

CHRISTIAN'S

PAID-MINUTE 8

BY HOOVER SIMMONS, E. M.

Editor of the Third Presbyterian Church of the City of Albany.

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P. S. Van Hook

CHRISTIAN'S

VADE-MECUM :

By HOOPER CUMMING, A. M.

Pastor of the Third Presbyterian Church in the City of Albany.

Επαυνοῖσθαι τὴ ἀπαξ παραδοθεῖση τοῖς ἁγίοις
πιστῇ.

Jude 3.



ALBANY :

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY E. AND E. HOSFORD,
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NORTHERN DISTRICT OF NEW-YORK, ss.

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Επαγινίσεθαι τη απαξ παραδοθειση τοις αγιοις
πισει. Jude 3^o

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RICH'D. R. LANSING, *Clerk*
of the Northern Dist. of New-York.

TO MY BELOVED CONGREGATION:

The following Treatise is dedicated with every sentiment of respect, and with every emotion of gratitude.

HOOPER CUMMING.

Albany, June 1st, 1819.

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PREFACE.



THERE are many crude notions in the Church which raise nominal Christians but little above the Heathen. Some trust for their salvation in the belief of the historical fact, that there has been in our world such a personage as JESUS CHRIST, who died upon a cross for the salvation of mankind. Their faith, barely speculative, would be equally efficacious, if it centered in Julius Cæsar. The simple credence of the advent of the Son of God, added to the *intell'ectual* comprehension of the design of his mission will be about as operative in purifying the heart, as confidence in the veracity and impartiality of Tacitus and Livy, will convert cowards into heroes. It is to develope the truth, the unadulterated truth of God, and shew the manner in which it should be received ;—it is to free it from all the embarrassments with which error has enshrouded it ;—it is to present the humble and conscientious believer, with a clear view of the charter of his hopes, and assist him in conquering

the enemies of his salvation, that the Author of this Book enters on the work before him. Should it be said that the spirit of controversy pervades these pages, and that this is opposed to the spirit of meekness, I have only to remark, that had such a sentiment influenced the minds of Luther, and Calvin, and Knox, and Beza, and Zuinglius, and Cranmer, the glorious Reformation had never been achieved, and Christendom would, 'till this moment, have been enveloped by all the darkness and all the blasphemies of the man of sin. Let my motto plead my defence. *Παγανίζεσθαι τὴν ἀπὸ παραδόσεως τοῖς ἁγίοις πίστιν*. Earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered to the Saints. Jude 3. The word *παγανίζεσθαι*, properly signifies to strive as in the Olympic games : that is with the utmost force. *Faith* is here by an usual metonymy put for the objects of faith : namely, the doctrines and precepts of the gospel : both being equally the object of men's belief, and both being in the Apostle's view, when he wrote this, as is plain from the Epistle itself. And if the meaning be that we are not strenuously to oppose and confute the errors of false teachers, in the ef-

sort of establishing the truth, it is impossible to conceive the meaning of the inspired Jude.

I know, indeed, that an attempt is made to convince the Christian publick, that controverted points should not be agitated. But it is the attempt of those who wish to put out the eyes of men, that they may with the more effect seduce them from the path of sound doctrine. It would be well for these hereticks to reflect on the course of conduct pursued by our Saviour, in reference to this point, when he was in the world. Did he not most vehemently condemn the Scribes and Pharisees and Sadducees, for having made void the law of God through their tradition? Did he not hold them up to the contempt and abhorrence of the common people, as blind guides, and as hypocrites? Did he not ask these very hereticks in language which at the present day, would be reprov'd as extremely harsh, "How they could escape the damnation of hell?" And did not his primitive Apostles tread faithfully and perseveringly in his footsteps, with the stake, and the faggots, and the boiling cauldron, and the gibbet, full in view? Let us no longer then hear that it is uncharitable to defend the

truth in opposition to the errors, and the intrigues of its foes.

Christian ! Ponder the following pages, and while perusing them, lift up thy heart to the throne of grace, that thou mayest be strengthened, settled, and established.

That this Treatise may redound through the thanksgivings of many, to the praise and glory of God, is the ardent desire and the sole object of the

AUTHOR.

Albany, June 1st, 1819.

THE VADE-MECUM.



1. THERE IS ONE GOD.

THIS truth is inscribed in legible characters on every part of the universe. The objects which now exist could not have created themselves. How can that which has no life and motion inspire life and motion? They must have been formed by some antecedent cause. But if this were not uncreated, it must have derived its being from some still prior origin, and that from one yet preceding: so that we must sooner or later rise in our contemplations, and fix, and rest in an uncreated, self-existent, independent, and supreme first cause of all things.

2. THIS GOD EXISTS IN A TRINITY OF PERSONS.

The doctrine is confessedly mysterious. We can neither comprehend nor explain it. No deduction of reason will establish—no similitudes will elucidate it. It is a truth purely of revelation, and it claims our credence on the authority of “Thus saith the Lord.”

By the doctrine of the Trinity, we mean not as its enemies allege, that there are three Beings in one Being. That were a palpable absurdity. But

10 THE CHRISTIAN'S VADE-MECUM.

we mean that there are three persons in one Being, necessarily using the word *person* for want of a better term, to signify that peculiar mode of the divine existence which the scriptures clearly teach. Such is the mysterious and incomprehensible manner in which the Divine Being exists, as to lay a proper foundation in his nature to speak of himself in the first, second, and third person, and say, I, Thou, He, meaning only himself.

The sacred writings abound with unequivocal declarations of this truth. They uniformly represent the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, as distinctly possessed of personal properties, and yet, as acting in perfect union, and as being one and the same in essence. The Father addresses his Son as a distinct person. "Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee." Ps. ii. 7. Heb. i. 5. "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." Matt. iii. 17. and xvii. 5. The Son addresses the Father as a distinct person; "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me." Matt. xxvi. 39. "O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee; but I have known thee." John xvii 25. The Holy Ghost is represented as a distinct person. "I will pray the Father," says Christ, "and he shall give you another comforter, that he may abide with you forever, even the spirit of truth." John xiv. 16. 17. And he is spoken of again in distinctive terms which at the same time

most clearly represent the three persons in the Godhead. "But the Comforter, which is the *Holy Ghost*, whom the *Father* will send in *my name*, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." John xiv. 26. The Divine Spirit also adds his testimony to the distinct personality of the Son, "As the Holy Ghost saith, To-day if ye will hear his voice," that is the voice of Christ, as appears evident from the context, "harden not your hearts." Heb. iii. 7. 8.

Thus we have three distinct persons in one God. If this distinction did not in fact exist, we could never discover the propriety of speaking of God as the Scriptures frequently do, in the *plural* number. We read in Genesis i. 26. "God said let *us* make man in *our* image after *our* likeness." Again, "The Lord God said, behold the man is become as one of *us*." Gen. iii. 22. Nay, to evince the importance as well as to demonstrate the truth of the doctrine, the very first line of the Bible, in the original Hebrew, develops the sentiment with the utmost clearness. It reads literally, "In the beginning the *Covenanters* created the heavens and the earth." The noun is plural; and, to denote the unity of essence and operation in the Deity, the verb is in the singular number.

If farther evidence be wanting, the Scriptures on a topic so important, furnish that which is clear,

abundant, and irrefragable. The same names (and they can in no sense be applicable to a *creature*) the same names, such as Jehovah, Lord, the Highest, are given to the Father, Son, and Spirit. The same works are ascribed to them: the same perfections predicated of them: the same homage represented as their due.

The enemies of the doctrine we advocate do not deny that there is one God, and he the Father. If then we can prove that the Son and the Spirit have equal claims to essential Divinity, we gain our point. This can be *demonstrated*. The evidences are so multifarious, so lucid, so energetic, that it really is surprising, that any who are not avowed Deists, should be Anti-Trinitarians. The Divinity of Christ will form the subject of a separate article in this work. I shall therefore now only quote a few of the most prominent scriptural declarations on that head. "The word was God." John i. 1. "And Thomas answered and said, my Lord and my God. John xxi. 28. Christ did not reprove him for idolatry. "Of whom as concerning the flesh, Christ came who is over all, God blessed for ever." Romans ix. 5. "They tempted and provoked the most high God." Ps. lxxviii. 56. in connexion with 1 Cor. x. 9. "Neither let us tempt Christ as some of them also tempted." These two texts relate to the same rebellious acts of the Israelites in the wilderness. In the first the person

tempted is called the *most High God*: in the second, he is called *Christ*: the inference is irresistible, *Christ is the most high God*.

That the *Holy Spirit* is divine, appears perfectly obvious from the declaration of Peter to Ananias, in the 5th chapter of the Acts of the Apostles. "Why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the *Holy Ghost*. Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto *God*." To be born of *God* and to be born of the *Spirit* are synonymous expressions occurring frequently in the New Testament. All scripture is said to be given by inspiration of *God*: and yet holy men of *God* are said to have spoken as they were moved by the *Holy Ghost*. "It was revealed unto Simon by the *Holy Ghost*, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ." Luke ii. 16. "And he blessed *God* and said, *Lord* now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word. Ibid v. 28. "The *Holy Ghost* said, separate me Barnabas and Paul for the work for which *I have called* them." Acts xiii. 2. "No man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called of *God*." Heb. v. 4. Baptism is a solemn act of dedication: But it is to be performed in the name of the *Holy Ghost* as well as the Father and the Son. The benediction which closes our religious services if offered in the name of a creature, would be horrid blasphemy: but it is pro-

14 THE CHRISTIAN'S VADE-MECUM.

nounced in the name of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Some who believe the Divinity of the Spirit, are of opinion that there is not so clear and so much proof of that doctrine exhibited by the scriptures as of the Deity of the Son. But after examining candidly and pondering solemnly the foregoing statement, the evidence will appear as striking, and, if it were necessary, could be shown to be quite as voluminous, in favour of one, as of the other.

Yet men, in the pride of an unconverted temper, offended at the mysteries of a religion which proves the divinity of its origin by the fact of its close resemblance to the *incomprehensible* God, deny the doctrine which we have been endeavouring to establish. These men walk by *sight* and not by *faith*. They are unwilling to rely, with unreserved confidence, on the testimony of God. Say they, "We are not bound to believe what we cannot comprehend. The God of reason imposes no articles of faith upon us which cannot be understood and explained on principles of reason." Infatuated men ! Are you not surrounded on every side by mysteries ? Is not the natural as well as the moral world full of mysteries ? Understand and explain the nature of that union which subsists between the soul and the body. Understand and explain the manner of the growth of a single spire of grass. Understand and explain the mystery

which attends the support of animal nature by means of food. Understand and explain how it was possible for the Divine Being originally to have made *all things* out of *nothing*: And then repeat the declaration, that we can believe, and are bound to believe, nothing which we cannot comprehend. According to such a system, *faith* is driven from the world; and all obligation to place unlimited confidence in *the veracity of God* is overthrown. It is pride, not reason, which opposes the mysteries of religion. Reason itself teaches us, that it is rational to believe, although we cannot thoroughly comprehend it, whatever God declares. But pride controverts this sentiment—That *curiosity of pride*, which wishes to reduce every thing to the level of finite reason—especially that *enmity of pride*, which opposes, with peculiar asperity, those truths of revelation which are designed to stain the *pride of human glory*, and to lay man low.

In the third century Sabellius, and in the succeeding century Arius, arrayed himself against the doctrine of the Trinity, and its correlative truths. Previous to these events, however, the venerable John was obliged, notwithstanding his fervent and exemplary charity, to stigmatize Cerinthus as “the first born of Satan.” His first epistle was written with peculiar reference to the heresy of the Gnostics, who, calling themselves the

only wise men, questioned the doctrine of the Deity of Jesus Christ, and of course the doctrine of the Trinity. And when the holy John said, "Little children, keep yourselves from idols," (1 John v. 21.) he surely did not mean that it was idolatrous to worship Him on whose essential deity he had largely expatiated, and whose words he quoted in another portion of his writings, declaring that "all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father." John v. 23.

After the Gnostics had, as a sect, become extinct, Sabellius, a bishop of Upper Egypt, endeavoured to introduce heresy into the church, about the year 248. His distinguishing tenet was, that there is but *one person* in the Godhead. In confirmation of this doctrine, he made use of the following comparison :—As man, though composed of body and soul, is but one person, so God, though He is Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, is but one person. He held that the distinctions which the scriptures seem to institute in reference to the mode of the divine existence, arise altogether from the different characters and relations which God sustains : That the Word and Holy Spirit are only *virtues, emanations, or functions*, of the Deity : That he who is in heaven is the *Father* of all things : That he descended into the Virgin, became a child, and was born of her as a *Son* : And that having accomplished the mystery of our re-

demption, he diffused himself upon the apostles in tongues of fire, and was then denominated the *Holy Ghost*. But there is a short and very effectual method of overthrowing the Sabellian heresy. The profound mystery of the Trinity, as represented in Scripture, necessarily carries in it a distinction of persons in the divine essence. For nothing short of three distinct persons in one undivided Deity, can render it proper for him to speak of himself in the first, second, and third person, *I, Thou, He*. Hence the Bible represents the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, as distinctly possessed of personal properties. The Father is represented as being able to understand, to will, and to act of *himself*. The Son is represented as being able to understand, to will, and to act of *himself*. And the Holy Ghost is represented as being able to understand, to will, and to act of *himself*. Thus the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are three distinct persons or agents.

Sabellianism, for a short period, met with remarkable success : but its growth was soon checked by the able and enlightened opposition made to it by Dionysius, one of the ministers of Alexandria, and the sentence of condemnation pronounced upon its author by a council held at Rome, in the year 263.

Of late years, however, the doctrine appears to have revived : But the revival is rather nominal than real, and, at best, but partial. When a man is too proud and self-conceited to bow to the mysteries of the cross, the prominent reason why he is offended at the doctrine of the Trinity, is his opposition to that soul-humbling plan of grace, which robs him of all his glory, and confers, exclusively, on Jehovah the merit of human redemption. He is unwilling that the Father should sit upon his throne, defending the rights of the God-head : That the Son should make propitiation : And that the Spirit should, by his power, subdue the rebellion of the human heart. In this case, he will not be apt to admit, that, in different characters, or offices, the same God does, really, for his own honour, *provide* recovery from perdition for any man. Hence he will proceed some steps farther in the path of heresy, than did Sabellius. He will tear the crown of supremacy and sovereignty, from the head of the Redeemer, and will take the bold stand of modern days, and aim a death-blow at the Essential Deity of Christ.

The *Arian* heresy arose in the year 315, and derived its name from Arius, a native of Lybia, in Africa, and a minister of Alexandria.

The substance of his creed was, that Christ was possessed of all divine attributes, except self-exist-

ence and independence ; of course, according to this doctrine, he is not God. Arius maintained, that Christ was God, and yet, strange and glaring inconsistency ! that he was inferior to the Father, even as to his Deity, and his essence different : That he was neither co-eternal nor co-equal with him : and that the Holy Ghost was not God.

Modern Arians *all* maintain, in opposition to the followers of Socinus, that the Son of God existed previous to his incarnation, though in his pre-existent state they assign him different degrees of dignity : and hence the appellation of *Semi, High,* and *Low* Arian.

Dr. Whitaker, in his *Origin of Arianism*, remarks, “ At first it arose a ‘ little cloud out of the sea, like a man’s hand.’ But in a short time ‘ the heaven was black with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain.’ All the Jewish horizon was involved in the gloom. It even spread a deep shade of the darkness over the Christian. Before the end of the first century, this heresy had already infected the Jews very deeply. Before the beginning of the second, it was conveyed by the Jews to the infant church of the Christians. The *first* Arians that ever existed under the gospel, were two *Jews*, and their names have been consigned to an infamous immortality for the fact, Ebion and Cerinthus.”

The *Socinians* derive their name and their origin from Lælius and Faustus Socinus or Sozzini, uncle and nephew, of Sienna, in Tuscany, who both taught the same doctrines: but the latter, who died in Poland, A. D. 1604, is generally regarded as the founder of the sect.

The advocates of *Socinus*, however, do not relish the name. They arrogate to themselves the exclusive appellation of *Unitarians*, as though the friends of truth believed in more Gods than one. Trinitarians strenuously advocate the divine unity.

Some are inclined to suppose that the doctrines which distinguish modern Socinians, were first maintained by Paul of Samosata, who was bishop of Antioch, about the middle of the third century.

Whatever be the fact in reference to this point, the sect may, doubtless, be traced to a very early period of the Reformation. Several learned authors are of opinion that the heresy originated among the *Anabaptists*—a name by which those in Poland, who afterwards received the title of Socinians, were for some time known. “So early as the year 1524, the divinity of Christ was openly denied by Lewis Hetzer, one of the wandering and fanatical Anabaptists, who, about three years afterwards, was put to death at Constance.” *Mosheim's Eccles. Hist.* vol. iv. p. 487.

The distinguishing tenets of the Socinians are, that the *Father* alone is God; that Jesus Christ

had no existence whatever, before he was conceived by the Virgin Mary ; that the Holy Ghost is no distinct person, but that the phrase is a mere figurative expression to denote the *power* or *energy* of God : That Christ has never made a literal atonement or a real satisfaction for sin—but that he died merely to seal his doctrine by his blood : That repentance for past transgressions, and that moral conduct, will ensure our salvation, without any respect to the righteousness or merit of another.

They deny the necessity of divine grace, the doctrines of original sin, predestination, and the mediation of our Saviour : and they regard the sacraments as mere ceremonies or ritual observances, which are unaccompanied by any inward operations.

They generally maintain the sleep of the soul, or that it dies, or at least becomes torpid, with the body, and will not exist again until the resurrection. They also deny the eternity of future torments, and insist that all men will sooner or later be saved.

When these men call themselves *Christians*, 'tis impossible to divine. And that they should be denominated *Unitarians*; is really ludicrous ; for they do not believe in *one* God. They are quite as far removed from genuine religion as were Hume and Pain. Nay farther—for these modern deists were no hypocrites ; but *Socinians*

profess to be that to which they have no legitimate title.

The plain and unsophisticated declarations of the Holy Bible will, however, satisfy the ingenuous, the prayerful, and the heavenly minded. And one thing will remain for ever true. A *good* man is in no danger of denying the divinity of our Lord.

We have been the more prolix on this article, because of its intrinsick and radical importance. If the doctrine of the Trinity be not true, the sacred scriptures, of all writings, are the most metaphorical and unmeaning; and while declaring that “*Idolaters shall be cast into the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone,*” they are precisely calculated to plunge us into idolatry the *grossest*: For they uniformly enjoin it upon us, as an imperious duty, to pay the same and equal homage to Father, Son, and Spirit.

This doctrine is all-important. *The belief of it is essential to salvation.* For how can I consistently worship the Father, unless he be God? How can I worship and believe in the Son, as *my* only and all-sufficient Saviour, unless he be God? How can I trust in the Holy Ghost for all needed grace and consolation, unless he be God?

3. THE ATTRIBUTES OF THE DEITY.

The Creator of all things must be possessed of *almighty power*. All the magnificent and glorious objects which environ us, deeply impress on the mind the idea that nothing short of omnipotence could bring them out of nothing into being. *God spake and it was done : God commanded and it stood fast*. The facility of his operation displays the greatness of his power in the production of the world. He who produced an angel as easily as a man ; a man as easily as a worm ; and a world as easily as an atom, must be a God of unbounded power. We can form no conceptions of any power greater than that which can give existence, or produce something out of nothing. Were all the powers of dependent beings in heaven, earth, and hell combined, they could not create a worm, nor a fly, nor be able to produce the least particle of matter. The creation of *one* world displays power sufficient in its Author to form ten thousand times ten myriads of worlds. And therefore if we may judge of the cause by the effect, we may safely conclude, That the first and supreme cause of all things is necessarily *Omnipotent*. How sublime and how animated are the descriptions of God's unlimited power, which abound in the sacred writings ! “ Behold the heaven, and the heaven of heavens, is the Lord's : the earth also, with all

that therein is. For the Lord is God of Gods, Lord of Lords, a great God, a mighty and a terrible." Deut. x. 14—17. "Thine, O Lord, is the greatness and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty : for all that is in the heavens and in the earth is thine : thine is the kingdom, O Lord, and thou art exalted as Head above all. Both riches and honour come of thee, and thou reignest over all, and in thine hand is power and might, and in thine hand it is to make great, and to give strength unto all." 1 Chron. xxix. 11, 12. "O Lord God of hosts, who is a strong Lord like unto thee. Thou hast a mighty arm : strong is thy hand, and high is thy right hand." Ps. lxxxix. 8. 13. "Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised : and his greatness is unsearchable." Ps. cxlv. 3. "He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth : and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou ?" Dan. iv. 35. "For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things : to whom be glory for ever, Amen." Rom. xi. 36.

GOD IS INFINITELY WISE.

The amazing extent of the Divine Intelligence, is exhibited in every part of the creation. What curious arrangement ! What beautiful order !

What astonishing mechanism and contrivance ! What consummate skill, both in the plan and the execution ! Whether we view the system together, or examine it in detail, we must arrive at the same conclusion : All is wonderful, and surpasses comprehension. Especially are our mental faculties, the vast powers of the human soul—thought, reason, imagination, memory, will, affections : These are among the clearest proofs, and give us the most enlarged conceptions of the omniscience of God. “ He that teacheth man knowledge, shall not he know ? ” He *must* possess every excellence which he communicates to his creatures, and possess it too without their imperfection, and without their limitations. What an amazing intelligence must that be which can overlook the universe, preserve order in every part, attend to the necessities of the minutest creature, and make suitable provision for all ! How soon are our little plans deranged, and our best concerted schemes frustrated, through the weakness of our minds, which are liable to ignorance, forgetfulness, and inattention ! But the Divine wisdom must be unlimited, which, from age to age, without the intermission of a moment, sustains and governs all creatures and all worlds ; which ordains and regulates every event, however seemingly fortuitous, and that in places the most distant from each other, in sub-

servience to his own everlasting plans and purposes.

This is *Omniscience* : Nothing is hidden from it : Not even the vainest wanderings of the imagination, or the first emotions of desire in the heart. " O Lord, thou hast searched me and known me. Thou knowest my down sitting and mine uprising, thou understandest my thoughts afar off. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me ; it is high, I cannot attain unto it." Ps. cxxxix. 1, 2. 6. " He revealeth the deep and secret things ; he knoweth what is in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with him." Dan. ii. 22. " Neither is there any creature which is not manifest in his sight ; but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do." Heb. iv. 13.

GOD IS OMNIPRESENT.

Every creature must of necessity be dependent on its Creator. But if the Divine Being constantly upholds all his works, then he must be constantly present in every part of his wide domains. How can we conceive that a cause operates where it does not exist ? In like manner, 'tis incredible that the Creator of the world should exert his power beyond the limits of his presence. " Whither shall I go from thy spirit ? or whither shall I flee from thy presence ? If I ascend up into heaven.

thou art there : if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea ; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me." Ps. cxxxix. 7, 8, 9, 10.

GOD IS ETERNAL.

The first cause must be uncreated. To suppose the contrary, were grossly and palpably absurd. For it would be to imagine, either that there was a cause *before* the *first* cause, or that the Deity was the cause of his own existence ; which would amount to the idea that he existed and operated before he existed. Hence we are compelled to conclude, that there is something in his nature which renders his existence absolutely necessary and eternal.

GOD IS HOLY.

A self-existent Spirit, possessed of unlimited power and understanding, must be entirely removed from all that ignorance, and from all those temptations and infirmities, by which we, or any of his creatures, may be allured, deceived, and overcome. By his knowledge, he must discern things exactly as they are ; and being perfectly independent, he can have nothing either to hope

or fear. It follows, therefore, that "God cannot be tempted of evil, neither tempteth he any man."

An attention to the divine government, even without the light of revelation, might convince us that this is the character of the Almighty Sovereign. Though there be much apparent confusion in human affairs, and though the common events of life baffle our calculations—though virtue be frequently depressed, and though vice for the present be surrounded by many decided advantages; yet through the whole of his administration, there appears a marked disapprobation of sin; for its invariable tendency is to introduce and diffuse misery, whereas virtue, as such, never renders men unhappy. This is an incontestible proof of a moral government, or of the disposition of him who has ordered the natural course of things in favour of moral rectitude.

Besides, is it for a moment to be presumed, that having given man a capacity of discerning the moral beauty or deformity of every moral agent; having furnished his creatures with a faculty by which they could discover his own character, he would have exerted such a power and bestowed such a gift, unless he knew himself to be possessed of spotless purity? For if this were not his character, his creatures, whom he endued with moral powers, would be capable of discerning it; and whenever they should discover it, they would

be obligated to hate the Author of their existence. Hence the moral faculty in man carries in it a clear and unanswerable demonstration of the perfect rectitude of man's Maker.

Besides repeated, and almost innumerable, declarations of the Bible, that "God is holy," we may infer the same sentiment from the extensive demands and spiritual nature of the *decalogue*. Here we have an express declaration of his will, an exact transcript of his own mind. And what is the uniform language but this—"Be ye holy, for I am holy." 1 Pet. i. 16. When he prohibits and condemns all profanation of his name and day—all neglect of his instituted worship—all pride and murmuring of the heart against him—all irreverent thoughts of his majesty—and all preference of any creature to himself;—so likewise toward our neighbours, in the prohibition of every act and every design of violence, of lewdness, of dishonesty, of malevolence—in the injunction of universal love, and kindness, and forbearance, at all times and in all the varied circumstances of life—What do we learn but his supreme abhorrence of evil, and the immaculate purity of his nature? Thus, while we study his precepts, we are presented with an illustrious copy of himself.—We behold, as in a mirror, the resplendent glory, the consummate excellence, of our Lawgiver and our Judge.

But on the cross of Christ, this attribute is most

conspicuously displayed. God's only Son must be degraded to our nature, and the sword of divine vengeance must drink his heart's blood, or the indignation of the "Holy One," cannot be averted from transgressors. Draw nigh, thou rebel against the Majesty of heaven, and behold, in the agonies of him who is Jehovah's fellow, the accursed sinfulness of the sin which thou hast committed, and which, without his interposition, would have sunk thee to the lowest hell ! Christ Jesus became a *curse* for us, that we might be made the *righteousness* of God in him. Ah, yes ! It was the *guilt* of man which nailed him to the ignominious tree ; the *guilt* of man which rolled the billows of wrath in upon his sinless soul. It was in bearing our iniquity that hell's blackest midnight thickened upon his spirit, and wrung from him that agonizing cry, "*My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me.*" Behold the ignominy and the torture ; hear the sighs, the groans, and the bitter exclamation, and learn for ever that *God is holy*.

GOD IS JUST.

It appears both from the works and the word of God, that he rewards and punishes rational creatures with a direct reference to their conduct, whether good or evil. If this be done in due proportion, and in a constant, regular administration,

it is strict justice. For *justice*, in a ruler, is treating others as they deserve, according to the power or authority which he possesses.

This divine attribute may be deduced from the holiness of God ; for they are necessarily connected : And the proofs of both are, in a great measure, the same. His holiness is the essential rectitude of his nature, which approves what is right in the conduct of his creatures, and abhors what is evil. But perfect holiness in a governor, possessed of unlimited and uncontrollable dominion and power, must so direct the universal administration of affairs, as to ensure an invariable regard to justice.

'Tis impossible to conceive of an omnipotent being, self-existent, self-sufficient, and possessed of all possible happiness and perfection within himself, treating any of his creatures, in the final issue of events, contrary to their moral character ; or, in other words, rendering the truly virtuous, miserable, and, the grossly vicious, happy. Thus Abraham argued, " Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right." Gen. xviii. 25. Thus Elihu reasoned, " Far be it from God that he should do wickedness ; and from the Almighty that he should commit iniquity. For the work of a man will he render unto him, and cause every man to find according to his ways. Yea, surely, God will not do wickedly, neither will the Almighty per-

vert judgment." Job xxxiv. 10, 11, 12. The conclusion in favour of his justice, is evidently drawn from his power, wisdom, independence, purity, and all-sufficiency ; inasmuch as he cannot possibly be subjected to any temptation to act in contradiction to this principle.

