifty conspiracies, most of them contrived by Priests against his life. That the Jesuits employed this murderer, we have the testimony of Father Paul, who lived at that time ; and, as he was counsellor of state to the republic of Venice, was perfectly well acquainted with the intrigues of all the courts of Europe. He tells us that the Jesuits were the trainers up of Ravaillac and king-killers, and that they were the authors of the death of this great prince.

It were tedious to enumerate the murders, treasons, rebellions, blasphemies, and such like crimes, for which this society has been banished out of France, from Dantzie, from the Venetian territories, out of Thorn and Cracovia, and Bohemia ; not to mention that inhuman contrivance of theirs in England, to blow up both a king and parliament at once.

The following is the Jesuits' manner of consecrating both the persons and weapons employed for the murdering of kings and princes, by them accounted heretics.

" The person whose silly reasons the Jesuits have overcome with their more potent arguments, is immediately conducted into their Sanctum Sanctorum, designed for prayer and meditation. There the dagger is produced, carefully wrapt up in a linen safeguard, inclosed in an ivory sheath, engraven with several enigmatical characters, and accompanied with an Agnus Dei : certainly a most monstrous copulation, so unadvisedly to intermix the height of murderous villainy, and the most sacred emblem of meekness, together.

" The dagger being unsheathed, is hypocritically bedewed with holy water ; and the handle, adorned with a certain number of coral beads, put into his hand ; thereby ascertaining the credulous fool, that as many effectual stabs as he gives the assassinated prince, so many souls he should redeem out of purgatory on his own account. Then they deliver the dagger into the Parricide's hand, with a solemn recommendation in these words.—

"Elected son of God, receive the sword of Jephtha, the sword of Samson, which was the jaw-bone of an ass, the sword of David wherewith he smote off the head of Goliath, the sword of Gideon, the sword of Judith, the sword of the Macabees, the sword of Pope Julius II., wherewith he cut off the lives of several princes, his enemies, filling whole cities with slaughter and blood : go prosper, prudently courageous ; and the Lord strengthen thy arm." Which being pronounced, they all fall upon their knees, and the superior of the Jesuits pronounces the following exorcism : " Attend. O ye cherubims ; descend and be present, O scraphims ; you thrones, you powers, you holy angels, come down and fill this blessed vessel, *the parricide*, with eternal glory, and daily offer to him, for it is but a small reward, the crown of the blessed Virgin Mary, and of all the holy patriarchs and martyrs. He is no more concerned among us, he is now of your celestial fraternity. And thou, O God most terrible and inaccessible, who yet hast revealed to this instrument of thine in thy dedicated place of our prayer and meditation, that such a prince is to be cut off as a tyrant and a heretic,

and his dominions to be translated to another line ; confirm and strengthen, we beseech thee, this instrument of thine, whom we have consecrated and dedicated to that sacred office, that he may be able to accomplish thy will. Grant him the habergeon of thy divine omnipotency, that he may be enabled to escape the hands of his pursuers. Give him wings, that he may avoid the designs of all that lie in wait for his destruction. Infuse into his soul the beams of thy consolation, to uphold and sustain the weak fabric of his body ; that contemning all fears, he may be able to shew a cheerful and lively countenance in the midst of present torments or prolonged imprisonments ; and that he may sing and rejoice with a more than ordinary exultation, whatever death he undergoes."

" This exorcism being finished, the parricide is brought to the altar, over which at that time hangs a picture containing the story of James Clement, a Dominican Friar, with the figures of several angels protecting and conducting him to heaven. This Clement was accounted a blessed martyr for his barbarous murder of Henry III, king of France. This picture the Jesuits shew their cully ; and at the same time presenting him with a celestial coronet, rehearse these words—' Lord, look down, and behold this arm of thine, the executioner of thy justice ; let all thy saints arise, and give place to him :' whicb ceremonies being ended, there are only five Jesuits deputed to converse with, and keep the parricide company ; who, in their common discourse, make it their business, upon all occasions, to fill his ears with their divine wheedles ; making him believe, that a certain celestial splendour shines in his countenance, by the beams whereof they are so overawed, as to throw themselves down before him, and to kiss his feet ; that he appears now no more a mortal, but is transfigured into a deity ; and lastly, in a deep dissimulation, they bewail themselves, and feign a kind of envy at the happiness and eternal glory which he is so suddenly to enjoy ; exclaiming thus before the credulous wretch—' Would to God, the Lord had chosen me in thy stead, and had so ordained it by these means, that being freed from the pains of purgatory, I might go directly without let to Paradise !' but if the person whom they imagined proper to attempt the parricide, prove any thing squeamish, or reluctant to their exhortations, then, by nocturnal scarecrows and affrighting apparitions, or by the suborned appearances of the Holy Virgin, or some other of the saints, even of Ignatius Loyala himself, or some of his most celebrated associates, they terrify the soon retrieved misbeliever into a compliance, with a ready prepared oath, which they force him to take, and thereby they animate and encourage his staggering resolution. Thus, these villainous and impious *doctors in the art of murder and parricide*, sometimes by the terrors of punishment, sometimes by the allurements of merit, inflame the courage of the unwary, and having entangled them in the nooses of sacrilegious and bloody attempts, precipitate both soul and body into eternal damnation."

This is the Christian method by which the Jesuits clear themselves from their enemies : how happy then must that nation be where Loyolists flourish !

" This account of the religious orders in the Papal Hierarchy, is compiled from statements which the monks themselves have recorded, and for the truth of which they are witnesses and vouchers ; and if so ridiculous a scene of superstition, falsehood and blasphemy, as that which appears in the original and progress of every order, be not sufficient to create an aversion from Popery, even in its most zealous advocates, they must have lost all sense either of Liberty or Religion.

X. Page 245. *Luther's magnanimous address before the Imperial Diet at Worms in 1521.*

The history connected with Luther's public appearance before all the assembled dignitaries of the German Empire, with the irrefragable defence of himself and his doctrines which he there delivered, constitutes so splendid, unique and interesting an occurrence in modern ecclesiastical history, that all its concomitant events require more circumstantial detail than could be incorporated in the lecture.

Prior to the meeting of the Diet, Pope Leo had exerted his utmost influence with the Elector of Saxony, and the then Emperor Charles, not only to cause the writings of Luther to be burned, but also to have him delivered up at Rome. Nor did he neglect the use of base and small means to accomplish his ends. He offered to one of the most learned men of that time many offices and great emoluments, if he would resolve to write against Luther. But this man is said to have replied to the Pope : "That one single leaf of Luther's writings gave him more instruction than all former wisdom." An attempt was even made to bribe Luther with money. It is related, that 2000 guilders were promised secretly to be paid to him ; and in addition to this, great offices and titles of honor would be conferred on him, if he would promise to be silent—but that the emissaries who had been commissioned to make these overtures to him, had been obliged to depart from him with this confession : "The German brute disregards both money and dignities."

The noise which his writings made, now reached every place. The prohibition against the reading of them, had the very opposite effect. Every one read and studied them. All Germany learned from them how unjustifiable the power of the Pope was ; how many errors the doctrines of the Romish Church contained, and how very necessary a universal change and revolution were in religious opinions. Some hundreds of noblemen in Franconia and Suabia offered their protection to Luther. All this inspired Luther with new courage, and gave him new strength, insomuch that he could now bid defiance to all dangers. It really appeared as if he became more intrepid in proportion as the storm threatened from on all sides to burst forth upon him. Persecutions which would have deterred ordinary spirits from the accomplishment of their ends, had no other effect on him, than to make him the more unyielding and inclined to redouble his zeal.—Luther himself relates, that at a certain time, as he was returning to his cloister, from the university where he had been reading his lectures, a traveller approached and asked him : "How he could be so bold as to accost every person in so friendly a manner, and give him his hand. That some one might have a weapon with him, and murder him." Luther replied : "How could any one escape who should commit such an act ? He would put his own life in jeopardy and have to die for it." "If I should murder you," continued the stranger, "and should even myself perish for the deed, the Pope would make me a saint, and you a heretic, whom he would deliver over to the devil." Hereupon the stranger left the city. It is also related that a foreigner had been found in his kitchen, who had a small pistol concealed in his sleeve, and who asked Luther in front of the cloister : "why he walked alone." "I am in the hands of God," Luther replied to him, "he is my shield and protection, what can man do to me?" Whereupon the assassin turned pale and tremblingly passed through the gate of the city. At that time Luther was also apprehensive that he would be poisoned, so exceedingly did his enemies hate his life. He at least received warning from many places to be on his guard. He received written information from Breslaw, that 2000 ducats had been offered to a certain physician

if he would try his skill upon Luther. There likewise often came suspicious persons to him, whom he however avoided as much as possible. He relates that when he once sat at table in a certain person's house, after having eaten a little, he was seized with violent vomiting, and thrown into a profuse perspiration, which however had not been followed by any further bad consequences.

The Pope, who saw his power and authority so violently attacked, perceived no other means of extricating himself from his difficulties, than to entreat the Emperor Charles V. in a more pressing manner than ever before, to have the punishment denounced by the Bau, inflicted on Luther and his adherents. The Emperor, an intelligent and impolitic prince, found himself reduced to a serious dilemma by this requisition. On the one hand he did not wish to displease the Pope, with whom he stood in such relations as to need his favor. And if he should on this occasion not oblige him, he was certain of losing his friendship. On the other hand, without the assumption that his love of justice prevented him from yielding to the desire of the Pope, yet his own interest dictated measures, which were in direct opposition to those of the Pope. He but too clearly saw how absolutely necessary it was, to limit the arrogant pretensions and claims, the plunderings and violent proceedings of the papal court. And to this may be added, that he had become Emperor through the assistance of the Elector of Saxony, the friend of Luther, and to whom on that account he owed gratitude. If he should carry into execution the papal decree, he had to fear that the Elector, who in some measure protected Luther, would thereby become offended. After weighing all these considerations, he did not think it prudent to break friendship with either party, and summoned Luther to appear before the Diet at Worms, which grand assembly was held in the year 1521, to take his trial. But by adopting this alternative, he satisfied neither party. The Pope who did not wish an investigation to be first made; but wanted the punishment to be immediately inflicted, was displeased by this measure. And the Elector, as he believed he foresaw nothing with greater certainty, than that the journey and the vindication would cost Luther his head, at first refused to accept of the proposal. At length however both parties assented to it, after a safe conduct for his journey had been provided for Luther. Luther himself, seemed to be animated with the greatest courage. Among other things he wrote to the Elector as follows: "I will when I am cited, if it shall be in my power, rather procure my self to be carried there, sick, if I shall not be able to go there in *good health*. For if the Emperor calls me thither, there is no doubt but I am called by God. If they intend to conduct the business in a violent manner it must be intrusted to God. He who preserved the three men in the fiery furnace still lives and reigns. But if he will not save me, there is but a mere trifle at stake, my head. For in this affair, danger or safety ought not to be regarded, and it is our duty rather to take heed that we may not desert the Gospel which we have once adopted, nor leave it exposed to the derision of these ungodly men; but courageously shed our blood in its defence." And on another occasion he writes to one of his friends: "Do not imagine I shall recant in the least degree. But I will reply to the Emperor. If it were intended that I should appear before him for the mere purpose of making a recantation, I would not go. For I could as well here recant, if that were the only object. But if he calls me before him to take my life, and by reason of my answer, shall consider me as an enemy of the empire, I shall offer to go to the Diet. For by the grace of God I shall not flee nor leave his word in danger." With these sentiments Luther commenced his journey to Worms on the fourth of April 1521. An imperial herald and several learned men accompanied him on

his journey. When on the way, he saw the papal decree of his excommunication, and the Ban which had been issued against him, put up in some of the cities through which he passed, the imperial herald asked him : " will you proceed Doctor ? " " Yes," he answered, " notwithstanding their having put me to the Ban." Whenever he arrived at a city, the people ran to meet him, to see the wonderful man, who was so bold as to oppose the pope, who was considered as a small Divinity. He every where received the assurance, that he would fare like John Huss, who a hundred years before had been burned, upon account of his attacks on popery. He was advised secretly to return, and not expose himself to the fury of his enemies. This was his answer : " Christ lives, and we will therefore enter Worms in defiance of all the gates of hell, and of those spirits who reign in the air. And if they were to kindle a fire, whose flames between Wittenberg and Worms reached up to heaven, yet will I, because I have been called, make my appearance, and put myself between the teeth of my enemies, acknowledge Christ, and as to the rest, leave it to his care and direction." Luther had hardly arrived at Worms, when he was cited to appear before the Diet on the following day at four o'clock in the afternoon. He first strengthened himself with a fervent prayer, which elevated his heart, and which he sent to his God, and then concluding with the following words, went to the Diet : " O God ! thou art not dead ! thou livest ! but I will go and die. Righteous is the cause, and thine it is. This is resolved on in thy name !" The concourse of people was on this occasion so great, that it was found necessary to lead him through secret passages to the Town House, where the Diet was assembled. Every one wanted to see Luther, and it was with difficulty, that the military guard which stood without, could prevent the people from forcibly entering the Town House. As he was going into it a Knight patted him on the shoulder, and said : " Little Monk, little Monk, you are now going to undertake something greater than I or others of my rank have ever done, even in our hottest military engagements. If your opinions are correct, and you feel an assurance that they are, then go in the name of God, and be of good cheer, God will not forsake you." Some of the members of the Diet who were on his side, also encouraged him with this passage of scripture : " When they shall deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak; for it shall be given you in the same hour what ye shall speak."

On his appearance before that august assembly, he was directed to be silent till questions should be put to him. The emperor's speaker on the occasion produced a bundle of books and informed Luther, that by order of his imperial majesty, he was directed to propose two questions to him. The first was, whether he acknowledged those books that went by his name, to be his own, and the second, whether he intended to defend or to retract what was contained in them. Upon this, before any reply could be made, Jerome Schurff, a celebrated doctor of the civil laws, who had come from Wittenberg in the character of Luther's advocate, called out with a loud voice, " You ought to recite the titles of the books." The official then read over the titles in succession. Among which were Commentaries on the Psalms, a little tract on Good Works ; a Commentary on the Lord's Prayer ; and other books on christian subjects, in no way related to controversy.

" I shall answer the questions," said Luther, " as concisely as I possibly can. First : unless the books have been mutilated or altered by fanciful sciolists, or by the arts of my adversaries, they are certainly mine. Because this question relates to faith and the salvation of souls, and because it concerns the word of God, the most important of all subjects in heaven and in earth, and which deservedly requires of us all the most profound revo-

rence, it would be equally rash and dangerous for me to give a sudden answer to such a question; since without previous deliberation I might assert less than the subject demands, and more than truth would admit; both which would expose me to condemnation from that sentence of Christ; ‘ Whosoever denieth me before men, him will I deny before my Father which is in heaven.’ For this reason I humbly beseech your imperial majesty to grant me a competent time for consideration, that I may satisfy the inquiry without injuring the word of God, and without endangering my own salvation. After some deliberation, he was allowed to defer his answer till the next day, on the express condition, however, that he should deliver what he had to say, *viva voce*, and not in writing.

On his return from the hall where the Diet was assembled, many princes who were convinced of the truth of his positions, exhorted him by no means to be disheartened, but to remember the words of Christ: ‘ Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven.’

On the following day he was told that he ought not to have petitioned for delay, because he had well known, for a long time, what would be the nature of his examination; and moreover, that every one ought to be able at any moment to give an account of his faith; and much more a doctor of great reputation, like Luther, who had been long exercised in theological discussion. At length, however said the official, return an answer to the question of the emperor, who has so kindly granted your request.

Luther then rose, and spoke before the emperor, and the princes, in the German language to the following effect.

“ I stand here in obedience to the commands of his most serene imperial majesty, and the most illustrious princes, and I earnestly entreat that they would deign to listen to this cause with clemency. It will appear I trust, to be the cause of truth and justice; and therefore, if through ignorance, I should fail to give proper titles to each of the dignified personages who hear me, or if in any other respect I should show myself defective in politeness, they will be pleased to accept my apology with candour. I have not been accustomed to the refinements of the court, but to the cloisters of the monastery: nor of myself have I any thing further to say, than that hitherto, I have read lectures and composed books, with that simplicity of mind which only regards the glory of God and the instruction of mankind.

“ To the first question,” continued Luther, “ I give a plain and direct answer; and in that I shall persist forever. I did publish these books, and I am responsible for their contents, so far as they are really mine; but I do not answer for any alterations that have been made in them, whether by the crafty malice of enemies or the imprudent officiousness of friends.

“ In regard to the second question, I humbly beg your most serene majesty and their highnesses to take especial notice, that my publications are by no means all of the same kind. Some of them treat of piety, and of the nature of faith, and morals; and these subjects are handled in so evangelical a manner, that my greatest adversaries are compelled to pronounce them innocent, profitable, and worthy to be read by Christians. The Pope’s bull indeed, though it actually declares some of my books innocent, yet with a monstrous and cruel indiscrimination, condemns them all. Now were I to retract such writings I should absolutely stand alone, and condemn those truths in which friends and foes most perfectly agree.