The ordinary course of providence evinces the justice of God. It is obvious to the most superficial observer of human affairs, that virtue in various ways, tends to promote comfort ; vice, to introduce perplexity and distress. The man of temperance, integrity, and benevolence, generally possesses the largest share of bodily health and mental tranquillity, of domestick peace and personal respectability. Sensual and excessive indulgence, fraud, violence, and malignant affections, are the usual forerunners of infirmity and remorse, of strife and misery, of publick contempt and abhorrence. It was the observation of an acute observer of human life, " He becometh poor that dealeth with a slack hand : but the hand of the diligent maketh rich." Society is so constituted, that to preserve its peace, its welfare, and even its existence, various transgressors must be cut off.

Are not these facts clear and unequivocal testimonies of the will of heaven in favour of a virtuous conduct ? It will perhaps be said, that these events happen in the ordinary course of nature, and according to established laws. Be it so. 'Tis

the very point we maintain. For what is the course of nature, but that which the God of nature has ordained ? And what are these established laws but the regular system by which the Almighty governs the world ?

On the same principle we are to interpret signal interpositions of his providence. Flourishing and mighty states have been desolated and overthrown, not by accident and without design, but by *his* righteous appointment, who holds in his hand the reins of universal government, and who, though he be long-suffering, yet on some tremendous occasions, “ cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity.” What does the history of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, of Nineveh and Tyre, of Babylon, of Egypt’s tyrant, of the impious Belshazzar, of the vaunting Herod, of Jerusalem, and the unparalleled sufferings of her children, teach, but that Jehovah executeth wrath ! And how can we suppress the exclamation, “ Even so, Lord God Almighty, for true and righteous are thy judgments !”

GOD IS MERCIFUL.

When Moses besought his Maker, “ Shew me thy glory,” perhaps he asked too much ; he probably desired such a manifestation as the human frame is incapable of sustaining. But Jehovah

condescended to give him that discovery which was most useful and most suited to the condition of a sinner, not dazzling, and paining, and overpowering his vision by the splendour of divine majesty, or the terrors of divine vengeance ; but affording a mild and alluring revelation of his mercy. He said, " I will make all my *goodness* to pass before thee." And he passed by before him, and proclaimed, " The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping *mercy* for thousands, forgiving iniquity, and transgression, and sin." Ex. xxxiv. 6, 7.

The light of nature can afford us no *satisfactory* information—no *well-grounded* confidence. Yet reason itself may suggest such considerations from the usual course of God's providence, as may excite *hope*. The *calamities* which seem appointed as punishments, though regarded as the natural consequences of sin, do not *always* follow. The sentence is suspended : and this wears the aspect of mercy in the Governor. Sinners are spared ; some of them are reclaimed. Diseases contracted by criminal indulgences, are frequently removed by the application of remedies which God himself has pointed out by the finger of his Providence. Careless, extravagant, and dishonest men, plunged from a situation of rank and fortune,

the most respectable, into the direst distress, are sometimes extricated and restored to comfort.

Yet, after all, the mind must be perplexed by incertitude, and harassed by the most painful apprehensions. For what is the consolation of being restored to health, to rank, to character, for a transitory period, if a terrible punishment await the criminal in another world? Are we sure that nothing is to be hereafter apprehended? *Death* may be the tremendous crisis, when justice will assert its claims with unabating rigour, and the rebel, who was reprieved for a short time, may perish eternally and with aggravated ruin. Thus, with all the light which nature can afford, the mind of that man who is truly awake to his condition, must be involved in gloom and terror.

But divine revelation has given us a clear and striking exhibition of mercy. It declares that it is possible : it delineates its vast extent : it opens the way through which it may reach the sinner's soul : it invites offenders of all descriptions, and without exception, to partake of its benefits.

That revelation assures us, that "the Lord is plenteous in mercy"—that "as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him"—that if the wicked "will forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts, the Lord will have mercy upon him, and God will abundantly pardon him."—that "there is no God

like Jehovah, who pardoneth iniquity, because he delighteth in mercy"—that "there is remission of sins through the tender mercy of our God, whereby the day-spring from on high hath visited us :—that in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace, in his kindness towards us through Christ Jesus."

The gospel is essentially a system of mercy. Its grand object is to represent "God in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them ;" and to encourage us to "come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. The angels sing "Glory to God in the highest," because there is "peace on earth, good will towards men." Jesus Christ issues widely the proclamation, "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him might not perish, but have everlasting life." The apostles, and succeeding ministers, publish the same "good tidings of great joy," declaring to all people, "Behold, now is the accepted time : behold, now is the day of salvation."

Yes, unmerited mercy, distinguishing mercy, plenteous and abundant mercy, signalizes the lot of every individual who reads these pages. In the national liberty he enjoys, in the relatives, the friends, and all the other social comforts extended to him by the providence of God—but especially

in the free and sincere offer of eternal pardon and bliss through “the unspeakable gift,” God’s mercy is conspicuous. Apostates from his favour, and rebels against his government, we were objects of his just, and of his sore d’spleasure. Without the least impeachment of his righteousness, he might have sworn in his wrath, that we should never enter into his rest. But in the multitude of his mercies, he provides for us, even for *us*, a ransom that delivers from going down into the pit. “God so loved,” how mighty the emphasis, “so loved the world, that he gave”—not an angel, nor a host of angels—that would have been an expression of wondrous favour—but more, infinitely more, than these—God gave “his only begotten Son,” for the redemption of the foulest of the foul : And, when no combination of created intelligences could, by any multiplied, and long continued, and aggravated sufferings, have sustained the wrath, or magnified the law, or vindicated the government of the Most High ; when the evil lay infinitely deeper than to be reached by such a remedy, the Lord God, *merciful* and *gracious*, provided a ransom, and rendered doubly illustrious the perfection we have described.

THE CHARACTER OF MAN.

While entertaining erroneous conceptions on this subject, it is impossible for us to ascertain the nature of genuine religion.

As originally formed, man was a noble, a glorious, and a happy being, capable of understanding and appreciating the perfections, capable of enjoying, with extatick rapture, the presence of his God. In that state, his desires, his plans, his principles, his pursuits, his pleasures, were all strictly and invariably regulated by a regard to the unerring rule of righteousness.

He must have been supremely blessed, as his purity was unsullied. No restless longings, no perplexing care, no collision of interest, no throb of envy, no pang of disappointment, hung around the pursuit or the possession of earthly good. His mind, kept in order by the dominant love of God, held the creature in its proper place, and enjoyed, without mixture, all the good which it contained.

But alas ! man has forfeited this supreme happiness, and cast from him his primeval dignity.

Come, and let us weep over the ruins of this grand and beautiful edifice. We may still trace remains of the most exquisite workmanship : but the view is most affecting and humiliating.

How the deplorable change was introduced, we are informed by divine revelation, and by nothing else. Through the insinuating wiles of the devil, our first parents were induced to violate the positive commandment which was given them as a test of their obedience. They were probably ignorant of the fact, that some of the angels had, by transgressing the precepts of the Almighty, forfeited his favour, and been consigned to everlasting punishment. Therefore they anticipated no temptation. But these malignant spirits envied their happiness, and resolved on their destruction. The effort was but too successful. In an evil hour, pride enthroned itself in their hearts. They believed the misrepresentation of God's designs; they misconstrued his command; and, designing to be all that he was, in knowledge and in power, they abandoned their rectitude, and became the prey of enemies, the most ferocious. Ejected from paradise, corrupted in all their faculties, involved in present misery, and every moment liable to be cut off by the sentence of death eternal:—These are the direful effects of the first transgression; but they did not terminate with our progenitors. There are proofs irrefragable, that they have extended to all their posterity. *Man is now corrupt.* If we may deduce any inferences from the manner in which Jehovah has been treated wherever he has revealed his character and his

will—if we may be authorized to conclude, that, as “God is love,” he would never inflict misery on an innocent being : If we may form a judgment on this subject, by taking an impartial survey of the heathen nations, then it cannot, for a moment, be questionable whether mankind are depraved.

How gloomy, and how black, a picture is drawn of the most polished gentiles, in their best circumstances, by Paul, in his epistle to the Romans !* Wherever divine revelation has been withheld or discontinued, not an instance can be produced in which the pure worship of the true God has prevailed. In such cases, men have, universally, been either atheists or idolaters. Their ideas of a Supreme Being, if any, have been palpably absurd, and disgustingly gross ; and their religious ceremonies, from those that were offered by emperors and senators, and historians, and poets, and orators, down to those that were practised by despised plebeians, were of a nature too indecent to be named, and of an enormity too shocking to be described. The catalogue of their deities comprised the whole range of creation, from the most resplendent luminary of the heavens, to the meanest reptile of the earth.

“ Gods partial, changeful, passionate, unjust,

“ Whose attributes were rage, revenge, or lust,”

* Rom. i. 16—32.

were admitted to the highest honours of the pantheon. It is not, then, wonderful that their temples were polluted with licensed debauchery, and their altars covered with human blood.

Where revelation has shed its clearest, and its most alluring lustre, the corruption of man's heart has been equally demonstrated. How, on any other principle than deep-rooted depravity, can we account for all that practical atheism, which has, in every generation, existed among those who have been most favoured by light from Heaven,—for that disregard and profanation of the publick and private ordinances of divine worship—for that manifest aversion to serious meditation and discourse—and for the early and universal prevalence of the most stupid and abominable idolatry, not merely amongst ignorant barbarians, nor even among the more polished Greeks and Romans, but also among God's own chosen people, notwithstanding the miracles of judgment and of mercy, which they witnessed through successive generations. When did the Most High ever manifest himself to mankind, that he was not resisted? What treatment did the faithful prophets experience from the Jewish nation? They “had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover, of bonds and imprisonment: They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword; they wandered about in

sheep skins and goat skins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented ; they wandered in deserts and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth." Heb. xi. 36—38. And how was the *Son of God* received ? He was calumniated as an impostor, as a seditious incendiary, as a glutton and a drunkard, as a profaner of the Sabbath, the enemy of Moses, the enemy of Cæsar—a mere pretender to divine honours. Every degrading epithet was applied to him. All the vocabulary of malice was exhausted in aspersing his character. Nay, more, infinitely more than this. He was buffeted and spit upon in the palace of Caiphas ! He was scourged at the bar of Pilate ! He was formally arraigned and publicly insulted at the judgment-seat of Herod ! He was arrayed at the common hall, in derision, with a crown of thorns and a purple robe, styled a king, and treated as a slave ! And after receiving such outrages from men, whom his power had created, and who were dependent on his bounty for the very places which they held ; he was obliged to carry a cross toward the hill of Calvary, till, fainting, he sunk beneath it ; and, afterwards, on that cross, to endure those amazing sufferings which nothing but omnipotence could possibly undergo ; and, through pains which convulsed the inanimate creation, to be persecuted back to heaven. And these woes were inflicted on the harmless and the holy Jesus,

by the very men who built and garnished the tombs of the prophets, and said, "If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets." Striking specimen of the temper of mankind, in every age, toward God, and all that resembles God !

And was the immaculate Redeemer exposed to the lash of every slanderous, every scurrilous, every petulant, every ungovernable tongue—was he, the world's greatest Benefactor, compelled to say, "The world hateth me"—was he crucified by the very men whom, with infinite charity, he had instructed, and fed, and cured of diseases. Was it for his matchless benevolence, that his kindred slighted him—that his disciples abandoned him—that Iscariot, the vile traitor, issued from his bosom—that a whole nation, whom he had most earnestly sought and laboured to save from impending destruction, conspired to persecute him with the most rancorous spite, and the most cruel misuse.

Was it because he left heaven, and became poor to make us rich, that the world would allow him no revenue, no estate, no certain livelihood—not so much as a house where to lay his head ? Was it because of his disinterested and unexampled beneficence, that, while on earth, he owed his ordinary support to alms, and was compelled

to seek his food from a fig-tree on the publick highway?

And why was it that his most ardent desires, his most solicitous cares, his most painful endeavours, for the happiness of men, produced so little fruit; had, indeed, an effect diametrically the reverse, aggravating, but not removing, their sins; hardening, but not converting, their hearts; and instead of rescuing, plunging them the deeper, in perdition. Although he taught with omnipotent authority, with matchless gracefulness, with convincing evidence, with superhuman eloquence—Although he most fervently invited the men who heard him to receive the boon he offered, the richest boon which infinite love could possibly dispense—Although with assiduous fervour of affection, he strove to reclaim them from courses which tended inevitably and directly to damnation, yet he was compelled to utter that heart-rending complaint, “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, but ye would not!”

The very same corruption has been evinced by the conduct of natural men toward the kingdom of Christ, in every age since the period of his advent. We know how the first apostles were abused. They, and after them, their successors, during a lapse of three hundred years, were obliged to wade

through *rivers of blood*, in carrying their Master's gospel to the gentiles. During that time alone ten general persecutions raged, and threatened to bury the church beneath the mass of one promiscuous desolation. One only of the twelve disciples of our Lord was permitted to die a natural death. All that dreadful scene was acted over which he had himself foretold—"Think not that I am come to send peace on earth : I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and a daughter against her mother—and a man's foes shall be they of his own household." Matt. x. 34. 36. "If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more them of his household." John xv. 20. in connexion with Matt. x. 25. "The brother shall deliver up the brother to death, and the father the child ; and the children shall rise up against the parents and cause them to be put to death, and ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake." Matt. x. 21, 22. The prediction was literally fulfilled. The Jew and the heathen united to whet the sword, and to kindle the faggots. Pagan Rome raised successive and terrible persecutions. Papal Rome prepared the rack, the scaffold, the gibbet, and the heated irons. The subtle jesuit, the follower of the Arabian impostor, the scoffing infidel, the man

of pleasure, the ignorant, the gay, and the thoughtless, have all in their turn united to reproach, to persecute, and to crush the cause of Christ. The sanctified spirit of the Christian religion, the construction, the scope and end of the Christian plan, find malignant and eternal resistance in the natural tempers of mankind. As far as the overruling providence of God, which is perpetually verifying the promise, "the gates of hell shall not prevail against the church,"—as far as that restraining Providence permits—at this very day, unconverted men act out, the same temper which distinguished the persecutors of ancient times. The distinguishing doctrines of grace are every where opposed in one or another shape, not indeed with that outward violence, which has, at some periods, marked the history of Zion, but yet in a way to demonstrate that although the enmity and corruption of the human heart are curbed by various restraints, which God now imposes on it, the human heart is essentially the same as ever.



THE DOCTRINE OF TOTAL DEPRAVITY, STATED AND DEFENDED.

There is not, probably, on earth, an individual who will deny that human nature is somewhat corrupted : but the degree of that corruption presents a question which forms the chief point of

separation from which professing Christians diverge to widely different systems of faith and practice.

By the doctrine of *total depravity*, we do not mean, that *men are as wicked as they possibly could be*. On the contrary, they are under various restraints. Conscience, connected as it is in this world with hope ; the apprehension of future punishment ; natural humanity ; the social affections given to fit men for society ; the influence of social relations, such as that of husbands and wives, parents and children ; selfishness rendered good natured by prosperity ; the mutual dependence of men, making it their *mutual interest* to live in amity and concord ; the influence of education and early habits ; a regard for reputation ; the fear of human laws ; and the checks of the Divine Spirit ; all these combined, form a prodigious bond of restraint, which is felt more or less by every man.

Nor is it meant by this doctrine, that *all men are equally wicked*. Some feel the restraints just mentioned much more than others, particularly the social affections ; that is, in common language, some have better natural dispositions than others. They are more generous, more kind, less avaricious, less proud, less passionate, less cruel, less mean. All are not literally murderers, nor highway-robbers, nor thieves, nor adulterers, nor pro-

fane swearers, nor traitors to the peace and liberties of their country.

Nor is it meant, that the *external conduct* of every natural man is always wrong in *form*. The unregenerate do many actions that are materially good, though they are not praise-worthy, as the motive which prompts them is far from being good.

Nor is it meant, that *natural men have nothing which in society is amiable and useful*. The contrary is true of most men, and of many to a high degree.

But this is meant : *They have no holiness*. And the sentiment is established principally by the fact, that they are utterly destitute of love to God.

This doctrine represents them as being what Adam was after the fall, and before he was re-sanctified. Now, in that state, our first father had social, as well as animal and selfish affections ; but, being under the entire dominion of the social, the animal, and the selfish affections, he was by them made an enemy to God. Having no love to his Maker, the object of these affections became his God, and ruled his heart, and prompted him to oppose that God who opposed this idolatry.

But let us *establish* the doctrine. When man first apostatized, the crime which he committed, involved, as a part of the penalty annexed, perpetual abandonment to unmixed depravity. One

sin forfeited all good, and therefore it forfeited that divine influence which produced holiness. That influence could never again move upon his heart but by an act of *grace* ; for grace is favour to the *ill-deserving*. After the first sin, therefore, Adam could possess no holiness till grace conferred it on him.

That nature which he possessed *immediately after the fall*, he *transmitted* to his posterity. When restored to communion with God, by the dispensation of grace, he ceased to be the federal head of the human family. That moment when supreme and unsullied love to his maker abandoned him, he had effected all that he could do to fix the character and to seal the destiny of his offspring. In proof of this, consult Paul's epistle to the Romans, the fifth chapter, from the twelfth to the twenty-first verse inclusive. If we escape from the consequences of the first transgression, it must be by the power of the *second* Adam, for we received nothing but corruption from the first Adam. He was restored by grace, but grace is not hereditary. The contrary sentiment makes Adam virtually the Saviour. That the effects of his apostacy are entailed on us, is palpably evident from the thorns of the field, the sorrows of disease, the toil of the labourer, the besom of death, and the abundant testimony of the scriptures. "In Adam all die." That his sinful nature was transmitted, is equally

evident. "He begat a son in his own likeness." "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death hath passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." Hence it is, that we are "by nature the children of wrath even as others." No account different from this, can rationally be given of the origin of that acknowledged and universal propensity of men to evil, which we witness in every age and in every country. We are sinners because our parents were, and they because their parents were, and so back to Adam.

As it is apparent that we derived a sinful nature from Adam, it is certain that we derived the nature which he had after the fall, before grace restored him; that is, a nature totally void of holiness. "That which is born of the flesh," that is, of carnal, unconverted nature, "is flesh"—that is, carnal. It is that "carnal mind," which is "enmity against God." As is the root so are the branches.

What Adam became by the apostacy, is, I believe, denied by none. But some suppose, that, as he was restored by grace, we are born in a partly-restored state. I allow that natural men so far share in grace, or favour to the ill-deserving, as to enjoy many mercies. But they are not made *holy* in the *least degree*, except by a *new birth*. If the first birth unite us in nature to the first Adam, as

he was immediately after he fell, we possess that nature until a new birth unite us to the second Adam. This seems evident from the very principle of analogy. If the first birth begin to make us sinful, the second birth *begins* to make us holy. Accordingly, the new birth is represented not as the improvement of an *old* principle, but the introduction of one entirely *new*. It is the taking away of the heart of stone and the giving of the heart of flesh.—“A new heart.” It is *a new creation*.” In it “old things pass away and all things become new.” It is the slaying of the enmity of the heart. It is the crucifying of the old man. It is opening the eyes of the blind—Pouring light into total darkness—Unstopping ears wholly deaf. It is a resurrection from the dead. It is a work of great power—the work of God. A work of as great power as at first to create the light of day. “For God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.” 2 Cor. iv. 6. It is a work of as great power as to raise Christ from the dead. “The eyes of your understanding being enlightened that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty pow-

er, which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named not only in this world, but also in that which is to come." Eph. i. 18—21. The greatness of the power is a proof of our doctrine. The heart is so rivetted in enmity against God, that no means nor motives can subdue it. God the Spirit is alone competent to the mighty work.

Farther. The doctrine is established by the nature of the promises.

Those which pertain to salvation are annexed to the least degree of holiness. "Blessed are the poor in spirit : for their's is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are they that mourn : for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek : for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are they who do hunger and thirst after righteousness : for they shall be filled. Blessed are the merciful : for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart : for they shall see God." Matt. v. 3—8. "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." 1 John iii. 14. "Every one that loveth, is born of God." 1 John iv. 7.

In these passages it is observable that the *degree* of the several graces spoken of is not mentioned.

It is not said, how poor in spirit men must be to make it evident that their's is the kingdom of heaven ; nor how much they must mourn before it is certain that they shall be comforted ; nor how meek they must become before they can enjoy the earth as a divine patrimonial inheritance ; nor how merciful, before they can rationally expect the bestowment of divine mercy ; nor how ardently they must desire righteousness, before the promise of being filled, may be appropriated by them ; nor how pure in heart those are who shall hereafter enjoy the beatifick vision of God. Neither is it said, what degree of brotherly kindness and charity we must experience and exhibit, in order to know that we have passed from death unto life, or that we are born of God. But all this is left so entirely out of view, as necessarily to compel us to suppose, that if a man can be certain that he has these graces in the very lowest degree, he may be certain that he is an heir of immortal glory. But this could not be true, if the unregenerate possessed one holy principle, to any degree whatever. If the natural man were not utterly destitute of these virtuous affections, *they* could be no discriminating marks of the adopted children of God—no satisfactory evidence of justification, and acceptance. “The manner in which the Scripture *distinguishes* saints from sinners,” says one of the most celebrated divines of the present day, “af-

fords the most clear and convincing evidence, that all who are not saints, are totally depraved. According to scripture, he that loveth God is a saint, but he that loveth him not is a sinner ; he that repenteth of sin is a saint, but he that repenteth not is a sinner ; he that believeth in Christ is a saint, but he that believeth not is a sinner ; he that is born of God is a saint, but he that is not born of God is a sinner ; he that is in the Spirit is a saint ; but he that is in the flesh is a sinner ; he that is *for* Christ is a saint, but he that is *against* him is a sinner. This mode of distinction necessarily implies that saints have *some* grace, but sinners have *none* ; that saints have *some* holiness, but sinners have *none* ; and that nothing short of total depravity can justly denominate any person a sinner, in distinction from a saint. Though the plainest passages of scripture, in favour of total depravity, may be tortured to some other meaning ; yet this argument, drawn from the *scriptural manner* of distinguishing saints from sinners, admits of no evasion, and cannot be rejected without rejecting the distinction itself. Whoever undertakes to describe a sinner without taking total depravity into his character, will describe a saint. If he say, a sinner is one who sometimes does good, and sometimes does evil, this is a description of a saint. For every saint sometimes does evil. If he say, a sinner is one who does more evil than good ; this

is a description of a saint. For every saint has more sin than holiness. If he say a sinner is one who has the lowest degree of grace ; this is a description of a saint. For the least degree of love, faith, repentance, or any other holy affection, forms the character of the saint, and entitles him to the divine favour. Indeed, ask any intelligent, frank, candid man, who denies the doctrine of total depravity, to tell you the essential difference between a saint and a sinner, and he will freely acknowledge that it is out of his power. For he knows, that if all men are possessed of *some* real holiness, then the only moral difference between one person and another is, that one has *more* and another has *less* true love to God. But this is the difference between one saint and another, and not the difference between a saint and sinner. The most celebrated writers, who deny total depravity, appear to be unable to point out any essential difference between saints and sinners. We may read all the sermons of Barrow, Clarke, Hoadley, and Tillotson, and never find a single instance in which they have drawn two essentially different moral characters. They speak of saints and sinners, in scripture language ; but they never show wherein they essentially differ, nor describe that particular act or exercise of mind, by which a sinner becomes a saint. Hence, it appears from facts, as well as from scripture, that it is impossible to point out any

essential moral difference between a sinner and a saint, without making total depravity the peculiar and essential character of a sinner. If there be any such persons in the world, therefore, as justly deserve to be called *sinner*s, in distinction from *saint*s, they are totally depraved.”*

We may argue the same doctrine from the general tenor of the *threatenings* of scripture. These are so constructed as to exclude none from heaven but those who are utterly destitute of holiness. “If any man *love not* the Lord Jesus Christ, [*at all*] let him be Anathema Maran-atha.” 1 Cor. xvi. 22. “Follow—holiness, *without which*, [*without some degree of which*] no man shall see the Lord.” Heb. xii. 14. “Except ye *repent*, [*in some degree*] ye shall all likewise perish.” Luke. xiii. 3. “He that *believeth not*, [*at all*] shall be damned.” Mark xvi. 16.

None, therefore, but those who are freed from the threatenings of death, and have a gracious title to the promises of life, possess a particle of holiness.

The strong opposition subsisting between God and man, is an additional proof of our doctrine. “Get thee behind me, Satan, for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but the things that be of men.” Matt. xvi. 23. “If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but

* EMMONS.

because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you." John xv. 19. "The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other." Gal. v. 17.

Farther. A number of the most simple and essential properties of a holy heart, are particularly declared not to belong to natural men. *They do not love God.* "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." 1 John ii. 15. But all men, in a state of nature, do love the world. *They do not desire God.* "They say unto him, Depart thou from us, for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways." Job xxi. 14. *They do not desire Christ.* "Ye will not come unto me that ye might have life." John v. 40. *They wish not to depart from evil.* "The desire accomplished is sweet to the soul: but it is an abomination to fools to depart from evil." Prov. xiii. 19. "There is no fear of God before their eyes." Rom. iii. 18.—But, "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." Ps cxi. 10. *They have no knowledge of God—no spiritual discernment.* "They seeing, see not: and hearing, hear not: neither do they understand." Matt xiii. 13. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually

discerned." 1 Cor. ii. 14. Of the righteous exclusively, it is said—"They hear the word and understand it." "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, [the natural man] the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them to us, [that is, to regenerated Christians] by his Spirit." 1 Cor. ii. 9, 10. Speaking of the new birth, God says, "I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not : I will lead them in paths that they have not known." Isa. xlii. 16.

Again. None of the *outward conduct* of natural men, though right in form, is pleasing to God : which shews that they are *never* actuated by *holy* motives. "The plowing of the wicked is sin." Prov. xxi. 4. "Their ways are always grievous." Ps. x. 5. "The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord." Prov. xv. 8. "They that are in the flesh, [that is, natural or unconverted men] cannot please God." Rom. viii. 8. "Without faith it is impossible to please him." Heb. xi. 6.

Besides the quotations already made from Scripture, there are almost innumerable more, which, in the most explicit and unequivocal manner, reveal the doctrine of *total depravity*. It seems impossible to imagine how any man who reads, and who believes, the Bible, can unblushingly deny this sentiment. But we have been already so

prolix on this article, that the reader is only referred to the margin for further evidence.*

I cannot, however, take leave of this subject without quoting the following remarks from the writings of that eloquent and distinguished man,† who, above his contemporaries, has experienced persecution from the totally depraved, in consequence of the pungency of his sermons : and more persecution, arising from this source, than any other minister since the days of the Apostles, Whitfield alone excepted : a man, whom it is an honour to admire : a man, who has probably been instrumental in converting more souls to the Lord Jesus, than any preacher in our country, and than all the Arminians who have breathed since the time of Wesley, or shall exist, until his destructive dogmas are obscured for ever by the light of the millennium.

“The representations throughout the Bible, establishing the doctrine of total depravity, are abundantly confirmed by *the history of the world*.

“But a few ages had elapsed after the fall of man, before “the earth was filled with violence,” and the whole world, with the exception of a single family, must be swept away by a flood. As

* Gen. vi. 5. Eccl. viii. 11, ix. 3. Isa. i. 5, 6. Jer. xvii. 9. Matt. viii. 22. John iii. 6. v. 25. Rom. vii. 18, viii. 5—9. Gal. v. 17—24. Eph. ii. 1, 4, 5. Col. ii. 13. 1 Tim. v. 3, 6. Tit. i. 15, 16. 1 Pet. iv. 6. Jude 12. Rev. iii. 1.

† GRIFFIN.

soon as men began again to multiply on the earth, the whole race, except one family, preserved by a succession of miracles, apostatized to idols. “Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds and four-footed beasts, and creeping things. For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections”—to wallow in the most unnatural and brutal lusts—“as they *did not like to retain God in their knowledge*, God gave them over to a reprobate mind ; being *filled* with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness ; *full* of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity ; whisperers, backbiters, *haters of God*, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenant-breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful,”—“murderers of fathers, and murderers of mothers.”* Only collect the crimes committed in the Assyrian and Persian courts, including the frequent murder of the nearest relatives to open the way to the throne, and without looking further, this whole catalogue of charges stands supported. Sodom was but a specimen of the heathen world.

“And if you turn from this wilderness to the

* Rom. i. 22—32. 1 Tim. i. 9, 10.

vineyard, on which all the culture of heaven was bestowed, you see little else than the grapes of Sodom and the clusters of Gomorrah. Under the glories of the burning mount, while the voice of God was still sounding in their ears, they constructed a molten calf, and stupidly cried, "These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt." Their unbelief and rebellion never ceased. From generation to generation their lust after other gods could scarcely be restrained by all the miracles wrought before their eyes—by all the fervid expostulations of anxious prophets. Those prophets they slew, and at length filled up the measure of their iniquity by the murder of the Son of God.

"And what has the *Christian* world exhibited? Must I retrace that apostacy which gave one half of the church into the hands of the Saracens and Turks? Must I measure over those scenes of pride and pollution which laid the other half at the feet of the man of sin? Must I revisit the faggots of the martyrs, and wade through seas of blood which have been shed by hands bearing the cross? Look where you will, and the deep depravity of man on every side appears. The history of the world is a history of crimes. The earth has been, from the beginning, a great Aceldama, a shambles of blood. And lest it should be thought that Christianity, and science, and modern refinement,

have tamed the natural heart, *the most polished nation on earth*, in the centre of the Christian world, has been selected to take the lead in that scene of atheism and violence reserved for the latter day—reserved to make a full developement of the human character, that the millennium might be introduced without a remaining doubt on earth of the total depravity of man.

“ This horrid scene in the centre of the Christian church, was foretold by astonished prophets. “ This know, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God, *having the form of godliness*, but denying the power thereof : *from such turn away.*”* “ And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent : and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail, for the plague thereof was exceeding great.”†

“ Such is the history of *man*—of man under every form of society, Pagan, Jewish, and Christian. And it furnishes a fair illustration of what

* 2 Tim. iii. 1—9. † Rev. xvi. 21.

selfishness will do, *in spite of all the affections of nature*, when *divine* restraints are taken off, and sufficient temptations occur. It may be regarded as the history of *every man left to himself*. For, “as in water face answereth to face, so the heart of man to man.” The conduct of those wretches who are recorded as prodigies of iniquity, is only an exemplification of selfishness, and a specimen of what every man would do, if left of God. All doubt on this subject will be removed as soon as the wicked enter the eternal world, and begin to exercise the rage of the damned. Hence, in the descriptions of man which are drawn by the Holy Ghost, crimes that have not been *acted out* at all, but by a part, as a sample of the rest, are set down among the characteristic of the whole human family.*

“All this men will be slow to believe, because they are ignorant of themselves. No man knows what is in his heart, further than he is tried; because no man knows what selfishness, restrained only by nature, is capable of doing. Hazael could ask, “Is thy servant a dog, that he should do this great thing,” and yet he did it. The Jews, who crucified the Saviour of the world, thought that if they had lived in the days of their fathers, they should not have slain the prophets.† And if any

* Rom. iii. 9—20. † Matt. xxiii. 30.

of you are dreaming, that, left to yourselves, you should not go the length of those whose history you have reviewed, let that dream end at this spot.—“The heart is *deceitful above all things*, and desperately wicked, *who can know it ?*”



ORIGINAL SIN.

That human depravity is derived from Adam, has been already proved in part. But the subject is so important, as throwing light on some succeeding chapters, that it is proper to dwell on it a little more particularly. It seems impossible to account for the *universal* depravity of mankind on any other principle, than that we derive a corrupt nature from our first parents, or, in other words, that sin is *inherent*. When we reflect, that the whole world, from the period that men began to multiply, has ever been, and still is, “like the troubled sea, whose waters cast up mire and dirt :” what a multitude of rulers, of laws, of punishments, have been indispensable to the preservation of peace and order in society, and that these, after all, are in a state of manifest imperfection.—When we reflect on the scenes of carnage which have desolat-

ed the earth, and how the soil of every country has been literally whitened with the bones, and fattened by the corpses of human beings, converting it into a Golgotha and an Aceldama, are we not furnished with a most shocking demonstration that “the *heart* of the sons of men is full of evil; and madness is in their heart while they live?”

When further we bear in mind, that no age is exempted from the stroke of death—When we behold helpless infants, who cannot possibly have committed any actual transgression, writhing in agonies from the moment of their birth, and sinking to the tomb, can we doubt, that, in the eye of omniscient purity, they are corrupt? Will a perfect Being inflict pain and dissolution on any of his rational creatures who are free from sin? “Remember, I pray thee,” says Eliphaz to Job, “who ever perished, being innocent? or, where were the righteous cut off?” Abraham, in his intercession for Sodom, asks, “Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked?—That be far from thee:—Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?” Can we believe that an infant angel will ever be the victim of such calamities as, with our own eyes, we have often beheld torturing the feeblest and the youngest of our race?

If we deny the doctrine of original sin, on what principle can we defend the institution of those

means which have been appointed by God for the salvation of our children? Are we advocates of the divine right of infant baptism? But whence its necessity, if there be no original, no inherent sin? Surely none but transgressors have occasion for being baptized, as the rite is administered in the name of a pardoning God, a Saviour, and a Sanctifier. The application of water in this ordinance denotes the absolute necessity of being washed in the blood, and cleansed by the Spirit of the Son of God. Nay, our Lord Jesus Christ specifically states this as the reason why not an individual of the human family can enter into the kingdom of God without being born of water and of the Spirit. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh." John iii. 6.

And those who, in direct contradiction to every principle of analogy, of compassion, and of the Bible, oppose the ordinance of infant baptism, must still be compelled to admit the doctrine of original sin, from the ancient institution of *circumcision*. For that was indicative of the removal of sin. It was a seal of the righteousness of faith. It was applicable to none but fallen and depraved creatures.

Besides, the natural state of man is expressly declared, in almost innumerable passages of scripture, to be a state of condemnation. But will a spotless being condemn the pure. Consult candidly the first, second and third verses of the se-

cond chapter of Paul to the Ephesians, and you are furnished with an irrefragable argument. "You hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins ; wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now walketh in the children of disobedience : Among whom also *we*, (we Jews as well as you Gentiles) all had our conversation in times past, in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind : and were *by nature the children of wrath, even as others.*

I presume it will be denied by no man, that the very same curse which was denounced in Eden upon our progenitors, is continued to the present day, at least so far as *temporal* evils are concerned. Unto the woman God said, "I will greatly multiply thy sorrow, and thy conception ; in sorrow shalt thou bring forth children ; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee. And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it ; cursed is the ground for thy sake : in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life. Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee : and thou shalt eat the herb of the field. In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return to the ground ; for out of it

wast thou taken : for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." Gen. iii. 16—19.

It cannot be controverted that all the temporal evils pronounced upon our first parents, the toil and trouble, the thorns and thistles, the state of female subjection, the pains of child-birth, and death itself, do, in fact, alight upon their posterity, not by accident, but according to the original sentence, which included all Adam's offspring, down to the latest generation. And according to the strictest principles of analogy, we are compelled to believe that such was the nature of the constitution established by the Creator with our first parents, as to affect their descendants in precisely the same manner with relation to a future world. If the one be inconsistent with justice, why not the other also ? If it be derogatory with the perfections of God, that we should share in *all* the fruits of the apostacy, is it not, to any degree whatever, inconsistent with his character, to involve us, so far as we are in fact involved, in its temporal consequences, which are indeed bitter and deplorable. *Death* was the penalty annexed to the law which was originally given as the test of man's obedience—death, *temporal*, *spiritual*, and *eternal*.

Such was the constitution the Almighty formed with Adam, that, if he continued holy during a certain period of probation, all his posterity should enter the world in as high a state of moral purity

as he entered it : But if he transgressed, they should be born in moral and in utter depravity. Benevolence was the prominent feature in the character of our great progenitor—for it is the essence of all true religion. He, therefore, felt all the importance, and realized all the solemnity, of his condition. Actuated by that regard which a holy being may be supposed to cherish for unborn myriads, *their* happiness, as well as his own, must have influenced him to be circumspect and faithful. Human nature could not have possibly been placed in more favourable circumstances, to ensure the durable felicity of the world.

All objections, therefore, to our doctrine are vapid : for they are built upon the shallow presumption that the Almighty is obliged to preserve free and accountable agents in a state of perfection, whether they desire it or not ; in other words, that he is bound to violate the very law of their nature, or that without which they could not act, could not be entitled either to praise or blame, could not be amenable to him who made them.

THE NATURE AND NECESSITY OF THE ATONEMENT OF CHRIST.

On this subject, it is of vital importance that we form correct ideas. As the atonement distinguishes the Christian religion from all other systems, and confers on it its chief superiority, so all the truths of revelation will be materially affected by the manner in which this doctrine is explained. An error here will be followed with incalculable evil; for it will disseminate its baneful influence through all the doctrines of the Bible. "Atonement," in the language of an eloquent writer, "is the great sun in the centre of the system. Blot it out, and you are lost for ever. Not a ray from any other quarter will dart through the gloomy prison of sin, to cheer its disconsolate inhabitants, to disenthral them from their chains, and enlighten their path to freedom and to glory."

By atonement, taken in a *large* sense, we are to understand, such an obedience as shall fulfil the precept, and such suffering as shall exhaust the penalty of the divine law; and thus, by satisfying the claims of justice, remove every obstruction to the exercise of mercy.

The word *atonement*, as it occurs in Scripture, signifies either *an expiation for an offence*, or, *the means by which the expiation is made*, without in-

cluding the idea of any thing done to procure *positive* blessings. Sometimes it signifies a *ransom given* to redeem from death. “Then he is gracious unto him and saith, Deliver him from going down to the pit: I have found a ransom.”* Sometimes the act of ransoming. “The rich shall not give more, and the poor shall not give less, than half a shekel when they give an offering unto the Lord, *to make an atonement for your souls*: And thou shalt take the atonement-money of the children of Israel and shalt appoint it for the service of the tabernacle of the congregation, that it may be a memorial unto the children of Israel before the Lord, *to make an atonement for your souls*.”† “We have, therefore, brought an oblation for the Lord, what every man hath gotten, of jewels of gold, chains, and bracelets, rings, ear-rings, and tablets, *to make an atonement for our souls* before the Lord.”‡ Sometimes it means *reconciliation*, or the appeasing of anger, by what means soever that is effected. “And it came to pass on the morrow that Moses said unto the people, ye have sinned a great sin, and now I will go up unto the Lord, peradventure I shall make an atonement for your sin.”§ And Moses said unto Aaron, Take a censer and put fire therein from off the altar, and put on incense, and go quickly into the congrega-

* Job xxxiii. 24. † Exod. xxx. 15, 16. ‡ Numb. xxxi. 50.

§ Exod. xxxii. 30.

tion, and make an atonement for them : for there is wrath gone out from the Lord ; the plague is begun.”* Sometimes it means *reparation for an injury*. “Wherefore David said unto the Gibeonites, What shall I do for you, and wherewith shall I make the atonement, that ye may bless the inheritance of the Lord.”† Sometimes, and, indeed most generally, it denotes *the cleansing of the Jews from sin or from ceremonial uncleanness by blood, especially by the sacrifice of a sin-offering*. The passages which occur in proof of this, are too numerous to be quoted. I only refer you to one as a specimen of the rest. “And thou shalt offer every day a bullock for a sin-offering *for atonement*, and thou shalt cleanse the altar when thou hast made an atonement for it, and thou shalt anoint it to sanctify it. Seven days thou shalt make an atonement for the altar and sanctify it, and it shall be an altar most holy : whatsoever toucheth the altar shall be holy.”‡

In all the passages which have now been quoted, the word atonement signifies the *act* or *means* of expiating for some offence, so as to avert the punishment of the guilty, and not an equivalent rendered for their obedience also, on account of which they are rewarded as well as forgiven. In-

* Numb. xvi. 46. † 2 Sam. xxi. 3.

‡ Exod. xxix. 36, 37. See also Exod. xxx. 10. Lev. i. 4. xvii. 11. iv. 20. 26. 31. 35, &c. &c.

deed, this is the meaning of the word in every passage of the Bible where it occurs ; for each of them comes under one or another of the classes just enumerated. It follows, then, that using the word in its most strict and appropriate sense, the atonement of our Saviour, consisted in the expiation which he made for sin, in order that all who believe in him might be delivered from wrath, and not in what he did to procure them admittance into heaven.

The atonement, therefore, consisted in the *sufferings* of Christ : and however needful his obedience was to give efficacy to those sufferings—however needful to honour the preceptive part of the divine law, he was “made perfect through sufferings,” and by them opened the way for the consistent grant of pardon. If, then, we would have definite ideas on this subject, and express ourselves with precision, we must maintain that believers are pardoned on account of the *death* of Christ, and admitted into heaven on account of his *obedience*. Accordingly we read, “It is the blood that maketh atonement for the soul ;”^{*} and “without shedding of *blood*, is no remission.”[†] Our Saviour said, at the institution of his supper, “This is my *blood* of the New Testament, which is *shed* for many *for the remission of sins*.”[‡] Ac-

^{*} Lev. xvii. 11.

[†] Heb. ix. 22.

[‡] Matt. xxvi. 28.

cordingly, the Apostle Paul tells the Ephesians, that they have "*redemption through his blood :*" and Peter says, that "Christ hath once *suffered for sins*, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God :" or, in other words, that he might reconcile us, "*being put to death in the flesh.*"

But that we may more thoroughly understand the nature of the atonement, it is essential that we ascertain what was its prominent design or object. If we separate the effects from the cause, as we should do in distinguishing correctly on this subject ; if we keep out of view the happy consequences which flow from the atonement as their source, it appears that the grand or primary object of the atonement was, *to support the authority of the divine law.*

When God created men, he necessarily made them the subjects of a law, to the violation of which he annexed the penalty of eternal death. Men transgressed that law. But God was disposed to be merciful. The benevolence of his nature prompted him to desire the pardon and salvation of his rebellious subjects, if these could be effected consistently with the honour of his law. But how can such a result be possible ? If these sinners, who have become obnoxious to the divine *displeasure*, are forgiven without any tribute being rendered to divine *justice*, the authority of the law is **cancelled**—the sinews of government are relaxed—

the legislator himself is despised. But if something be achieved, which, to the purpose of supporting the authority of the law, is equivalent to the punishment of the guilty, every obstacle is removed, and the way at once opened through which the Almighty may bestow compassion. All this was accomplished by the death of Jesus. The atonement which he offered proved as forcibly as the endless perdition of sinners could have done, that Jehovah is determined to support his law; and thus it demonstrated to the universe of rational beings, that the law cannot be disobeyed with impunity—that transgressors may expect, without a peradventure, to be pursued by vindictive justice. Being infinitely dignified, and infinitely dear to his Father, it was not necessary that the Son of God, in making an adequate atonement, should endure as *much* misery as would have been endured throughout eternal ages by the elect. This, indeed, was impossible. For it was only his human nature that suffered, and this, being finite, could not suffer an infinite degree of misery. But Christ was an *infinitely dignified person*, in consequence of the union of the divine with the human nature. *An infinitely dignified person*, therefore, suffered. Consequently, a less punishment, both in degree and continuance, inflicted on him, would manifest God's determination to support the authority of his law, as clearly and as forcibly, as a

heavier punishment inflicted on mankind. For we know, that the more conspicuous and respectable the *character*, a proportionate degree of importance is attached always to the *actions*.

Thus the sufferings of Christ made atonement. Thus he “magnified the law and made it honourable.”* Thus he “condemned sin in the flesh.”† Thus supporting the dignity of the law, he opened the way by which God “might be just,” that is righteous—righteous to himself, and righteous to the universe—and yet, “the Justifier of him that believeth.”‡ Agreeably to this, when he was on earth, he said to his disciples, “Think not that I am come to destroy the law. I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled § And Paul, in his Epistle to the Romans, asks, “Do we then make void the law through faith?” He replies, “God forbid, yea, we establish the law.”|| The sufferings of our Saviour were designed to answer the same end as the punishment of sinners would have done in supporting the penalty of the law, and thus manifesting, to the universe, God's infinite displeasure against sin, which is “the transgression of the law.” The authority of the decalogue is, in this way, perfect-

* Isa. xlii. 21. † Rom. viii. 3. ‡ Rom. iii. 25. § Matt. v. 17, 18.

|| Rom. iii. 31.

ly maintained. That accomplished, the pardon of the guilty becomes possible and consistent, and the lustre of the other attributes is not tarnished, while divine mercy enfolds in its arms, and presses to its bosom, as many as God is pleased to save.

We have endeavoured, with studied simplicity and perspicuity, to describe the nature of ATONEMENT for sin. It is now proper that we unfold the reasons why such an intervention was indispensable to human happiness. Not an individual on earth could have possibly escaped from hell, and been admitted to the joys of heaven, unless the Lord Jesus had atoned for sin.

This truth may be evinced by the following considerations :

1. *The indispensable importance of maintaining the authority of the divine law.*

Some of the leading ideas under this head, have been already anticipated. But as they form a very prominent part of the subject before us, it may be profitable to dwell on them a little more particularly.

When God creates intelligent and immortal beings, he *must* make them the subjects of moral government. It would be manifestly inconsistent with every principle of his wisdom and his goodness, to form *men*, without placing them under an equitable law. It is not only right that things

should be so constituted, but the Almighty *has*, in fact, given a moral law to men. But to this code, a *penalty* must be annexed. Otherwise, the law would degenerate into mere advice. Now, this law, denouncing death eternal, on every transgressor, has been violated. How then can the guilty escape? If the penalty be not inflicted, the law ceases to be law, as much as if there were no penalty : and the law and the legislator are held up to publick view as contemptible. If the threatening be not executed in some way or other, it is evident that the authority of the law expires, and, with it, the dignity of its author, and the very existence of moral government. When this law is broken, if it be important to deter transgressors from breaking it again ; if it be important to maintain a consistency between the legislative and executive departments of the divine government ; in a word, if it be important to manifest the divine displeasure against sin, the penalty of the law must be inflicted. Consequently, if sinners are to be forgiven, something equivalent to their punishment must take place, or their forgiveness will be inconsistent with the authority of the law, and the dignity of the divine government. This equivalent is the atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ. Hence, that pardon may consistently be offered, atonement is needful for the very same reason that the punishment of sinners would be needful with-

out an atonement. If, therefore, we deny the absolute necessity of an atonement, in order that sinners, who have violated the divine law, may be pardoned, we must maintain that laws can exist in full force without penalties ; or that God can govern his creatures by laws which are never executed, and the execution of which was never contemplated. A more glaring absurdity than this it is impossible to conceive.

2. Atonement is indispensable, considered as a means precisely adapted to the accomplishment of the great plan of God.

This plan is the best that could possibly have been framed. The supposition of the contrary were an impious reflection on the divine character. For infinite wisdom, which must perceive the best, has devised the plan ; infinite goodness, which must prompt the best, has dictated the plan ; infinite power, which can execute the best, has brought it into actual operation. The design of this plan, or the principal end of creation, is the display of God's character, which display is the source of all created happiness. Now, atonement was needful to the full exhibition of the divine perfections. Had men been left to perish in their sins, holiness and justice would have been conspicuously displayed : But where would have been the evidence of mercy—of mercy—without which the character of God never can be exhibited in all

its glory. But on the cross of Christ, while holiness and justice shine as illustriously as in the torments of the damned, the rays of mercy also meet in full effulgence. To secure the greatest sum of happiness, to make the most glorious display of the divine perfections, atonement then was needful. All the praise and honour which will redound to God—all the happiness which will result to the universe, from the salvation of sinners, will flow through the atonement of Christ, as the grand medium by which God accomplishes the ultimate end he had in view in creating the world. Atonement, therefore, is necessary to the fulfilment of the great plans of God.

3. It is indispensable to our salvation, *because atonement has actually been made.*

No part of the divine administration can be useless. More especially an event of such amazing magnitude as the death of God's only Son, would never take place under the divine government, if it were not absolutely indispensable. The simple fact that the Son of God has died the substitute of sinners, proves that sinners could on no other plan be saved : Else he died in vain. A man of ordinary wisdom and benevolence would not permit his son to die, if no consideration made it imperiously requisite. A son of common wisdom and benevolence, would not consent to die, if no important end could be effected by his death.

And suppose ye, that the eternal and co-equal Son of the Almighty, would have voluntarily stooped to the death of the *cross*, if, without such unparalleled ignominy and distress, sinners could have been redeemed? And would the Father have parted with his beloved Son, and have consented that he should endure the most excruciating agonies, if urgent necessity had not demanded. No! The Son of God did not die in vain. Had not his death been essential, the bitter anguish would have been assuaged, when he cried, "O, my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me."

4. The atonement of Christ was indispensable, *because we could never have atoned for our individual transgressions.*

If sinners can make a sufficient expiation for their guilt, they must do it either by repentance or reformation, or by enduring a lesser punishment than that threatened by the law. No other method can be conceived. But a slight attention to the subject will prove that neither of these ways would answer.

1st. Repentance and reformation could not atone for our sin. These are a mere return to the path of duty, from which we should never have aberrated. If I omit the discharge of an obligation which I owe my neighbour, my sorrow and future fidelity will not remove the guilt of that transgression. It still remains a truth, that *I omitted the*

discharge of my obligation, and that for this I am to blame. To illustrate our position by another instance.—Suppose that the subject of any human government becomes a traitor, and attempts the subversion of his country's liberties : but, having exerted all his faculties to effect his nefarious designs, he lays down his arms, repents sincerely of his conduct, and again becomes a peaceful citizen. Will his repentance, and return to duty, atone for his rebellion ? If so, where is the vigour of government—where the authority of law—where that displeasure manifested against treason, which is essential to prove its criminality, and to deter others from committing the offence ? It is universally acknowledged, that should the traitor go unpunished, and no expedient be devised which would, equally with his death, evince the indignation of the government, and the justice and authority of the laws, no proof would be exhibited of the evil nature and ill-desert of rebellion. And does not this reasoning apply, with equal force, to the subject of the atonement ? If sinners were forgiven merely on account of their repentance, what evidence should we have that the law of God is “ holy, and just, and good ”—that the government of God is righteous, and will always be supported—that the character of God is opposed to sin ? And where, in this case, would be an administration, the tendency of which is to discourage and

restrain from sin? On the contrary, would not a full license be granted to the wicked, and universal disorder and misery ensue?

Whatever be the future feelings of the sinner, notice must be taken of his past conduct, or, all the ends of moral government are defeated. However sincere our repentance—however dutiful and obedient we now are, or may be hereafter, it is, nevertheless, true, that as we have rebelled against the majesty of heaven, we cannot ourselves make an adequate atonement.

Nor, in the second place, could we atone for our sins by enduring a lesser punishment than that threatened by the divine law. The very idea of atonement, implies something done which, as far as the dignity of government, and the veracity and authority of the legislator, are concerned, is *fully equivalent to the malediction of the law*. But no punishment, endured by the sinner himself, less in degree or duration than that which the law denounces as its penalty, can be equivalent to the curse. If this be untrue;—if the authority of God's holy law can be supported by inflicting a slighter punishment than that which it threatens, as the inevitable consequence of disobedience, then it follows, that the penalty of which it speaks, is too rigorous, and consequently unjust, cruel, and oppressive. *No being in the universe will hazard that assertion, who believes that Jehovah is righteous.*

A less degree or duration of suffering than that threatened by the law, may, when endured by *the Son of God*, be equivalent to the malediction of the law, on account of *the infinite dignity of his person*. But when the sinner himself is to be punished, he must exhaust the penalty of the law, or its authority is cancelled.

It is evident then, that we can, neither by repentance, nor by enduring a lesser punishment than that denounced by Jehovah, atone for our sins. And if we cannot, in either of these ways, every other method is impossible. Without the atonement of Christ, therefore, not a sinner of our race could possibly have been redeemed.

In the last place—The necessity of an atonement appears from explicit declarations of the Bible. In almost innumerable passages, the atonement of our Lord Jesus Christ is represented as the sole basis of our eternal hopes. In reference to the ancient Jewish sacrifices, which were all evidently typical of his vicarious substitution, Christ is denominated “our passover sacrificed for us;”^{*} and is said to have “given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God, for a sweet-smelling savour;”[†] and to have “appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.”[‡] Without those sacrificial offerings, which the Jews present-

^{*} 1 Cor. v. 7. [†] Eph. v. 2. [‡] Heb. ix. 26.

ed under the Levitical ritual, they could not obtain the pardon of their sins. Hence we are expressly taught that we can derive forgiveness in no other way than through the sacrifice of Christ, the grand antitype of all these ceremonies. In confirmation of this truth, the following passages are decisive. "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the Scriptures have spoken! *Ought* not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory."* "Thus it *behooved* Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead on the third day."† "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so *must* the Son of Man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life."‡ "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past—to declare, I say, at this time, his righteousness that he *might be just*, and the *justifier* of him that believeth in Jesus."§ These words of Paul explicitly declare that God could not have been righteous in justifying the believer, on any other ground than the atonement of Christ.

To proceed with the scriptural proofs—"Without shedding of blood is no remission."|| "Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ."¶ "Neither is there salvation in

* Luke xxiv. 25, 26. † Luke xxiv. 46. ‡ John iii. 14, 15.

§ Rom. iii. 25, 26. || Heb. ix. 22. ¶ 1 Cor. iii. 11.

any other : for there is *no other* name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved.* “Jesus saith unto him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life : no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.”†

In a word, all the blessings of believers ; their pardon, their justification, their peace, their sanctification, their final and complete redemption—all the temporal and all the spiritual mercies they enjoy, are represented in passages of the Bible, reiterated times nearly without number, as flowing through the atonement of Christ. We can scarcely open the sacred volume without lighting on some such passages as these : “As for thee also, by the blood of thy covenant, I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit.”‡ “This is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many, for the remission of sins.”§ “Feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.”|| “Being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.”¶ “In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sin.”** “Ye are made nigh by the blood of Christ.”†† “Having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things to himself.”‡‡ “By his own blood he

* Acts iv. 12. † John xiv. 6. ‡ Zech. ix. 11. § Matt. xxvi. 28.

¶ Acts xx. 23. † Rom. v. 9. ** Eph. i. 7. †† Eph. ii. 13.

‡‡ Col. i. 20.

entered into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.”* “Jesus, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate.”† “And they sung a new song, saying, “Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests:”‡ Was it not then indispensable that Christ should die?

Perhaps some reader will say, that we have been altogether too tedious on this article. Not so, when we reflect on its vital importance. Neither can we take up another subject, until we have stated a few of the most prominent practical inferences deducible from the doctrine of atonement.

1st. It teaches—it demonstrates, the divinity of Jesus Christ. Has the law of God been magnified? Has that been done which, to the purpose of supporting the divine character and government, is fully equivalent to the damnation of all the elect? And by whom? By a *creature*? By a man, like myself? By an angel? By a seraph? No! ’Tis impossible! Men, angels, seraphs, are created spirits, and, therefore, finite. So grand, so amazing a work, as a satisfactory atonement for sin can be accomplished by

* Heb. ix. 12. † Heb. xiii. 12. ‡ Rev. v. 9, 10.

none other than *the mighty God*. It requires a person of infinite dignity to make propitiation, by submitting to the penalties inflicted by a violated law. And none but the Eternal Three possess this perfection. Jesus Christ, then, is God, for he has atoned.

2. The light reflected from this subject, shows us the infinite turpitude of sin. The utmost powers of the human mind would be exhausted in attempting to describe the heinous nature of rebellion against God. The eloquence of the highest seraph who burns in the upper temple, would be in vain employed to express the aggravations, the inconceivable enormity of my various acts of disobedience ; while on the cross of him, who spilt the last drop of his precious blood, to make an atonement for these acts, I see their odiousness portrayed in the strongest colours. “ Will all the potentates,” asks the pious ~~Hervey~~ ^{Hervey}, “ will all the potentates that sway the sceptre in a thousand kingdoms, devote their royal and honoured lives to rescue an obnoxious creature from the stroke of vengeance ? Alas ! it must cost more, incomparably more, to expiate the malignity of sin, and save a guilty wretch from hell. Will all the principalities of heaven be content to assume my nature, and resign themselves to death, for my pardon ? Even this would be too mean a satisfaction for inexorable justice ; too scanty a reparation of God’s in-

jured honour. So flagrant is human guilt, that nothing but a victim of infinite dignity can constitute an adequate propitiation. He who said, "Let there be light, and there was light"—Let there be a firmament, and the blue curtains floated in the sky—He must take flesh—He must feel the fierce torments of crucifixion, and pour out his soul in agonies, if ever such transgressors are pardoned." We cannot conceive how the Holy One could possibly have manifested a stronger detestation of sin, than he did by declaring to the universe that he never could exercise his mercy, nor pronounce a pardon, for the least transgression, without the interference of such an atonement as none but the Son of God could make, and which required that even he should endure the buffetings of Satan, the cruelties of barbarous men, the hidings of his Father's face, and the sacrifice of his precious life. Surely, then, sin must be inexpressibly odious ! Surely no other argument can be requisite to prove that it is an infinite evil !