“ There is another species of my publications in which I endeavour to lay open the system of the papal government, and the specific doctrines of the papists, who, in fact, by their corrupt tenets and bad examples, have

made havoc of the christian world, both in regard to body and soul.—There is no denying this : witness the universal complaints now existing, how the papal laws and traditions of men most miserably entangle, vex and tear to pieces the consciences of the faithful, and also plunder the inhabitants of this famous country in ways most shameful and tyrannical, and scarcely credible, notwithstanding that Germany by her own laws has declared, that any doctrines or decrees of the Pope, which are contrary to the Gospel, or the sentiments of the fathers, are to be deemed erroneous, and in no degree obligatory. If, therefore, I should revoke what I have written on these subjects, I should not only confirm the wicked despotical proceedings to which I allude, but also open a door to further abuses of power, that would be still more licentious and insupportable, especially if it were said among the people, that what I had done was confirmed by the authority of his most serene majesty, and a general meeting of the empire.

“ Lastly, the defences and replies which I have composed against such individuals as have laboured either to establish the Roman tyranny, or to undermine my explanations of the fundamental principles of religion, constitute the third class of my publications. And in these, I freely confess, I have been betrayed into an asperity of expression, which neither becomes me as a clergyman, or as a christian ; however I pretend not to set myself up for a saint, neither do I plead for the strictness of my life, but for the doctrines of Christ. But it is not in my power to retract even these writings, as far as the matter contained in them is concerned ; lest by such a step I should become the patron of the most arbitrary and impious usurpations, which in consequence would soon gather strength, and spend their fury on the people of God in more violent outrages than ever. Yet, since I am but a man and therefore fallible in judgment, it would ill become me, in supporting my poor paltry tracts, to go further than my Lord and Master Jesus Christ did in defence of his own doctrines, who when he was interrogated concerning them before Annas, and had received a blow from one of the officers, said, “ If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil, but if well, why smitest thou me ? ” If then our Lord who was infallible, did nevertheless, not disdain to listen to any thing that could be said against his doctrine, even by a person of the lowest condition, how much more ought such a contemptible being as I, who am all imperfection to be ready to attend to whatever arguments can be brought in the way of objection to my positions ? I therefore intreat your majesty and the members of this illustrious assembly, to produce evidence against me, and however high, or however low, be the rank of the person who shall be able from the holy scriptures to convince me of error, I will instantly retract, and be the first to throw the book into the fire.

“ Hence it will appear, that I have already deliberated and maturely weighed, the perils and sorrows, the discord and dissensions which have already arisen, and which may yet appear in the world, through the promulgation of my doctrine, of which I was yesterday so very closely and vehemently admonished. Concerning which division of the minds of men, the opinions of others I know not ; but for myself, I have no higher enjoyment in any earthly good, than when I behold discord and dissension for the word of God ; because this is always the course and result of the Gospel ; as our Lord Jesus Christ declared, “ I came not to send peace but a sword, I came to set a man at variance with his father ; ” nevertheless, this contention cannot be imputed to the doctrines of Christ, but to the corruption of his adversaries.

“ Permit me to suggest, for the consideration of us all, that as Almighty God is wonderful and terrible in counsel, surely it behoves this august

assembly to examine with special care, whether the object which my enemies so ardently wish to compass, does not in fact amount to a condemnation of THE DIVINE WORD : and whether such a measure, adopted by the first German diet of the new emperor, might not lead to a dreadful deluge of evils. Under the protection of God, there is reason to anguish well of this excellent young prince ; but take care that you do not render the prospect of his government unfavourable and inauspicious.

" By a variety of instances from holy writ, and particularly by the cases of Pharaoh, the king of Babylon, and the kings of Israel, I could prove this important point; viz; that men have ruined themselves at the very moment when they imagined they had settled and established their kingdoms in the most prudent manner. The ruling principle, should be the fear of God.—He it is who taketh the wise in their craftiness, and removeth the mountains and they know not, and overturneth them in his anger.

" In saying these things I mean not to insinuate, that the great personages, who condescend to hear me, stand in need of my instructions or admonitions ; no—but there was a debt which I owed to my native country, and it was my duty to discharge it. The reasons which I have now alleged, will, I trust, be approved by your serene majesty and the princes : and I humbly beg that you will disappoint my enemies in their unjust attempts to render me odious and suspected. I have done."

As soon as Luther had finished his speech, which was delivered in the German language, he was ordered to say the same things in Latin; after having recovered himself, he did this with prodigious animation, and to the very great satisfaction of his friends, especially the elector of Saxony. His adversaries acknowledge that he spoke for two hours with the applause of one half of the assembly: until John Eckius, the Emperor's speaker, having lost almost all patience, before Luther had well concluded, cried out, in much heat and passion, that he had not answered to the point; that he was not called to give an account of his doctrines; that these had already been condemned in former councils, whose decisions were not now to be questioned: that he was required to say, simply and clearly, whether he would or would not retract his opinions.

" My answer," said Luther instantly, " shall be direct and plain.—I cannot think myself bound to believe either the Pope or his councils; for it is very clear, not only that they have often erred, but often contradicted themselves. Therefore, unless I am convinced by scripture, or clear reasons, my belief is so confirmed by the scriptural passages I have produced, and my conscience so determined to abide by the word of God, that I neither can nor will retract any thing; for it is neither safe nor innocent to act against a man's conscience. Here I stand. I cannot do otherwise. May God help me. Amen."

After the diet had taken Luther's speech into consideration, their speaker told him, that he had not answered with the modesty that became his character and situation; that if he had recanted those books which contained the main parts of his errors, he would have suffered no persecution for the rest; that for him who had revived the errors condemned at Constance, to require a refutation and conviction from scripture, was a wild proposal of a man scarcely in his senses; that upon such principles, nothing would be left certain in the church; and that for these reasons, he was once more asked, whether he intended to defend all he had written as orthodox, or whether he would retract any part as erroneous. Luther persisted in his former answer; and intreated the emperor not to permit him to be compelled to do violence to his conscience, by recanting what he felt himself bound to believe upon the authority of the word of God, unless he was proved to be mistaken by evident arguments from scripture.

Councils, he repeated, have erred frequently. " You cannot prove that," said Eckius. " I will pledge myself to do it," replied Luther. But night coming on, the diet broke up.

During the whole of this interesting scene, the special partizans of the Pope were filled with indignation ; and many of the Spanish Roman Catholics followed Luther as he returned home from the tribunal, and showed their enmity by long continued sneers and hisses.

Incredible pains were now taken by the princes, electors, and deputies of various orders, to shake the resolution of this hero of the reformation. Luther stood firm, thanked the princes for their clemency and good will toward him, and said, " He by no means censured Councils in general, but only that part of the proceedings at Constance, in regard to John Huss. If the faith of Christ was truly set forth, and Christ's flock were fed in a real gospel pasture, there would be no need to burden the church with human traditions. He allowed that he ought to obey magistrates ; that the precepts for this purpose were to be taken in their plain meaning, and that he had often taught this doctrine in his writings. He was ready to do any thing, provided he was not urged to deny the clear word of God."

The diet having found Luther inflexibly determined to abide by the sole authority of the sacred scriptures, and that no threats, nor exhortations, nor promises availed to make him change his resolution, the emperor sent him a message, directing him to leave Worms, " because notwithstanding the most friendly admonitions and intreaties, he persisted in his contumacy, and would not return into the bosom of the church."

Luther was allowed twenty one days to return to Wittemburg ; during which time the public faith was pledged for his safety ; but he was strictly enjoined not to preach to the people in the course of his journey.

" This is the Lord's will," said Martin, " and blessed be the name of the Lord !" He then through the official, returned most respectful thanks to the emperor, and the members of the assembly, for their patience in hearing him, and their liberal treatment in general. He said, he had wished for nothing but a reform in religion on the plan of the holy scriptures ; nor did he now request any favour for himself, but to be allowed the free use of the word of God. Let that be only granted, and he was willing to undergo every thing without exception, for the sake of his imperial majesty and the imperial orders. He left Worms on the following day, the 26th of April, under a strong escort, after having received from princes and other persons of high distinction, extraordinary proofs of good will and favour. Princes of the highest rank visited at his lodgings. The elector of Treves had even invited him to his table, where however the extraordinary circumstance took place, that at the very moment when Luther was putting the wine glass to his lips, it bursted. Conjectures of every kind, especially that of the possibility of poison having been introduced into the glass, gained possession of the minds of all who were present in the moment of surprise. But Luther with much composure of mind put down the glass, and said, " the liquor was not bestowed on me : the bursting of the glass was perhaps occasioned by the sudden transition from coldness to warmth produced in the glass by the wine."

XI. Page 261. *Zwinglius, Calvin, Cranmer and Knox.*

It was proposed to insert distinct biographical notices of these eminent Reformers, comprehending some of the most interesting occurrences in their eventful history ; but the completion of the design was unavoidably precluded ; because circumstances did not justify the enlargement of the work beyond its originally proposed limits—the following narrative will however enable us to form a correct judgment of the prominent characteristics which these luminaries of the Reformation exhibited.

ZUINGLIUS.

A few detached circumstances in the life of this intrepid, pious, zealous, enlightened, and eminent Reformer will lucidly illustrate his spirit and motives and characteristics. He was born on January 1, 1484; and was killed in 1530.

His Biblical studies.—“Zwingle had resided four years at Basil, when the burghers of Glaris, the chief town of the canton of that name, chose him for their pastor. He accepted this situation, which brought him nearer to his family, and repaired thither after receiving holy orders, which were conferred upon him by the Bishop of Constance, in whose diocese the canton of Glaris was situated. In order worthily to acquit himself of the ministry entrusted to him, Zwingle thought that he stood in need of deeper and more extensive learning than he already possessed. He accordingly resolved to recommence his theological studies after a plan that he had himself traced out, and which was very different from that followed in the universities. An assiduous perusal of the new testament preceded his fresh researches. In order to render himself more familiar with St. Paul's epistles, he copied the Greek text with his own hand, adding in the margin a multitude of notes extracted from the fathers of the church, as well as his own observations, and this interesting manuscript still exists in the public library of Zurich. The attention of Zwingle was from this time directed to the passages of Scripture cited in the canon of the mass, and to those which serve as a basis to the dogmas and most essential precepts of the church. Their interpretation had long been fixed, but Zwingle thought it inexpensable in a man appointed to instruct his fellow Christians to rest upon the decision of others on points that he might himself examine. He therefore followed the only method to discover the true sense of an author, which consists in interpreting an obscure passage by a similar and clearer one; and an unusual word by one more familiar; regard being had to time, place, the intention of the writer, and a number of other circumstances which modify and often change the signification of words. After endeavoring to explain the text of the Gospel by itself, Zwingle also made himself acquainted with the interpretations given by other theologians, especially by the fathers of the church, who, having lived nearer the times of the apostles, must have understood their language better than the modern doctors. It was in the writings of the fathers that he also studied the manners and customs of the first Christians; followed them through the persecutions of which they were the victims; observed the rapid progress of the rising church; and admired that astonishing revolution which by degrees elevated the new religion to the throne of the Caesars.”

His Preaching.—“Without directly attacking the abuses authorized by the Romish church, he confined himself in his sermons to the doctrines which he found clearly laid down in the Scriptures, and to the moral precepts to be deduced from them. He took every opportunity of repeating to his audience, that in matters of faith, we ought to refer ourselves to the word of God contained in the Scriptures, to regard as superfluous all that was unknown; and as false, all that was contrary to them. The time was not yet come for unfolding the consequences of this maxim; it was necessary to prepare the minds of men to receive the new light, and Zwingle thought that this could not be done better than by insisting upon the practice of all the Christian virtues, while most of the preachers of his time recommended nothing to their flocks but the external exercises of devotion.”

It was on the day appointed for the commemoration of the supposed miraculous consecration of the Abbey of Einsiedeln, that Zwingle, imagining the minds of his auditors in a measure prepared for the attempt, struck the

first public and decisive blow at the reigning evils. An immense crowd was drawn together to listen to the annual discourse. In the midst of this vast assembly Zwingle mounted the pulpit. "By an exordium full of warmth and feeling he disposed the mind to collectedness and attention;" and then, alluding to the cause of their present meeting, broke forth as follows :

"Cease to believe that God resides in this temple more than in every other place. Whatever region of the earth you may inhabit, he is near you, he surrounds you. He grants your prayers, if they deserve to be granted; but it is not by useless vows, by long pilgrimages, offerings destined to adorn senseless images, that you can obtain the divine favour : resist temptations, repress guilty desire, shun all injustice, relieve the unfortunate, console the afflicted. these are the works pleasing to the Lord."

"Did these chosen of God at whose feet you come hither to prostrate yourselves, enter into heaven by relying on the merit of another? No, it was by walking in the path of the Law, by fulfilling the will of the Most High, by facing death that they might remain faithful to their Redeemer. Imitate the holiness of their lives, walk in their footsteps, suffering yourselves to be turned aside neither by dangers nor seductions; this is the honour that you ought to pay them. But in the day of trouble put your trust in none but God, who created the heavens and the earth with a word: at the approach of death invoke only Christ Jesus, who has bought you with his blood, and is the sole Mediator between God and man."

"Language so unexpected produced impressions difficult to describe: admiration and indignation were painted alternately on every face while Zwingle was speaking; and when at length the orator had concluded his discourse, a confused murmur betrayed the deep emotions he had excited. Their expression was restrained at first by the holiness of the place, but as soon as they could be freely vented, some, guided by prejudice or personal interest, declared themselves against this new doctrine; others, and those were the greater number, felt a new light breaking in upon them, and applauded what they heard with transport. Some pilgrims were seen to carry back their offerings."

His first celebration of the Lord's Supper.—On Easter Sunday, a table covered with a white cloth, unleavened bread, and cups filled with wine, recalled the remembrance of the last repast of our Redeemer with his disciples. The first priest, who was Zwingle himself, announced to the faithful, that the religious act which they were about to celebrate would become to each of them the pledge of salvation, or the cause of perdition, according to the dispositions they might bring to it; and he endeavored by a fervent prayer, to excite in all their hearts repentance for past faults, and a resolution to live a new life. After this prayer, Zwingle and the two ministers who assisted him, presented mutually to each other the bread and the cup, pronouncing at the same time the words uttered by Jesus Christ at the institution of the last supper; they afterwards distributed the symbols of the body and blood of the Redeemer to all the Christians present, who listened with the most profound and reverent attention to the reading of the last words of our Lord, as they have been transmitted to us by his beloved disciple. A second prayer, and hymns full of the expression of love and gratitude towards Him who had voluntarily endured a cruel and ignominious death to save repentant sinners, terminated this solemn and affecting ceremony. Zwingle was of opinion, that to celebrate the Lord's Supper in this manner, was to bring it back to its ancient simplicity, and to unite all that could render it useful. The event proved that he was not mistaken; the churches could scarcely contain the immense crowd that came to participate in this religious solemnity, and the good works and numerous reconciliations which followed it, proved the sincerity of the devotion with which it was attended."

His death.—Zwingle was Chaplain of the Swiss Protestant Army, who were surprised and involved in an unequal conflict. “In the beginning of the battle, while Zwingle was encouraging the troops by his exhortations, he received a mortal wound, fell in the press, and remained senseless on the field of battle while the enemy were pursuing their victory. On recovering his consciousness, he raised himself with difficulty, crossed his feeble hands upon his breast, and lifted his dying eyes to heaven. Some Catholic soldiers who had remained behind, found him in this attitude. Without knowing him, they offered him a confessor : Zwingle would have replied, but was unable to articulate; he refused by a motion of the head. The soldiers then exhorted him to recommend his soul to the Holy Virgin. A second sign of refusal enraged them. ‘Die then, obstinate heretic !’ cried one, and pierced him with his sword.

“It was not till the next day that the body of the Reformer was found, and exposed to the view of the army. Among those whom curiosity attracted, several had known him, and without sharing his religious opinions, had admired his eloquence, and done justice to the uprightness of his intentions: these were unable to view his features, which death had not changed, without emotion. A former colleague of Zwingle’s, who had left Zurich on account of the Reformation, was among the crowd. He gazed a long time upon him who had been his adversary, and at length said with emotion, ‘Whatever may have been thy faith, I am sure that thou wast always sincere, and that thou lovedst thy country. May God take thy soul to his mercy !’ ”

CALVIN.

This celebrated Reformer was born in 1509 and died in 1564. One of the most curiously interesting and painful considerations attached to his name and memory is the ceaseless obloquy and hatred with which “this great luminary of the Christian Church” in every generation has been assailed. The others, notwithstanding all their persecutions when living, have received their eulogies since their death, but Calvin is yet the incessant source of the most obstreperous vituperation. While this proves the effervescence of human depravity, does it not also furnish a strong argument in proof of his doctrinal expositions ?

Labours.—During a fortnight in each month he preached every day : gave three lectures in theology every week ; assisted at all the deliberations of the Consistory, and at the meetings of the pastors ; met the Congregation every Friday : instructed the French Churches by the frequent advices they solicited from him ; defended the Reformation from the attacks of its enemies, and particularly those of the French priests. The Council charged him with many painful and difficult commissions, and he was obliged to undertake long and frequent journeys. The Council, who knew that he was an excellent civilian, as well as a theologian, consulted him habitually on all important concerns. He was particularly employed in framing the edicts and legislative acts of the town, which were completed and approved in the year 1543. By his reputation and his eloquence he prevented the usual troubles of a rising government ; and inspired confidence amongst the different bodies of the state. Montesquieu has remarked ; “The Genevese ought to bless the moment of the birth of Calvin, and that of his arrival within the walls of Geneva.”