3. What a wonderful display of *the love of Christ* is his atonement ! By the fall, our race was ruined. Divine indignation impended over us, just ready to burst upon our head. Nothing awaited us but wretchedness and despair. In that awful crisis, the Son of God interposed. Melted with compassion, "Spare them, Father, spare them," was his cry, "I have found a ransom. I will expire in

their stead. I will honour the law which they have broken. I will endure its penalty myself." Be astonished, O ye heavens, at such matchless love ! The Father, always disposed to evince mercy, but too tenacious of the rights of the Godhead, too regardful of his holy law, to pardon transgressors, without making a clear manifestation of his truth and holiness, foreseeing that his Son would open a way in which he could consistently pardon and redeem "the chief of sinners," accepted the proposal.

In the fulness of time, after having prepared the church, by types, and shadows, and prophecies, for his glorious advent, the Saviour came on earth. Born in a manger, driven to Egypt, while an infant, by the sword of envy and persecution, reviled by Scribes and Pharisees, abused by the Jewish populace, and at last brought to the infamous and excruciating death of the cross, and there tormented, by the rage and malice of men and of devils, till their fury chased him back again to heaven. This is but a faint outline of his sufferings in the world. And all this he endured for us—for us, whose hearts, by nature, are so full of opposition to the divine perfections, that were Christ again to appear in our world, and again to exhibit the same character that he presented to the Jews, we should vociferate, with one accord, "Crucify him, crucify him."

Foreseeing all the treatment that he actually received—foreseeing the temper of all succeeding generations towards him—that he should consent to part with the adoration of angels, and leave the blessedness and glory of heaven, for the purpose of executing a plan which furnished the only possible means by which we could escape from the wrath of God—is there a human heart so ungrateful and so obdurate, as not rapturously to exclaim, “Oh, this was wondrous love ! We will adore this precious Saviour ! We will devote ourselves unto him ! We will live, and we will die for him !”

No wonder that “the angels desire to look into these things.”* No wonder, that, according to the emphatic language of the original, they *bend*, they *stoop*, to pry into this *mystery of love*. No wonder that all heaven is filled with praise, amazement, and adoration. But, Oh, how wonderful that man, most interested of all beings in this dying love, should be unconcerned, unaffected, and, with base ingratitude, should despise and reject this bleeding Christ !

* 1 Pet. i. 12.

REGENERATION.

The same scriptures which declare that man is totally depraved, and which dwell on the necessity of an atonement for sin, use a variety of comprehensive and energetick expressions to denote that important change which the sinner's soul must experience, before it can "enter into rest." It is a *great change*, of which they speak. In the second Epistle to the Corinthians, it is styled *a new creation*. "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature : old things are passed away : behold all things are become new."* It is compared, in the Epistle to the Ephesians, to a resurrection from the dead. "You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins."†

These and like expressions, which are to be found on almost every page of the Bible, denote a very great change, and are fully sufficient to destroy, at one blow, the opinion of some *modern* teachers, that regeneration consists in the mere external rite of *baptism*. Let me not be understood to derogate from the honour of that divine ordinance. It is an institution of Christ : and, as such, ought to be religiously observed and revered. It is a sacred and important rite—the ap-

* 2 Cor. v. 17. † Eph. ii. 1.

pointed mode of admission into the Christian church—the precious privilege of believers, and believers' children. Still, we ought carefully to distinguish between an *outward and visible sign*, and an *inward and spiritual grace*. While we honour the ordinance, we should not consider it as implying more than its Author ever intended. He must be strangely ignorant, indeed, of the design of baptism, and the nature of regeneration, who confounds the two, and makes them one and the same thing. Baptism is a mere external symbol. But if regeneration is nothing more, how are we to account for the solemnity of that conversation which our Lord held with Nicodemus, the Jewish ruler, recorded in the third chapter of John's Gospel. Why the unusually forcible language which he adopts to express his sense of the vast importance of the change? Why, on this principle, does our Saviour declare, with so much emphasis, “Except a man be born again, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God;” and, “Marvel not that I said unto thee, ye must be born again.” If baptism were all that was necessary to gain admittance into the kingdom of God, why speak of the *Spirit*, in addition to the *water*? Surely, it would have been an idea easily comprehended by Nicodemus, had he been informed that he must be baptised, if he wished to go to heaven. But is it presumable, that, in so plain a matter, our

Lord Jesus Christ would have used such obscurity of language, as, on the principle we oppose, is evidently contained in all his expressions? And can we think that the Jewish ruler would have been so surprised and puzzled, as he evidently was, by being told that *baptism* was all that was needful to entitle a man to the happiness of God's kingdom. Would he have exclaimed, "How can these things be?"

It is one of the strangest, as well as one of the most destructive delusions which a man ever embraced, that, because our bodies are washed, or sprinkled with water, we are necessarily regenerate, whatever be the inward state or disposition of our souls. It is "not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, that saves us," says the Apostle Peter, when on the subject of baptism, "but the answer of a good conscience toward God."* What *necessary* connexion is there between an outward sign and a spiritual renovation? If all who have been baptised, were really partakers of the thing signified, there would be some plausibility in the opinion which we combat. But it can never abide this test. "As many as are led by the Spirit of God," says Paul, "they are the sons of God."† But do all, who have been baptised in infancy, do all, who, even in riper years, have been baptised at

* 1 Peter ii. 21. † Rom. viii. 14.

their own request, and on their own profession of their faith ; and baptised too in that peculiar mode on which some Christians lay so much stress, as apparently to deem it the sum and substance of religion ;—do all these approve themselves the sons of God, by walking under the hallowing guide of the Spirit ? “ Whosoever is born of God,” says John, “ doth not commit sin :” * That is, does not sin as unregenerate men do, habitually, deliberately, wilfully. But is this true of all who are baptised ? Where, on earth, do we behold more audacious sinners, than many of those who have received the seal of the covenant ? “ Whosoever is born of God,” adds the Apostle, “ overcometh the world.” † But is it a violation of that charity which “ hopeth all things,” to lament that many who have been externally devoted to God, by the sacramental washing of water, are still engrossed by worldly pleasures and pursuits, and are miserably enslaved by the vain and corrupt maxims and customs of ungodly men ?

From this view of the subject, is it not extremely evident, that regeneration, or the new birth, is something very different from baptism ? Let no man deceive us with vain words. If there be any meaning in our Saviour’s language, and in the writings of the Apostles and Prophets, baptism is

* 1 John iii. 9. † 1 John v. 4.

not that kind of regeneration of which we must be the subjects, would we enter into the kingdom of God.

2. It has been seriously advanced, by men who have undertaken the responsible office of guiding others in the path to heaven, that nothing more is meant by the new birth, than *external reformation*. But if regeneration is not a radical, and an internal change, how metaphorical, and utterly incomprehensible, is our Saviour's language. But outward reformation does not necessarily imply a radical and internal change. It may exist where there is not a holy principle in the heart. We read of those who "make clean the outside of the cup and platter; but whose inward part is full of ravening and wickedness:"* Of those who are "like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness."† We have many instances, in the world, of *moral* men, as they are termed, who are vehemently opposed to every principle of the Gospel: who, however amiable they may be in other respects, are "enemies to the cross of Christ." They contend, vehemently, against the most important doctrines of the Christian faith, and in diametrical opposition to the requirements of the Bible, advance their

* Luke x. 30.

† Matt. xxiii. 27.

morality as quite sufficient to qualify them for the heavens. Can such be said to be "born again?" "God desireth truth in the inward parts."* But are fair outside appearances acceptable to him while the heart is in a state of enmity against him?—Besides, motives altogether selfish—motives which have no reference to God, or human happiness, and, therefore, motives which are corrupt, may influence men to preserve a decent exterior deportment, or, after having abandoned, again to resume it. Reason and experience may teach them the folly and the danger of gross vices, and induce them to become, for instance, honest, chaste and temperate, merely to promote some present interest: such as the preservation or restoration of their health, the good opinion of their fellow men, or some other object in which they are personally concerned.

Moreover, there are men, who are regular and moral in their lives, from a naturally amiable disposition. They have always been so. No new birth is necessary to effect in them an external reformation. But Christ says that every man must be born again—That no man can otherwise enter into the kingdom of heaven. Regeneration, therefore, imports something more than mere decency of manners.

3. Is it not somewhat remarkable, that, in a Christian country, attempts should perpetually be made to misrepresent the truth of God—the truth of God, in which we have the most lively interest, and the experimental power of which we should seek with the utmost ardour? It has been contended, that the phrases “born again,”—“born of God,” and the like, only signify a renunciation of the Jewish or Pagan religion, upon the reception of Christianity. But as it respects the conversion of men from Judaism, to the speculative belief and external profession of the Gospel,—(I say, the *speculative* belief and *external* profession, for it must be borne in mind, that they who advocate the idea which we now oppose, dream of no conversion of the heart, no experimental change, but a bare relinquishment of one set of theoretical opinions for another,)—as it respects the conversion, in this sense, of Jews to the Gospel, it is only necessary to advert to the following scriptural declarations to demonstrate the entire fallacy of such a creed. “Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but by his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost.”* “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively

* Tit. iii. 5.

hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for those who are kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation."* "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever."† "As new-born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby."‡ "As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to the former lusts in your ignorance."§ "For the time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquettings, and abominable idolatries."|| Having pondered the import, and marked the energy of the preceding quotations, let any man of reflection, and of candour, pronounce whether it is not straining these various expressions to a most unwarrantable degree, to assert that regeneration, and those other phrases which convey to our minds the same idea, are only used when applied to Jewish converts to Christianity, in opposition to their first birth from Abraham.

The ^{chief part} ~~probable~~ of these scriptural declarations ~~are~~ taken from the two Epistles of Peter, which were addressed to societies of Christians, of

* 1 Pet. i. 3, 4, 5. † 1 Pet. i. 23. ‡ 1 Pet. ii. 2. § 1 Pet. i. 14.
|| 1 Pet. iv. 3.

whom, by far, the greater ^{number} ~~part~~ had formerly been idolatrous *Gentiles*. The phrases, therefore, begotten again, new-born, &c. as here applied, and which denote the very same idea as regeneration, could not possibly have any reference to a conversion from Judaism to Christianity. Nor, indeed, according to the plainest and most natural construction of the words, can the Apostle be supposed to have had the most remote allusion to a mere exchange of any one religious party for another. The whole tenor of our Lord's conversation with Nicodemus, serves to settle this point. Can we suppose, for a moment, that the Saviour would have used such obscurity of language, as in this case would be the phrases, "born again," and "born of the Spirit," had he only meant to inform the Jewish ruler, that he must abandon the rites and ceremonies of his nation, and profess attachment to the Christian system? And had this been his meaning would Nicodemus have felt so much surprise as he manifested during the whole conversation? Such a mode of interpretation, as that which we oppose, would indeed, if applied to the scriptures generally, make them a group of the most unmeaning metaphors; ~~and when~~ applied particularly to the passage on which we have already commented at some length, (John iii. 3.) will make it the strangest sentence that was ever uttered.

The uniform current of scripture teaches us, that the change of one set of speculative opinions for another, will not save us : that an external profession of religion may be made without feeling the power, or partaking of the everlasting benefits of religion. The Jews were reminded that their various ceremonies, and especially the rite of initiation into their church, represented an internal and spiritual purification, destitute of which, they were not allowed to belong to "the Israel of God." "He is not a Jew who is one outwardly ; neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh, but he is a Jew who is one inwardly ; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter, whose praise is not of men, but of God."* And the following passage applies equally to Jews, Pagans, and the professors of Christianity. "In Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision availeth any thing, but a new creature."† However we may change our religious parties, or our speculative opinions, a mere *profession* of regard to Christ and his truth, will not recommend us to him, nor prove us to be his sincere disciples. We may renounce a corrupt church, and yet ourselves remain corrupt ; or, we may become members of a pure one, and yet not be pure.

We are now prepared to remark, in the 4th,

* Rom. ii. 28, 29. † Gal. vi. 15.

and last place, that regeneration is a *great moral change produced in the heart of a sinner by the power of the Holy Ghost*. When I define it thus, I use it in its most restricted sense, as confined to *the agency which God exerts in the work*. In Scripture it has this signification, and is frequently used also in a more extensive sense, as implying *conversion*, in which there is both divine and human agency ; in which, though God is the efficient cause, man is also active—actively turns from sin to holiness, and walks in the path of the divine commandments. But, for the sake of clearness, I use the term in the former sense, and confine it to that change wrought in the heart by the power of the Holy Spirit, and which is the foundation of all holy exercises. As the first birth introduces us into a state of sin and condemnation, by uniting us with the first Adam, so the second birth introduces us into a state of holiness and justification, by uniting us with the second Adam. And hence arises the propriety of calling it *regeneration*, or *new birth*. Notwithstanding we all possess those faculties of mind which are necessary to constitute us rational, voluntary, conscious, and accountable agents, yet, by nature, we have corrupt dispositions of the heart. The heart, the seat of the affections, is depraved. The word of God, and daily observation, concur in establishing this position. Now, in regeneration, the heart is created anew.

By this it is not meant that any new power of loving and hating, not before possessed, is bestowed : But merely that the current of the natural affections is altered. Formerly these affections were placed on objects which God forbade and hated : now, they are fixed on those which he commands and approves. A man will not, and, in this sense cannot, act rightly, when he has no good disposition, though he may be ever so free in his agency, —that is, though he may be ever so capable of acting as he please." "The vile person *will* speak villany, and his heart *will* work iniquity."* "A corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit."† While a man's heart is totally destitute of holiness, (and this has been proved already to be the state of every unregenerate sinner) his thoughts, and purposes, and practices, and pursuits, even though they may accord with what the world calls moral goodness, will, in the view of the divine law, be radically and altogether wrong. It is *the temper of the heart which determines the nature of moral actions*. We must have a good disposition, a principle of unfeigned holiness before we can be accepted of Jehovah. Now this disposition, this principle, is produced in the heart by the Holy Spirit, when a man is born again. This is meant by that remarkable passage in Ezekiel's prophecy

* Isa. xxvii. 6. † Matt. viii. 18.

—“A new heart will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you ; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and will give you a heart of flesh.”* This is meant by that expression of Paul, in his Epistle to the Ephesians, “the *new man*, which, after God, is created in righteousness and true holiness.”† This is meant by that declaration of the Apostle, in his second Letter to the Corinthians—“If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature.”‡ This is meant by being “born again.”

We observed, that the Holy Spirit produced the disposition of heart that was given in the new birth. He is the Author of regeneration. To be “born again”—“born of God,” and “born of the Spirit”—are expressions of the same meaning. The inference, then, is undeniable, that *God the Spirit* is the Author of the change. He moves upon the face of the moral chaos, and, in an instant of time, by his Almighty Power, brings light out of darkness, and order out of confusion. Whatever may have been the means which he employed to awaken the soul out of its sleep of security, and to convict it of its guilt, he operates by no second causes in forming it anew, but by an immediate, a supernatural, an instantaneous energy, he implants that holy disposition which shall gradually extend and increase its influence over the whole man, till, at death, sin shall be totally subdued, and mortality shall be swallowed up of life.

* Ezek. xxxvi. 26. † Eph. iv. 24. ‡ 2 Cor. v. 17.

And now, this disposition having been created, a foundation is laid for active conversion. The man has new views, new feelings, and in his life exhibits new conduct. His desires and inclinations; his attachments and aversions; his hopes and fears; his joys and sorrows; his conversation, and pursuits, and practices are all changed. Once they were wholly carnal: now they are pure and spiritual. Regeneration is not a partial and a transient change. It is radical. It is abiding. "To what purpose shall we boast of having experienced the illumination of Balaam, the humiliation of Ahab, the confession of Judas, the faith of Simon Magus, the confidence of the unbelieving Jews, the attention of Ezekiel's auditors, the reformation of Herod, and, what perhaps includes them all, the promising appearances of the stony-ground hearers—if, like them, we rest in a partial change." The regenerated man is placed, as it were, in a new world. in which he views himself, and all around him, through a new medium. Now commences his spiritual existence. The films of ignorance, and prejudice, and sin, removed from his eyes, he has altogether different views from those which he formerly entertained of God, of Christ, of himself, of sin and holiness, of the world and eternity. And his affections being converted into a new channel, he has different feelings also towards their several objects. He loves God, in-

stead of hating him, and serves, instead of rebelling against him. He believes in Christ. He loaths and abhors himself for his transgressions. He repents of sin. He loves and follows after holiness. He dies to this world, using as not abusing it, and looks forward to an *eternal heaven as his home*.

A few words on the necessity of experiencing this renovation, and we shall close the article.

He who is truth itself—the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever—who came on earth, not only as our Priest, to atone for sin, but as our Prophet also, to instruct us what we must do to inherit life eternal, and who never pronounced an useless sentiment, has declared, in the most solemn and explicit manner, “Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.”* What further proof is necessary? But we have, on this subject, line upon line and precept upon precept—both from our Lord himself, and from the inspired penmen of his word. Passages are scattered up and down the sacred pages throughout the Bible, which, in direct and positive terms, teach the indispensable necessity of being born again. And, indeed, why are so many efforts used by the God of grace to rescue our souls—why did Jesus die—why are the ministers of his truth sent forth to preach glad

* John iii. 3.

tidings—why does the Holy Spirit operate on the minds of men—if there be no necessity that we should be reclaimed from the love and dominion of sin ; if there be no necessity that we should be renovated in the temper of our hearts.

It was abundantly proved in one of the preceding chapters, that we are by nature totally sinful. But God is a Being of spotless purity. He has “no fellowship with unrighteousness.” Can we, then, through eternity enjoy his favour unless we become new creatures ? Can we be admitted to his friendship until a reconciliation is effected ? And can this take place in any other way than by a change on our part, as, with God, there is “no variableness, neither shadow of turning ?” It is not at all surprising, that they who maintain the native innocence of man, and his entire competence to fulfil all righteousness, deny the doctrine of regeneration, as it has been stated in the foregoing pages. They must do so, to be consistent with themselves. Indeed, *an ignorance of human depravity*, will account for all those erroneous systems, so flattering to human pride, which have been reared in opposition to evangelical truth. But such systems being built upon notions which contradict the Bible, and universal experience, cannot stand. It still remains an incontrovertible truth,—that “*which is born of the flesh, is flesh.*” *Man is a sinner : his nature must be renovated, or*

a Holy God cannot, consistently with his perfections, admit him to his friendship.

But, that every cavil may be silenced, consider, further, that, unless a man be born again, he cannot enjoy happiness in the kingdom of heaven, even should God admit him there.

What is *heaven*? It is the perfection of holiness—the uninterrupted enjoyment and service of God—the adoration and love of Christ—the communion of saints and angels—and all this throughout eternity. *The perfection of holiness.* But can an unregenerate soul take pleasure in that? To imagine it, for a moment, would be to suppose him regenerate and unregenerate at the same time. “To talk of being happy in heaven without holiness,” as the pious Baxter well observed, “is as great an absurdity as to talk of being well without health, or of being saved without salvation.”

What is *heaven*? *The uninterrupted enjoyment and service of God.* But can the unregenerate man, whose “mind is enmity against God,” delight in contemplating the glories of his nature, and in executing his commands? Can he, who is utterly opposed to what he now sees of the divine attributes, rejoice in the near view and immediate presence of “The Holy Lord God Almighty?” No! Such a sight would overwhelm him with horror, and with anguish. Can he, who has no relish for the service of Jehovah in the present

world—he, to whom the duties of private and public worship are a burden—he, who is ever ready to exclaim, “When will the Sabbath be past,”—he, whose heart is placed altogether on carnal objects, and whose every faculty is devoted to carnal pursuits; can he rejoice in serving God without a moment’s intermission—in “resting not, day nor night, saying Holy! holy! holy! is the Lord of hosts”—in prostrating himself before the throne, and “giving glory, and honour, and thanks to him that sitteth on the throne, and worshipping him that liveth for ever and ever;” and being ready always to fly at his command in the execution of his will? No! The temper of his heart must be now altogether changed, or such scenes will be a hell instead of heaven!

What is *heaven*? *The adoration and love of Christ.* “But though Christ be indeed “the chiefest among ten thousands, and altogether lovely”^{*}—though he be “the brightness of the Father’s glory, and the express image of his person”[†]—though his presence pours joy and transport into the souls of the heavenly inhabitants; yet, in the view of unregenerate men, he has “no form nor comeliness that he should be desired.” They do not adore—they do not love him. How then can they enjoy the blessedness of his kingdom? How can they

^{*} Cant. v. 10. 16.

[†] Heb. i. 3.

cast their crowns at his feet, and with their golden harps sing that “ new song, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain and has redeemed us to God by his blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation, and has made us unto our God kings and priests : Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.”

What is *heaven* ? *It is the communion of saints and angels.* But can they who take no pleasure in holy society on earth—who are now disgusted even with the company of God’s people, at best imperfect beings, can they relish the presence of those pure and spotless spirits, who constantly surround the throne of the Eternal ? Can they delight in perpetual fellowship with them, in communing together, in being one with them in temper and employment ? No ! Annihilation itself would be infinitely preferable to such torments ! If the Bible gives us correct ideas of heavenly happiness, it is impossible, in the nature of things, that unregenerate men should enjoy this happiness. Admit them to heaven : They would be in agony. They would long to remove from that holy place.

Thus it is not only that decree of Jehovah, which we can no sooner reverse than blot out the planetary system—it is not only that decree which excludes unconverted souls from Paradise, but the

very constitution of nature is an insuperable barrier.

Let every individual, then, who, while perusing these pages, has not the witness in himself that he has been born again; "give no sleep to his eyes, nor slumber to his eye-lids, till he experience a thorough renovation, and let him pray, with all the fervour of a soul realizing its immortal destination, "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me."



EVANGELICAL REPENTANCE.

This is one of the most purifying and discriminating graces which grow out of that change of heart which we have just described. Repentance, literally, signifies an alteration of mind, or a change of purpose. The chief object it has in view is *sin*, yet, in its exercises, it necessarily contemplates other objects also. It is not concerning that selfish, slavish fear of future punishment, which, by way of distinction, is denominated "legal repentance," and which an apostle styles "the sorrow of the world which worketh death," that I now write. My only intention is to describe the nature

112 THE CHRISTIAN'S VADE-MECUM.

of evangelical or saving repentance. Of this, the following observations may be made.

1st. It always implies a genuine conviction of sin. I say, a *genuine conviction* : for although the degree cannot be accurately marked, as, in this respect, there is a considerable difference among the best of Christians, still the penitent is not merely convicted in his understanding that he has transgressed ; but feels it sensibly. On his burdened conscience there is a weight of guilt sufficient in his view to press him to the lowest hell. The subject is brought home with power. He has not that vague and general impression with which we are all acquainted, whether penitent or impenitent, that we have come short of our duty. He has that *experimental feeling* of his guilt in the sight of Heaven, that, were the whole world to rise up and tell him he was not a sinner, the feeling would still remain. He sees, without a peradventure, that he has sinned, all his days, against the character, the law, the government of God—against the love of Christ—against the operations of the Holy Ghost—against the interests of his own soul, and the best interests of the universe. In view of these things, he feels his desert of condemnation—he wonders that he is out of hell. The Spirit of the Highest has descended : the commandment has come : sin revives, and he dies.

But this is not all. The worst man on earth may feel a sense of guilt, and yet be far, very far, from genuine repentance. Pharaoh was convicted, and hardened himself more and more. Felix was convicted when, under the preaching of Paul, he trembled in view of an approaching judgment, and, after all, no doubt, perished in his sins. Judas was convicted, and went out and hanged himself. The devils are convicted, and remain devils still. The truth is, that although conviction of guilt and ill-desert, necessarily accompanies evangelical repentance, it does not, in itself, constitute this grace.

We, therefore, remark, secondly, that the sincere penitent *hates* sin. He exercises sorrow as well as the legal penitent: But it is sorrow of a far different kind, arising not from the mere apprehension of future punishment, but from the "exceeding sinfulness of sin." Although he dreads misery in itself considered, as much as any other man—yet his motives to repentance are drawn from an infinitely higher source. Were there no such place as hell, he would still lament his rebellion and ingratitude against the lovely, glorious Being he adores. It is the fact that he has sinned against the best Being in the universe, that grieves and breaks his heart. This fact, while it makes him mourn over his iniquities as "one that mourneth for a first born," induces him, at the same time, to

detest them. He sees that they are committed against the character of the great and excellent God. This consideration swallows up all others, and leads him, with David, to exclaim, "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned." He views sin as discrediting, and thus dishonouring, all the divine perfections, his omniscience and omnipresence, his holiness and justice, his goodness, and his truth. His very mercy, that attribute with which the rebel always professes to be so much pleased, sin tramples in the dust. Dishonouring the character, sin, as viewed by the penitent, aims itself also against the law of God, which is the transcript of his character: that law, all whose requisitions are infinitely reasonable, and the direct tendency of which is to produce universal harmony and happiness. This consideration aggravates the enormity of sin, and fills the penitent with double hatred of it. He views it also as committed against the government of God; as aiming to demolish the throne of the Eternal. And when, to all this, he adds that sin, in the shape of unbelief, is directed against that love which brought a Saviour from heaven to the cross on Calvary, and enveloping itself in the most deep-rooted pride, opposes the influence of that Divine Spirit who has condescended to visit earth for the purpose of persuading men to be saved, words fail him to express his abhorrence. The temper of his soul is such, that, inde

pendent of all future consequences, he loathes sin and himself on account of sin, and desires, most fervently, to be delivered from its thralldom. The legal penitent would rather sin than not, if he were sure of escaping final misery. Not so with the evangelical penitent. Sin, in itself, is to him the greatest of evils. This is genuine contrition. This is that "godly sorrow," to quote the language of an Apostle, which "worketh repentance to salvation, not to be repented of."

The temper now described has not reference merely to some sins. It exercises the same feelings toward *all* sin. At every recollection of what he has been, and what he has done, the penitent mourns, and, with holy Job, *abhors himself*. Some particular sins, when he thinks of them, may give him more pain than others, on account of their peculiar aggravations, or their mischievous consequences: But his contrition extends to every violation of the divine law—to sins, secret and presumptuous—to sins of heart and life—to every foolish imagination—to every corrupt desire—to every unholy propensity; in short, to every *defect* in goodness, as well as to the positive commission of evil. He does not, indeed, remember all the instances in which he has transgressed; but the temper of his heart is the same as if he did.

I would remark, in the third and last place, that genuine repentance disposes the soul to forsake sin. I do not mean, by this, that the penitent is perfect. Alas, no ! He discovers, to his grief, that he is sanctified but in part. He mourns over remaining corruptions. He finds occasion every day for repeated exercises of holy sorrow. This affords him unfeigned distress : for the temper of his heart induces him to long for entire emancipation from the dominion of impurity. He does not, however, rest in desires. He also strives. He is watchful. He supplicates divine aid. He presses forward in the strength of promised grace, against his spiritual foes, determined that, if he perish, he will perish in the combat. With David, he thinks on his ways, and turns his feet unto the testimonies of the Lord ; he makes haste, and delays not, to keep his commandments.* The language of Paul, to the Corinthian Christians, applies, with equal emphasis, to him, “ For behold this self-same thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what clearing of yourselves, yea, what indignation, yea, what fear, yea, what vehement desire, yea, what zeal ”† Determining no longer to live to the “ lusts of men, but to the will of God,”‡ he wages war with every sinful passion. Convinced of the reasonableness

* Ps. cxix. 59, 60. † 2 Cor. vii. 11. ‡ 1 Pet. iv. 2, 3.

of the divine service, he retraces his steps, and actively devotes himself to the advancement of the glory of God. No lust is so dear that it cannot be sacrificed ; no duty so arduous that it cannot be performed. Mourning over every known sin of heart and life, his reformation is universal. In all respects, he desires and strives to be " a new creature." Vain is that repentance which is not accompanied with a fervent solicitude to be freed from sin : Hollow-hearted is that contrition which is not succeeded by a permanent reformation. Art thou a penitent ? Evince your sincerity by bringing forth " fruits meet for repentance."* " Wash you, make you clean : put away the evil of your doings : cease to do evil, learn to do well."† Where is your conviction of the evil of sin—where your abhorrence of it, " if you can spare it, and forsake it not, but keep it still within your mouth, and hide it under your tongue."‡

* Matt. iii. 8. † Isa. i. 16, 17. ‡ Job xx. 12, 13.

FAITH.

In its general import it signifies confidence in the testimony of another. It, therefore, varies, in some respects, according to the nature of the object of its exercise. If this be the testimony of our fellow-men, faith is simply a reliance on the truth of their statements. If it have God for its object, it fixes its eye on his character, his works, and his word ; or, to change the figure, it encircles, in its arms, all the essential truths respecting himself, which he has revealed to mankind. But the Scriptures represent one particular part of this revelation as calling into exercise, in a peculiar manner, the operation of faith. I mean “ the record which God hath given of his Son.” This, in the view of the sacred volume, is the grand object of saving faith. And although a right understanding and firm belief of the general character of God, enter into his essence, yet the Scriptures, when delineating the nature of saving faith, have a principal and immediate reference to the Son of God.

There are two kinds of faith : the one of the intellect, the other of the heart. The one speculative, the other evangelical. The one inefficacious, the other practical. The one unproductive of final benefit, the other saving. But the latter presupposes, and always includes the former. He,

then, who possesses evangelical faith, believes, in speculation, certain truths relating to the Redeemer; and also believes them in a peculiar manner, that is, he accompanies the belief with suitable affections of the heart.

Let us attend to each of these ideas.

1st. What are the truths relating to the Redeemer, which faith believes in speculation. Here it must be evident, that, as faith reposes unlimited confidence in the veracity of Christ, it will credit, as soon as they are presented to its view, all the truths which Christ reveals. But of these, the most important, and those on which the scriptures lay the principal stress, are the truths which respect the *person* of the Saviour—the *offices which he sustains as Mediator*—and his consequent *ability* and *willingness* to accomplish the great design for which he came on earth.

As to the person of the Saviour: No truth is more fully and explicitly developed in the Bible, and none more firmly confided in by saving faith, than that he is the *Eternal Son of God*, equal in every divine perfection with the Father and the Holy Ghost. The believer, when he casts his eye over the sacred pages, beholds the titles, the attributes, the works of God, ascribed to Christ, and equal homage represented as his due. He, therefore, credits the divine testimony in its full extent, when it declares, “ In the beginning was the word, and

the word was with God, and the word was God"*—when it asserts, that "being in the form of God, he thought it not robbery to be *equal with God*"†—when it represents him, as "the only potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords, who only hath immortality"‡—when it calls him, "the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the ending"§—when it attributes to him the omniscience of God, "Jesus knew all men, and needed not that any should testify of man, for he knew what was in man"||—The eternity of God, "Christ is before all things"¶—the omnipotence of God, "by him all things consist"***—"He upholdeth all things by the word of his power"††—The unchangeableness of God, "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever."‡‡—And when this testimony ascribes to him the holiness, the justice, the mercy, the truth, and faithfulness of God, in passages far too numerous to be now particularly quoted.

Thus faith credits the doctrine of *the Essential Divinity* of the Lord Jesus.

It also confides in the scriptural declarations, that "he took not on him the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham"—that "he was found in

* John i. 1. † Phil. ii. 6. ‡ 1 Tim. vi. 15, 16. Rev. xvii. 14. xix. 16. § Rev. i. 8. || John ii. 25. ¶ Col. i. 17. *** Col. i. 17. †† Heb. i. 3. ‡‡ Heb. xiii. 8.

fashion as a *man*”—that “in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren.” That Christ united in himself divinity and humanity, or, in other words, that he is *true God and true man*, is the grand idea which faith entertains respecting his *person*.

Not doubting this, it also credits the divine testimony concerning *the offices which he sustains as Mediator*. This point is intimately connected with the former, so that from the one to the other, the transition, by the exercise of faith, is natural and easy. If Christ be a divine person, and if he add to his divinity the properties of human nature, he is then, in all respects, fitted to act the part of a Mediator between God and man. This was the glorious design for which he came on earth. In accomplishing it, he exercises the offices of a *Prophet, Priest, and King*. As a *Prophet*, he instructs his people by his word, his ministers, his Spirit, in all things pertaining to their salvation. As a *Priest*, he makes atonement for their sins, by presenting, at his Father's throne, the sacrifice of himself, as “of a Lamb without blemish and without spot ;” and also makes continual intercession for them. As a *King*, he calls them to himself from the midst of a wicked world, makes them the subjects of his laws, bestows all needed grace upon them, rewards them for their obedience, corrects them for their sins, supports them under their

temptations and their sufferings, and restrains and conquers all their enemies. Faith sees the ability of Christ to discharge these important offices, and fully and implicitly believes the abundant testimony which the Scriptures yield on the interesting subject. Who is so capable of reconciling God and man, as he, who is himself God-man ! As he, whose divinity could sustain and keep his humanity from sinking under the wrath of God, which his atonement was intended to appease—could give weight and efficacy to his sufferings, his obedience, his intercession—could procure for sinners the favour of their offended Judge—could send forth into their hearts the Spirit of grace—could subdue them to himself—could overcome all their enemies—could finally confer upon them eternal life ; and whose humanity was needful, that, suffering and obeying in our stead, he might suffer and obey in our nature—that, knowing our infirmities, he might be touched with the feeling of them—that, being tempted like as we are, he might succur us when tempted ; and that, in our approaches through him to the throne of grace, we might not be dazzled and terrified, and overcome, by the majesty and holiness of God, but might draw near with boldness, confiding in the mediation of him, who, although God, is “ bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh.” What being in the universe is so capable of supporting the character of a *Mediator* ? And

who, but the most incorrigible unbeliever, can refuse assent to the ample testimony which the Scriptures bear to the offices which Christ, in this character, sustains ? As to his prophetical character, we read, “ A Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me : him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you.”* “ No man hath seen God at any time, the only begotten Son which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.”† As to his *priestly* office : “ It behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a *merciful and faithful High Priest* in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people.”‡ “ Thou art a Priest for ever after the order of Melchizedeck.”§ As to his *kingly* office : “ The government shall be upon his shoulders. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end.”|| “ Him hath God exalted with his right hand, to be a *Prince* and Saviour, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins.”¶ “ He must *reign* till he hath put all enemies under his feet.”** “ That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth : and that every

* Acts iii. 22. in connexion with Deut. xviii. 15. † John i. 18.
 ‡ Heb. ii. 17. § Heb. v. 6. || Isa ix. 6, 7. ¶ Acts v. 31.
 ** 1 Cor. xv. 25.

tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”*

Having such views as have been now described, of the *person* and the *mediatorial offices* of the Redeemer, faith confides in his *full ability and disposition* to save the chief of sinners. It reposes implicit confidence in the power and benevolence of Christ, as pledged to deliver from death eternal, to sanctify, and to confirm in heaven all who truly trust in him. It therefore credits the divine testimony, which says, that “it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell;”† and that “he is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him.”‡ It credits his own testimony of himself, when he says “Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest;”§ and when he declares, “Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.”||

The truths we have just considered constitute, in speculation, the prominent objects of saving faith in the Redeemer.

But these truths are not believed in speculation merely. There is a peculiar manner in which evangelical faith yields its assent to them. One who is, in the scriptural sense, an unbeliever, may credit them intellectually, while his heart feels naught of their power or their preciousness. Whereas true faith not only assents speculatively to them,

* Phil. ii. 10, 11. † Col. i. 19. ‡ Heb. vii. 25. § Mat. xi. 28.

|| John vi. 37.

but embraces them with cordiality and love. The genuine believer receives Christ as his Lord and Saviour, on the very terms in which he is tendered in the Gospel. Pressed sorely by the burden of his guilt, he not only feels his perishing need of such a friend as Christ : not only views him in his all-sufficiency, as a Saviour perfectly adapted to supply the utmost wants of the chief of sinners, but he goes to him, and with all his heart consents to trust, exclusively, in the merits of the Divine Redeemer for pardon and salvation. "As many as received him," says John, "to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name."* Paul speaks of those who perished, "because they received not the *love* of the truth, that they might be saved."† Peter, having mentioned Christ as the chief corner stone in Zion, as the only true foundation of a sinner's hopes, says, "Unto you, therefore, which believe, he is precious."‡ Christ is, indeed, *precious* to every genuine believer : For every genuine believer accepts him not from *necessity*, but of *choice*—accepts him in, all his mediatorial offices, with cheerfulness and affection, cordially consenting to be taught by him as an ignorant sinner, to be saved by him as a condemned sinner, and to be governed by him as an humble and obedient child. There-

* John i. 12. † 2 Thess. ii. 10. ‡ 1 Pet. ii. 7.

fore faith is justly said, in Scripture, to purify the heart and to work by love.

Strictly speaking, faith is an exercise of the understanding : but because that faith which is of an evangelical kind, is always accompanied with those feelings of the heart, which have now passed under review, the Scriptures say, that “ with the heart man believeth unto righteousness.”* Indeed, *saving faith* must, in the very nature of things, be accompanied by those feelings. For how is it possible that the soul can dwell for ever in the presence of Christ, be enraptured with his character, ascribe to him all the glory of its salvation, and be delighted with the holy joys and occupations of his kingdom, unless the faith which it exercises in him be connected with holy love ?

Evangelical faith is always productive of good works. It is not an idle, inactive, unoperative grace : but evinces its real nature by producing love to God and love to man. “ Faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.”† The genuine believer will prove the sincerity of his faith in Christ, by devoting himself to the service of Christ. “ Whosoever forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple ;”‡ and “ whosoever doth not bear his cross and come after me, cannot be my disciple.”§ The believer does follow Christ,

* Rom. x. 10. † James ii. 17. ‡ Luke xiv. 33. § Luke xiv. 27.

by yielding a willing obedience to all the precepts of the Gospel. It is the joy of his heart to honour his Redeemer, by a life of devotedness to the glory of God and the welfare of man. When he is remiss in duty, he is restless and wretched. It is only while living in the exercise of a practical faith—a faith which operates as a principle of holiness in heart and life—that he possesses peace of mind, or enjoys a substantial hope of being personally interested in the merits of the Saviour. Vain is that faith which is barren of good works. Delusive are the hopes of that man who is, in speculation, a believer : in the efficient principles of character, an unbeliever.



PERSEVERANCE.

This doctrine does not maintain that, in the *nature of things*, he, who is once a believer, will always continue so. Holiness in creatures is not necessarily permanent. Adam was once holy, but he became the enemy of God. The fallen angels were once holy, but they rebelled, and are now “reserved in chains under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day.” But by the perseverance of the saints, is meant, that the safety of God’s

people is founded on his gracious purpose and promise—that every individual who has been born again, will arrive at heaven, *because the Almighty has determined and declared that it shall be so.*

This is a doctrine purely of revelation. Were it not for the light which the Scriptures shed on our path, we should be for ever in the dark. Reason, it is true, does not oppose the sentiment we are now endeavouring to establish. There is no absurdity in believing that God will secure the salvation of those whom his Spirit has once sanctified. But the investigations of mere intellect can never arrive at a satisfactory conclusion on this subject. We must appeal to the Scriptures. Let us then attend to a few of the proofs which they exhibit.

1st. There are many passages which assert, in the most express terms, the present safety of the children of God, and the certainty of their future and eternal happiness. This appears in the following particulars.

It is clearly revealed, that *the saints will advance in holiness.* “The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.* “The righteous shall hold on his way, and he that hath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger.”† “The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree : he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon.”‡

* Prov, iv. 18. † Job xvii. 9. ‡ Ps. xcii. 12.

It is declared that *God will not permit the sins of his people to prevail against them.* “The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord : and he delighteth in his way. Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down : for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand.”* “Lay not wait, O wicked man, against the dwelling of the righteous : spoil not his resting place : For a just man falleth seven times, and riseth up again.”†

God's covenanted care of his people ensures their safety. “The mountains shall depart and the hills be removed ; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee.”‡

There are positive declarations that God will preserve his people from destruction. “The Lord forsaketh not his saints ; they are preserved for ever.”§ “He shall never suffer the righteous to be moved.”|| “For the Lord will not cast off his people, neither will he forsake his inheritance.”¶ “He preserveth the souls of his saints.”**

It is promised that nothing shall prevent the salvation of the true disciples of Christ. “Mary hath chosen that good part which shall not be taken away from her.”†† “My sheep,” said the Saviour, “hear my voice, and I know them, and

* Ps. xxxvii. 23, 24. † Prov. xxiv. 15, 16. ‡ Isa. liv. 10 § Ps. xxxvii. 123. || Ps. lv. 22. ¶ Ps. xciv. 14. ** Ps. xcvi. 10. †† Luke x. 42.

they follow me, and *I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish ; neither shall any pluck them out of my hand.* My Father, who gave them, is greater than all, and *no one* is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand."* "Who," asks an apostle, "shall separate us from the love of Christ ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword ? Nay ! in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."†

Another proof of this doctrine is derived from *the covenant of redemption*. In the ages of eternity, the Father entered into a covenant with the Son, in which, as a reward of his death, he promised him a certain number of the human race, who should for ever serve him. Their names are written in "the Lamb's book of life." We read, in several passages of Scripture, of some whose names were written in the book of life before the foundation of the world. These are they who are called the *elect*. Peter styles them "elect according to the foreknowledge of God."‡ Paul speaks of "the

* John x. 27, 28, 29. † Rom. viii. 35—39. ‡ 1 Pet. i. 2.

faith of God's elect."* And in the first chapter of his Epistle to the Ephesians, the same Apostle represents the saints as having been *chosen* in Christ before the foundation of the world."† Our Saviour, when on earth, denouncing the false teachers who should endeavour, after his decease, to lead men from the true faith, declared, that, "if it were *possible*, they would deceive the *very elect*;"‡ and that, "for the elect's sake those days should be shortened."§ The elect are they whom Christ frequently spoke of, as having been *given* to him. These are the *sheep* for whom he *died*. "I lay down my life," said he, "for the sheep. And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice: and there shall be one fold and one shepherd."|| Now, there is an indissoluble connexion between the *covenant* entered into by the Father and the Son, and the *effectual calling* of all the *promised seed*; between their *effectual calling*, and their *justification*, between their *justification* and their *glorification*. "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me: and him that cometh to me I will in NO WISE cast out."¶ "And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day."** "Whom he

* Tit. i. 1. † Eph. i. 4. ‡ Matt. xxiv. 24. § Matt. xxiv. 22.

|| John x. 15, 16. ¶ John vi. 37. ** John vi. 39.

did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son. Moreover, *whom he did predestinate*, them *he also called*, and whom he called, *them he also justified*, and whom he justified, them he also *glorified*.”* In confirmation of all this, we may add that remarkable passage in the eighty-ninth Psalm—“His seed also will I make to endure for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven. If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; if they break my statutes and keep not my commandments: Then will I visit their transgressions with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless my loving kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail. My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips. Once have I sworn by my holiness, that I will not lie unto David. His seed shall endure for ever, and his throne as the sun before me.”†

Another argument, for the perseverance of the saints, is drawn *from the nature of the covenant of grace*. This is intrinsically and radically different from the covenant of *works*. It rests upon a basis infinitely more substantial than the obedience of man. It is “an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure.”‡ The fulfilment of its promises is not at all dependent on any human works,

* Rom. viii. 29, 30. † Ps. lxxxix. 29—36. ‡ Vide 2 Sam. xxiii 5.

purposes, or fidelity. On the contrary, those promises have a certain pledge in the veracity and faithfulness of God. "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers, in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, (which my covenant they brake, although I was a husband unto them, saith the Lord.) But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel: After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and *will* be their God, and they *shall* be my people."* "I will make an *everlasting* covenant with them that *I will not turn away from them to do them good*: but I will put my fear in their hearts, that *they shall not depart from me*."†

From this general description of the covenant of grace, it appears, that God has taken into his own hands the *entire* work of saving his people, and has engaged to carry on this work in every heart in which he begins it, until it shall be consummated. The Apostle was fully persuaded of the truth of this sentiment, when he said to the Christians at Philippi, "Being confident of this very thing, that he who hath begun a good work in you will

* Jer. xxxi. 31, 32, 33.

† Jer. xxxii. 40.

perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.”* In this sure and eternal covenant, all real believers are interested. Nothing shall prevail against them. The power and faithfulness of God are pledged to defend them. The Father promises to impute no iniquity unto them. The Son points to his atonement, and bids them not despond. The Holy Spirit undertakes, in his own way and time, to purify them from all their corruptions, to comfort them under all their tribulations, and at last to make them “meet for the inheritance of the saints in light.” Their salvation does not depend on conditions, for the fulfilment of which they have no promise of a sufficiency of grace. If the blessings of the covenant, which God has established with his people, were only conditionally promised, and no provision, adequate and certain, made, that believers should be kept from apostatizing, their state would be indeed deplorably hazardous. Under such circumstances, where would be that hope of the Christian, which is, emphatically, called “an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast?”† Under such circumstances, what could we understand by that “immutability of God’s counsel, which he confirmed by an oath; that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, they might have a strong consolation who

* Phil. i. 6.

† Heb. vi. 19.

have fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before them.”* Under such circumstances, the trust of the believer would be a shadow. He could have no other confidence than that which was founded on his own efforts, and his own works. But, ah ! this would be a state of wretched uncertainty, nay, of inevitable ruin ! Christian experience adds its testimony to the voice of revelation, that “ he who trusteth in his own heart is a *fool*.”† But that foundation on which God’s children build their confidence, is not thus weak. No ! ’tis *the Rock of Ages*. The covenant in which they are interested, is safe, is certain. JESUS CHRIST is its Mediator. All its promises are in him *yea*, and in him *amen*. It, therefore, deserves the name of a “ *sure and an everlasting covenant*,” and establishes, beyond controversy, the truth of our doctrine.

The intercession of Christ, furnishes another argument. He, whom the Father “ heareth always,” fervently supplicated, in a prayer, but a short time previous to his crucifixion, that all his disciples, to the end of the world, might be preserved from apostacy, and finally admitted to the kingdom of heaven. “ Father, the hour is come : glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee. I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world : thine they were and

* Vide Heb. vi. 17, 18.

† Prov. xxviii. 26.

thou gavest them me, and they have kept thy word. I pray for them : *I pray not for the world*, but for them *which thou hast given me* ; for they are *thine*. And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are. I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil. *Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word* : that they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us, that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. Father, I will that *they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me*, for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world. O, righteous Father, the world hath not known thee, but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me. And I have declared unto them thy name, and *will declare it*, that the love wherewith thou hast loved me, may be in them, and I in them.”* These petitions furnish an unanswerable argument for the safety of the saints : an argument, which, if it *can* be strengthened, is rendered stronger still, by the fact, that Jesus Christ *has*

* Vide John xvii.

not ceased to importune for his people. His petitions on their behalf are now as fervent as they ever were. He is "set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens ;"* where "he ever liveth to make intercession for them."† "Who is he that condemneth ? It is Christ that died, yea, rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us."‡

Another consideration, in favour of our doctrine, is, that instances are recorded, in Scripture, of saints, who, because they were confident that they were saints, were confident of salvation Job could declare, "*I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand, at the latter day, upon the earth : And though after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God, whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold and not another.*"§ Asaph was able to say, "Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory. My flesh and my heart faileth, but God is the strength of my heart, and *my portion for ever.*"|| Paul could affirm, that "for him to live was Christ, and to die was gain"¶ He knew that there was laid up for him 'a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, should give him at that day.'** And on another

* Heb. viii. 1. † Heb. vii. 25. ‡ Rom. viii. 34. § Job xix.

25—27. || Ps. lxxiii. 24, 26. ¶ Phil. i. 20. ** 2 Tim. iv. 8.

occasion, while he expressed himself with equal confidence, he described, accurately, the broad and firm basis on which that confidence was built. "I know *whom* I have believed, and am persuaded that *he* is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day."* Now, I would ask, whether it is possible to account for this assurance on any other principle than the infallible safety of God's people? If all saints are *liable* to fall from grace, where is the propriety of exhorting them to obtain this certainty? They *are* thus exhorted—"And we desire that every one of you," says the Apostle to the Hebrews, "do shew the same diligence to *the full assurance of hope* unto the end."† And Peter, in his second Epistle, thus addresses believers—"Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election *sure*."‡ But the propriety of such exhortations cannot be vindicated—the assurance to which they point, can never be obtained, if Christians are liable to fall from grace.

These are a few of the arguments which support the important doctrine under review. More might easily be adduced. But the power of unbelief must, indeed, be strong, if we are not already convinced. Objections, it is true, are urged. And plausibility may exert her faculties to bring into disrepute any

* 2 Tim. i. 12.

† Heb. vi. 11.

‡ 2 Pet. i. 10.

scriptural sentiment, however rational, and however explicitly revealed : But when the word of God is so decisive in its testimony on this point, as we have perceived, no objections, however specious, or however artful, should have the least tendency to weaken our faith. A " thus saith the Lord," is sufficient to silence every *cavil*. We may then rest assured, that the enemies of the truth have no legitimate claim to scriptural authority for their assertions. They may pretend to such authority. But 'tis mere pretence, founded not on a fair interpretation of the word of life, but on a palpable and violent distortion of its meaning. *The word of life cannot contradict itself.* It might, possibly, administer to the gratification of our curiosity, were we to examine distinctly the several objections alleged against the doctrine we have been defending, and expose their fallacy. But this the proposed limits of the present work will not permit. Indeed, as far as our individual faith is concerned, such an employment is altogether useless. For, when the Bible reveals the doctrine so plainly, and so repeatedly, as we have seen, we are bound to believe it, notwithstanding the objections that are ~~alleged~~ ^{advanced}.

It may, however, be profitable to attend, a moment, to one consideration urged by the opponents of this truth, and it is that in which they place the highest degree of confidence. They assert, that

the moral tendency of this doctrine is pernicious, encouraging those who think themselves saints, to live in licentiousness and spiritual sloth. But the objection is utterly unfounded. We grant, that a *gross misconception* of this doctrine may blind self-deluded hypocrites, and confirm them in carelessness and carnality : but not the doctrine *itself*, rightly understood. If we taught that believers may become unbelievers ; or that those who have been born of God, may lead unholy lives, and, after all, be saved, the enemies of the truth we have been defending, would, indeed, have a manifest advantage. But this is not our sentiment. We maintain that the saints cannot be saved, unless they persevere. At the same time, we contend, that God has determined to enable them to persevere. We allege that none are kept unto salvation, except "through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth." Men must grow in holiness, or they do not persevere. Men must persevere, or they will never arrive at heaven. Now, suffer me to inquire, what possible encouragement such a sentiment can give to licentiousness. Is it not a palpable and shameful abuse of the doctrine, to neglect prayer, ~~to be~~ inattentive to the preaching of the word, or live in allowed transgression and disobedience ? But the children of the Holy One will not thus abuse the doctrine. They have no inclination to do so. It is

their "hearts' desire" to abound in all the fruits of holiness. They are kept from apostacy, by the grace of God. Those, therefore, who are not thus kept, have no part in the consolations of the doctrine. On the contrary, they have the utmost reason to conclude that they never were in a state of grace.

In one word, if the doctrine of perseverance, as stated and defended in the foregoing pages, be not true, it would be quite as well for the world, if there were no Christianity : for I am sure, that *left to himself, there is not a believer on earth who would maintain his standing in the favour of God a single hour.*



We have now explained, and endeavoured to establish the leading doctrines of revealed religion. As it is the professed purpose of this work to instruct the feeblest mind, we have studied simplicity of arrangement and of style. Before proceeding, however, to an examination of the nature and design of the *Ordinances*, and of that *Government* which Christ has instituted for the church on earth, it is proper to repel and overthrow a sentiment, perhaps, of all others, the most destructive in its consequences, that was ever propagated by the malice and intrigues of the *Devil*. I allude to the dogma of universal salvation. If God be holy and just, as has been already proved—if the nature

of atonement has been correctly explained—if regeneration be indispensable to the inheritance of life eternal ;—in a word, if every sentiment which has been advanced in this book, be not unscriptural, then multitudes of our race will inevitably be damned. That man, who reads the Scriptures, and is an universalist, is not a Christian. For he does not believe the testimony of God himself. “He makes God a liar.” Either with one section of his party he entertains the most erroneous conceptions of the divine justice—conceptions diametrically opposed to Scripture, imagining that benevolence is indiscriminately lavished, without regard to the suggestions of wisdom ; denying the infinite evil of sin, representing its future punishment as a purgatory, and not an eternal hell ;—or, with another section, he disclaims any future punishment, and sends, immediately after death, without an exception, the vilest of the vile to the rewards of the righteous. To whichever party he attach himself—whether he believe in a limited punishment, or no punishment at all, he palpably contradicts the whole system, the very tenor of Christianity : he palpably contradicts the positive declarations of the true and holy God. Such a man wishes to quiet his conscience by his delusive hopes. But they are, indeed, *delusive* hopes—hopes, which must perish when God shall take away his soul.

The doctrine which opposes the destructive sentiment of universal salvation, is an essential article in the system of divine truth—a doctrine, which *every minister who is called of Christ*, feels it his imperious duty to explain, to defend, and unequivocally to avow. It is so interwoven with all his religious sentiments, so fastened to his heart, by the every tenderest and firmest ligament of his renovated nature, that, were he to renounce it, he would renounce his *entire creed*. If all men are to be saved, why believe in Christ? Why obey and serve him? Why insist that others should obey and serve him?

The very same declarations of the Bible which reveal the *duration* of heavenly happiness, also reveal the *duration* of the torments of the wicked. In that remarkable passage, which you will find at the close of the twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew, the very same word which, in the original Greek, denotes the eternity of the joys of Paradise, is used to express the never-ending miseries of the damned.—“And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.”* Our translators appear not to have been aware that, in any succeeding age, a class of men would be so presumptuous as to attempt to instruct their fellow mortals in the knowledge of the Scriptures, while utterly ignorant of the languages in which

* Matt. xxv. 46.

they were originally given to the world :—men who would play upon words, and attempt to prove that everlasting did not mean eternal ; and, therefore, to avoid tautology, they rendered *the same Greek word* indifferently everlasting and eternal. And the universalist, who would, from this difference of translation, undertake to shew that the wicked will not for ever be tormented, can, with the same ease, prove, and from the same verse too, that a period will arrive when the bliss of God's redeemed will terminate—and then his sentiment overthrows itself—for these very wicked, who, at some time or other, according to his doctrine, shall be admitted to 'ruination of heaven, shall, at some time or other, be ejected from it.

The whole current of divine truth—all the protracted preparations for ushering in the Christian system—the scope, the design, the tendency of that system—the repeated, and fervent, and solemn exhortations to personal holiness—the broad line of demarkation drawn between the righteous and the wicked—All these, and every thing else contained in the Gospel, prove, to demonstration, the literal eternity of the miseries of the damned.

What is the nature of a threatening ? Is it not a denunciation of evil, certainly to be endured by those against whom it is denounced, unless they abandon the courses from which it endeavours to dissuade them ? What is the nature of a promise ?

Is it not a pledge of future good, certainly to be enjoyed by those who comply with its conditions? And pray, are there no threatenings as well as promises in the Bible? And are they not frequent and tremendous? And do they, in a solitary instance, afford the slightest intimation that they shall not be executed, and executed precisely as long as they declare? They do not. It is a gross and shameful perversion of the Scriptures to distort their meaning so as to abate their severity, either in degree or duration.

To whom are the promises of the Bible directed? To adulterers, and highway robbers, and thieves, and slanderers, and profaners of the Sabbath, and profaners of the name of God, and drunkards, and extortioners? To these or any of them, or any who resemble them? And if such a marked difference be made in this world between those who serve God, and those who do not serve him, will there be no difference at the day of judgment, and in the other world? Why institute a day of judgment at all, if there shall be no distinction between the *sheep* and the *goats*—between those on the right hand and those on the left?