Disinterestedness.—“Eckius being sent by the pope, legate into France, upon his return resolved to take Geneva in his way, on purpose to see Calvin ; and if occasion were, to attempt reducing him to the Roman Church. Therefore, when Eckius was come within a league of Geneva, he left his retinue there, and went, accompanied but with one man, to the city, in the

forenoon. Setting up his horses at an inn, he inquired where Calvin lived; whose house being shown him, he knocked at the door, and Calvin himself came to open it to him. Eckius inquiring for Mr. Calvin, he was told he was the person. Eckius acquainted him that he was a stranger; and having heard much of his fame, was come to wait upon him. Calvin invited him to come in, and he entered the house with him; where, discoursing of many things concerning religion, Eckius perceived Calvin to be an ingenious learned man, and desired to know if he had not a garden to walk in; to which Calvin replying he had, they both went into it; and there Eckius began to inquire of him, why he left the Roman Church; and offered him some arguments to persuade him to return; but Calvin could by means be persuaded to think of it. At last, Eckius told him that he would put his life in his hands: and then said he was Eckius, the pope's legate. At this discovery, Calvin was not a little surprised; and begged his pardon that he had not treated him with the respect due to his quality. Eckius returned the compliment; and told him if he would come back to the Roman Church, he would certainly procure for him a Cardinal's cap. But Calvin was not to be moved by such an offer. Eckius then asked him what revenue he had; he told the Cardinal he had that house and garden, and fifty livres per annum, beside an annual present of some wine and corn, on which he lived very contentedly. Eckius told him, that a man of his parts deserved a greater revenue; and then renewed his invitation to come over to the Romish Church, promising him a better stipend if he would. But Calvin, giving him thanks, assured him he was well satisfied with his condition. About this time dinner was ready; when he entertained his guest as well as he could, excused the defects of it, and paid him great respect. Eckius, after dinner, desired to know if he might not be admitted to see the church, which anciently was the Cathedral of that city. Calvin very readily answered that he might; accordingly, he sent to the officers to be ready with the keys, and desired some of the syndics to be there present, not acquainting them who the stranger was. As soon, therefore, as it was convenient, they both went towards the church; and as Eckius was coming out of Calvin's house, he drew out a purse, with about one hundred pistoles, and presented it to Calvin; but Calvin desired to be excused. Eckius told him he gave it to buy books, as well as to express his respect for him. Calvin, with much regret, took the purse, and they proceeded to the church, where the syndics and officers waited upon them; at the sight of whom, he thought he had been betrayed, and whispered his thoughts in the ear of Calvin, who assured him of his safety. Thereupon they went into the church; and Eckius having seen all, told Calvin he did not expect to find things in so decent an order, having been told to the contrary. After having taken a full view of every thing, Eckius was returning out of the church; but Calvin stopped him a little, and calling the syndics and officers together, took out the purse of gold which Eckius had given him, telling them that he had received that gold from this worthy stranger, and that now he gave it to the poor; and so put it all into the poor-box that was kept there. The syndics thanked the stranger, and Eckius admired the charity and modesty of Calvin. When they were come out of the church, Calvin invited Eckius again to his house; but he replied that he must depart: so thanking him for all his civilities, offered to take his leave. But Calvin waited upon him to the inn, and walked with him a mile out of the territories of Geneva, where, with great compliments, they took a farewell of each other."

Will. — "I give thanks to God, that, taking pity on me, whom he hath created and placed in this world, he hath delivered me out of the thick darkness of idolatry into which I was plunged; and hath brought me into the light of his Gospel, and made me a partaker of the doctrine of salvation,

whereof I was most unworthy. And he hath not only gently and graciously borne with my faults and sins, for which I deserved to be rejected of him, and cast out, but hath vouchsafed to use my labours in preaching and publishing the truth of his Gospel. And I declare that it is my wish and intention to continue in the same faith and religion, having no other hope or rehing but in his gratuitous adoption of me, upon which is founded all my salvation ; embracing the grace which he has given me in Jesus Christ, and accepting the merit of his death and passion, that so all my sins may be buried, and beseeching him so to wash and cleanse me in the blood of that great Redeemer, which was shed for all poor sinners, that in his image I may appear before his face. I declare also, that, according to the measure of grace bestowed upon me, I have endeavored to teach his word in its purity, as well in sermons as in writings, and endeavoured faithfully to expound the Holy Scriptures ; and that in all the disputes which I have had with the enemies of truth, I have never used either craftiness or sophistry, but have fairly maintained the truth. But, alas ! my zeal, if it deserve the name, has been so cold and unworthy, that I feel myself highly indebted in all, and through all : and if it were not for his infinite bounty, all the zeal I have discovered would appear as light as smoke, and the graces which he has bestowed upon me would only render me more guilty. So that my only rehing is, that He being the Father of mercy, I trust he will be, and appear the Father of so miserable a sinner."

Death.—The year 1564, the first of his eternal felicity, occasioned a deep and lasting grief to Geneva. On the second of February he delivered his last sermon and theological lecture. His asthma having deprived him of the use of his voice, he seldom spoke, although carried to the house of worship. Being of a dry and feeble temperament, and strongly inclined to consumption, he slept very unsoundly. During ten years, at least, he ate no dinner, taking no nourishment until supper time. He was subject to a headache, the only remedy for which was fasting ; on account of which he remained sometimes thirty-six hours without eating. He was frequently attacked by a distressing malady, brought on partly by preaching ; and five years before his death he was seized with a spitting of blood. He was no sooner cured of the quartan ague, than he was attacked by the gout ; he was afterwards afflicted with the cholick, and, a few months before his death, with the stone. Afflicted, however, as he was with so many maladies, he was never known to pronounce a word unworthy of a Christian, or even of a man of constancy and courage. In his greatest agonies, lifting up his eyes to heaven, he was accustomed only to repeat the words, ‘How long, O Lord ?’ When in health, he frequently made use of these words, with reference to the calamities of his brethren in Jesus Christ, whose afflictions were much more painful to him than his own. When importuned not to dictate or write, during his illness, ‘Would you,’ said he, ‘that when the Lord comes, he should surprise me in idleness?’

Having received a final visit from the syndics, from all the ministers of Geneva and its vicinity, and from his beloved friend Farel, he seemed to have closed his connection with merely earthly objects. From this time to the period of his death he was incessantly employed in prayer to God. It was, indeed, in a low voice, interrupted by a shortness of breath, with which he was oppressed ; but his sparkling eyes, constantly directed toward heaven, and the serenity of his countenance, discovered the ardor of his petitions, and his confidence in the mercy of God. In his most violent pains he frequently repeated those words of David ; “I was dumb, Lord, because thou didst it.” And sometimes those of Isaiah ; “I mourn like the dove.” And frequently, lifting up his heart to God, he would exclaim, “Lord thou bruisest me, but I suffer with patience, since it is thy

hand that hath done it." To admit all the persons who wished to express their regret at losing him, the door of the chamber must have been open night and day. But as he spoke with difficulty, he requested that his friends would be contented to pray to God for him, and spare themselves the trouble of visiting him. On being visited by his intimate and highly valued friend, Beza, he informed him, that he made it a matter of conscience not to divert him, in the smallest degree, from the duties of his charge, so much had he the interest of the church, and the glory of God, at heart. In this state he continued until the 19th of May, exhibiting a perfect resignation and comforting his friends. And, as on this day they were accustomed to partake of a meal together, in token of their intimate friendship, he was anxious that they should sit in the hall of his house; and being carried thither from his chamber, he made use of these words on entering: "I am come to see you, my brethren, and to seat myself at table with you for the last time." He then offered up the usual prayer, ate a little, and discoursed in a manner worthy of his piety, and of his zeal; and when his weakness obliged him to retire to his chamber, looking at the company with a smile, "This wall," said he, "will not prevent my being united with you in spirit."

What he had predicted happened; for until this day, however weak, he had never failed to rise, and to be placed before his table. But after this night he remained confined to his bed, so thin and exhausted that breath only remained, though his face was not much altered. On the day of his death, which was the 24th of May, he appeared to speak with less difficulty, and more strength. But it was the last effort of nature. About eight o'clock in the evening, the signs of death appeared suddenly in his face; he continued speaking, however, with great propriety, until his last breath, when he appeared rather to fall asleep than die. Thus was this great light of the protestant church extinguished. On the day following, the whole city was plunged into the most inconceivable grief. For the republic regretted the wisest of its citizens; the church its faithful pastor; the school its incomparable master; and all bewailed their common father, the source of their joy and consolation.

CRANMER.

This excellent worthy among the Reformers was not only a luminary for his learning, perseverance and zeal, but exhibited a constellation of other virtues, which peculiarly qualified him for his influential rank in the English nation. While he knew no fear either in countering the Pope's anti-christian assumptions, or Henry's tyrannic and contrary claims; even when every contrivance was in operation against his reputation and life; he was so meek, humble, patient and forgiving to all his opponents, that it became a common proverb; "do unto my Lord of Canterbury displeasure and then you may be sure to have him your friend while he liveth." The noblest eulogy which could be given of his integrity of heart, and gentleness of disposition. The following example of his forbearance furnishes an interesting illustration, not only of the Reformer's character, but also of the manners of the times; it is extracted in the antiquated narrative bequeathed to us by Fox from his own edition of the book of Martyrs—the old black letter type and the orthography being changed.

"It chanced an ignorant priest in the north parts, he was a kinsman of one Chersy a grocer, dwelling in London, to sit on a time with his neighbours at the alehouse within his own parish, where was communication minister in commendation of my Lord Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury. This said parson envying his name only for religion's sake, said to his neighbours, "what make you of him, he was but a hostler, and hath no more.

learning than the goslings that go yonder on the green," with such like slanderous and unseemly words. These neighbours of his, not well bearing those unseemly words, articed against him, and sent their complaint to Lord Cromwell, then vice-gerent in causes ecclesiastical, who sent for the priest, and committed him to the Fleet Prison, minding to have had him recant those his slanderous words in public at Paul's cross. Howbeit the Lord Cromwell having great affairs in hand, forgot his prisoner in the Fleet: so that this Chersy, understanding that his kinsman was in durance, only for speaking words against my Lord of Canterbury, consulted with the priest, and between them devised to make suit rather unto the Archbishop for his deliverance, than to the Lord Cromwell, before whom he was accused, understanding right well that there was great diversity of nature between these two, the one gentle and full of clemency, the other severe, and somewhat intractable against a Papist; so that Chersy took upon him, first to try my Lord of Canterbury's benignity, for that his cousin's accusation touched only the offence against him, and none other. Whereupon the matter was moved. The Archbishop incontinently sent for Chersy; and when he came before him, Chersy declared, that there was a kinsman of his in the Fleet, a priest of the North country, "and as I may tell your grace th' truth," quoth Chersy, "a man of small civility and less learning; and yet he hath a parsonage there, which now that Lord Cromwell hath laid him in prison is unserved, and he bath continued in durance two months, and is called to no answer, so that this imprisonment will utterly undo him, unless your grace will be his good lord." "I know not the man, said the Archbishop, nor what he hath done, why he should thus be in trouble." Said Chersy again, he only hath offended against your grace, as may well be perceived by the articles objected against him, the copy whereof the said Chersy then exhibited unto the said Archbishep of Canterbury. Who well perusing the said articles said, "this is the common talk of all the ignorant papistical priests in England against me; surely, I was never made privy to this accusation, nor of his indurance I never heard before this time. Notwithstanding if there be nothing else to charge him withal, I will at your request take order with him, and send him home to his cure to do his duty; and so therenpon sent to the Warden of the Fleet, willing him to send the prisoner at afternoon.

When the keeper had brought the prisoner at the hour appointed, and Chersy had well instructed his cousin in any wise to submit himself to the Archbishop, confessing his fault, whereby that way he should most easily have an end and win his favour; thus the parson being brought into the garden at Lambeth, the Archbishop demanded of the parson what was the cause of his indurance in the Fleet? The parson answered and said, that the Lord Cromwell sent him thither, for that certain malicious parishioners of his parish, had wrongfully accused him of words he never spoke nor meant. Chersy hearing his foolish cousin so much out of the way said; "Thou dastardly dolt and varlet, is this thy promise that thou madest to me?—Is there not a great number of thy neighbor's hands against thee, to prove thee a liar? Surely my Lord, quoth Chersy, it is pity to do him good, I am sorry that I have troubled your grace thus far with him. Well, said the Archbishep to the parson, if you have not offended me, I can do you no good, for I am intreated to help one out of trouble that hath offended agauns me. If my Lord Cromwell hath committed you to prison wrongfully, that lieth in himself to amend. If your offence only toucheth me, I will do something for you for your friend's sake here; if you have not offended against me, you may go and remain whence you came. O! what ado Chersy made with him, calling him all kinds of opprobrious names. In the end, my Lord of Canterbury seeming to rise and go his way, the silly priest

fell on his knees, and said ; " I beseech your grace to forgive me this offence ; assuring your grace that I spoke those words not well advised. Oh ! said my lord, this is somewhat, and yet it is no good excuse, for drunkenness evermore uttereth that which lieth hid in the heart of man when he is sober, alleging a text or twain out of the Scriptures concerning that vice. Now therefore said the Archbishop, that you acknowledge somewhat your fault, I am content to commune with you, hoping that you are at this present of an indifferent sobriety. Tell me then, quoth he, did you ever see me, or were you ever acquainted with me before this day ? The priest answered that never in his life he saw his grace. Why then ? said the Archbishop, what occasion had you to call me a hostler, and that I had not so much learning as the goslings which then went on the green before your face ? If I have no learning you may now try it, and be out of doubt thereof ; therefore I pray you appose me, either in grammar or other liberal sciences, for I have at one time or other tasted partly of them ; or else if you are a divine say somewhat that way. The priest being amazed at my lord's familiar talk, made answer and said ; I beseech your grace to pardon me ; I am altogether unlearned, and understand not the Latin tongue but very simply : my only study hath been to say my service and mass, fair and deliberate, which I can do as wel as any priest in the country where I dwell, I thank God. Well, said the other, if you will not appose me, I will be so bold as to appose you, and yet as easily as I can devise, and that only in the story of the Bible now in English, in which I suppose that you are daily exercised. Tell me therefore who was king David's father ? said my lord. The priest stood still pausing awhile and said ; in good faith, my lord, I have forgotten his name. Then said the other again to him, if you cannot tell that, I pray you tell me who was Solomon's father ? The foolish priest without consideration of what was demanded of him before, made answer, " My good lord bear with me, I am no further seen in the Bible, than is daily read in our service in the church."

The Archbishop answering, said ; this my question may be found well answered in your service : but I now well perceive, however ye have judged heretofore of my learning, sure I am that you have none at all. But this is the common practice of all you who are ignorant and superstitions priests, to slander, backbite, and hate all such as are learned and well affected towards God's word and sincere religion. Common reason might have taught you what an unlikely thing it was, and contrary to all manner of reason that a prince having two universities within his realm of well learned men, and desirous of being resolved of as doubtful a question as in these many years was not moved the like within Christendom, should be driven to that necessity for the defence of his cause to send out of this realm a hostler, being a man of no better knowledge than a gosling in an ambassade to answer all learned men both in the court of Rome and of the Emperor. But look, when malice reigeth in the heart of man, there reason can take no place ; and therefore I see, you are all at a point with me, that no reason or authority can persuade you to favour my name, who never meant evil to you, but your commodity and profit. Howbeit, God amend you all, forgive you, and send you better minds. With these words the priest seemed to weep, and desired his grace to pardon his fault and frailty, so that by his means he might return to his cure again, and he would sure recant these his foolish words before his parishioners so soon as he came home, and would become a new man. Well, said the Archbishop, and so had you need : and giving him a godly admonition to refuse the haunting of the ale house, and to bestow his time better in the continual reading of the Scriptures, dismissed him from the Fleet.

Lord Cromwell perceiving within a fortnight after, that his prisoner was sent home without any open punishment, came to Lambeth unto the archbishop, and in a great heat said to him : " my Lord, I understand that you have despatched the Northern priest that I late sent to the Fleet, home again, who un honestly railed at you, and called you an hostler. Indeed, I have so done, replied he, for that in his absence, the people of his cure wanted their divine service. It is very devout divine service that he saith, quoth Lord Cromwell, it were more meet for him to be a hostler than a curate, who sticketh not to call you a hostler. But I thought so much what you would do, and therefore I would not tell you of his knavery when I sent him to prison. Howbeit, henceforth, they shall ent your throat before that I say any thing more to them on your behalf. Why ? what would you have done with him, quoth the archbishop ; there was nothing laid to his charge, other than words spoken against me, and now the man is repentant and well reconciled, and hath been at great charges in prison ; it is time therefore he were rid of his trouble. Well, said my Lord Cromwell, I meant that he should have preached at Paul's cross a recantation before he had gone home. That had been well done, quoth the other, for then you would have had all the world as well to have wondered at me as at him. Well, well, said Lord Cromwell, we shall so long bear with these popish knaves, that at length they will bring us indeed to be wondered at of the whole world." Cromwell's anticipation was realized ; these stars of the first magnitude among the English reformed, were both immolated upon the altar of martyrdom to appease the wrath of Romish furies, and to astonish and agonize all the Protestant regions.

The freedom and ability with which he canvassed the king's marriage with his brother's widow, recommended him to the notice of the court, and Henry soon employed his abilities in defence of his views. Upon the death of Warham he was raised to the see of Canterbury without acknowledging the pope's supremacy. Thus at war with the authority of the pope, he began earnestly to labour for the advancement of the reformation, by the translation of the bible into English, and by inveighing against the vices and usurpation of the court of Rome. After the death of Cromwell, he retired from publick affairs ; but his influence was such, that he procured the passing of laws for the promotion of true religion, and the modification of the six articles which proved so obnoxious to the clergy. His enemies, however, were not silent in those times of intrigue and corruption, and the commons, as well as the privy council, severally reprobated his conduct, till Henry interposed, and saved him from further prosecution. At that king's death, he became one of the regents of the kingdom, and while Edward nominally reigned, all his knowledge, influence and energies, were ever in operation by his own writings, and patronizing learned men to establish and extend the Protestant cause. The homilies were composed, and some by Cranmer himself ; the six offensive articles were repealed, the communion was given in both kinds, the offices of the church were revised, and the visitation of the clergy regularly enforced.

After Mary's accession to the throne, notwithstanding all her obligations to Cranmer ; she, in whom gratitude, sensibility, and justice were all extinguished by the predominance of the most odious qualities of Romish bigotry and cruelty, irritated at his conduct and consequence among the Protestants, summoned him before the council, and speedily immured him in confinement. He was attainted for high treason and found guilty, but he was pardoned for the treason, and arraigned by his persecutors for heresy. He was removed in April, 1554, with Ridley and Latimer, to Oxford, to dispute and make his defence before popish commissioners ; but on the refusal of himself and his venerable friends to subscribe to popery, they

were condemned as heretics. In September, 1555, he was again arraigned in Oxford, for blasphemy, perjury, incontinency and heresy; and while they pretended to summon him to Rome, to make his defence within eighty days, they secretly determined his execution. Cranmer, though firm to his faith, yet yielded before the terrors of death, and in a moment of weakness and despair, he was prevailed on to sign his own reantation, and to embrace popery, from the promises of pardon and restoration to Mary's favour; who instantaneously, with fiend-like treachery, having as she fancied, disgraced him beyond redemption, doomed him to follow his brethren to eternity. His enemies having resolved to commit him to the flames, he was brought to St. Mary's church in order to make a profession of his faith; he surprised his persecutors by an awful appeal to heaven and their consciences and by a solemn renunciation of the tenets he had lately, in a moment of error, embraced, emphatically exclaiming, "that, that one thing alone wrung his heart, and that the hand which had falsely signed the dishonourable deed, should first perish in the flames." This manly conduct surprized and enraged his enemies, he was immediately dragged over against Baliol college, where, standing in his shirt and without shoes, he was fastened to the stake. The fire was kindled, and the venerable martyr stretching his right hand into the flames, exclaimed, "this hand hath offended, this unworthy hand." His miseries were soon over, and his last words were, "Lord Jesus receive my spirit."

In this his final earthly scene, Cranmer evinced, the truth of our Lord's declaration, "Wisdom is justified of her children"—for the force of his arguments against the papists, the sincerity of his reantance, the manliness with which he expressed his insuperable abhorrence of his prior renunciation of the truth, the fortitude with which he condemned his right hand which had witnessed his retraction to the first sensations of torture, the christian placability of his temper towards his traitorous enemies, the fervour of his supplications, and his immovable confidence in Jesus the friend of sinners, diffused a splendour so brilliant around the Martyr's triumphant exit, that its irradiations after the lapse of nearly 270 years, have lost none of their soul-quickenning efficacy. He slept in Jesus, in the midst of the flames, at Oxford, March 21, 1556.

KNOX.

This Scotch Boanerges, equally with the other primitive dignitaries of the Protestant cause, has been the subject of continual obloquy; until very lately, his motives, character and actions were represented with incessant and the most flagrant injustice. Now the current of opinion flows towards the point of equity. The following brief notice fills all the space which could be allotted to this department; those who desire a more perfect acquaintance with these and the other champions of the reformation, must refer to the authors cited in the preface.

Knox was born in the year 1505, at Gifford or Haddington, in east Lothian. At the age of nineteen, he was sent to St. Andrews, in which university, the famous John Mair, or Major, was at that time the professor of philosophy and theology. Of the academical life and habits of Knox, very few records have been preserved. During a period of near twenty years, he seems to have lived at the university in scholastic seclusion from the world. That during the greater part of that time, he was a sincere Papist is not to be questioned; and indeed there is no reason to doubt, but that at an early age he was ordained a priest in the communion of the Romish church. In the year 1542, however, or in the following year, he quitted the university from a well grounded apprehension, that

the opinions which he appears at this time to have publicly avowed, in favour of the reformation, would expose him to the enmity of Cardinal Beaton, whose authority at St. Andrews was then little less than absolute. Under the protection of the laird of Languidrie, Knox was engaged during the three succeeding years, in the prosecution of his own studies, and in superintending the education of the sons of his patron: but, harassed with the efforts continually made for his destruction, he was compelled in compliance with the solicitations of the father of his pupils, to retire with them for protection to the castle of St. Andrews. In this place, Knox received from some of the reformed ministers, who like himself, had taken refuge there, a solemn call to the exercise of the ministerial office. The account of his vocation at St. Andrews is affecting.

"They of that place, but especially Mr. Henry Balnaves, and John Rough, preacher, perceiving the manner of his doctrine, began earnestly to travail with him, that he would take the function of preacher upon him, but he refused, alleging that he would not run where God had not called him, meaning that he would do nothing without a lawful vocation; whereupon they privily among themselves advising, having with them in council Sir D. Lindsay of the Mount, they concluded that they would give a charge to the said John, and that publicly, by the mouth of the preacher. And so upon a certain day, a sermon of the *election* of ministers, what power the congregation how small soever, that it was passing the number of two or three, had above any man, namely, *in time of need*, as that was, in whom they supposed, and espied the gift of God to be; and how dangerous it was to refuse and not hear the voice of such as desire to be instructed. These and other heads declared, the said John Rough preacher, directed by his words to the said John Knox, saying, 'brother, ye shall not be offended albeit that I speak unto you, that which I have in charge, even from all these which are here present, which is this. In the name of God and of his Son Jesus Christ, and in the name of these that presently call you by my mouth, I charge you that ye refuse not this holy vocation, but as ye tender the glory of God, the increase of Christ's kingdom, the edification of your brethren, the comfort of me, whon ye understand well enough to be oppressed by the multitude of labours, that ye take upon you the public charge and office of preaching, even as ye look to avoid God's heavy displeasure, and to multiply his graces upon you.' And in the end he said to those that were present, 'Was not this your charge to me, and do ye not approve this vocation?' They answered, 'It is, and we approve it.'—Whereat the said master John, abashed, broke forth into the most abundant tears, and withdrew himself to his chamber. His countenance and behaviour from that day till the day when he was compelled to present himself at the public place of preaching, did sufficiently declare the grief and trouble of his heart; for no man saw any sign of mirth in him neither yet had he pleasure to accompany any man for several days together."

In consequence of this vocation, Knox, then in the 45th year of his age, immediately commenced at St. Andrews those labours, for the reformation of religion, to the prosecution of which the whole of his succeeding life was devoted. An unexpected event, however, very abruptly suspended these exertions. A French fleet sent at the request of Hamilton, the governor, appeared before the castle of St. Andrews. After a short siege, the garrison was reduced to recapitulation, and Knox, with many others, was carried in the galleys to the river Loire, and was there compelled during many months to labour at the oar.

In no part of his life does the energy of character of the Reformer, and his fervent desire to promote the glory of God, appear more conspicuously than during this period. While he resolutely refused to attempt his escape

by the adoption of any measure which could endanger the lives of his oppressors he maintained an unshaken confidence that God would deliver him, and that he should be preserved for greater services than any which he had already been permitted to render to the cause of truth. After a confinement of nineteen months, our Reformer was released from the galleys, and immediately repaired to England, where, under the patronage of Cranmer and the Privy council, he preached during two years at Berwick, and was probably appointed one of King Edward's chaplains. His diligence in discharge of his ministerial duties was almost unexampled.

Besides assisting in the composition of the Book of Common-Prayer, and the Articles of the church, he preached not only on Sundays, but frequently on every day of the week; he argued in public in defence of the doctrines of the Reformation, and travelled as an itinerant minister, preaching incessantly, and with great effect, in the towns and villages; and at a time when he was afflicted with one of the most acute disorders to which the human frame is subject. Edward esteemed his character, and was anxious to retain permanently in the Church of England a man so eminently qualified to promote the diffusion of the Gospel. He offered him the living of Allhal'ows in London, and subsequently a bishop's see, which it was then in contemplation to establish at Newcastle. These proposals, however, were rejected; from a dissatisfaction with the ritual and discipline of the English church, and from a well grounded apprehension of the insecurity of the Protestant establishment in England. The accession of Mary to the throne of her brother revived the power and activity of the Roman Catholic party, and not only deprived the Reformer of his means of subsistence, but rendered it impossible for him longer to continue the exertions which he had made during the five preceding years, for promoting the knowledge of the truth in that kingdom. Deeply as he was himself afflicted with the loss which the church had sustained by the premature death of Edward, he could not, without the utmost indignation, behold the thoughtless joy with which the common people hailed the commencement of the reign of his successor. He expressed these feelings with warmth, and was soon marked out by Queen Mary's government as a fit object for punishment. Finding that it was vain to resist the power of his enemies, he yielded to the entreaties of his brethren, who, he says, "partly by tears, partly by admonition, compelled him to obey, and to give place to the rage of Satan for a time." In the beginning of the year 1554, he quitted England, and landed safely at Dieppe in Normandy.

During the reign of Mary, Switzerland was the general place of refuge for the English Protestants who fled from persecution in their native country. Knox was received with christian hospitality and kindness at Geneva. His spirits which were much depressed at the commencement of his exile, seem to have recovered their natural tone, from the cordiality of his reception among the teachers of the different Protestant congregations in the Helvetic church. Few men have possessed, in so eminent a degree as Knox, the power of subduing present evils by the anticipation of future prosperity.

A congregation of English Protestants had, in consequence of the persecutions of Mary, been established at Frankfort-on-the-Maine, then one of the opulent imperial cities of the German empire. By the persuasion of Calvin, Knox was induced, in compliance with the urgent request of this body of christians, to reside among them as one of their regular preachers. At Frankfort, however, the most perplexing troubles and disquiet awaited him. Incessant disputes arose among the people, as to the different parts of the English Liturgy, the administration of the Sacraments, and the use of audible responses in public worship. Dr. Cox, a man of considerable learn-

ing, who had been preceptor to Edward the Sixth, seems to have engaged deeply in these unhappy and ill-timed controversies, and received a public censure from Knox, for having persisted, in opposition to the wishes of many of the congregation, in answering aloud after the minister in the time of divine service. In the conclusion of the contest, the opponents of Knox acted with the most shameless perfidy. They accused him secretly to the magistrates of Frankfort, of high treason against the Emperor of Germany, putting into their hands a copy of the "Admonition to the Professors of Truth in England," in which some expressions not very respectful to that monarch were contained. The magistrates, though they thought the accusation no less absurd than malignant, could not entirely disregard it, and Knox, by their advice, retired from the charge of the congregation, and returned to Geneva.

In this place he studied with great ardour and perseverance, and, except a short visit to his native country, continued to reside there, uninterruptedly, till the year 1559. From the return of Knox to Scotland, till his death, forms a most important part of the general history of his native country. He had the happiness of seeing, before his death, the full establishment of the Reformation, and of having contributed with more zeal and efficacy to its success, than any other individual within that kingdom. His labours of every kind, were in fact, stupendous. No man should ever pronounce the name of Knox, without veneration and gratitude. Beyond all question or controversy, he was the greatest benefactor to his native country whom her history records.

From the time of his renunciation of the errors of Popery, to the last moment of his life, Knox appears to have been involved in an almost unbroken succession of disputes and contests. In defence of the martyr Wishart he braved the unbounded authority of the cardinal; he openly joined at St. Andrews the Protestants who maintained that place against Chatelrault the governor; his whole life was a scene of contest against the leaders of the Roman Catholic cause in his native country; nor did he seldom oppose the measures, and severely censure the faults even of his own party. In public and in private, in his negotiations with England and in the parliament, in the pulpit and with his pen, he participated in the civil war against the queen regent, and in no slight degree contributed to the success of that contest. He was long the austere monitor of Mary, and immediately after Bothwell's marriage, engaged with his habitual zeal in support of Murray and his adherents. Even in more private life he seems to have been little conversant with repose or quiet. Among the Protestant exiles at Frankfort, he was incessantly harassed with angry contentions; in his own family he appears to have suffered much from the domestic dissensions which his marriage had occasioned among his wife's relations; and, as though he had not already a sufficient variety of enemies, he thought fit to publish his treatise against female government, at a time when England and Scotland were governed by women, and when Elizabeth was presumptive heir to the English crown.

With a single object in view, he seems to have abandoned every other pursuit. His writings, his sermons, his public and private correspondence, all exhibit the same insatiable anxiety for the welfare of the church of which God had appointed him minister. He scarcely lived for any other purpose, and appears to the hour of his death to have thought and written and acted for the promotion of the Reformation, rather with the energy of passion than with the deliberate resolution of the man who steadily discharges a solemn duty.

His penetration into the designs of men, his sagacity as to the results of any measures, and his courage were almost unrivalled. His supersti-

tions tendency, augmented his characteristic vigour, and gave the utmost energy to his hope, and the greatest confidence in triumph. Opposition, he ridiculed ; and his ardent temper inconceivably strengthened by his highly wrought sensibilities enabled him to defeat all dangers in whatever form they assailed him. His appearances before Mary the Queen, and his interviews with the Protestant leaders when in their deepest distresses developed a fortitude almost incredible ; but the detail must be omitted : the last scene alone of his life can be introduced.

" He was very anxious to meet once more with the Session of his Church, and to give them his dying charge and bid them his last farewell. In compliance with his wish, his colleague, the elders and deacons, with David Lindsay, one of the ministers of Leith, assembled in his room on Monday Nov. 17, when he addressed them in the following words : ' 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 labours and immeasurable 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 judgments. I cannot deny but that I felt the greatest abhorrence at the sins in which they indulged ; but I still 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 which appointed me, to be a steward of Divine mystery ; and a belief that he will demand an account of my discharge of the trust committed unto me when I stand before his tribunal. I profess, therefore, before God and before 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 persevere 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 thou, my brother Lawson, fight the good fight, and do the work of the Lord joyfully and resolutely. The Lord from on high bless you and the whole church of 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.' " — Perceiving that he breathed with difficulty, some of his attendants asked if he felt much pain. He answered that he was willing to lie there for years if God so pleased, and if he continued to shine upon his soul through Jesus Christ. At intervals he exhorted and prayed, ' Live in Christ, live in Christ, and then flesh need not fear death. Lord, grant true pastors to thy church, that purity of doctrine may be retained. Restore peace again to this commonwealth, and godly rulers and magistrates. Once, Lord make an end of my trouble. Lord I commend my spirit, soul, and body, all into thy hands. Thou knowest, O Lord, my troubles. I do not murmur against Thee.' After this he appeared to fall into a slumber, during which he uttered heavy groans. The attend-

ants looked every moment for his dissolution. At length he awaked as if from sleep, and being asked the cause of his sighing so deeply, replied : ' I have formerly, during my frail life, sustained many contests and many assaults of Satan ; but at present that roaring lion hath assailed me most furiously, and put forth all his strength to devour and make an end of me at once. Often before, he has placed my sins before my eyes, often tempted me to despair, often endeavoured to ensnare me by the allurements of the world ; but with these weapons, broken by the sword of the Spirit, the word of God, he could not prevail. Now he has attacked me in another way. The cunning serpent hath laboured to persuade me that I have merited heaven and eternal blessedness by the faithful discharge of my ministry. But blessed be God, who has enabled me to beat down and quench this fiery dart, by suggesting to me such passages of Scripture as these : ' What hast thou that thou hast not received. By the grace of God I am what I am : not I but the grace of God in me.' Being thus vanquished he left me. Wherefore I give thanks to my God, through Jesus Christ, who was pleased to give me the victory, and I am persuaded that the tempter shall not again attack me ; but within a short time, without any great bodily pain or anguish of mind, I shall exchange this mortal and miserable life for a blessed immortality through Christ Jesus.' Dr. Preston asked him if he had heard their prayers, ' Woulo to God,' he said, ' that you and all men had heard them as I have heard them. I praise God for that heavenly sound.' About eleven o'clock he gave a deep sigh, and said, *Now it is come.* Richard Baunatyne immediately drew near, and desired him to think upon those comfortable promises of our Saviour Jesus Christ which he had so often declared to others ; and perceiving that he was speechless, requested him to give them a sign that he heard them, and died in peace. Upon this he lifted up one of his hands, and sighing twice expired without a struggle." At his funeral after he had been interred in the sepulchre, the Regent of Scotland pronounced his eulogy, "*Here lies he who never feared the face of man.*" And christian charity wrote his epitaph, "good and faithful servant of the Lord." He entered Paradise, November 24, 1572.