The unconverted cannot, in the nature of things, be happy in heaven, even should it please God to admit them there. This has been abundantly proved while discussing the article of *Regeneration*. The unconverted must then be changed, or Para-

dise cannot be their abode. But when are they to be renewed, if not in this world ? Is there, in the Bible, a shadow of evidence that any alteration will be effected in the temper of the heart beyond the grave ? What then is the meaning of those repeated and repeated declarations, that "*now is the accepted time, and now is the day of salvation*"*—that "*there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave*"†—that "*in the place where the tree falleth, there it shall be*"‡—that "*in this, the day of our merciful visitation, we should attend to the things which belong to our peace, before they be hidden from our eyes.*"§ If the wicked are to be changed hereafter and fitted for heaven, whence the solemnity of our Saviour's sermons ? Why was he so importunate in urging them to "*escape from the wrath to come* ?" And why, let me inquire, in the name of all that is rational, and of all that is benevolent, why did he, in a single sermon, thrice declare, in reference to the torments of the damned, that "*their worms dieth not, and the fire is not quenched* ?"|| And if sin be not an infinite evil, and if God be bound, from the principles of his nature, to forgive it, and if it were unjust to make any creature miserable for ever, where, we ask, was the necessity of the death

* 2 Cor. vi. 2. † Eccl. ix. 10. ‡ Eccl. xi. 3. § See Luke xiii.

|| See Mark ix. from 42d verse.

of Christ? Men would have been sure of happiness without the intervention of an atonement. Thus, the doctrine of the Universalists overthrows the whole system of the Gospel.

To conclude this article; for it is so very perspicuous as not to need a protracted discussion, we call the attention of every candid man to the following texts: "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God."* "He that believeth not shall be damned."† "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."‡ "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven, with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not his Gospel; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power."§ "The hour is coming in the which all that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of Man, and shall come forth: They that have done good unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation."|| "The smoke of their torment ascendeth for ever and ever."¶ "There was a certain rich man, who was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day: And there was a certain

* Ps. ix. 17. † Mark xvi. 16. ‡ Luke xiii. 3. § Thess. i. 7, 8, 9.

¶ John v. 28, 29. † Rev. xiv. 11.

beggar, named Lazarus, who was laid at his gate, full of sores, and desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table : moreover, the dogs came and licked his sores. And it came to pass that the beggar died, and was carried by angels into Abraham's bosom : the rich man also died and was buried : *and in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torment, and seeth Abraham afar off and Lazarus in his bosom* : And he cried, and said, father Abraham, have mercy on me : and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue, for I am tormented in this flame. But Abraham said, Son, remember that *thou in thy life time receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things* : but now he is comforted and thou art tormented. *And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed : so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot : neither can they pass to us that would come from thence.*"* What is the plain, the obvious, the palpable meaning of this parable ? If Jesus Christ ever meant to countenance the idea of universal salvation, or of final restoration, would he have used such language as the foregoing ? It is clear that he inculcated a sentiment diametrically the reverse,—as much so, as that he taught the doctrine of his own essential divinity, when he

* Luke xvi. 19—26.

came into the world, to discourage men from idoltry, instead of plunging us into that which would be the grossest and the most destructive. *Jesus Christ never dealt in fictitious terrors.*

In the fourteenth chapter of Mark, and twenty-first verse, we read, "good were it for that man if he had never been born." The obvious meaning is, that it would have been far better for Judas never to have had existence at all, than, by his own folly and wickedness, to have exposed himself to eternal ruin.

Now, if the time will come, be it after ever so many ages, wherein Judas shall be happy and glorified, this declaration cannot be true. The felicity of heaven is so exquisite, as to counterbalance every pain, which we can in this world, or in the *limbus patrum* of the final restorationist, possibly endure. Infinite glory, which can never know an end,—which eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man conceived,—this glory, enjoyed for ever, will render it far more desirable for Judas to have been born than otherwise. He must bless God to all eternity for his existence in such glory, let him previously have suffered ever so much anguish; and it will be better for him to have been born, in exact proportion between a finite and an infinite duration.

But surely that doctrine which admits Judas Iscariot, the covetous defrauder of his Master in

life, and the base, treacherous betrayer of him to death,—whom Jesus Christ expressly calls *the son of perdition*; and who was so filled with horror and despair at his own vileness, and his own guilt, as to terminate his existence with his own hands;—this doctrine must be *precious to the most abandoned and profligate characters*,—and must serve to make every man's conscience easy, let him live or die ever so wickedly.

Again—it is declared in the word of God, that there is one sin which is *unpardonable*. It follows, then, that any individual who is guilty of this sin, shall fall short of life eternal,—and, of consequence, be for ever wretched: for no one will be so palpably absurd as to say, that men shall be saved without being pardoned. Jesus Christ has declared, “*The blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. Whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world nor in the world to come.*” Matt. xii. 31, 32. This is plain language, and there are other parts of Scripture which are contemporaneous. Now, we cannot, for a moment, suppose that such a denunciation should be made against a sin of which mankind cannot be guilty; because this would be trifling with the most important concerns of mankind, and would serve only to excite useless terrors. Could no man, then, had no man before, and should no man afterwards be

guilty of this offence, we have every possible reason to suppose that not a syllable would have been uttered on the subject. But if there be a sin which never shall be forgiven, either in this or the other world ; and if any one man, either heretofore has, or hereafter shall be guilty of that sin ; then there is one man who shall not be saved,—and, of consequence, the *parade* made by the adversaries of our doctrine, with their universal appellations, is *groundless*. Thus much, at least, is demonstrable, that the fear of being utterly denied forgiveness, either in time or eternity, is held up as a motive to restrain us from sin,—which would not have been done, had this motive in reality no existence.

In the eighteenth chapter of Matthew, and the eighth verse, we read, “ If thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast them from thee. It is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet, to be cast into everlasting fire.” In the succeeding verse, this is styled “ *hell-fire* ;”—which proves plainly, that it refers to that state of punishment upon which the wicked enter after death.

But this is still more plainly discovered, and the truth of our doctrine evinced, by the parallel place—Mark ix. 43. ‘ Here it is styled, “ *the fire that never shall be quenched*.”—τὸ πῦρ τὸ ἀσβέστον. This adjective *asbeston*, expresses the perpetuity of the punishment of the wicked, from its very na-

ture. *Literally inextinguishable*, it has a principle of subsistence within itself, which can be destroyed by no continuance, or perpetuity of distress. Thus the word asbeston, is made use of by naturalists to denote a kind of mineral which was well known to the ancients, and is well known to us. It is easily inflammable ; but never consumes in the fire. It suffers no diminution, nor the least separation of its parts, from the fire. Burn it as long as you please, it never decreases in weight. This is a notorious fact. Perhaps no one body in nature can be produced which more plainly points out the unquenchable fire of the bottomless pit,—continually burning, but never exhausting its fuel ; preying upon the heart-strings of those who endure it, but not terminating their existence, nor diminishing their capacity to endure it.

In a text already quoted, (Rev. xiv. 11.) it is peculiarly observable that the phrase by which the duration of the punishment of the damned is expressed, *eis aiōnas aiōnōn*, is, in every instance, applied both in the Septuagint version of the Old Testament, and in the original Greek of the New Testament, to an unlimited duration. *It is never used to express a different idea.* In no case is it applied to point out a limited term. And we would ask our opponents, whether they know of any Greek phrase in the Bible, in the writings of the Fathers of the Church, or of profane authors,

which conveys a stronger idea of eternity? This phrase is used in Scripture to signify the duration of that Being who liveth for ever and ever. The doctrine of the universalists, therefore, pursued to its legitimate consequences, would amount to a denial of the Eternity of God.

In addition to the texts already quoted, I will now suggest to the consideration of my readers, a few in which it is, in so many words, declared that all men shall not be saved.

The first is the declaration of our Lord himself. "Many are called, but few are chosen."* This is a moral drawn from the parable of the marriage feast; and of the man who had not on a wedding garment. The expression is plain and unlimited. It certainly means as much as this, at least,—that every one, saint and sinner, with the wedding garment and without it, shall not finally inherit the kingdom of heaven. If it imports any thing different, it imports nothing; and this is all the use which I purpose, at present, to make of it.

More explicit, if possible, is that assertion of our Lord, in his sermon upon the mount, Matt. vii. 13, 14.—"Enter ye in at the straight gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat; because strait is the gate and narrow is

* Matt. xxii. 14.

the way which leadeth unto life ; and few there be that find it." Here Christ himself says, that there are few, comparatively, who find the way to eternal life. How diametrically contrary to this is the proposition, that all shall at last find it, and be happy !

In one of the journeys made by our Lord, when on earth, a certain individual came to him, and asked a question, highly important ;—" Lord, are there few that be saved ?" To this the Son of God replied in a manner very similar to his declaration on the mount—" Strive to enter in at the strait gate : for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able."* He then proceeds in a parabolical manner, to describe the miserable fate of those professors of religion who delay their preparation for death, till it actually arrives—the addition which it will make to their sufferings to behold the happiness of others, and the number of Gentiles who shall be admitted to heaven, while the Jews, who thought that they alone should inherit the kingdom, shall be ejected. Now, if there be any who shall seek to enter into the kingdom of heaven at the last day, (for to this the Saviour evidently refers,) and shall not be able,—then there will be some excluded thence, and, of course, all men will not finally be saved. The inference is irresistible.

* Luke xiii. 24.

These plain and positive assertions of the Son of God, imperiously demand our assent, and should perpetually and solemnly guard us against cherishing a hope totally at variance with them.

It has been already demonstrated, while treating on the article of Human Depravity, that there is an essential difference between the righteous and the wicked. Throughout the entire Scriptures, a marked discrimination is made between saints and sinners. Let any man, of plain practical sense, and of ordinary candour, peruse and ponder these almost innumerable passages, and then decide. An obvious and a striking contrast is drawn between those who are styled the *the children of God*—and those who are represented as the *children of the evil one, the children of wrath, and a generation of vipers*.

As in their character there is a signal difference, so also in the treatment which they receive in the present world, at the hands of God. To one class the light of his countenance, and communion and fellowship with him, are promised. A solemn pledge is given them that *all things shall work together for their good*; and they are said to *possess all things*;—while it is declared that *there is no peace to the wicked*,—that *they are poor, and miserable, and blind, and naked*. To crown all in this life, a denunciation like the following, is pronounc-

ed against them,—“ *If ye will not hear, and if ye will not lay it to heart, to give glory unto my name, saith the Lord of hosts, I will even send a curse upon you ; and I will curse your blessings ! yea, I have cursed them already, because ye do not lay it to heart.*”*

Now, mark their *end*. How essentially different is the closing scene of the righteous and the wicked. The latter are driven away in their wickedness.† *In their wickedness*. This phrase imports that the sinner's guilt is, at the hour of death, uncanceled. “ The whole account stands without abatement. There are the sins of his youth, and of his riper years : the sins which originated in strong passion, or sudden temptation, and those which were committed with presumptuous deliberation ; sins which, viewed retrospectively, gave alarm to his conscience, and those which he deemed so trifling as to give his Maker no offence ; sins which are now fresh in his recollection, and those which, through distance of time or other circumstances, have long since escaped his memory. In the protracted account may be enumerated the iniquities of the tongue—slander, rash speaking, profaneness ; the iniquities of the heart—impious discontent, and insubordination to the righteous dispensations of God ; emotions of envy,

* Mal. ii. 2.

† Prov. xiv. 32.

of pride, of cruelty, of revenge toward his fellow-men, whose happiness he was bound, by every tie, to consult, to accelerate, to establish.

The whole series reaches from the commencement of moral agency to the period of his death. Under the guilt of all these sins, and in possession of that temper, in the exercise of which they were committed, he is called to his final reckoning,—is called?—he “*is driven away.*” He dies with reluctance, perhaps with terror, and with agony. Unwilling to abandon a world which has been the scene of his activity, and of all his enjoyments, he is appalled at the righteous character of his Judge, and at the purity of that law, by which he believes he must be tried, and by which he knows he must be condemned. To what part of the universe can he look for consolation? On the earth he is forbidden to remain: the powers of the healing art, the influence of friends, their passionate lamentations, and even the ardent intercession of Christians, cannot avail to retard death for a single hour. Clothed in terrors, it is seen to advance with steady, unbroken footsteps. The plaints of the victim produce neither delay nor commiseration. Now, if the sinner is *driven away* in his wickedness,—if his hold on earth is *forcibly* broken,—if all his enjoyments vanish,—if all his plans of business, of pleasure, of elevation—are disconcerted,—if he is no more to have any por-

tion in the things which are transacted beneath the sun, from what part of the Almighty's vast dominions can he expect relief? On what can he fix his thoughts with complacency? Shall he direct his eyes to heaven, and see Jesus sitting at the right hand of God? Shall he behold angels, swift to execute the commands of their divine Sovereign; or the spirits of just men made perfect, who are redeemed from the earth, out of all nations, and kindreds, and tongues? These splendid and sublime objects he may, indeed, contemplate, but the view, far from alleviating, only augments his anxiety. These objects he never viewed with affection or desire. They are objects to which the pleasures of sin, however unsatisfactory and evanescent, were cordially preferred. That solemn view, which he now has of them, serves only to convince him how utterly unqualified he is for their enjoyment. As he did not choose them in health, so neither did he in the view of death. To his taste, impure and unrenewed, there is, in the Christian paradise, nothing which can afford pleasure. A man, overtaken by a tempest, might be glad to take refuge for an hour, in a sordid cottage, though his heart would sink within him, at the thought of its becoming his permanent abode. So the sinner may, on his dying bed, contemplate heaven with an aversion somewhat less than the terrors with which he views the place of punish-

ment, for ever exposed to the storms of divine wrath ; but a palace is not so much better than a cottage, as in his estimation *earth* is preferable to *heaven*. He would sicken at the thought of an endless residence among those who are employed, without intermission, in spiritual exercises ; who “ rest not, day nor night, saying, Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord God Almighty.”*

Nothing, therefore, but the prospect of a place of endless punishment, presents itself to the mind of an expiring sinner, who has any just conceptions of his guilt. Hence we are furnished, by our actual observation, with a multitude of instances where *the wicked, on a death bed, express the utmost horror*. Now, is it not altogether more probable that their apprehensions are well-founded, when they have Scriptural authority, and when the word of God declares unequivocally in ten thousand instances, that there is an eternal hell, than that these forebodings arise from a *diseased conscience, an overheated imagination, and a morbid state of the animal affections* ?

Mark the *end* of the pious. It is peace. “ The righteous hath hope in his death,”†—hope of salvation through the merits of Emanuel,—hope of perfect holiness in heaven,—hope of eter-

* The eloquent APPERSON, President of Bowdoin College.

† Prov. xiv. 33.

nal association with the spirits of the just ; as well those redeemed from earth, as those who never fell,—hope of the immediate and perpetual vision and fruition of the Lamb of God, and of God the Father, and of the Holy Ghost, the Comforter and the Sanctifier.

For these and other reasons, *the death of the saints* is declared to be *precious in the sight of the Lord* ; while the wicked are represented as *dying under his wrath and curse*.

In short, there is, throughout the entire word of God, a palpable distinction made between the character, the situation, and the circumstances, of good and bad men. There are plain marks given to us, in that word, by which we are to judge, whether we bear the one or the other character. We are most earnestly pressed to examine ourselves on this point : We are most sedulously cautioned against deception : We are most positively assured that this distinction will be preserved in the future world. “ Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked : between him that serveth God, and him that serveth him not.”* The declaration refers to the day of judgment, as is perfectly evident from the context,—*the day when God will make up his jewels, —the day which shall burn as an oven.*

* Mal. iii. 18.

Now, we should ask, in the name of common sense, why is all this distinction made? Why are the character, the state, and the end of the pious and the wicked represented as being so radically different, if a period shall arrive, no matter when, in which they shall both stand upon precisely the same footing, and shall both be equally acceptable to God, and shall both be alike happy in communing with him? Why all this *empty parade*, this *unmeaning farce*,—this worse than *ridiculous bagatelle*, according to the views of the universalist, concerning the necessity of a renovation of the heart, of the importance of faith, and the indispensable necessity of holiness, in order to the beatifick vision of God, if all mankind shall enjoy it, when they leave the world, be they ever so far removed from regeneration, ever so unholy, or unbelieving? Why, why, is eternal happiness promised only to men of a certain character, if men of *all descriptions* shall enjoy it? Why is it said, with such peculiar emphasis, “*Without holiness no man shall see the Lord*,*—if we shall all see him, whether pure or impure? Why is it declared, with such profound solemnity,—“Be not deceived, neither fornicators, idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the king-

* Heb. xii. 14.

dom of God !”* Why is this declaration made, if men of the foregoing description, be they ever so much devoted to the various vices portrayed,—even though they may live and die in the love and the constant, and deliberate, and cherished practice of every one of these vices, shall finally enter the kingdom of heaven ? If the man who wallows in blood, who breaks through every social and every moral obligation, who destroys the happiness of millions, who wantons in the miseries of whole nations ; if this man, living and dying under the influence and government of these ferocious passions, is to be at last and for ever blessed, where exists the necessity of self-denial and mortification ? Why need we give diligence to make our calling and election sure ? Why should we study to be conformed to the image of God ? Surely, on this hypothesis, ’twere labour lost.

If the time shall come, when all men shall be admitted to the divine favour and enjoyment, then surely the distinction which is so carefully made in the Scriptures of God, between the pious and the abandoned, is altogether nugatory. We need take no pains to become Christians, or to live according to the directions which are addressed specifically to them. We may as well gratify our appetites and passions ; for throughout eternity,

* 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10.

it will be the same thing to us,—every distinction will be levelled,—all will be alike blessed.

There cannot be conclusions, more natural in themselves, or which will be more universally drawn by mankind, from the doctrine now opposed, than these. And can there be conclusions more fatal to the interests of virtue and holiness, or more pernicious to human society? To what purpose do exhortations to saints, or alarms to sinners, tend, if saints and sinners are promiscuously to meet at last on the shores of the celestial paradise? And what is there to prevent a believer in the doctrine of universal redemption from committing any crime which his interest, or his passions, may dictate, if he can escape *present* shame and punishment?

The doctrine of the universalists is false for another reason. It peremptorily and necessarily denies that *sin is an infinite evil*. However lightly mankind at large, may regard a violation of Jehovah's authority; and however prone they are to deem one offence committed against themselves, far more heinous than ten thousand directed against the majesty of the blessed God,—yet the Scriptures, on which we must ultimately depend for all truth, convey to us the most formidable ideas of transgression,—comparing its consequences to *the bite of a serpent, and the sting of an adder*.

It is perfectly consistent for us to judge of the

nature of an offence from the dignity, situation and circumstances of the person against whom it is committed ; and from the obligations of the person committing it, to a contrary course of conduct.

—We can never arrive at a precise idea of *crime*, without taking these into the account : for they have an intimate, an inseparable connexion. An offence of a servant against his master, or of a citizen against the first magistrate of his country ; or of a child against an affectionate and devoted father, is, either of them, far greater than that of an equal against his fellow.

Sin is an offence committed against infinite authority,—for it is a violation of the laws of an infinite God. He has guarded the injunctions of his law, and the precepts of his Gospel, with a sanction no less than the entire weight of his authority. This every sinner knows. But notwithstanding this knowledge, he perpetually opposes infinite authority. He violates the law, though the eternal and immaculate Jehovah utters his vehement prohibition.

The sinner is under the very highest obligation to a contrary course of conduct. God is his Creator, Preserver, Benefactor. The most powerful motives, alarming and persuasive, are arrayed to excite him to duty, and to restrain him from sin. But notwithstanding all his light, his knowledge, his advantages, he does that which is radically

wrong. He is, then, justly chargeable with committing an infinite offence.

Such an offence merits a correspondent punishment. But man is a finite creature : He cannot be overtaken by a vengeance infinite in its nature. His punishment, therefore, must be eternal in its duration, that it may be adequate to the offence : and thus, precisely thus, the Scriptures of God represent the subject.

There is no one thing which all the declarations, all the promises, and all the threatenings of the divine word, have a more direct tendency to shew us, than that the Almighty views sin as a most destructive evil ; that it is diametrically opposed to his nature, which is essential holiness ; and that it produces the most pernicious effects upon human happiness. The Bible speaks of it as *a great and horrible evil,—as exceedingly sinful,—as that which separateth between God and man,—and that against which his wrath is revealed.*

The Scriptures, both of the Old and of the New-Testament, lead us to view sin as the productive cause of every calamity to which the human race is subjected. We are warned against it, as our bane. Every motive is placed before us to restrain us from following its suggestions. We are directed to make use of every occurrence in providence, as an inducement *to take away sin.* Eve-

ry page of divine revelation furnishes some argument to restrain us from iniquity.

So opposed is sin represented to be, to the pure nature of the Deity, and so subversive of human happiness, as that, without repenting of it, and abandoning its ways, and detesting its wages, we are told expressly, and in ten thousand instances, that we shall not enjoy the mercy of God. We read, *He that covereth his sins shall not prosper : but he that confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.** Without repentance of sin, which includes forsaking it, we are told, that we shall not enjoy life eternal. *Except ye repent, saith our Lord, ye shall all likewise perish.†* At the same time that we are called upon to believe the Gospel, we are directed to repent ;‡ which proves, to demonstration, that this is equally essential to salvation, with faith in Jesus Christ.

How unscriptural, then, must that sentiment be, which maintains that how many soever infinite offences against God we have committed, and how long or obstinately soever, we may have persisted in them ; though we may live disobeying the divine authority, and die blaspheming the name, the nature, and the works of the great and adorable Jehovah ; persisting in an opposition to him,—yet

* Prov. xxvii. 13

† Luke xiii. 3.

‡ Mark i. 2.

we shall at last be happy,—yea, the time shall come, when we shall be as really and truly glorious and blessed, as those who have for many successive years bitterly repented of their sins against the Lord,—and through much tribulation and variety of unanticipated temptations, with fervent solicitude sought conformity to his moral image ! Is that doctrine agreeable to Scripture which says, that whether a man forsakes sin or not, he shall eventually be saved ? On the other hand, is it not pointedly reprobated by every page of the Gospel ?

It is most certain that our partiality in our own favour, renders us extremely prone to excuse and to justify ourselves. Our crimes do not appear a thousandth part as heinous to us as they are in themselves ; We cannot be persuaded that they deserve a very aggravated condemnation. Let a man, who has been guilty of the most atrocious offence, judge of the punishment which ought to be inflicted on him, and we know that it will not be extreme. Selfishness leads us to imagine that we cannot merit any great suffering for such trifling offences as unregenerate men deem their sins. We ought always to take this thought into view when we are judging upon ourselves, and endeavouring to ascertain how we stand with reference to our Maker.

FAITH.

In its general import it signifies confidence in the testimony of another. It, therefore, varies, in some respects, according to the nature of the object of its exercise. If this be the testimony of our fellow-men, faith is simply a reliance on the truth of their statements. If it have God for its object, it fixes its eye on his character, his works, and his word ; or, to change the figure, it encircles, in its arms, all the essential truths respecting himself, which he has revealed to mankind. But the Scriptures represent one particular part of this revelation as calling into exercise, in a peculiar manner, the operation of faith. I mean “ the record which God hath given of his Son.” This, in the view of the sacred volume, is the grand object of saving faith. And although a right understanding and firm belief of the general character of God, enter into his essence, yet the Scriptures, when delineating the nature of saving faith, have a principal and immediate reference to the Son of God.

There are two kinds of faith : the one of the intellect, the other of the heart. The one speculative, the other evangelical. The one inefficacious, the other practical. The one unproductive of final benefit, the other saving. But the latter presupposes, and always includes the former. He,

then, who possesses evangelical faith, believes, in speculation, certain truths relating to the Redeemer; and also believes them in a peculiar manner, that is, he accompanies the belief with suitable affections of the heart.

Let us attend to each of these ideas.

1st. What are the truths relating to the Redeemer, which faith believes in speculation. Here it must be evident, that, as faith reposes unlimited confidence in the veracity of Christ, it will credit, as soon as they are presented to its view, all the truths which Christ reveals. But of these, the most important, and those on which the scriptures lay the principal stress, are the truths which respect the *person* of the Saviour—the *offices which he sustains as Mediator*—and his consequent *ability* and *willingness* to accomplish the great design for which he came on earth.

As to the person of the Saviour: No truth is more fully and explicitly developed in the Bible, and none more firmly confided in by saving faith, than that he is the *Eternal Son of God*, equal in every divine perfection with the Father and the Holy Ghost. The believer, when he casts his eye over the sacred pages, beholds the titles, the attributes, the works of God, ascribed to Christ, and equal homage represented as his due. He, therefore, credits the divine testimony in its full extent, when it declares, “In the beginning was the word, and

the word was with God, and the word was God"*—when it asserts, that "being in the form of God, he thought it not robbery to be *equal with God*"†—when it represents him, as "the only potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords, who only hath immortality"‡—when it calls him, "the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the ending"§—when it attributes to him the omniscience of God, "Jesus knew all men, and needed not that any should testify of man, for he knew what was in man"||—The eternity of God, "Christ is before all things"¶—the omnipotence of God, "by him all things consist"***—"He upholdeth all things by the word of his power"††—The unchangeableness of God, "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever."‡‡—And when this testimony ascribes to him the holiness, the justice, the mercy, the truth, and faithfulness of God, in passages far too numerous to be now particularly quoted.

Thus faith credits the doctrine of *the Essential Divinity* of the Lord Jesus.

It also confides in the scriptural declarations, that "he took not on him the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham"—that "he was found in

* John i. 1. † Phil. ii. 6. ‡ 1 Tim. vi. 15, 16. Rev. xvii. 14. xix. 16. § Rev. i. 8. || John ii. 25. ¶ Col. i. 17. *** Col. i. 17. †† Heb. i. 3. ‡‡ Heb. xiii. 8.

fashion as a *man*”—that “in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren.” That Christ united in himself divinity and humanity, or, in other words, that he is *true God and true man*, is the grand idea which faith entertains respecting his *person*.

Not doubting this, it also credits the divine testimony concerning *the offices which he sustains as Mediator*. This point is intimately connected with the former, so that from the one to the other, the transition, by the exercise of faith, is natural and easy. If Christ be a divine person, and if he add to his divinity the properties of human nature, he is then, in all respects, fitted to act the part of a Mediator between God and man. This was the glorious design for which he came on earth. In accomplishing it, he exercises the offices of a *Prophet, Priest, and King*. As a *Prophet*, he instructs his people by his word, his ministers, his Spirit, in all things pertaining to their salvation. As a *Priest*, he makes atonement for their sins, by presenting, at his Father's throne, the sacrifice of himself, as “of a Lamb without blemish and without spot ;” and also makes continual intercession for them. As a *King*, he calls them to himself from the midst of a wicked world, makes them the subjects of his laws, bestows all needed grace upon them, rewards them for their obedience, corrects them for their sins, supports them under their

temptations and their sufferings, and restrains and conquers all their enemies. Faith sees the ability of Christ to discharge these important offices, and fully and implicitly believes the abundant testimony which the Scriptures yield on the interesting subject. Who is so capable of reconciling God and man, as he, who is himself God-man ! As he, whose divinity could sustain and keep his humanity from sinking under the wrath of God, which his atonement was intended to appease—could give weight and efficacy to his sufferings, his obedience, his intercession—could procure for sinners the favour of their offended Judge—could send forth into their hearts the Spirit of grace—could subdue them to himself—could overcome all their enemies—could finally confer upon them eternal life ; and whose humanity was needful, that, suffering and obeying in our stead, he might suffer and obey in our nature—that, knowing our infirmities, he might be touched with the feeling of them—that, being tempted like as we are, he might succour us when tempted ; and that, in our approaches through him to the throne of grace, we might not be dazzled and terrified, and overcome, by the majesty and holiness of God, but might draw near with boldness, confiding in the mediation of him, who, although God, is “ bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh.” What being in the universe is so capable of supporting the character of a *Mediator* ? And

who, but the most incorrigible unbeliever, can refuse assent to the ample testimony which the Scriptures bear to the offices which Christ, in this character, sustains? As to his prophetic character, we read, "A Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me: him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you."* "No man hath seen God at any time, the only begotten Son which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him."† As to his *priestly* office: "It behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a *merciful and faithful High Priest* in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people."‡ "Thou art a Priest for ever after the order of Melchizedeck."§ As to his *kingly* office: "The government shall be upon his shoulders. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end."|| "Him hath God exalted with his right hand, to be a *Prince and Saviour*, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins."¶ "He must *reign* till he hath put all enemies under his feet."** "That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth: and that every

* Acts iii. 22. in connexion with Deut. xviii. 15. † John i. 18.
 ‡ Heb. ii. 17. § Heb. v. 6. || Isa ix. 6, 7. ¶ Acts v. 31.
 ** 1 Cor. xv. 25.

tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”*

Having such views as have been now described, of the *person* and the *mediatorial offices* of the Redeemer, faith confides in his *full ability and disposition* to save the chief of sinners. It reposes implicit confidence in the power and benevolence of Christ, as pledged to deliver from death eternal, to sanctify, and to confirm in heaven all who truly trust in him. It therefore credits the divine testimony, which says, that “it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell;”† and that “he is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him.”‡ It credits his own testimony of himself, when he says “Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest;”§ and when he declares, “Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.”||

The truths we have just considered constitute, in speculation, the prominent objects of saving faith in the Redeemer.