MELANCTHON.

The history of this, equally with the other Reformers, from their connection with the general events which occurred, of which they were often the main spring, is invariably so commingled with the Reformation that a circumstantial narrative cannot be incorporated. His prominent characteristics must be learnt therefore from a few detached memorials.

Melancthon was 'the intimate friend and distinguished co adjutor of Martin Luther ;' and in his character was associated the most genuine piety with a high degree of literary talent, and a large portion of Christian charity. He was born in the close of the fifteenth century, and educated in the bosom of the church of Rome, under the ablest scholars of the age, whom, however, he soon equalled, and perhaps excelled, particularly in the Greek literature, which he was an eminent instrument of reviving and extending.

The character of Melancthon was, it seems, inclined to melancholy, and he was often tortured with anxieties : and when his friends conjured him to suppress them, he would piously reply, ' If I had no anxieties, I should lose a powerful incentive to prayer ; but when the cares of life impel to devotion, the best means of consolation, a religious mind cannot do without them. Thus trouble compels me to pray, and prayer drives away trouble.' Availing himself of a favorable opportunity, he went from Spires to pay a short visit to his mother. In the course of conversation, she mentioned to her son the manner in which she was accustomed to attend to her devotions,

and the form she generally used, which was free from the prevailing superstitions. "But what (said she) am I to believe amidst so many different opinions of the present day?" "Go on (replied Melanethon) believe and pray as you do and have done before, and do not disturb yours, if about the disputes and controversies of the times."

An anecdote of Luther, is highly characteristic of the spirit of that Reformer. On visiting Melanethon, who was taken ill on his journey to Ha-guenaw, he found him apparently at the point of death, and burst out into the following strain of ardent devotion : "We implore thee, O Lord our God ! we cast all our burdens on thee, and *will cry till thou hearest us*, pleading all the promises which can be found in the Holy Scriptures, respecting thy hearing prayer ; so that *thou must indeed hear us*, to preserve, at all future periods, our confidence in thine own promises." After this he seized the hand of Melanethon, and in the tone of a prophet, said, "Be of good courage, Philip, *you shall not die* ;" and from that moment Melanethon began to revive, and speedily recovered. Upon this fact we add one remark, that the conduct of eminent men, on extraordinary occasions, must not be drawn into precedent in the circumstances of common life.

It is not a little remarkable, that in the case of Servetus, the memory of which departed Blasphemer and Infidel, heretics of every class and of all subsequent generations, and enemies of the cross of Christ of all grades of corruption and insolence, have embalmed as a standing memento whence to manufacture falsehood and vituperation ; this proverbially lamb like Reformer, equally with all the other Protestants of that period, coincided with Calvin. But in this age, Christians of every party retained the Popish doctrine, "that gross religious errors were punishable by the civil magistrate ;" on which principle even the gentle and humane Melanethon thought the Council of Geneva, had done "right in putting to death this obstinate man (Servetus) and wondered that any one could be found to disapprove of this proceeding."

The following Ode, although expressly written on the death of Melanethon ; may with equal propriety be adapted to almost all of the Reformers ; and is here introduced as a general elegiac tribute to the memory of those Christian Heroes, by whose instrumentality we enjoy all our civil and religious immunities.

ON THE DEATH OF PHILIP MELANTHON.

OH ! who would envy those who die
Victims on Ambition's shrine !
Though idiot man may rank them high,
And to the slain in victory,
 Pay honors half divine ;
To feel this heaving, fluttering breath,
Still'd by the lightest touch of death,
 The happier lot be mine :
I would not, that the murdering brand,
Were the last weapon in my hand.

He, of whom these pages tell,
He, a soldier too—of truth,
He, a hero from his youth ;
How delightfully he fell !
Not in the crash, and din, and flood,
Of execrations, groans, and blood,
Rivetting letters on the good :—
But happily, and well.

No song of triumph sounds his fall,
 No march of death salutes his bier ;
 But tribute sweeter far than all,
 The sainted sigh, the orphan tear !
 Yet mourn not, ye who stand around,
 Bid not time less swiftly roll ;
 What though shade the prospect bound,
 He a brighter world has found,
 Death is the birth-day of the soul !

Witness ! for ye saw him die,
 Heard you complaint, or groan, or sigh ?
 Or if one sigh breathed o'er his breast,
 As gentle airs, when days of summer close,
 Breathed over wearied nature still repose,
 And hush'd a lovely evening to rest ;
 It whispered,— “ All within is peace.
 “ The storm is o'er, and troubles cease.”

His sun went down in cloudless skies,
 Assured upon the morn to rise
 In lovelier array ;
 But not like Earth's declining light
 To vanish back again to night ;
 The zenith where he now shall glow
 No bound, no setting beam, can know ;
 Without or cloud or shade of woe,
 Is that eternal day.

History will not write his name,
 Upon the *crimson* roll of fame,
 But Religion, meeker maid,
 Mark him in her tablet fair ;
 And, when million names shall fade,
 His will stand recorded there !

XII. Page 266.

The biographical notices of the martyrs mentioned in the text, with an abstract of their disputation in defence of the truth are unavoidably omitted; and for the same cause, that the work might not be extended beyond its limits, the examples of divine retribution upon the persecutors of Christ's disciples, are excluded. Those who desire a full acquaintance with this subject are referred to Fox's Book of Martyrs.

XIII. Page 267. *Walter Mill or Milne.*

This martyr for the truth was an aged minister of the most inoffensive manners, whose death excited universal horror throughout Scotland. No one of the civil officers could be found who would partake in his execution; one of the Archbishop of St. Andrew's servants at length engaged in the odious work—when fastened to the stake, he said. “ I trust in God I shall be the last that shall suffer death for his holy cause.” His confidence was true. He was the last Scotch-martyr for the Protestant religion. His pretended trial and death are one of the most interesting passages in ecclesiastical history.

XIV. This number was altered by mistake.

XV. Page 323. *Scotland before the Reformation.*

The corruptions by which the christian religion was universally depraved, before the Reformation, had grown to a greater height in Scotland, than in any other nation of the Western church. Superstition and religious imposture, in their grossest forms, gained an easy admission among a rude and ignorant people. By means of these, the clergy attained to an exorbitant degree of opulence and power ; which were accompanied, as they always have been, with the corruption of their order, and of the whole system of religion. The full half of the wealth of the nation belonged to the clergy ; and the greater part of this was in the hands of a few of their number, who had the command of the whole body. Avarice, ambition, and the love of secular pomp, reigned among the superior orders. Bishops and Abbots rivalled the first nobility in magnificence, and preceeded them in honours. A vacant bishopric or abbacy called forth powerful competitors, who contended for it as for a principality or petty kingdom ; it was obtained by similar arts, and not infrequently taken possession of by the same weapons. Inferior benefices were openly put to sale, or bestowed on the illiterate and unworthy minions of courtiers ; on dice-players, strolling bards, and the bastards of Bishops. There was not such a thing known as for a bishop to preach ; the practice was even gone into disuse among all the secular clergy, and was wholly devolved on the mendicant monks, who employed it for the most mercenary purposes.

The lives of the clergy, exempted from secular jurisdiction, and corrupted by wealth and idleness were become a scandal to religion, and an outrage on decency. Through the blind devotion and munificence of princes and nobles, monasteries, those nurseries of superstition and idleness, had greatly multiplied in the nation ; and though they had universally degenerated, and were notoriously become the haunts of lewdness and debauchery, it was deemed impious and sacrilegious to reduce their number, abridge their privileges, or alienate their funds. The kingdom swarmed with ignorant, idle, luxurious monks, who, like locusts, devoured the fruits of the earth, and filled the air with pestilential infection : friars, white, black, and grey ; with canonesses of various claus.

The ignorance of the clergy respecting religion was as gross as the dissoluteness of their morals. Even bishops were not ashamed to confess that they were unacquainted with the canon of their faith, and had never read any part of the sacred Scriptures, except what they met with in their missals. Under such pastors the people perished for lack of knowledge. That book which was able to make them wise unto salvation, and intended to be equally accessible by " Jew and Greek, Barbarian and Scythian, bond and free," was locked up from them, and the use of it, in their own tongue, prohibited under the heaviest penalties. The religious service was mumbled over in a dead language, which many of the priests did not understand, and some of them could scarcely read ; and the greatest care was taken to prevent even catechisms, composed and approved by the clergy, from coming into the hands of the laity.

Large sums of money were annually exported out of the kingdom, for the purchasing of palls, the confirmation of benefices, the conducting of appeals, and for many other purposes ; in exchange for which, were received leaden bulls, woollen palls, wooden images, plenty of old bones, with similar articles of precious consecrated mummery. Of the doctrine of Christianity scarcely any thing remained but the name. Instead of being directed to offer up their adorations to one God, the people were taught to divide them

among an innumerable company of inferior objects. A plurality of mediators shared the honor of procuring the divine favour, with the "One Mediator between God and man;" and more petitions were presented to the Virgin Mary and other saints, than to "Him whom the Father heareth always." The sacrifice of the mass was represented as procuring forgiveness of sins to the living and the dead, to the infinite disparagement of the sacrifice by which Jesus Christ expiated sin and procured everlasting redemption; and the consciences of men were withdrawn from faith in the merits of their Saviour, to a delusive reliance upon priestly absolutions, papal pardons, and voluntary penances. Instead of being instructed to demonstrate the sincerity of their faith and repentance, by forsaking their sins, and to testify their love to God and man, by observing the ordinances of worship authorised by scripture, and practising the duties of morality; they were taught, that, if they regularly said their *Aves* and *Credos*, confessed themselves to a priest, purchased a mass, went in pilgrimage to the shrine of some celebrated saint, or performed some prescribed act of bodily mortification—if they refrained from flesh on Fridays, and punctually paid their tithes and other church dues, their salvation was infallibly secured in due time: while those who were so rich and pious as to build a chapel or an altar, and to endow it for the support of a priest, to perform masses, obits, and dirges, procured a relaxation of the pains of purgatory for themselves or their relations, according to the extent of their mortifications. Legendary tales concerning the founder of some religious order, his wonderful sanctity, the miracles which he performed, his combats with the devil, his watchings, fastings, flagellations; the virtues of holy water, chrism, crossing, and exorcism; the horrors of purgatory, with the numbers released from it by the intercession of some powerful saint; these, with low jests, table-talk, and fire-side scandal, formed the favorite topics of these preachers, and were served up to the people instead of the pure, solid, and sublime doctrines of the Bible.

The beds of the dying were besieged, and their last moments disturbed by avaricious priests, who laboured to extort bequests to themselves or to the church. Not satisfied with the exacting of tythes from the living, a demand was made upon the dead: no sooner had a poor husbandman breathed his last, than the rapacious vicar came and carried off his corps present, which he repeated as often as death visited the family. Ecclesiastical censures were fulminated against those who were reluctant in making these payments, or who showed themselves disobedient to the clergy; and, for a little money they were prostituted on the most trifling occasions. Divine service was neglected; the churches were deserted; so that, except on a few festival days, the places of worship in many parts of the country, served only as sanctuaries for malefactors, places of traffic, or resorts for pastime.

Persecution, and the suppression of free inquiry, were the only weapons by which its interested supporters were able to defend this system of corruption and imposture. Every avenue by which truth might enter was carefully guarded. Learning was branded as the parent of heresy. The most frightful pictures were drawn of those who had separated from the Romish church, and held up before the eyes of the people, to deter them from imitating their example. If any person attained a degree of illumination amidst the general darkness, began to hint dissatisfaction with the conduct of the clergy, and to propose the correction of abuses, he was immediately stigmatized as a heretic, and, if he did not secure his safety by flight, was immured in a dungeon or committed to the flames.

From this imperfect sketch we may see how false the representation is which some persons would impose on us: as if popery were a system, erroneous indeed, but purely speculative! superstitious, but harmless; provided

it had not been accidentally accompanied with intolerance and cruelty. The very reverse is the truth. It may be safely said, that there is not one of its erroneous tenets, or of its superstitious practices, which was not either originally contrived, or artfully accommodated, to advance and support some practical abuse; to aggrandize the ecclesiastical order, secure to them immunity from civil jurisdiction, sanctify their encroachments upon secular authorities, vindicate their usurpations upon the consciences of men, cherish implicit obedience to the decisions of the church, and extinguish free inquiry and liberal science.

It was a system not more repugnant to the religion of the Bible, than incompatible with the independence, liberty, and prosperity of kingdoms; a system not more destructive to the souls of men, than to social and domestic happiness and the principles of sound morality. To the revival of the primitive doctrines and institutions of Christianity, by the preaching and writings of the Reformers, and to those controversies by which the popish errors were confuted from Scripture; we are chiefly indebted for the overthrow of superstition, ignorance and despotism; and for the blessings, political and religious, which we enjoy, all of which may be traced to the Reformation from popery.

How grateful should we be to divine Providence for this happy revolution! For those persons do but "sport with their own imaginations," who flatter themselves that it must have taken place in the ordinary course of human affairs, and overlook the many convincing proofs of the superintending direction of superior wisdom, in the whole combination of circumstances which contributed to bring about the Reformation in Scotland as well as throughout Europe. How much are we indebted to those men, who under God, were the instruments in effecting it; who cheerfully jeopardized their lives, to achieve a design which involved the felicity of millions unborn; boldly attacked the system of error and corruption, fortified by popular credulity, custom and laws, fenced with the most dreadful penalties; and having forced the strong hold of superstition, and penetrated the recesses of its temple, tore aside the veil which concealed that monstrous idol which the world had so long worshipped, and dissolving the magic spell by which the human mind was bound, restored it to liberty! how criminal must those be, who, sitting at ease under their vines and figtrees, planted by the unwearyed labours, and watered by the blood of these patriots, discover their disesteem of the invaluable privileges which they inherit, or their ignorance of the expence at which they were purchased, by the most unworthy treatment of those to whom they owe them; misrepresent their actions, calumniate their motives, and cruelly lacerate their memories!

Patriots have toil'd, and in their country's cause
Bled nobly; and their deeds, as they deserve,
Receive proud recompence——
But fairer wreaths are due, though never paid,
To those who, posted at the shrine of truth,
Have fallen in her defence.——

Their blood is shed,
In confirmation of the noblest claim,
Our claim to feed upon immortal truth,
To walk with God, to be divinely free,
To soar, and to anticipate the skies.
Yet few remember them.——

With their name
No bard embalms and sanctifies his song

And history, so warm on meaner themes,
Is cold in this. She execrates indeed
The tyranny that doom'd them to the fire,
But gives the glorious sufferers little praise.

XVI. Page 332. *The Scotch Secession.*

In 1732, more than 40 ministers presented a memorial to the general assembly specifying great defections from the constitution of the church, and praying for redress. A similar petition from several hundred elders and private christians was also then offered; but the assembly contemptuously enacted, that when there was no private presentation to the living, the elders and heritors alone being Protestants, should elect the Minister. This act was objected to by a large number of the Preachers and their congregations—as it entirely divested at least 30 to 1 of the people who were not landholders of their right to chuse their Pastors; and this proceeding was denounced as prejudicial to the honour and interest of the church; destructive of the people's edification; contrary to the authority of Jesus Christ; and inconsistent with Apostolic practice, which sanctioned the choice of elders and deacons by the whole multitude of Christians.

Ebenezer Erskine, minister of Stirling, being appointed to preach a sermon before the Synod of Perth, with great boldness enumerated what he conceived to be the sins and defections of the church: and among these, patronage, and the evils arising from its rigorous exercise, were not forgotten. Clerical men have never been famed for being humble and docile hearers, nor did the present instance furnish an exception. Instead of meekly receiving the word of exhortation, for three days the synod warmly disputed concerning the obnoxious preacher; and at last determined that he should be rebuked at their bar, both for the matter and the manner of his sermon. From this decision, twelve ministers and two elders dissented, and Mr. Erskine appealed to the General Assembly; but here too, he found the same reception, for embracing the sentiments of the synod they ordered him to be rebuked at their dread bar. Conceiving that he pleaded for the cause of God and truth, Mr. Erskine protested, that without violating his conscience, he could not submit to the rebuke, and insisted that he should be left at liberty to deliver the same testimony on every proper occasion. Three other ministers William Wilson, Alexander Moncrief, and James Fisher joined in his protest. The meekness and gentleness of Christ do not appear to have been that day the reigning principles in the assembly; for they ordered their commission, at the next meeting to proceed against the four brethren, and if they did not retract their protest and express their sorrow for it, to suspend them from their office, or even inflict severer censure. Mr. Erskine and his adherents remaining stedfast in their sentiments, the sentence of suspension was pronounced against them; and some months afterwards at another meeting, the same ecclesiastical court finding them still, as they termed it, obstinate and impenitent, their relation to their congregations was dissolved; the moderator's casting vote determined a point so important in its consequences to the Scottish establishment. Against this sentence too the four brethren protested, insisting that the validity of their office as ministers, and their relation to their congregations should not be effected by it: and they declared a secession, not from the constitution of the church of Scotland, to which they professed their ardent adherence, but from the prevailing party in her judicatories.

Such was the commencement of a separation from the established church which has been increasing for fourscore years, and which is likely to be of

equal duration with the church itself. Nor can it be denied, that for the first half century at least of its existence, in proportion to their numbers, few sects can boast of so many laborious, faithful, and orthodox ministers, and intelligent and exemplary private Christians within the pale of their communion.

The leaders in the secession were men of eminent piety, unshaken integrity, deeply concerned for the prosperity of religion, and wholly devoted to the service of Christ. Their preaching was evangelical, and the manner of some of them exceedingly popular. But they had studied that part of the Gospel which enjoins crucifixion to the world, and keeping at the remotest distance from every vice, more than that which inculcates the meekness and gentleness of Christ, and the catholic philanthropy which sweetens as well as purifies the soul. Their principles of church government were injurious to their minds. While the independent derives all his religion both as to doctrine and discipline from the sacred Scripture, the Scotch presbyterian of those days derived a multitude of his ideas from the confession of faith, the books of discipline, the acts of the general assembly, and some in addition to these from the solemn league and covenant. These at once perverted and contracted his heart, and brought into his religious system a multitude of human ordinances which he regarded as essential parts of divine truth : hence flowed a spirit of intolerance, and sourness, and severity.

Another difficulty arising also from the system of established presbytery, Mr. Erskine and his brethren found in the character and conduct of many of the persons with whom they were associated in an ecclesiastical body. During the long period of the church's peace, some were, from year to year, entering on the performance of the sacred functions who were not endued with the spirit of their office. But with these men they were obliged to associate in their church courts, to unite with them in various parts of ministerial duty, and to acknowledge them as brethren in the work of Christ. Episcopacy is a loose system which exercises little controul over the parson of a parish, if he performs what the rubric enjoins. He is required to have scarcely more intercourse with the neighboring priesthood than is agreeable to his choice ; and in the meetings of the bishop with the clergy, there is no exercise of ecclesiastical authority in which he is required to take an active part in conjunction with his worldly brethren. But presbytery is a compact and active system, which obliges a minister to sit and vote in ecclesiastical courts in conjunction with the rest of his body, and to unite with the worst of men in carrying into execution the decisions of their courts, however contrary they may be to his own judgment. This grievous inconvenience was deeply felt by Mr. Erskine and those who thought with him : it was their continual burden, and it was one of the things which led to a separation from the established church.

To prevent an entire separation was at last the wish of those who had acted with so much severity ; and in 1734 the general assembly decreed that the seceding brethren should be restored to the execution of their office. The seceders would not accept the boon. In 1739 they were commanded to appear before the court, and a willingness was expressed to receive them again into communion. This offer being rejected, the assembly of the following year deposed them from the ministerial office, as to the exercise of it in the church of Scotland.

The seceding brethren were not idle spectators of these proceedings. Immediately after their suspension, they formed themselves into a distinct ecclesiastical body, to which they gave the name of the associated presbytery, and drew up what they called a testimony, containing a view of their principles, which they held to be those of the church of Scotland in her purity. Still, however, they did not lose sight of returning to their former stations ;

but when the favour was offered to them, in 1739, they were unable to accept it : for by keeping their eyes steadfastly fixed on every thing amiss in her, they perceived so many and so great corruptions, that they were afraid to go back into her communion. After a time, a second testimony appeared, comprising an immense mass of historical record, detailing the sins of the land, and the defections of the church ; and this they made one of the standards of the body. Not satisfied with these displays of their principles and complaints, after they were entirely separated from the church, in 1743, they renewed with an oath the solemn league and covenant, and they went so far as to make it a term of ministerial and Christian communion.

In the course of these proceedings, the active and faithful discharge of their ministerial functions presents a more pleasing prospect. Mr. Erskine and his colleagues became itinerants and preached throughout the country. For this service they were well qualified by their eminent skill in theology, the superior purity of their doctrine, and the fervour and energy of their elocution. The effect was powerful ; multitudes joined them, the number of their congregations continued yearly to increase, till a check was received by an unnatural division among themselves.

While in the excess of their zeal for little things, and the indulgence of scrupulosity of conscience, the seceders had proceeded to raise high walls of separation between themselves and all other christians in the world, in 1745 the baneful effects of this contracted spirit were betrayed in rending to pieces their own body, and producing a separation which betrayed them to the ridicule of their enemies, and covered them with dishonour even in the eyes of their friends. In the oath required of persons who become burgesses of corporations in Scotland, there is the following clause : " I profess and allow with my heart the true religion at present professed within the realm, and authorised by the laws thereof. I shall abide by and defend the same to my life's end, renouncing the Roman religion called papistry."

This declaration some of the seceders conceived to be perfectly consistent with their principles, because it was the pure religion of the church of Scotland which they professed they would maintain. To others of their body it appeared unlawful, because the oath was administered by the members of the established church, and must mean religion as it at present existed in the establishment. When the subject was brought before the synod, those who thought the oath lawful were desirous that forbearance might be exercised, and no decision made upon it ; and this was carried by a majority of votes. The other party would not acquiesce in this arrangement ; but leaving the place, though confessedly the minority, they claimed to themselves the name and powers of the synod, excommunicated their brethren, and renounced all fellowship with them. From that time 1746, they became two separate bodies, and were known to the world by the undignified names of burghers and antiburghers, from their approbation or their condemnation of the burgher oath.

During the course of this period another separation from the church of Scotland took place, but on principles directly opposite to those of the seceders. The author of it was John Glass, minister of Tealing, a country parish in the neighbourhood of Dundee, who had imbibed the sentiments of the independents, but carried them to a degree of minuteness and rigour far beyond the advocates for the system, in England and America. Though an inveterate enemy to presbytery, he had not the manliness to quit his living ; but after having for some years tormented and perplexed the ecclesiastical courts, by modes of reasoning to which they had altogether been unaccustomed, he was arraigned at the bar of the presbytery

of Danlee, and as his answers tended rather to confirm than to remove the suspicions of departure from presbyterian principles, he was cited, in April, 1728, before the synod of Angus and Mearns. He there openly avowed his sentiments concerning the nature and discipline of a christian church; and being asked whether he felt himself obliged to publish these opinions, he answered, "I think myself in conscience obliged to declare every truth of Christ, and keep nothing back, but to speak all the words of this life, and to teach his people to observe all things whatsoever he commands, so far as I can understand, though others may differ from me and I may be exposed to hazard for declaring them." The synod then pronounced him deposed from his office as minister of the parish of Tealing: and he published an exposition of the proposition "that a congregation or church of Jesus Christ, with its presbytery is in its discipline subject to no jurisdiction under heaven." Notwithstanding all means for reclaiming the Glassites," says Brown, "they obstinately went about preaching their principles in fields or streets, or printing pamphlets in favour of them, so that at length the synod deposed Mr. Glass from the office of the holy ministry."

Mr. Glass was a man of very considerable talents, and illustrated some parts of the gospel with peculiar felicity, simplicity, and purity. Though differing so widely in his opinion from the seceders, he equalled or perhaps exceeded them in a contracted spirit, in excluding all other Christians from his communion, and in short in confining Christianity to himself and to his sect.

Towards the latter part of this period another sect arose, which took to itself the name of the Presbytery of Relief. It derived its origin from the tyranny of the church of Scotland, and alone of all the divisions in that country can lay claim to the praise of liberality in principles. The person compelled to be its founder was Thomas Gillespie, minister of Carnock, a man of apostolical sanctity and zeal, as faithful to his charge and as unblameable in his conduct, as any age can produce. One distinguished mark of a true presbyterian, was that a congregation has a right to choose its own minister. But a party in the church was now beginning to prevail, of men who carried the law of patronage to the utmost rigour, and treated the sentiments of the people with sovereign contempt.

In 1752, a candidate being presented by a patron to a parish within the bounds of the presbytery to which Mr. Gillespie belonged, the inhabitants were unwilling to receive him as their pastor. The business being finally brought before the general assembly, they enjoined the presbytery to proceed to his ordination. Mr. Gillespie who was appointed to preside on the occasion, refused to take part in a service which he conceived to be contrary to the spirit of the Gospel; and several of his brethren concurred with him. Far from venerating the pious scruples of a tender conscience, the assembly, provoked at their refusal, inflicted ecclesiastical censures on all; but poured the full stream of its vengeance on Mr. Gillespie's head, by deposing him from the office of the Christian ministry, and ejecting him from his parish. This sentence was pronounced, after solemn prayer to God and in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. All the blasphemies for twenty years past have not equalled the profaneness of that one act of the assembly composed of the ministers and elders of the church of Scotland. The deposition of this good man was the commencement of a system of ecclesiastical polity, which with but little interruption has continued with increasing strength to the present time.

For Mr. Gillespie to have ceased from his evangelical labours, on account of so unrighteous a sentence, would, in his view been disloyalty to his Lord, and cruelty to the souls of men. He therefore continued to preach

to his congregation at their request, but not in the kirk, and it was hoped that the next general assembly would restore him to his charge. But the application then made on his behalf was without effect; nor were repeated applications afterwards more successful; the same baleful influence which deposed him still continued to bear sway.

All hopes of his restoration being blasted, his hearers procured for him a place of worship in a neighbouring town; and he continued nearly six years to minister to his congregation, unconnected and alone. But in 1758 he was joined by Thomas Boston who resigned his charge in the church of Scotland: and they united as fathers of the new denomination, the Presbytery of Relief. They professed to maintain the principles of the church of Scotland in their purity; they were willing to hold communion with all the good ministers and private christians in the establishment; and their avowed design was to afford relief to such parishes as had ministers imposed on them by law contrary to their will, and which did not wish to be fettered with the chains which the seceders had forged for their adherents. Boston was as popular as Gillespie was good; and in consequence of their catholic principles and evangelical preaching, the number of their followers increased from year to year. This was the ground, which had Mr. Erskine and his colleagues occupied in their secession, would have conciliated to them vast multitudes of the members of the establishment, and rendered their labours and influence more extensive and beneficial.

XVII. Page 334. *The present state of the Protestants.*

To those men of God who were the instruments of the Reformation from popery; and to the pious rulers, John, Elector of Saxony, and Edward the sixth of England, who promoted the cause in their dominions from the purest principles, it is difficult to give adequate praise. But it has not been sufficiently considered that the method employed by the apostles in planting christianity, is widely different from that which was adopted in most of the countries which renounced the communion of Rome. In the former case, none were admitted into the church of Christ, but such as made a credible profession of their faith, without compulsion or restraint. In the latter, the change in most countries was produced in great part by the fiat of the civil authorities. Hence multitudes embraced the new religion, from motives which the Scriptures condemn. Many of the great and noble became Protestants from an eagerness to share in the ample spoils of the Romish Church, or to acquire the favour of the court, or to avoid the evil consequences of refusing to comply with the will of the sovereign. As to the mass of the people, swarms of them became converts to the new religion as it was called, not from choice, but from necessity and constraint—from being compelled to attend on the services performed by the teacher, whom the higher powers thought proper to constitute their guide in sacred things.

In Scotland and the other nations, where the reformation commenced with the zealous labours of holy men of God; and was disseminated by the same means from city to city, and from village to village, without any co-operation or countenance of the constituted authorities, there was a far greater number of Protestants from principle, as well as a higher degree of vital piety. Yet even there, the extent was far more limited: and the establishment Protestants—persons who from indifference to divine truth will conform to the dominant religion of the country whatever it may be—were far more numerous than is generally supposed.

Since the days of Diocletian the last great pagan Emperor, and persecutor of the Christians, no event has taken place, which for its beneficial in-

fluence, can be compared with the Reformation from popery. From the hour of the death of the last minister who was converted to the faith by the preaching of the apostles and evangelists, there was not so clear a delination of the doctrines of the Gospel by any of the ancient fathers of the Church, as has been presented by the Reformers, and those of the same mind who succeeded them. Nor were there in the same long space of time, private Christians so enlightened, so judicious, or more devoted than those who had been members of Protestant churches. The Reformation laid the foundation of a fair temple to Jehovah, by the restoration of the pure doctrines of the Gospel : to build on this foundation was the employment of the following generations. The Reformers, next in praise to the evangelists who assisted the twelve in their labours, after they had served their generation, by the will of God, entered into glory. With their life, the wider propagation of Protestantism ceased ; and not a country in Europe, not a province—nay it may be questioned if one city—from the year 1580 to the present day, has been added to the Protestant communion. The men who immediately followed them, lost the spirit of propagation of their principles ; and sat down as parish ministers, whose labours were circumscribed by a certain geographical line. That which remained popery at that period, continues popery to the present hour. What is yet more remarkable—in many places where part of the inhabitants of a district or town or parish were not converted from the old superstition, to that superstition they remain still wedded.

In process of time, what might naturally be expected took place. The peaceful state of the church in different countries, accompanied with the emoluments and honours of an establishment, drew into the ecclesiastical body a numerous class of men destitute of the spirit of their office, under whose unskillful and lukewarm services the glory of the Reformation decayed.

In the northern part of Germany, where the Reformation first lifted the standard of opposition to Rome, the state of religion is far from prosperous. The spirit of the world, and what tends to foster it—the spirit of error, of destructive error, has taken extensive possession of the colleges, the pulpits, and as a natural consequence, of the hearts of the mass of the people. Glorious exceptions there are of professors in their universities, of ministers, and private christians, who continue stedfast in the faith, and zealous for the Redeemer's glory ; but alas, they are comparatively few. In the south, the proportion of those who adhere to the pure principles of the Reformation, is more considerable ; and religion is in a more flourishing state ; but not equal to what it formerly was. Of the northern kingdoms, Denmark, Norway, and Sweden, in which the Lutheran system was established during the wonderful events of the sixteenth century ; a dreadful insensibility to vital godliness has taken place among a very large portion both of the clergy and laity ; and while attention is paid to prescribed forms, the spirit of religion is at the lowest ebb ; and while cold indifference has widely extended its dominion, no vigorous efforts are making for a revival ; heresy too, has spread its mortal poison among them. In the Protestant cantons of Switzerland are to be found many eminent ministers, and many zealous christians in private life, who are labouring to promote the Redeemer's cause : but evangelical piety is by no means diffused so extensively through the mass of the people, and perhaps of the teachers too, as it was a century ago. Geneva, once the glory of Protestantism, and the seat of pure religion has now lost its pre-eminence : Calvin is fastened to the stake, and Servetus sits in the professor's chair ; and wherever his sentiments are taught, vital godliness takes its flight ; the fire of devotion is extinguished ;

and all becomes cold and frozen, like the eternal snows of their neighbouring Alps.

Reformed France stripped of every religious privilege, lay broken on the wheel of persecution for a century and more ; and besides the torment of her suffering, the injury sustained as to knowledge, principles, and sanctity cannot be expressed. As Protestant Germany is divided into numerous principalities, Holland may be considered as occupying the second rank among the reformed countries of Europe. In proportion to its population, no land has produced a longer list of eminent divines : and there have been from generation to generation multitudes of true followers of Christ in private life. Still many able and faithful ministers are labouring here with ardour and with success : still many zealous disciples in civil stations are adorning the doctrine of God their Saviour.

The island of Great Britain can boast of a larger multitude of persons professing the Protestant religion than any other country in Europe. In England, from the era of the Reformation, notwithstanding many obstacles, there was for a whole century a gradual progress of real religion, and a gradual increase of faithful pastors and pious people. The exclusion of two thousand ministers from their parochial charges for conscience' sake, checked the growth of piety in the establishment for almost another century. These confessors, and those who succeeded them in their voluntary religious societies, were the men who during the greater part of this latter period, kept alive the sacred fire on the altar of God in the southern part of the isle. Since that time, the vigorous efforts of an increasing body of pious ministers in the established church ; and the continued exertions of a more numerous host of dissenters and methodists are from year to year spreading the triumphs of the cross more extensively in every district of that land.

Scotland, which has, since the Reformation, sent more saints to heaven than any country in Europe of the same population, was a region of storms both ecclesiastical and civil, for more than a century after that period ; but religion continued to flourish. At the restoration it sustained an injury the most severe, and suffered a persecution more bitter than words can describe, which ceased not to increase till the revolution in 1. 88. From that time the church of Scotland enjoyed days of peace and of spiritual prosperity : and when about fifty years afterwards, from a long state of ease and rest, religion had considerably decayed, God in mercy raised up some zealous men, who, though they separated from the established church, and formed various new denominations ; yet preached the Gospel in its purity, converted a multitude of souls, and contributed greatly to advance the cause of Christ.

At the present day an increasing number of faithful ministers in the church of Scotland ; and a multitude of preachers of different communions, both presbyterian and congregational, are exerting themselves to extend the boundaries of the Messiah's spiritual kingdom in that highly favoured land. In a word, through the whole of Great Britain there is an evident advancement in knowledge and piety from year to year, and the prospects for the time to come are unspeakably pleasing.