But these truths are not believed in speculation merely. There is a peculiar manner in which evangelical faith yields its assent to them. One who is, in the scriptural sense, an unbeliever, may credit them intellectually, while his heart feels naught of their power or their preciousness. Whereas true faith not only assents speculatively to them,

* Phil. ii. 10, 11. † Col. i. 19. ‡ Heb. vii. 25. § Mat. xi. 28

|| John vi. 37.

but embraces them with cordiality and love. The genuine believer receives Christ as his Lord and Saviour, on the very terms in which he is tendered in the Gospel. Pressed sorely by the burden of his guilt, he not only feels his perishing need of such a friend as Christ : not only views him in his all-sufficiency, as a Saviour perfectly adapted to supply the utmost wants of the chief of sinners, but he goes to him, and with all his heart consents to trust, exclusively, in the merits of the Divine Redeemer for pardon and salvation. “As many as received him,” says John, “to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name.”* Paul speaks of those who perished, “because they received not the *love* of the truth, that they might be saved.”† Peter, having mentioned Christ as the chief corner stone in Zion, as the only true foundation of a sinner’s hopes, says, “Unto you, therefore, which believe, he is precious.”‡ Christ is, indeed, *precious* to every genuine believer : For every genuine believer accepts him not from *necessity*, but of *choice*—accepts him in, all his mediatorial offices, with cheerfulness and affection, cordially consenting to be taught by him as an ignorant sinner, to be saved by him as a condemned sinner, and to be governed by him as an humble and obedient child. There-

* John i. 12. † 2 Thess. ii. 10. ‡ 1 Pet. ii. 7.

fore faith is justly said, in Scripture, to purify the heart and to work by love.

Strictly speaking, faith is an exercise of the understanding : but because that faith which is of an evangelical kind, is always accompanied with those feelings of the heart, which have now passed under review, the Scriptures say, that “ with the heart man believeth unto righteousness.”* Indeed, *saving faith* must, in the very nature of things, be accompanied by those feelings. For how is it possible that the soul can dwell for ever in the presence of Christ, be enraptured with his character, ascribe to him all the glory of its salvation, and be delighted with the holy joys and occupations of his kingdom, unless the faith which it exercises in him be connected with holy love ?

Evangelical faith is always productive of good works. It is not an idle, inactive, unoperative grace : but evinces its real nature by producing love to God and love to man. “ Faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.”† The genuine believer will prove the sincerity of his faith in Christ, by devoting himself to the service of Christ. “ Whosoever forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple ;”‡ and “ whosoever doth not bear his cross and come after me, cannot be my disciple.”§ The believer does follow Christ,

* Rom. x. 10. † James ii. 17. ‡ Luke xiv. 33. § Luke xiv. 27.

by yielding a willing obedience to all the precepts of the Gospel. It is the joy of his heart to honour his Redeemer, by a life of devotedness to the glory of God and the welfare of man. When he is remiss in duty, he is restless and wretched. It is only while living in the exercise of a practical faith—a faith which operates as a principle of holiness in heart and life—that he possesses peace of mind, or enjoys a substantial hope of being personally interested in the merits of the Saviour. Vain is that faith which is barren of good works. Delusive are the hopes of that man who is, in speculation, a believer : in the efficient principles of character, an unbeliever.



PERSEVERANCE.

This doctrine does not maintain that, in the nature of things, he, who is once a believer, will always continue so. Holiness in creatures is not necessarily permanent. Adam was once holy, but he became the enemy of God. The fallen angels were once holy, but they rebelled, and are now “reserved in chains under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day.” But by the perseverance of the saints, is meant, that the safety of God’s

people is founded on his gracious purpose and promise—that every individual who has been born again, will arrive at heaven, *because the Almighty has determined and declared that it shall be so.*

This is a doctrine purely of revelation. Were it not for the light which the Scriptures shed on our path, we should be for ever in the dark. Reason, it is true, does not oppose the sentiment we are now endeavouring to establish. There is no absurdity in believing that God will secure the salvation of those whom his Spirit has once sanctified. But the investigations of mere intellect can never arrive at a satisfactory conclusion on this subject. We must appeal to the Scriptures. Let us then attend to a few of the proofs which they exhibit.

1st. There are many passages which assert, in the most express terms, the present safety of the children of God, and the certainty of their future and eternal happiness. This appears in the following particulars.

It is clearly revealed, that *the saints will advance in holiness.* “The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.*” “The righteous shall hold on his way, and he that hath clean hands shall be stronger and stronger.”† “The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree : he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon.”‡

* Prov, iv. 13. † Job xvii. 9. ‡ Ps. xcii. 12.

It is declared that *God will not permit the sins of his people to prevail against them.* “The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord : and he delighteth in his way. Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down : for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand.”* “Lay not wait, O wicked man, against the dwelling of the righteous : spoil not his resting place : For a just man falleth seven times, and riseth up again.”†

God's covenanted care of his people ensures their safety. “The mountains shall depart and the hills be removed ; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee.”‡

There are positive declarations that God will preserve his people from destruction. “The Lord forsaketh not his saints ; they are preserved for ever.”§ “He shall never suffer the righteous to be moved.”|| “For the Lord will not cast off his people, neither will he forsake his inheritance.”¶ “He preserveth the souls of his saints.”**

It is promised that nothing shall prevent the salvation of the true disciples of Christ. “Mary hath chosen that good part which shall not be taken away from her.”†† “My sheep,” said the Saviour, “hear my voice, and I know them, and

* Ps. xxxvii. 23, 24. † Prov. xxiv. 15, 16. ‡ Isa. liv. 10. § Ps. xxxvii. 23. || Ps. lv. 22. ¶ Ps. xciv. 11. ** Ps. xcvii. 10. †† Luke x. 42.

they follow me, and *I give unto them eternal life*, and they shall *never perish* ; neither shall *any pluck them out of my hand*. My Father, who gave them, is greater than all, and *no one* is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand."* "Who," asks an apostle, "shall separate us from the love of Christ ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword ? Nay ! in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."†

Another proof of this doctrine is derived from *the covenant of redemption*. In the ages of eternity, the Father entered into a covenant with the Son, in which, as a reward of his death, he promised him a certain number of the human race, who should for ever serve him. Their names are written in "the Lamb's book of life." We read, in several passages of Scripture, of some whose names were written in the book of life before the foundation of the world. These are they who are called the *elect*. Peter styles them "elect according to the foreknowledge of God."‡ Paul speaks of "the

* John x. 27, 28, 29. † Rom. viii. 35—39. ‡ 1 Pet. i. 2.

faith of God's elect."* And in the first chapter of his Epistle to the Ephesians, the same Apostle represents the saints as having been *chosen* in Christ before the foundation of the world."† Our Saviour, when on earth, denouncing the false teachers who should endeavour, after his decease, to lead men from the true faith, declared, that, "if it were *possible*, they would deceive the *very elect*;"‡ and that, "for the elect's sake those days should be shortened."§ The elect are they whom Christ frequently spoke of, as having been *given* to him. These are the *sheep* for whom he *died*. "I lay down my life," said he, "for the sheep. And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice: and there shall be one fold and one shepherd."|| Now, there is an indissoluble connexion between the *covenant* entered into by the Father and the Son, and the *effectual calling* of all the *promised seed*; between their *effectual calling*, and their *justification*, between their *justification* and their *glorification*. "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me: and him that cometh to me I will in NO WISE cast out."¶ "And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day."** "Whom he

* Tit. i. 1. † Eph. i. 4. ‡ Matt. xxiv. 24. § Matt. xxiv. 22.

|| John x. 15, 16. ¶ John vi. 37. ** John vi. 39.

did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son. Moreover, *whom he did predestinate*, them *he also called*, and whom he called, *them he also justified*, and whom he justified, them he also *glorified*.”* In confirmation of all this, we may add that remarkable passage in the eighty-ninth Psalm—“His seed also will I make to endure for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven. If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; if they break my statutes and keep not my commandments: Then will I visit their transgressions with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless my loving kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail. My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips. Once have I sworn by my holiness, that I will not lie unto David. His seed shall endure for ever, and his throne as the sun before me.”†

Another argument, for the perseverance of the saints, is drawn *from the nature of the covenant of grace*. This is intrinsically and radically different from the covenant of *works*. It rests upon a basis infinitely more substantial than the obedience of man. It is “an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure.”‡ The fulfilment of its promises is not at all dependent on any human works,

* Rom. viii. 29, 30. † Ps. lxxxix. 29—36. ‡ Vide 2 Sam. xxiii 5.

purposes, or fidelity. On the contrary, those promises have a certain pledge in the veracity and faithfulness of God. "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers, in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, (which my covenant they brake, although I was a husband unto them, saith the Lord.) But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel: After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and *will* be their God, and they *shall* be my people."* "I will make an *everlasting* covenant with them that *I will not turn away from them to do them good*: but I will put my fear in their hearts, that *they shall not depart from me*."†

From this general description of the covenant of grace, it appears, that God has taken into his own hands the *entire* work of saving his people, and has engaged to carry on this work in every heart in which he begins it, until it shall be consummated. The Apostle was fully persuaded of the truth of this sentiment, when he said to the Christians at Philippi, "Being confident of this very thing, that he who hath begun a good work in you will

* Jer. xxxi. 31, 32, 33.

† Jer. xxxii. 40.

perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.”* In this sure and eternal covenant, all real believers are interested. Nothing shall prevail against them. The power and faithfulness of God are pledged to defend them. The Father promises to impute no iniquity unto them. The Son points to his atonement, and bids them not despond. The Holy Spirit undertakes, in his own way and time, to purify them from all their corruptions, to comfort them under all their tribulations, and at last to make them “meet for the inheritance of the saints in light.” Their salvation does not depend on conditions, for the fulfilment of which they have no promise of a sufficiency of grace. If the blessings of the covenant, which God has established with his people, were only conditionally promised, and no provision, adequate and certain, made, that believers should be kept from apostatizing, their state would be indeed deplorably hazardous. Under such circumstances, where would be that hope of the Christian, which is, emphatically, called “an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast?”† Under such circumstances, what could we understand by that “immutability of God’s counsel, which he confirmed by an oath; that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, they might have a strong consolation who

* Phil. i. 6.

† Heb. vi. 19.

have fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before them.”* Under such circumstances, the trust of the believer would be a shadow. He could have no other confidence than that which was founded on his own efforts, and his own works. But, ah ! this would be a state of wretched uncertainty, nay, of inevitable ruin ! Christian experience adds its testimony to the voice of revelation, that “ he who trusteth in his own heart is a *fool*.”† But that foundation on which God’s children build their confidence, is not thus weak. No ! ’tis *the Rock of Ages*. The covenant in which they are interested, is safe, is certain. JESUS CHRIST is its Mediator. All its promises are in him *yea*, and in him *amen*. It, therefore, deserves the name of a “ *sure and an everlasting covenant*,” and establishes, beyond controversy, the truth of our doctrine.

The intercession of Christ, furnishes another argument. He, whom the Father “ heareth always,” fervently supplicated, in a prayer, but a short time previous to his crucifixion, that all his disciples, to the end of the world, might be preserved from apostacy, and finally admitted to the kingdom of heaven. “ Father, the hour is come : glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee. I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world : thine they were and

* Vide Heb. vi. 17, 18.

† Prov. xxviii. 26.

thou gavest them me, and they have kept thy word. I pray for them : *I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me ; for they are thine.* And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are. I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil. *Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word : that they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us, that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.* Father, *I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me, for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.* O, righteous Father, the world hath not known thee, but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me. And I have declared unto them thy name, and *will declare it, that the love wherewith thou hast loved me, may be in them, and I in them.*"* These petitions furnish an unanswerable argument for the safety of the saints : an argument, which, if it *can* be strengthened, is rendered stronger still, by the fact, that Jesus Christ *has*

* Vide John xvii.

not ceased to importune for his people. His petitions on their behalf are now as fervent as they ever were. He is "set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens ;"* where "he ever liveth to make intercession for them."† "Who is he that condemneth ? It is Christ that died, yea, rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us."‡

Another consideration, in favour of our doctrine, is, that instances are recorded, in Scripture, of saints, who, because they were confident that they were saints, were confident of salvation. Job could declare, "*I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand, at the latter day, upon the earth : And though after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God, whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold and not another.*"§ Asaph was able to say, "Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory. My flesh and my heart faileth, but God is the strength of my heart, and *my portion for ever.*"|| Paul could affirm, that "for him to live was Christ, and to die was gain."¶ He *knew* that there was laid up for him "a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, should give him at that day."** And on another

* Heb. viii. 1. † Heb. vii. 25. ‡ Rom. viii. 34. § Job xix.

25—27. || Ps. lxxiii. 24, 26. ¶ Phil. i. 21. ** 2 Tim. iv. 8.

occasion, while he expressed himself with equal confidence, he described, accurately, the broad and firm basis on which that confidence was built. "I know *whom* I have believed, and am persuaded that *he* is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day."* Now, I would ask, whether it is possible to account for this assurance on any other principle than the infallible safety of God's people? If all saints are *liable* to fall from grace, where is the propriety of exhorting them to obtain this certainty? 'They are thus exhorted—"And we desire that every one of you," says the Apostle to the Hebrews, "do shew the same diligence to *the full assurance of hope* unto the end."† And Peter, in his second Epistle, thus addresses believers—"Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election *sure*."‡ But the propriety of such exhortations cannot be vindicated—the assurance to which they point, can never be obtained, if Christians are liable to fall from grace.

These are a few of the arguments which support the important doctrine under review. More might easily be adduced. But the power of unbelief must, indeed, be strong, if we are not already convinced. Objections, it is true, are urged. And plausibility may exert her faculties to bring into disrepute any

* 2 Tim. i. 12. † Heb. vi. 11. ‡ 2 Pet. i. 10.

scriptural sentiment, however rational, and however explicitly revealed : But when the word of God is so decisive in its testimony on this point, as we have perceived, no objections, however specious, or however artful, should have the least tendency to weaken our faith. A “ thus saith the Lord,” is sufficient to silence every *cavil*. We may then rest assured, that the enemies of the truth have no legitimate claim to scriptural authority for their assertions. They may pretend to such authority. But 'tis mere pretence, founded not on a fair interpretation of the word of life, but on a palpable and violent distortion of its meaning. *The word of life cannot contradict itself.* It might, possibly, administer to the gratification of our curiosity, were we to examine distinctly the several objections alleged against the doctrine we have been defending, and expose their fallacy. But this the proposed limits of the present work will not permit. Indeed, as far as our individual faith is concerned, such an employment is altogether useless. For, when the Bible reveals the doctrine so plainly, and so repeatedly, as we have seen, we are bound to believe it, notwithstanding the objections that are ~~alleged~~ ^{advanced}.

It may, however, be profitable to attend, a moment, to one consideration urged by the opponents of this truth, and it is that in which they place the highest degree of confidence. They assert, that

the moral tendency of this doctrine is pernicious, encouraging those who think themselves saints, to live in licentiousness and spiritual sloth. But the objection is utterly unfounded. We grant, that a *gross misconception* of this doctrine may blind self-deluded hypocrites, and confirm them in carelessness and carnality : but not the doctrine *itself*, rightly understood. If we taught that believers may become unbelievers ; or that those who have been born of God, may lead unholy lives, and, after all, be saved, the enemies of the truth we have been defending, would, indeed, have a manifest advantage. But this is not our sentiment. We maintain that the saints cannot be saved, unless they persevere. At the same time, we contend, that God has determined to enable them to persevere. We allege that none are kept unto salvation, except “through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth.” Men must grow in holiness, or they do not persevere. Men must persevere, or they will never arrive at heaven. Now, suffer me to inquire, what possible encouragement such a sentiment can give to licentiousness. Is it not a palpable and shameful abuse of the doctrine, to neglect prayer, ~~to be~~ inattentive to the preaching of the word, or live in allowed transgression and disobedience ? But the children of the Holy One will not thus abuse the doctrine. They have no inclination to do so. It is

their “ hearts’ desire” to abound in all the fruits of holiness. They are kept from apostacy, by the grace of God. Those, therefore, who are not thus kept, have no part in the consolations of the doctrine. On the contrary, they have the utmost reason to conclude that they never were in a state of grace.

In one word, if the doctrine of perseverance, as stated and defended in the foregoing pages, be not true, it would be quite as well for the world, if there were no Christianity : for I am sure, that *left to himself, there is not a believer on earth who would maintain his standing in the favour of God a single hour.*



We have now explained, and endeavoured to establish the leading doctrines of revealed religion. As it is the professed purpose of this work to instruct the feeblest mind, we have studied simplicity of arrangement and of style. Before proceeding, however, to an examination of the nature and design of the *Ordinances*, and of that *Government* which Christ has instituted for the church on earth, it is proper to repel and overthrow a sentiment, perhaps, of all others, the most destructive in its consequences, that was ever propagated by the malice and intrigues of the *Devil*. I allude to the dogma of universal salvation. If God be holy and just, as has been already proved—if the nature

of atonement has been correctly explained—if regeneration be indispensable to the inheritance of life eternal ;—in a word, if every sentiment which has been advanced in this book, be not unscriptural, then multitudes of our race will inevitably be damned. That man, who reads the Scriptures, and is an universalist, is not a Christian. For he does not believe the testimony of God himself. “He makes God a liar.” Either with one section of his party he entertains the most erroneous conceptions of the divine justice—conceptions diametrically opposed to Scripture, imagining that benevolence is indiscriminately lavished, without regard to the suggestions of wisdom ; denying the infinite evil of sin, representing its future punishment as a purgatory, and not an eternal hell ;—or, with another section, he disclaims any future punishment, and sends, immediately after death, without an exception, the vilest of the vile to the rewards of the righteous. To whichever party he attach himself—whether he believe in a limited punishment, or no punishment at all, he palpably contradicts the whole system, the very tenor of Christianity : he palpably contradicts the positive declarations of the true and holy God. Such a man wishes to quiet his conscience by his delusive hopes. But they are, indeed, *delusive* hopes—hopes, which must perish when God shall take away his soul.

The doctrine which opposes the destructive sentiment of universal salvation, is an essential article in the system of divine truth—a doctrine, which *every minister who is called of Christ*, feels it his imperious duty to explain, to defend, and unequivocally to avow. It is so interwoven with all his religious sentiments, so fastened to his heart, by the every tenderest and firmest ligament of his renovated nature, that, were he to renounce it, he would renounce his *entire creed*. If all men are to be saved, why believe in Christ? Why obey and serve him? Why insist that others should obey and serve him?

The very same declarations of the Bible which reveal the *duration* of heavenly happiness, also reveal the *duration* of the torments of the wicked. In that remarkable passage, which you will find at the close of the twenty-fifth chapter of Matthew, the very same word which, in the original Greek, denotes the eternity of the joys of Paradise, is used to express the never-ending miseries of the damned.—“And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.”* Our translators appear not to have been aware that, in any succeeding age, a *class of men would be so presumptuous as to attempt to instruct their fellow mortals in the knowledge of the Scriptures, while utterly ignorant of the languages in which*

* Matt. xxv. 46.

they were originally given to the world :—men who would play upon words, and attempt to prove that everlasting did not mean eternal ; and, therefore, to avoid tautology, they rendered *the same Greek word* indifferently everlasting and eternal. And the universalist, who would, from this difference of translation, undertake to shew that the wicked will not for ever be tormented, can, with the same ease, prove, and from the same verse too, that a period will arrive when the bliss of God's redeemed will terminate—and then his sentiment overthrows itself—for these very wicked, who, at some time or other, according to his doctrine, shall be admitted to the fruition of heaven, shall, at some time or other, be ejected from it.

The whole current of divine truth—all the protracted preparations for ushering in the Christian system—the scope, the design, the tendency of that system—the repeated, and fervent, and solemn exhortations to personal holiness—the broad line of demarkation drawn between the righteous and the wicked—All these, and every thing else contained in the Gospel, prove, to demonstration, the literal eternity of the miseries of the damned.

What is the nature of a threatening ? Is it not a denunciation of evil, certainly to be endured by those against whom it is denounced, unless they abandon the courses from which it endeavours to dissuade them ? What is the nature of a promise ?

Is it not a pledge of future good, certainly to be enjoyed by those who comply with its conditions? And pray, are there no threatenings as well as promises in the Bible? And are they not frequent and tremendous? And do they, in a solitary instance, afford the slightest intimation that they shall not be executed, and executed precisely as long as they declare? They do not. It is a gross and shameful perversion of the Scriptures to distort their meaning so as to abate their severity, either in degree or duration.

To whom are the promises of the Bible directed? To adulterers, and highway robbers, and thieves, and slanderers, and profaners of the Sabbath, and profaners of the name of God, and drunkards, and extortioners? To these or any of them, or any who resemble them? And if such a marked difference be made in this world between those who serve God, and those who do not serve him, will there be no difference at the day of judgment, and in the other world? Why institute a day of judgment at all, if there shall be no distinction between the *sheep* and the *goats*—between those on the right hand and those on the left?

The unconverted cannot, in the nature of things, be happy in heaven, even should it please God to admit them there. This has been abundantly proved while discussing the article of *Regeneration*. The unconverted must then be changed, or Para-

dise cannot be their abode. But when are they to be renewed, if not in this world? Is there, in the Bible, a shadow of evidence that any alteration will be effected in the temper of the heart beyond the grave? What then is the meaning of those repeated and repeated declarations, that "*now is the accepted time, and now is the day of salvation*"*—that "there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave"†—that "in the place where the tree falleth, there it shall be"‡—that "in this, the day of our merciful visitation, we should attend to the things which belong to our peace, before they be hidden from our eyes."§ If the wicked are to be changed hereafter and fitted for heaven, whence the solemnity of our Saviour's sermons? Why was he so importunate in urging them to "escape from the wrath to come?" And why, let me inquire, in the name of all that is rational, and of all that is benevolent, why did he, in a *single* sermon, *thrice* declare, in reference to the torments of the damned, that "*their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.*"|| And if sin be not an infinite evil, and if God be bound, from the principles of his nature, to forgive it, and if it were unjust to make any creature miserable for ever, where, we ask, was the necessity of the death

* 2 Cor. vi. 2. † Eccl. ix. 10. ‡ Eccl. xi. 3. § See Luke xiii.
|| See Mark ix. from 42d verse.

of Christ? Men would have been sure of happiness without the intervention of an atonement. Thus, the doctrine of the Universalists overthrows the whole system of the Gospel.

To conclude this article; for it is so very perspicuous as not to need a protracted discussion, we call the attention of every candid man to the following texts: "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God."* "He that believeth not shall be damned."† "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."‡ "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven, with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not his Gospel; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power."§ "The hour is coming in the which all that are in their graves shall hear the voice of the Son of Man, and shall come forth: They that have done good unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation."|| "The smoke of their torment ascendeth for ever and ever."¶ "There was a certain rich man, who was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day: And there was a certain

* Ps. ix. 17. † Mark xvi. 16. ‡ Luke xiii. 3. § Thess. i. 7, 8, 9.

|| John v. 28, 29. ¶ Rev. xiv. 11.

beggar, named Lazarus, who was laid at his gate, full of sores, and desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table : moreover, the dogs came and licked his sores. And it came to pass that the beggar died, and was carried by angels into Abraham's bosom : the rich man also died and was buried : *and in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torment, and seeth Abraham afar off and Lazarus in his bosom* : And he cried, and said, father Abraham, have mercy on me : and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue, for I am tormented in this flame. But Abraham said, Son, remember that *thou in thy life time receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things* : but now he is comforted and thou art tormented. *And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed : so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot : neither can they pass to us that would come from thence.*"* What is the plain, the obvious, the palpable meaning of this parable ? If Jesus Christ ever meant to countenance the idea of universal salvation, or of final restoration, would he have used such language as the foregoing ? It is clear that he inculcated a sentiment diametrically the reverse,—as much so, as that he taught the doctrine of his own essential divinity, when he

* Luke xvi. 19—26.

came into the world, to discourage men from idol-try, instead of plunging us into that which would be the grossest and the most destructive. *Jesus Christ never dealt in fictitious terrors.*

In the fourteenth chapter of Mark, and twenty-first verse, we read, "good were it for that man if he had never been born." The obvious meaning is, that it would have been far better for Judas never to have had existence at all, than, by his own folly and wickedness, to have exposed himself to eternal ruin.

Now, if the time will come, be it after ever so many ages, wherein Judas shall be happy and glorified, this declaration cannot be true. The felicity of heaven is so exquisite, as to counterbalance every pain, which we can in this world, or in the *limbus patrum* of the final restorationist, possibly endure. Infinite glory, which can never know an end,—which eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man conceived,—this glory, enjoyed for ever, will render it far more desirable for Judas to have been born than otherwise. He must bless God to all eternity for his existence in such glory, let him previously have suffered ever so much anguish; and it will be better for him to have been born, in exact proportion between a finite and an infinite duration.

But surely that doctrine which admits Judas Iscariot, the covetous defrauder of his Master in

life, and the base, treacherous betrayer of him to death,—whom Jesus Christ expressly calls *the son of perdition*; and who was so filled with horror and despair at his own vileness, and his own guilt, as to terminate his existence with his own hands;—this doctrine must be *precious to the most abandoned and profligate characters*,—and must serve to make every man's conscience easy, let him live or die ever so wickedly.

Again—it is declared in the word of God, that there is one sin which is *unpardonable*. It follows, then, that any individual who is guilty of this sin, shall fall short of life eternal,—and, of consequence, be for ever wretched: for no one will be so palpably absurd as to say, that men shall be saved without being pardoned. Jesus Christ has declared, “*The blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. Whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world nor in the world to come.*” Matt. xii. 31, 32. This is plain language, and there are other parts of Scripture which are consentaneous. Now, we cannot, for a moment, suppose that such a denunciation should be made against a sin of which mankind cannot be guilty; because this would be trifling with the most important concerns of mankind, and would serve only to excite useless terrors. Could no man, then, had no man before, and should no man afterwards be

guilty of this offence, we have every possible reason to suppose that not a syllable would have been uttered on the subject. But if there be a sin which never shall be forgiven, either in this or the other world ; and if any one man, either heretofore has, or hereafter shall be guilty of that sin ; then there is one man who shall not be saved,—and, of consequence, the *parade* made by the adversaries of our doctrine, with their universal appellations, is *groundless*. Thus much, at least, is demonstrable, that the fear of being utterly denied forgiveness, either in time or eternity, is held up as a motive to restrain us from sin,—which would not have been done, had this motive in reality no existence.

In the eighteenth chapter of Matthew, and the eighth verse, we read, “ If thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast them from thee. It is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet, to be cast into everlasting fire.” In the succeeding verse, this is styled “ *hell-fire* ;”—which proves plainly, that it refers to that state of punishment upon which the wicked enter after death.