Besides these Protestant nations in Europe, there is one in another quarter of the world, and but one, which professes the same faith. Hear and mourn : in Asia, that immense world of souls : in Africa's widely and far extended surface there are none ; and in America, which stretches itself almost from pole to pole, there is but one Protestant nation ! Of more than seven hundred millions of the human race which those three quarters of the globe contain, search for the Protestant communities there ; and when you have travelled through every region and climate, it will be found that there is but one nation rising above the puny number of a million of

people, where the reformed religion can be called the religion of the country. This one social body is the North American Republic. At the time of the Reformation, rude pagans only were thinly scattered over the immense forests : now, a nation almost equal to Britain in population, dwells there,—in divine knowledge and unfeigned piety not inferior ; and moving forward with a rapid progress to superiority. To these regions of Protestantism, add the colonies formed by its votaries in America, Africa, and Asia ; and the missionaries sent out by them to bring the heathen and unenlightened nations of the world to the obedience of Christ.

XIX. Page 341. *Calvin and Socinus contrasted.*

No event conjoined with the Reformation has furnished so many materials for calumny, as Calvin's connection with the death of Servetus. Arminians and Humanitarians have combined to augment the ignominy, under which they have hoped to bury that splendid Reformer's services and intelligence. But they have not been just and impartial in their censures. Admit that Calvin was anti-evangelical in his sanction of that absurd mode to convert an infidel blasphemer, was Socinus more philanthropic ?

Socinus most inconsistently but strenuously defended the religious worship of our Lord Jesus Christ ; this practice Francis Davides the Humanitarian superintendent opposed, as mere idolatry. The controversy raged with so much acrimony, that the Prince of Transylvania imprisoned Davides, where, through the rigour of his sufferings, he died.

This act of persecution is passed over silently by those who keep up a constant deafening outcry against the murderers of Calvin, for his conduct towards Servetus. If it be alleged that Socinus left Davides to the civil power, the same excuse may be made for Calvin. When it is ascertained that this Reformer ruled in Geneva, so that the acts of the government were his own, it may be replied, that the government once banished Calvin himself, who declared, before Servetus came to Geneva, that it would not be in his power to save him ; so that his influence was little more than that of the Socinians in Transylvania, who had acquired such an ascendancy that the man whom they persecuted was sent to die in a jail. Calvin laboured to dissuade a stranger, who was viewed with horror, from coming to a place where the laws, which had been enacted long before by the emperor, would consign him to the flames ; but the Socinians saw their brother, the superintendent of their churches, hunted from his honours to a dungeon, and what efforts did they make to save him ? The death of Servetus, which was cruel indeed, was inflicted for what all the Reformers, as well as Calvin, deemed damnable heresies, worthy of death, the blasphemy of degrading the incarnate God to an ordinary man, his death to mere martyrdom, and his worship to idolatry. But the Socinians who are supposed to outstrip all others in liberal principles, hunted Davides to prison from political motives, lest the odium under which they laboured should be augmented. Socinus publicly stigmatized the adherents of Davides as semi-jews, and urged the unfortunate man to renounce his error ; but privately he acknowledged that it was a mere nothing, nay no error at all, but a proof of stronger faith ; so that Davides was made a sacrifice not to honest bigotry, but to mere fineness. The aggravated guilt of Socinus is, indeed, no excuse for that of Calvin ; but it may suffice to expose the conduct of his followers, who adduce the crime of the latter, as a proof of the blackness of his character and of the intolerant tendency of his doctrines.

XX, Page 353. *The Baptismal Controversy.*

The dogma of close communion, founded upon the premises, that immersion only is baptism, and that adults are the only proper subjects of the ordinance, is so abhorrent in its unavoidable inference, the extermination of all the denominations of christians that are now, or ever have existed, except the Baptists; that it is worthy of inquiry whether such an outrageous prescription can possibly be verified?

It is a curious but undeniable fact, that the first appearance of a Baptist christian community was in the sixteenth century, after the commencement of the Reformation. ‘If there be any truth in history, the Baptists’ opinions are wholly modern, and unknown to antiquity.’ It is said that among the Waldenses there were some Baptists; but the first notice of them as a distinct community, is about the time of the Reformation by Luther.’

‘No less than ninety different heresies are said to have sprung up in the three first centuries. Irenæus, Philastrius, Austin, and Theodoret, wrote catalogues of the several sects of christians they had heard of; but none of them mention any that denied infant baptism, except those who denied all baptism.’ Here we have a very curious fact—the first rise of a baptist community—in the sixteenth century, after the commencement of Luther’s Reformation.

How is it possible to account for this remarkable circumstance? It is replied, that the system of the Anti pedo-baptists is not supported by even one text of scripture, one pattern, one precedent, or one example in the word of God.

If this be evident there will be nothing very surprising—that there should be a lapse of more than fifteen centuries of the christian era, before a single baptist community made its appearance in the world. For who can wonder for a moment at the very late commencement of a community which has not in scripture, either precept, pattern, precedent, or example to rest upon?

There is no example in scripture in favour of the baptists.

Whenever an example is to support a practice, it is indispensably necessary that the example and the practice should both be of one and the same kind. For if the example be of one kind, and the practice of another kind, —the practice is not founded upon the example—nor does the example give any support to the practice. One kind of example can never support another kind of practice; for it is no example to the practice, such an example and such a practice being two different and distinct things. So when things are thus circumstanced, that the practice does not agree with the example, the practice, in this case, has no example at all; but is purely a practice without an example. And this is precisely the condition of the Baptists at this moment—they have neither precedent nor example for their practice in any part of scripture.

It is evident from scripture, that all the adults, whose baptism we read of, were the first of their families who embraced the christian religion. But what is the practice of the Baptists?—They baptize all adults promiscuously, whether descended from christian parents, or Heathens, or Jews. But scripture examples only go to the latter cases, Heathens and Jews; nor is there any example whatever for the former, the descendants of christian parents: consequently it appears that the baptists follow no example at all, and their practice, in relation to scripture, is completely without precedent.

All the examples of scripture are in favour of those called Pedo-baptists. What adults do these baptise?—Surely none but heathens and Jews, and such as have not been before baptised. This the pedo-baptists do, and the

apostles did no more. Herein we have the necessary agreement between the example and the practice—they are both of one and the same kind. Not as in the case of the baptists, in which there is no correspondence between the example and the practice. In their case they entirely differ: the example is this—and the practice is that—and there is not the least agreement between the two.

What shall we say to the baptisms of households?—Do not these look with a favourable aspect upon Pedobaptists? What has been just said has very nearly put the Baptists and their system out of the bible. We shall now proceed to throw them entirely out. From the examples we go to the word and precepts of Scripture.

How are persons to be baptized?—By immersion only, say the Baptists: nothing is baptism, but immersion only. Now no passage in any part of scripture will prove this. 1. Can it be proved that the word *Baptizo* itself means immersion only? This is utterly impossible; nay, the contrary is true, that it does not mean immersion only. 2. Can it be proved that any one person, whose baptism we read of in the scripture was immersed?—It cannot possibly be proved. 3. Can it be proved, that any one, said to have been baptized, was at all so much as in the water? No man in the world can prove it.

1. Can it be proved that baptism is immersion only? Who can prove that the term *baptism* means immersion, and nothing else but immersion? Could Dr. Gale do this? He was able to have done it if any one could;—but he proved the contrary, and so overthrew himself; for meeting with a passage in Aristotle, in which the thing baptized was not put into the water, but the water came upon it, he said ‘the word *Baptize*, perhaps, does not so necessarily express the action of putting under water, as in general a thing being in that condition, no matter how it came so.’—Another passage came in his way in which the thing baptized was only partially wet: his assertion was, ‘That the word does not always necessarily imply a total immersion of the thing spoken of, all over.’ These two things put together amount to this: that a thing is baptized if the element come upon it; and if it come only on one part it is baptized. Dr. Wall laid hold of this; and shewed to the world, that while Dr. Gale contended for immersion only, he held fast the mere word but completely lost the thing. If baptism meant immersion only, there could be no different or differing baptisms; but there are differing baptisms, so not immersion only. In Hebrews 9: 10, the apostle speaking of the ablutions among the Jews, calls them *divers washings*. The true meaning of the first word is *differing* or *different*.—Rom. 12: 6. Thus it is, ‘baptisms differing,’ or different; and this directly overturns the sentiments of the Baptists, who contend that baptism is immersion only. Had Origen thought as the Baptists do, he would not have said, ‘that when Elijah ordered water to be poured on the wood, the wood was baptized.’ Nor would the seventy translators have said, that Nebuchadnezzar was baptized,—which they do, when he was wet with the dew of heaven. Much less would the scripture have called the pouring out of the Holy Ghost *Baptism*. Nor can it be proved that the word *Baptism*, in the New Testament does ever mean *immersion*, we will not say *only*, but *at all*; and if not immersion only, the baptist principle is lost.

2. Can it be proved that any one person in the New Testament was immersed? There are seven instances of baptisms, which have some connection with place and circumstances:—The baptism of Jesus at Jordan—the baptizing at Enon—the baptism of the eunuch—of Saul—of Cornelius—of the jailor—and the three thousand in Jerusalem. Of these instances, three were in the open air, and at streams of water, two in private houses, one in a jail, and one in a city. If we look for proof for the

Immersion of any one, it must be from the first three instances ; but here is no proof at all that any one was immersed. It is true, here were persons, and there was water ; but whether any person was immersed in the water, there is not a word said. All that can be said, and all that the most sanguine can say, would be this, ‘It may be,—it is likely—it is highly probable—I am apt to think so.’ Such forms of speech shew there is no proof ; and that the best is merely presumption ; but if we attend to the other instances, the private houses, the jail, and the city, there is neither proof nor presumption ; or, if there be any presumption upon the case, it is entirely on the other side, that is, that there was no immersion practiced ; and the sum of all is this, that in the first instances there is not the least proof ; and that in the others, there is not the least presumption.

3. Can it be proved that any person baptized was so much as in the water at all ? The putting of this question may appear singular to some, who would be ready to say—Can any thing be more evident than this ?—Did not our Lord come up out of Jordan ? Did not Philip and the eunuch go down into, and come up out of the water ? The truth is, that whether they went into the water or not, depends upon three small words ; them, two are used in the New Testament ahundred times, to signify *from* ; and the first as often to signify *to* ; and they necessarily signify no more than *to* the water and *from* the water ; so there is no proof that any one person baptized was in the water at all.

But possibly some Baptist may say, that the Apostle tells us in Romans 6 : 4. ‘We are buried with him by baptism.’ True, ‘*by baptism*’—baptism may be the *means* of our burial with Christ, whatever may be the *form* of it. Before any conclusion can be drawn from this text, three things must be adjusted.—1. Does the apostle speak of the baptism of the Spirit, or of water baptism ? The probability is, from the context, that he actually speaks of the baptism of the Spirit ;—and if so, the Baptist inference is at an end : for the mode of this baptism was pouring. 2. But suppose the apostle to speak of water baptism ; does he allude to any mode of administration ? It is probable he had no allusion to any mode at all. When he says ‘baptized into Christ’ or ‘baptized into his death,’ he does not seem to allude to any mode. But 3. Suppose he does allude to some mode ; what mode does he allude to ? If there be an allusion to any thing in burial, it may be either to the putting of the body into the earth, or to the throwing of the earth upon the body ; which would resemble suffusion. If all these queries cannot be adjusted, and their adjustment is perfectly precarious, the inference of the Baptists from this passage is lost.

There is no passage in all the scriptures to evince immersion only, or to prove any immersion at all, or that any one of the baptized did so much as go into the water. And now there remains but one thing more to demonstrate that the Baptists have not a passage, precept, precedent, or example, in all scripture to support their system.

The Baptists deny infant baptism—But have they any thing in scripture for this ?—Not one passage : but they deny it by inference. If the inference be good, it is sufficient. Of what kind is the inference, and from what is it drawn ? A Baptist will tell us, that the scriptures require faith in those who are to be baptized ; as in this “If thou believest, thou mayest.” So likewise in other passages. Infants, they say, cannot believe, therefore they are not to be baptised. This is their inference—but a single remark will completely destroy it. It is the manner of Scripture, when any thing is enjoined as a *mean* to an *end*, it is enjoined upon those subjects *only* who are naturally capable of it ; but those subjects who are naturally incapable of the *mean*, may, notwithstanding, have a right to the *end*. For example ;

"He that believeth shall be saved" The *mean*, believeth, is in order to the *end*, saved. Now, according to the above remark, infants who are incapable of the *mean*, may yet enjoy the *end*; they may be saved. But according to the inference of the Baptists, infants must all be lost. So in another instance,—If any will not work, neither shall he eat.' But if infants cannot work, which is the *mean*; yet they may eat, which is the *end*. But upon the Baptists' principle, it does not follow that they should eat—because they have no will to *work*;—so all infants may as well be kept from meat as from baptism. As this inference is as bad as any inference can be, and as they have nothing better to bring, they are in fact completely out of the Bible.

In this way we account for this singular historical document, that the Baptists never existed as a community till the sixteenth century. And we presume that no better reason can be given for the very recent existence of the Baptists as a body, than by shewing that they have neither text, precept, precedent, or example in any part of scripture to support their exclusive system.

XXI. Page 354. *The unbroken succession.*

If any person wishes to understand this subject, he is referred to the standards of the Episcopal church of England; the *homily for Whitsunday*, Part II.; to Isaac's ecclesiastical claims investigated; and to Bristed's thoughts on the Anglican and American-Anglo churches. A Hierarch pleading for the divine right of Episcopacy by the regular descent from Peter; and a stiff Baptist boasting of the unbroken succession of dipping from John the Lord's forerunner, constitute the most wonderful anomaly in principle, and the most perfect identity in argument, in the theological world.

XXII. Page 364. *The Independents.*

Because many of the Congregationalists in this Union, have lately diverged from evangelical truth; persons south of New-England generally believe, that the *English Dissenters* are heterodoxial in their theological sentiments; and because some names are of so much importance in the scale of religious controversy, especially upon the questions of ecclesiastical government and discipline, others carefully conceal the fact, that *they* were the most decided opponents of all assumptions derogatory to the undivided supremacy of Jesus Christ as Head of the church. This is not only disrespectful, but injurious to their memory; for nearly all our most popular religious writers are the Puritans or their successors, the Independents and Baptists; Owen, Baxter, Bates, Howe, Flavel, Manton, Calamy, Charnock, Henry, Edwards, Keach, Doddridge, Watts, Ridgley, Gill, Stennett, Harmer, Booth, Williams, Buck, Fuller, Burder, Jay, Collyer, Foster and Bogue; with a multitude of others who will continue to edify mankind as long as the English language shall be understood by the inhabitants of our globe.

To them, under the Holy Ghost, we are deeply indebted for the most sublime knowledge; and therefore let honour be appropriated to the memories of the pioneers who have opened the road to civil and religious freedom for all the tribes of Adam. For it is manifest; that the moderns who adopt the Congregational form of government in the church of Christ, are the most assimilated upon this particular topic to the primitive Christians; and it is a memorable fact demonstrated by the invarying course of ecclesiastical history, that the prosperity of the *spiritual kingdom* of

the Redeemer has been exactly commensurate with the predominance and extension of the fundamental doctrines of the Puritans. This result however might naturally be anticipated; when we remember, that it was late in the second century, before ecclesiastical councils, which bodies have been the grand corruption of Christianity, were assembled; It is true, that the Pope and his adherents by distorting plain epithets, contend that the meeting at Jerusalem recorded in Acts 15; was the *first Christian Council*; but that council was only the christians of Jerusalem, with some travelling brethren "come together in the church; for the churches in those ancient times, were entirely independent; none of them subject to any foreign jurisdiction, but each one governed by its own rulers and its own laws. For though the churches founded by the apostles, had this particular deference shown them, that they were consulted in difficult and doubtful cases; yet they had no juridical authority, no sort of supremacy over the others, nor the least right to enact laws for them. Nothing on the contrary, is more evident than the perfect equality that reigned among the primitive churches; nor does there even appear, in this first century, the smallest trace of that association of provincial churches, from which *councils* and *metropolitans* derive their origin."

XXIII. Page 391. *The modern denominations.*

It was not deemed necessary to introduce at large, the history of the progress of the Methodists; except in a few instances, they have enjoyed all the privileges of toleration, and their annals are chiefly the catalogues of their increase in ministers, societies and members. Besides the subject is so generally understood, as to render a more minute detail not requisite.

¶ *The following note must be subjoined to the remarks on Pages 348 and 349.*

From the statement of the *five points* of controversy, between the Synod of Dort and the Arminians; it might be inferred, that Mr. Wesley, Mr. Fletcher, and their followers, admitted *all* the dogmas which had been enumerated, *in the same sense*, with the primitive Remonstrants. This was *not intended*; but as the passage in its present arrangement is liable to misconstruction, it must be observed, that whatever may be the sentiments of individuals, or however irreconcileable their *avowed* opinions are, in the judgment of a *controvertist*, the doctrine, that mankind by nature are totally and universally depraved, and therefore guilty in consequence of Adam's transgression, is the authorized creed of the modern methodists; who on the third point, page 347, substantially coincide with the Calvinists.

An omission occurs respecting the Methodist Missionary Society, which it is proper to supply. The following sentence should be inserted, after "*seal*," page 420. Their energies have hitherto been confined to the newly settled portions of this Union, with the exception of a Missionary to the Floridas, another to the Wyandott Indians, and a station among the Greeks, on the Chatahoochee; they publish the *Methodist Magazine*.

¶ *An additional remark, should be inserted on page 406, immediately after it is dissolved.*

This general statement admits of exceptions, because in Connecticut and other parts of New England, the Congregationalists, have not only *Associations* of *Ministers*; but also *Conscriptions* of *Churches*, which assemble at stated periods, and are composed of the Minister and a

Delegate appointed by each church. Neither of these bodies claim or exercise any jurisdiction over the separate congregations, and in cases of difficulty are merely *councils of advice*; the grand distinction between them consists in their objects; the *Associations* are designed to promote unity, affection and co-operation among the ministers, the others, in addition to this effect, are intended to perpetuate the purity, the communion and the prosperity of the Christian societies which are thus *consociated*.

~~¶ The ensuing paragraph was undesignedly omitted; it should have been inserted, Page 413, prior to the article Typographical.~~

Colleges constitute a very important department of the means organized to perpetuate knowledge, but the prosperity of one division of these superior institutions, is indissolubly connected with the extension of the Redeemer's kingdom: *the seminaries for theological studies*. The universities and colleges where all the sciences are incorporated in the course, are not hereby intended; but those only which are exclusively devoted to the preparation of students for the more publick exercises of the gospel ministry. The academies which are consecrated to this peculiar object, arose subsequent to the Reformation; and it is supposed, that they originated among the English Nonconformists; who being by law excluded from all the literary advantages, which flowed from the universities of Oxford and Cambridge, established them with the express design, to introduce junior Christians to a competent acquaintance with revealed theology. Many of these seminaries are in the most flourishing state, and are emphatically the light of the world.

The Secession in Scotland established two academies; and the Scotch Congregationalists have lately organized a very superior seminary for the study of divinity. In England, the Independents support six large institutions of this character; the Baptists maintain three academical societies; and the Calvinistic Methodists, one collegiate course of instruction. In Wales, those three denominations also possess seminaries. But three institutions among the European Christians are entirely modern: the College at Gosport, organized by the dissenters, to prepare and qualify Missionaries for the Heathen nations; an establishment of a similar character, under the patronage of the Church Missionary Society; and a very prosperous academy in Dublin, expressly founded to capacitate the students for the arduous employment of disseminating the light and the truth among the wretched and benighted papists of that island. Seminaries of the same character have also very lately commenced their operations on the European continent.

In the United States, besides the partial attention which is devoted to divinity in the general colleges; several institutions are designated solely for theological students. The congregationalists have endowed a very extensive college at Andover; the Dutch Reformed initiate youth into the service of the church, at Brunswick; the Presbyterians have founded a large seminary at Princeton; the Baptists have provided for a theological department in Columbia; and the Episcopalians have also recently organized a course of studies connected with Christianity. Of the principal denominations, the Methodists alone have not coalesced for the distinct education of pious youth for the ministry, who by nature "are apt to teach;" as neither of their schools in Europe or the United States is appropriated to a preparation for pulpit instruction. To this catalogue must be added as of vast importance in the august work to qualify by preliminary tuition, agents for the introduction of the Gospel among the Heathen, the *Foreign Mission School at Cornwall*, which constitutes one of the most

interesting and valuable seminaries now in existence. Respecting these various sources of illumination; with the minor places of tuition, dedicated to the same exalted object; every friend of Zion will fervently pray, that they may never be adulterated by error; and under the influences of the Holy Ghost, that their progress may be "like the shining light, which shineth more and more;" until the splendours of their piety, genius, learning and intelligence, continually accelerating their force, and expanding their extent, shall irradiate the world with the "perfect day."

XXIV. Page 432. Religious education.

Religion will be extensively propagated by the holy and fervent zeal of the teachers of youth. The number of the pious instructors of the youth of both sexes is increasing in a very considerable degree; and while they are sedulously attentive to every branch of useful and ornamental knowledge, they feel more deeply that it is incumbent on them to instruct their scholars in the principles of religion; and to press them home on the heart as vital springs of sentiment and action, to form their character in future life. The beneficial effects of their labours in diffusing religion more extensively through the different ranks in society, can scarcely be estimated sufficiently high.

In looking forward to years to come, there is every reason to conclude, that pious instructors of the rising generation will become still more numerous; and a more considerable number of the youth of both sexes enjoy the advantages of a religious education. There will be a far more abundant measure of religious knowledge, as well as of holiness and felicity. But it appears exceedingly probable, that these will not burst forth all at once, like lightening from the dark cloud at night, which in the twinkling of an eye renders clear and distinct, objects, which were unseen before; but will rather resemble the light of the morning, that from the first tints of the dawn increases gradually, till the sun pours his full beams upon the earth, and forms the perfect day. Such an augmentation of mental and spiritual light we may reasonably expect. Its benign operation, the pious teachers of succeeding generations will powerfully feel. It will communicate to them a greater capacity to do good;—it will increase their energies in their office;—it will convey their instructions more powerfully to the hearts of their pupils;—and it will render the influence of education more efficacious than it has hitherto been. If we suppose such teachers of youth widely scattered through a country, how extensive must be the fruit of their labours: Christ will have the dew of the youth, and that in such a goodly number as to be "accounted to him for a generation."—These well instructed young people will become heads of families, and enlarge the ranks of those who both command and teach their household to keep the way of the Lord. The instructors of youth will thus spread abroad the triumphs of the Redeemer, and advance the progress of religion towards its Millennial glory.

Those friends of the Redeemer engaged in Sunday Schools will contribute in no mean degree to hasten on the glory of the latter days. The careful instruction of so vast a multitude of children in the principles of pure religion, the greater part of whom would otherwise have been entirely ignorant is conferring on the rising generation a favour of the noblest kind; will infallibly beget a more intelligent and moral body of people; and will in a vast variety of instances produce the peaceable fruits of righteousness in their hearts and lives. How powerful as well as beneficial their influence must be on the general propagation of Christianity in the world, will be seen and must be acknowledged by all. It is a consideration which should excite no common feelings in the breast of every Sunday's-school

teacher : " I am engaged in a service which will accelerate the progress of religion, and quicken the speed of the chariot of the Gospel in its course to the uttermost ends of the earth."

XXV. Page 433. Religious restrictions.

Of all the crimes committed against God and his Christ, the chaining down of the consciences of the people to the faith of their rulers, and refusing them liberty of sentiment and of worship is the blackest—the most heinous in its nature, and the most destructive in its effects. By this intolerance, hundreds of millions of the human race have fallen short of the knowledge and love of God and the Redeemer. Such has with some exceptions, been the universal spirit of the governments of what is called the *Christian world*, almost to the present day. In rulers who have only the dim light of nature for their guide, we need not therefore wonder to see a similar disposition. With grief it must be mentioned, that an edict of the greatest pagan potentate in the world forbids the sacred Scriptures to be printed and circulated in his empire : the banishment of preachers had been ordered by a former decree. For a man to shut up his dominions against the knowledge of the true God and the only Saviour of sinners, and forbid its entrance under pain of death, is making a hell of China : it is committing a crime which no words of any human language can express.

The restrictions which have been laid upon religious liberty must be taken away. The want of this liberty is one of the most injurious privations that a mortal creature can feel. In past times, how little of it has been possessed within the pale even of the Protestant church. Its value will appear from this fact, that religion has flourished and now flourishes most, where freedom of conscience is most enjoyed ; and is least prosperous where it least exists,—being rendered dwarfish and misshapen by the harsh constraint. Unhappily the rulers of the world have arrogated to themselves authority in spiritual matters ; and have unwisely conceived that it belonged to them to say who shall be allowed to worship God according to the dictates of his conscience, and who shall not. How many faithful ministers of Christ, have been hindered by them from preaching the Gospel ; and what multitudes of people from hearing it out of their hallowed lips ! How many of both have been spoiled of their goods, and been shut up in prison because they would not refrain ! Blessed be God that those days of persecution are past. But at the present time in several Protestant countries, the same rigid severity still prevails. In Sweden, Denmark, Norway, and some parts of Germany, religious liberty is still unknown : the dominant sect will permit no other forms of worship but its own. Happy will it be if the late convulsions in Europe suffice to confer this inestimable benefit upon the Protestant churches ; and render further calamities unnecessary. Produced a change must be ; for with such chains on the souls of men there can be no Millennium. In order to the general prevalence of religion in a country, the disciples of Christ must be left at full freedom to worship God according to the dictates of their own judgments, and to manage their religious concerns in their own way ; for by such a method they will most effectually promote the cause of Christ. Speedily may intolerance cease ! Oh that spiritual tyranny may soon have a millstone tied about her neck, and be cast into the midst of the sea ; and that religious liberty may be invited to sit down upon the empty throne, and sway her sceptre over the whole of Protestant Europe !

XXVI. Page 437. *Longevity of the Millennial state.*

The passage Isaiah lxxv : 20—22, is generally understood to refer to the glory of the latter-day, of which *Longevity* will be a distinguished blessing. In the improved version of the words from Bishop Lowth;

" No more shall there be an infant short lived ;
 Nor an old man who hath not fulfilled his days ;
 For he that dieth at a hundred years shall die a boy ;
 And the sinner that dieth at a hundred years shall be deemed accursed.
 And they shall build houses, and shall inhabit them ;
 And they shall plant vineyards, and shall eat the fruit thereof ;
 They shall not plant, and another eat ;
 For as the days of a tree shall be the days of my people ;
 And they shall wear out the works of their own hands."

The prosperous state of the christian church is the object in view ; and "the new heavens and the new earth," signify that glorious and happy state of believers, when the knowledge of the Lord shall be universal, when war shall have ceased, and peace and joy prevail all over the world.

The duration of human life will then be lengthened. At present nearly half of the human race die in infancy ; but this sad mortality shall cease, and there shall be no more "an infant short-lived ;" one that "comes up like a flower" in the morning, and fades before noon. The man who now dies at seventy, is thought to have lived long ; but then, he who shall die at a hundred, shall have died—a youth ; and the sinner, if he should be found even in the Millennium, will be judged to have perished by an early and untimely death, if he complete only a century. But, generally, the people of that period shall enjoy a continuance of life, equal to that of a long-lived tree ; the expression denotes a great length of life, probably equal to that of the Antediluvians.

One advantage to be obtained, will be the enjoyment of man's labour. It was a curse denounced on a wicked man of old, "Thou shalt build a house, and thou shalt not dwell therein ; thou shalt plant a vineyard, and shalt not gather the grapes thereof ;"—death shall cut thee off, and so deprive thee of the expected fruit of thy toil. But in the Millennial state, the builder of a house shall live long to enjoy the accommodations he had planned and produced ; and he shall be gratified with the rich produce of the orchard he planted. And this enjoyment shall be so extended, that he shall have occasion to build and plant again, for "he shall wear out the works of his own hands." This is rarely, if ever now the case. Even a slightly-built house will generally be habitable long after its builder is in the grave ; and mansions, such as men of affluence erect may be tenanted by succeeding generations of the same family : but in the Millennium, the builder must build another house, which may accommodate him and his increasing family for a few centuries longer.

It may be asked, "What advantage will there be in all this? Do we not find that old age is usually attended with labour and sorrow ; that desires fail ; the senses become blunt, and the man of many years says, I have no pleasure in them?" It is so now, but the true longevity which we contemplate will be vigorous and tranquil—the old age of Moses ; concerning whom, when he had finished his 120 years, we are told that "his eye was not dim, neither was his natural force abated." Grey hairs will then indeed be a crown of glory. These aged saints will descend the hill of life, rejoicing in the consolations of the Gospel ; and their hearts exult in the pleasing hope of being ere long removed from earth, and united to the general assembly and church of the first-born in heaven, where they shall be ever with the Lord.

A believer of 3 or 400 years will be able to entertain the youth of his day with the pleasing relation of what he has witnessed in the growing advancement of the Saviour's kingdom; and the triumphs of divine grace in the subjugation of whole nations to the sceptre of Immanuel. Men of God, who have preached his word for 5 or 600 years, will be heard with profound attention, sacred delight, and unspeakable edification; and the rising generations will be stimulated to holy zeal in promoting the kingdom of the Saviour.

The Scriptures will be far better understood in those happy days than they are at present. The development of the prophecies will afford a high degree of delight, and prove a key to those which remain unaccomplished. The observation and experience of wise and good men, who have walked with God longer than Enoch or Noah did, will throw a wonderful beauty and lustre on the sacred book, and render the study of it inconceivably gratifying to pious minds; while the nearing prospect of the final consummation of the whole system of redemption, will produce an anticipation of bliss, creating a "heaven begun below."

CONCLUSION.

Christians ought to be familiar with the uniformity and progress of divine truth; the persecutions and fortitude of the martyrs; the delusions of multiform heresy, and its ever shifting but inalienable adherents; the labours, trials, and triumphs of Reformers; and "the faith and patience of the Saints." To them the authentic history of their fellow Pilgrims to Zion, and of their Lord's terrestrial kingdom, ought to be estimated as inferior only to the Sacred Books.

The imperfections of this work were unavoidable:—it was not proposed to be an abridgement; the object was to convey some idea of the numerous alterations which in the revolutions of eighteen centuries, the christian world has experienced; to elicit some obvious reflections which might benefit the believing auditors, and also to excite an attention in others to the most interesting and advantageous portions of the history of mankind: it was not intended to supersede a recurrence to the more minute details of other historians, but if possible to inspire a taste for an extensive acquaintance with the annals of Christianity, in them who were ignorant of the sublime instructions connected with the course of the Martyrs, Reformers, and the other worthies who have successively dignified the christian pilgrimage.

The Author has examined and selected his materials from the following writers: Josephus' Works—Instin—Tertullian—Origen—Arnobius—Eusebius—Socrates and Evagrius' History—Iaetantius—Augustine—Fox's book of Martyrs—Paul's Council of Trent—Burnet's History of the Reformation—Neal's Puritans—Nonconformists' Memorial—Mosheim's History—Jortin's Reflections—Newton's Review—Campbell's Lectures—Milner's History—Hawies' History—Sabine's History—Mather's Magnalia—Baxter's Narrative—Bogue and Bennett's History of Dissenters—Brooks' Puritans—Edwards' Popery—Woodworth's Biography—McCrie's Knox—Hess' Zwinglius—Cox's Melancthon—Mackenzie's Calvin—Gill's Lives of Wickliffe, Cranmer, &c.—Thomson's Lectures—Edwards' Redemption—Whitfield's Life—Brown's History—Wesley's Works—Encyclopædia Britannica—Bower's History of the Popes—and the Universal History—with a large number of other volumes and periodical works in which the general subject has been incidentally introduced, especially the modern Religious Magazines. It is proper also to state, that the Author has extracted many paragraphs verbatim from the various writers who have been consulted, and which are generally quoted; but where the language has been altered, or the passage abridged, or so incorporated with his own sentiments as in a great

measure to lose its identity, then the marks of quotation have been neglected : but in many instances the omission has been unintentional.

The history of the modern European sects has been compiled from late foreign publications ; many passages of which are in the language of the anonymous authors : and at least one half of the last lecture, on the Millennium, is little more than a condensed summary of part of Bogue's twenty discourses on that sublime and interesting topic.

In pages 233, 300, 367, reference is made to a future review, it was deemed expedient not to renew the discussion.

The Author peculiarly regrets the imperfections in the biographical department ; but in attempting to supply the void, he found it absolutely impracticable to compress into any succinct form a narrative of the prominent characteristics of those most renowned christian chiefs, "who through faith and patience inherit the promises :" this loss, however, an imagination vivified by the influence of the holy Spirit, can easily reimburse ; as the lives of Gospel labourers in every portion of the field are very similar, except as they are varied by activity and chequered by opposition their motives, pursuits, objects, and spiritual characteristics being uniformly identical.

An attentive reader will discern some repetitions ; it is only necessary to remark, that they were designed ; the Author endeavoured in some instances to avoid them, but the attempt produced so much obscurity that the Lectures when delivered would have been unintelligible.

The very abridged notice of the American churches was the result of imperious necessity. To remedy the omission, a defect which under any possible circumstance would have been palpable, the Author is preparing for publication, a succinct narrative of the rise, progress, and present condition of the christian denominations and religious institutions, in the *United States* which will be issued as speedily as the volume can be completed.

Probably it may be said, that some of the language is too strong ; it is replied, these were *popular* lectures, and of course in some measure *partook* of that excitement, without which all public addresses are not only frigid, but *vix et preterea nihil*. Nevertheless, while the Author has not been afraid, "plainly and boldly to call a fig, a fig, and a spade, a spade :" he has felt high delight in imperfectly eulogizing the stedfast followers of the Lamb. His motto was, *nullius addictus jurare in verba magistri* ; under its influence, he has searched for the truth extensively, patiently, and for some of his christian auditors beneficially ; and he devoutly prays, that his readers also may enjoy, through the divine benediction, the advantages of additional illumination, fortitude, and zeal in the service of Jehovah ; that thus they may "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

FINIS.

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