But this is still more plainly discovered, and the truth of our doctrine evinced, by the parallel place —Mark ix. 43. ‘ Here it is styled, “ *the fire that never shall be quenched*.”—τὸ πῦρ τὸ ἀσβεστόν. This adjective *asbeston*, expresses the perpetuity of the punishment of the wicked, from its very na-

ture. *Literally inextinguishable*, it has a principle of subsistence within itself, which can be destroyed by no continuance, or perpetuity of distress. Thus the word asbeston, is made use of by naturalists to denote a kind of mineral which was well known to the ancients, and is well known to us. It is easily inflammable ; but never consumes in the fire. It suffers no diminution, nor the least separation of its parts, from the fire. Burn it as long as you please, it never decreases in weight. This is a notorious fact. Perhaps no one body in nature can be produced which more plainly points out the unquenchable fire of the bottomless pit,—continually burning, but never exhausting its fuel ; preying upon the heart-strings of those who endure it, but not terminating their existence, nor diminishing their capacity to endure it.

In a text already quoted, (Rev. xiv. 11.) it is peculiarly observable that the phrase by which the duration of the punishment of the damned is expressed, *eis aiōnas aiōnōn*, is, in every instance, applied both in the Septuagint version of the Old Testament, and in the original Greek of the New Testament, to an unlimited duration. *It is never used to express a different idea.* In no case is it applied to point out a limited term. And we would ask our opponents, whether they know of any Greek phrase in the Bible, in the writings of the Fathers of the Church, or of profane authors,

which conveys a stronger idea of eternity? This phrase is used in Scripture to signify the duration of that Being who liveth for ever and ever. The doctrine of the universalists, therefore, pursued to its legitimate consequences, would amount to a denial of the Eternity of God.

In addition to the texts already quoted, I will now suggest to the consideration of my readers, a few in which it is, in so many words, declared that all men shall not be saved.

The first is the declaration of our Lord himself. "Many are called, but few are chosen."* This is a moral drawn from the parable of the marriage feast; and of the man who had not on a wedding garment. The expression is plain and unlimited. It certainly means as much as this, at least,—that every one, saint and sinner, with the wedding garment and without it, shall not finally inherit the kingdom of heaven. If it imports any thing different, it imports nothing; and this is all the use which I purpose, at present, to make of it.

More explicit, if possible, is that assertion of our Lord, in his sermon upon the mount, Matt. vii. 13, 14.—"Enter ye in at the straight gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat; because strait is the gate and narrow is

* Matt. xxii. 14.

the way which leadeth unto life ; and few there be that find it." Here Christ himself says, that there are few, comparatively, who find the way to eternal life. How diametrically contrary to this is the proposition, that all shall at last find it, and be happy !

In one of the journeys made by our Lord, when on earth, a certain individual came to him, and asked a question, highly important ;—" Lord, are there few that be saved ?" To this the Son of God replied in a manner very similar to his declaration on the mount—" Strive to enter in at the strait gate : for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able."* He then proceeds in a parabolical manner, to describe the miserable fate of those professors of religion who delay their preparation for death, till it actually arrives—the addition which it will make to their sufferings to behold the happiness of others, and the number of Gentiles who shall be admitted to heaven, while the Jews, who thought that they alone should inherit the kingdom, shall be ejected. Now, if there be any who shall seek to enter into the kingdom of heaven at the last day, (for to this the Saviour evidently refers.) and shall not be able,—then there will be some excluded thence, and, of course, all men will not finally be saved. The inference is irresistible.

* Luke xiii. 24.

These plain and positive assertions of the Son of God, imperiously demand our assent, and should perpetually and solemnly guard us against cherishing a hope totally at variance with them.

It has been already demonstrated, while treating on the article of Human Depravity, that there is an essential difference between the righteous and the wicked. Throughout the entire Scriptures, a marked discrimination is made between saints and sinners. Let any man, of plain practical sense, and of ordinary candour, peruse and ponder these almost innumerable passages, and then decide. An obvious and a striking contrast is drawn between those who are styled the *the children of God*—and those who are represented as the *children of the evil one, the children of wrath, and a generation of vipers*.

As in their character there is a signal difference, so also in the treatment which they receive in *the present world*, at the hands of God. To one class the light of his countenance, and communion and fellowship with him, are promised. A solemn pledge is given them that *all things shall work together for their good* ; and they are said to *possess all things* ;—while it is declared that *there is no peace to the wicked*,—that *they are poor, and miserable, and blind, and naked*. To crown all in this life, a denunciation like the following, is pronounc-

ed against them,—“ *If ye will not hear, and if ye will not lay it to heart, to give glory unto my name, saith the Lord of hosts, I will even send a curse upon you ; and I will curse your blessings ! yea, I have cursed them already, because ye do not lay it to heart.*”*

Now, mark their *end*. How essentially different is the closing scene of the righteous and the wicked. The latter are driven away in their wickedness.† *In their wickedness*. This phrase imports that the sinner's guilt is, at the hour of death, uncanceled. “ The whole account stands without abatement. There are the sins of his youth, and of his riper years : the sins which originated in strong passion, or sudden temptation, and those which were committed with presumptuous deliberation ; sins which, viewed retrospectively, gave alarm to his conscience, and those which he deemed so trifling as to give his Maker no offence ; sins which are now fresh in his recollection, and those which, through distance of time or other circumstances, have long since escaped his memory. In the protracted account may be enumerated the iniquities of the tongue—slander, rash speaking, profaneness ; the iniquities of the heart—impious discontent, and insubordination to the righteous dispensations of God ; emotions of envy,

* Mal. ii. 2.

† Prov. xiv. 32.

of pride, of cruelty, of revenge toward his fellow-men, whose happiness he was bound, by every tie, to consult, to accelerate, to establish.

The whole series reaches from the commencement of moral agency to the period of his death. Under the guilt of all these sins, and in possession of that temper, in the exercise of which they were committed, he is called to his final reckoning,—is called?—he “*is driven away.*” He dies with reluctance, perhaps with terror, and with agony. Unwilling to abandon a world which has been the scene of his activity, and of all his enjoyments, he is appalled at the righteous character of his Judge, and at the purity of that law, by which he believes he must be tried, and by which he knows he must be condemned. To what part of the universe can he look for consolation? On the earth he is forbidden to remain: the powers of the healing art, the influence of friends, their passionate lamentations, and even the ardent intercession of Christians, cannot avail to retard death for a single hour. Clothed in terrors, it is seen to advance with steady, unbroken footsteps. The plaints of the victim produce neither delay nor commiseration. Now, if the sinner is *driven away* in his wickedness,—if his hold on earth is *forcibly* broken,—if all his enjoyments vanish,—if all his plans of business, of pleasure, of elevation—are disconcerted,—if he is no more to have any por-

tion in the things which are transacted beneath the sun, from what part of the Almighty's vast dominions can he expect relief? On what can he fix his thoughts with complacency? Shall he direct his eyes to heaven, and see Jesus sitting at the right hand of God? Shall he behold angels, swift to execute the commands of their divine Sovereign; or the spirits of just men made perfect, who are redeemed from the earth, out of all nations, and kindreds, and tongues? These splendid and sublime objects he may, indeed, contemplate, but the view, far from alleviating, only augments his anxiety. These objects he never viewed with affection or desire. They are objects to which the pleasures of sin, however unsatisfactory and evanescent, were cordially preferred. That solemn view, which he now has of them, serves only to convince him how utterly unqualified he is for their enjoyment. As he did not choose them in health, so neither did he in the view of death. To his taste, impure and unrenewed, there is, in the Christian paradise, nothing which can afford pleasure. A man, overtaken by a tempest, might be glad to take refuge for an hour, in a sordid cottage, though his heart would sink within him, at the thought of its becoming his permanent abode. So the sinner may, on his dying bed, contemplate heaven with an aversion somewhat less than the terrors with which he views the place of punish-

ment, for ever exposed to the storms of divine wrath ; but a palace is not so much better than a cottage, as in his estimation *earth* is preferable to *heaven*. He would sicken at the thought of an endless residence among those who are employed, without intermission, in spiritual exercises ; who “ rest not, day nor night, saying, Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord God Almighty.”*

Nothing, therefore, but the prospect of a place of endless punishment, presents itself to the mind of an expiring sinner, who has any just conceptions of his guilt. Hence we are furnished, by our actual observation, with a multitude of instances where *the wicked, on a death bed, express the utmost horror*. Now, is it not altogether more probable that their apprehensions are well-founded, when they have Scriptural authority, and when the word of God declares unequivocally in ten thousand instances, that there is an eternal hell, than that these forebodings arise from a *diseased conscience, an overheated imagination, and a morbid state of the animal affections* ?

Mark the *end* of the pious. It is peace. “ The righteous hath hope in his death,”†—hope of salvation through the merits of Emanuel,—hope of perfect holiness in heaven,—hope of eter-

* The eloquent APPLETON, President of Bowdoin College.

† Prov. xiv. 33.

nal association with the spirits of the just ; as well those redeemed from earth, as those who never fell,—hope of the immediate and perpetual vision and fruition of the Lamb of God, and of God the Father, and of the Holy Ghost, the Comforter and the Sanctifier.

For these and other reasons, *the death of the saints* is declared to be *precious in the sight of the Lord* ; while the wicked are represented as *dying under his wrath and curse*.

In short, there is, throughout the entire word of God, a palpable distinction made between the character, the situation, and the circumstances, of good and bad men. There are plain marks given to us, in that word, by which we are to judge, whether we bear the one or the other character. We are most earnestly pressed to examine ourselves on this point : We are most sedulously cautioned against deception : We are most positively assured that this distinction will be preserved in the future world. “ Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked : between him that serveth God, and him that serveth him not.”* The declaration refers to the day of judgment, as is perfectly evident from the context,—*the day when God will make up his jewels, —the day which shall burn as an oven.*

* Mal. iii. 18.

Now, we would ask, in the name of common sense, why is all this distinction made? Why are the character, the state, and the end of the pious and the wicked represented as being so radically different, if a period shall arrive, no matter when, in which they shall both stand upon precisely the same footing, and shall both be equally acceptable to God, and shall both be alike happy in communing with him? Why all this *empty parade*, this *unmeaning farce*,—this worse than *ridiculous bagatelle*, according to the views of the universalist, concerning the necessity of a renovation of the heart, of the importance of faith, and the indispensable necessity of holiness, in order to the beatifick vision of God, if all mankind shall enjoy it, when they leave the world, be they ever so far removed from regeneration, ever so unholy, or unbelieving? Why, why, is eternal happiness promised only to men of a certain character, if men of *all descriptions* shall enjoy it? Why is it said, with such peculiar emphasis, “*Without holiness no man shall see the Lord*,*—if we shall all see him, whether pure or impure? Why is it declared, with such profound solemnity,—“Be not deceived, neither fornicators, idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the king-

* Heb. xii. 14.

dom of God !”* Why is this declaration made, if men of the foregoing description, be they ever so much devoted to the various vices portrayed,—even though they may live and die in the love and the constant, and deliberate, and cherished practice of every one of these vices, shall finally enter the kingdom of heaven ? If the man who wallows in blood, who breaks through every social and every moral obligation, who destroys the happiness of millions, who wantons in the miseries of whole nations ; if this man, living and dying under the influence and government of these ferocious passions, is to be at last and for ever blessed, where exists the necessity of self-denial and mortification ? Why need we give diligence to make our calling and election sure ? Why should we study to be conformed to the image of God ? Surely, on this hypothesis, ’twere labour lost.

If the time shall come, when all men shall be admitted to the divine favour and enjoyment, then surely the distinction which is so carefully made in the Scriptures of God, between the pious and the abandoned, is altogether nugatory. We need take no pains to become Christians, or to live according to the directions which are addressed specifically to them. We may as well gratify our appetites and passions ; for throughout eternity,

* 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10.

it will be the same thing to us,—every distinction will be levelled,—all will be alike blessed.

There cannot be conclusions, more natural in themselves, or which will be more universally drawn by mankind, from the doctrine now opposed, than these. And can there be conclusions more fatal to the interests of virtue and holiness, or more pernicious to human society? To what purpose do exhortations to saints, or alarms to sinners, tend, if saints and sinners are promiscuously to meet at last on the shores of the celestial paradise? And what is there to prevent a believer in the doctrine of universal redemption from committing any crime which his interest, or his passions, may dictate, if he can escape *present* shame and punishment?

The doctrine of the universalists is false for another reason. It peremptorily and necessarily denies that *sin is an infinite evil*. However lightly mankind at large, may regard a violation of Jehovah's authority; and however prone they are to deem one offence committed against themselves, far more heinous than ten thousand directed against the majesty of the blessed God,—yet the Scriptures, on which we must ultimately depend for all truth, convey to us the most formidable ideas of transgression,—comparing its consequences to *the bite of a serpent*, and *the sting of an adder*.

It is perfectly consistent for us to judge of the

nature of an offence from the dignity, situation and circumstances of the person against whom it is committed ; and from the obligations of the person committing it, to a contrary course of conduct.

—We can never arrive at a precise idea of *crime*, without taking these into the account : for they have an intimate, an inseparable connexion. An offence of a servant against his master, or of a citizen against the first magistrate of his country ; or of a child against an affectionate and devoted father, is, either of them, far greater than that of an equal against his fellow.

Sin is an offence committed against infinite authority,—for it is a violation of the laws of an infinite God. He has guarded the injunctions of his law, and the precepts of his Gospel, with a sanction no less than the entire weight of his authority. This every sinner knows. But notwithstanding this knowledge, he perpetually opposes infinite authority. He violates the law, though the eternal and immaculate Jehovah utters his vehement prohibition.

The sinner is under the very highest obligation to a contrary course of conduct. God is his Creator, Preserver, Benefactor. The most powerful motives, alarming and persuasive, are arrayed to excite him to duty, and to restrain him from sin. But notwithstanding all his light, his knowledge, his advantages, he does that which is radically

wrong. He is, then, justly chargeable with committing an infinite offence.

Such an offence merits a correspondent punishment. But man is a finite creature : He cannot be overtaken by a vengeance infinite in its nature. His punishment, therefore, must be eternal in its duration, that it may be adequate to the offence : and thus, precisely thus, the Scriptures of God represent the subject.

There is no one thing which all the declarations, all the promises, and all the threatenings of the divine word, have a more direct tendency to shew us, than that the Almighty views sin as a most destructive evil ; that it is diametrically opposed to his nature, which is essential holiness ; and that it produces the most pernicious effects upon human happiness. The Bible speaks of it as *a great and horrible evil,—as exceedingly sinful,—as that which separateth between God and man,—and that against which his wrath is revealed.*

The Scriptures, both of the Old and of the New-Testament, lead us to view sin as the productive cause of every calamity to which the human race is subjected. We are warned against it, as our bane. Every motive is placed before us to restrain us from following its suggestions. We are directed to make use of every occurrence in providence, as an inducement *to take away sin.* Eve-

ry page of divine revelation furnishes some argument to restrain us from iniquity.

So opposed is sin represented to be, to the pure nature of the Deity, and so subversive of human happiness, as that, without repenting of it, and abandoning its ways, and detesting its wages, we are told expressly, and in ten thousand instances, that we shall not enjoy the mercy of God. We read, *He that covereth his sins shall not prosper : but he that confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.** Without repentance of sin, which includes forsaking it, we are told, that we shall not enjoy life eternal. *Except ye repent, saith our Lord, ye shall all likewise perish.†* At the same time that we are called upon to believe the Gospel, we are directed to repent ;‡ which proves, to demonstration, that this is equally essential to salvation, with faith in Jesus Christ.

How unscriptural, then, must that sentiment be, which maintains that how many soever infinite offences against God we have committed, and how long or obstinately soever, we may have persisted in them ; though we may live disobeying the divine authority, and die blaspheming the name, the nature, and the works of the great and adorable Jehovah ; persisting in an opposition to him,—yet

* Prov. xxviii. 13

† Luke xiii. 3.

‡ Mark i. 5.

we shall at last be happy,—yea, the time shall come, when we shall be as really and truly glorious and blessed, as those who have for many successive years bitterly repented of their sins against the Lord,—and through much tribulation and variety of unanticipated temptations, with fervent solicitude sought conformity to his moral image ! Is that doctrine agreeable to Scripture which says, that whether a man forges sin or not, he shall eventually be saved ? On the other hand, is it not pointedly reprobated by every page of the Gospel ?

It is most certain that our partiality in our own favour, renders us extremely prone to excuse and to justify ourselves. Our crimes do not appear a thousandth part as heinous to us as they are in themselves ; We cannot be persuaded that they deserve a very aggravated condemnation. Let a man, who has been guilty of the most atrocious offence, judge of the punishment which ought to be inflicted on him, and we know that it will not be extreme. Selfishness leads us to imagine that we cannot merit any great suffering for such trifling offences as unregenerate men deem their sins. We ought always to take this thought into view when we are judging upon ourselves, and endeavouring to ascertain how we stand with reference to our Maker.

The doctrine of the universalists cannot be true, on account of the limitation with which all the promises of the Gospel are attended.

These promises do not extend to men of all descriptions. They contain no pledge that men of every character shall share in the blessings which the Gospel tenders. While an invitation is addressed to all,—an invitation pressed and urged by every consideration that can influence the heart of paternal solicitude, for the happiness of wayward children,—eternal life is promised absolutely to none but such as *believe, repent, and are born again, hope, trust, overcome, are obedient, hold out to the end*. Those of an opposite description, who disbelieve and reject the Gospel, who live and die in sin, unrepented of and unforsaken, are the objects of divine malediction. Thus, when it is promised, *he that believeth shall be saved*; it is, at the very same time, threatened, *he that believeth not, shall be damned*.

Now, I ask, what man has any right to take the least encouragement from a solitary promise, unless he have the character to which the promise is directed? I demand of the advocates of universal salvation, whether they can produce an individual promise of the Gospel, made to an unbeliever, a rejecter and despiser of the Gospel,—a constant, a wilful, and a deliberate violator of every commandment of God? And if they were able to do so, whether this would not at once render every

distinction of character totally useless ? If the Gospel promises salvation only to men of a certain character, have any a right to expect salvation, but such as sustain this character ? Or can a dispensation, which confines its benefits, in all its declarations, and in all its proposals, to such as submit to it, be extended, without exception, to every individual of the human family ? Must not the plan, the scope, the very tendency of the Christian dispensation be essentially altered before this can possibly be the case ? What minister of *religion* will stand up, in the full view of his congregation, and boldly declare, “ Whether you accept of the Gospel I preach, or do not accept it ;—whether you submit yourselves to its directions, or do not submit yourselves ; —whether you are righteous, or wicked,—yet you shall at last fully participate in the glorious and eternal blessings of the Gospel ?”

Finally,—the doctrine of universal salvation is not true, because it has a direct and inevitable tendency to enervate and destroy the motives by which men are urged to embrace the Gospel.

No article of faith can be of divine origin which has a tendency to introduce licentiousness. It would contradict the nature of God : it would be totally inconsistent with the other articles of the Gospel, and with the spirit and letter of the decalogue. Christ Jesus came into the world, not

to destroy, but to fulfil the eternal, the inflexible, and the unalterable law of morality.

We know that one of the strongest and most powerful arguments used in the scriptures, to quicken men to embrace the Gospel, and submit to its precepts, is drawn from the fatal consequences with which a non-compliance with them will be attended. We are warned to *flee from the wrath to come*. *Knowing the terrors of the Lord*, the ministers of true religion *persuade men*. Sensible that *the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men*, they *beseech them, in Christ's stead, to be reconciled to God*. And they use the terrors of the law, as the most powerful inducement, to awaken sinners from their stupid lethargy, and rouse them to attend to their most interesting concerns.

In the present melancholy state of human nature, these motives are the most energetick, which can possibly be used with men ; and they are altogether the most likely to be influential. We discover daily and without a peradventure, that mankind are not governed by a sense of rectitude : They have not such a regard for their Maker, as to induce them to follow a course of conduct inconsistent with their passions, in order to please or honour him. On the contrary, we do know, that they are universally attached to sinful indulgences : They love iniquity of every kind, and follow it with greediness. Nothing, therefore, but the ter-

ror of condign and tremendous punishment, the apprehension of endless ruin, will excite them to forsake their sinful courses, and adopt a new method of thinking and acting.

There is, indeed, among mankind a great variety of natural disposition or temperament. Some weep when they hear of the patience, the tenderness, and the matchless love of their heavenly Father. Others are callous to these sentiments :—while, with Felix, they tremble, when they are told of “ a judgment to come.” Some are led—others must be driven. But surely, if the doctrine of an eternal hell, with all its indescribable horrors, were untrue, then “ the God of grace and consolation,” would not make it instrumental in turning souls from “ the path of the disobedient to the wisdom of the just,”—then it would be never necessary to preach alarming sermons,—and then, many who are now rejoicing in hope, and thousands and tens of thousands, already in heaven, could not have been converted,—for they were dead to every other motive,—while the fear of hell alone was, in the first case, influential.

After all, those who have been gently brought into the kingdom of heaven, were, in part, operated on by the same motive,—because a sense of the divine forbearance, was mingled with a conviction of their *guilt* ; and a perception of their disingenuousness and ingratitude was blended with a belief of their *meriting damnation*.

That doctrine, therefore, which has a tendency to enervate the force of this argument, has a tendency, likewise, to prevent the effect of the Gospel upon the minds of men,—and, of consequence, to introduce licentiousness. But the doctrine of universal restitution has this tendency, because it assures men, that, let them act as they will, be they good or bad,—Christians, or Infidels, or Mahometans, or Pagans, or Jews,—drunkards, adulterers, idolaters, murderers ;—or, on the other hand, circumspect, exemplary, and devout,—it is a matter of no consequence in the final issue ;—they are all destined, eventually, to the same heaven. Let all men believe this, and in vain shall you urge upon them the deformity of vice, and the excellence of virtue ;—in vain shall you declare to them the explicit and positive commands of God :—in vain shall you address their reason, their gratitude, their ingenuousness. The voice of criminal inclination and indulgence, will sound infinitely louder, and *will be heard*. Divested of these needful, and these friendly terrors, you shall behold them gratifying every vicious propensity, without a check,—and in a few years mounting to the acme of wickedness. Like the common people among the heathen, who listened to the dogmas of Plato, of Epicurus, of Socrates, of Seneca—delivered as the opinions of men, without the authority of a law, or the sanction of a lawgiver,—they despised,

and, of course, did not obey them. Whatever the philosophers might deliver, on the subject of duty, and whatever they might advance as *probable conjectures*, in reference to a future life,—after all, the joys and sorrows of a world which was invisible, and distant, and uncertain, could never have weight sufficient to overbalance those pleasures, and those objects of sense, which were seen, which were near at hand, and which powerfully solicited their acceptance. They, like modern unbelievers, the practical heathens of Christendom, still passed onward in their career of iniquity, till, in the eternal world, they became familiarly and experimentally acquainted with the truth,—till there, their real characters were developed by the light of *everlasting burnings*.

A description of the pangs of hell, is an essential motive of the Gospel,—because we do know it to be the fact, that men would be even more depraved than they now are, if the apprehension of those pangs were utterly removed. Vehement and innumerable, as are the representations of the Bible on this subject, even they appear insufficient to restrain depraved man from criminal indulgences. Though he believes, and is confident, that everlasting misery and anguish will be the consequence of sin, allowed and cherished; yet, with all his fears about him, he rushes on the thick bosses of Jehovah's buckler, and defies omnipo-

tence. Though he may, in imagination, (believing that imagination a picture of the truth,) hear the groans and view the flames which envelope the damned, he persists in his iniquities. So strong is the force of natural corruption !

And if apprehensions of eternal punishment be insufficient to restrain the sinner, how much less will the fear of a few ages of purgatory, to be succeeded by interminable bliss ? With how keen a relish will he follow the dictates of every native, every sinful propensity ! His purgatory will be short. It will be but a point when compared with eternity. Heaven will be an ample compensation. *Thus will the sinner reason ;* and, indeed, were this doctrine true, his reasoning would be just.

Does not this thought prove, to every man's feeling and conviction, the pernicious consequences of a doctrine so pleasing to human nature ? Have we any need to diminish the force of those motives by which men are, in any degree, restrained from the practice of iniquity ? Shall we, in this age of licentiousness, throw down every barrier, by which men are kept from sinful indulgence ? Let the universalist reason as he may, *Yet we know that men will indulge themselves more freely in sin if they believe it to be punishable only for a limited time, than if they thought that it would be followed with everlasting misery.* It is not acting a friendly part,

then, to mankind, to remove the force of this restraint.

Were men to *act* universally under the belief of the doctrine of restitution, and indulge, without fear, every propensity within them, which was not prohibited by human laws,—what, what, would be the condition of society? Every thing that could escape the censure of the judge, would be committed without control ; and this world would be a constant scene of murder, theft, and rapine ! Every religious, every moral tie, which interfered with their passions, would be rent asunder with equal ease as the flaxen cords of Sampson ;—and riot, and anarchy, and confusion would universally prevail ! Blessed consequences of this gentle, lulling theory !

Let me state a case. Suppose a man constitutionally, and by long indulgence, addicted to a breach of the seventh commandment. In the recesses of midnight, conscious that no human being, except the willing partner of his guilt, beholds him, he is intent on the gratification of his lust,—when, by some unforeseen and unaccountable process, he realizes that, in the commission of the crime, he will sink into hell. Durst he, *can* he persevere ?

Let his conscience at this moment be lulled to sleep. Let him be, every moment, in the firm belief, that all will be well *hereafter*, and what remains to deter him in his guilty course ?

However contemptibly religion and its sanctions may be viewed by some in the present day ; yet we have every reason to believe that the fear of everlasting misery, in the world to come, restrains multitudes from indulging in vicious conduct, which they would otherwise inevitably pursue. The apprehension of the wrath of God keeps strong hold of many a man's conscience, which nothing else could bind, and makes him shudder at the thought of iniquities which otherwise he would commit without remorse. Remove at once, and for ever, this restraint ; persuade him to believe that whatever he does, and whatever he says, yet he shall at last be happy ; and he will become the most abandoned villain. Now he commits much wickedness, with eternal destruction before his eyes :—how much more would he indulge, if this restraint were effectually removed !

Thus it has been demonstrated, that the dogma of universal salvation is *false in every view*. The more time has been spent in exposing its futility, because it is destructive in its consequences, and extremely palatable to the unrenewed heart.

The doctrines that have been defended in the preceding pages, are those which will be found in the sermons of Christ and his apostles, and which, although corrupted in succeeding centuries, were the sentiments which distinguished the period of the Reformation.

They have been bitterly opposed by Pelagius, by Arius, by Socinus, by Servetus, by Munzer, by Arminius, by Wesley, Priestley, Murray, and their coadjutors. A particular account of their sentiments, together with a summary of the origin, progress, and character of the various heresies which, at different periods, have disturbed the peace, and invaded the purity of the church, will be found in the closing pages of this volume. In the mean while let us reflect, that however mysterious some of the truths of God may appear to us, yet his veracity is paramount to every objection; and that however unpalatable certain doctrines may be to our natural taste, yet rather than reject them, on that account, we should fervently desire a spiritual appetite. Nothing is more natural and easy than to find fault with that which we vehemently dislike. To this source we can readily trace the virulent opposition which the pungent truths of revelation have, in different ages of the church, been compelled to encounter. But it is wisdom's province first to ascertain what is the nature of genuine religion, and having gained that knowledge, to bow ^{submissive} ~~submissive~~ to the authority of God, in all matters of faith and practice. This done, the various objections alleged against the system of Evangelical Doctrine, will "pass by us as the idle wind, which we regard not."

THE SACRAMENTS.

We come now to describe the nature of the ordinances which the Lord Jesus has established for the benefit of his church.

We speak not particularly of prayer and praise, and the preaching of the word. The nature of these is sufficiently understood without further explanation. But we confine our attention to what may, with more propriety, be denominated the Sacraments of the New Testament. These are BAPTISM and the LORD'S SUPPER.

I know not in what language more pertinently to describe the nature of a sacrament, than in the words of the Westminster Assembly's Larger Catechism, in answer to the 162d question.

"A sacrament is an holy ordinance, instituted by Christ in his church,* to signify, seal and exhibitt† unto those that are within the covenant of grace,‡ the benefits of his mediation;§ to strengthen and increase their faith, and all other graces;|| to oblige them to obedience;¶ to testify and cherish their love and communion, one with another;**, and to distinguish them from those that are without."††

* Rom. ix. 8. Gal. iv. 29 Rom. xv. 8, 9. † Acts ii. 38. 1 Cor. x. 16. Acts xxii. 16. ‡ Rom. xv. 8, 9. Gal. iii. 27. § Rom. vi. 4. 1 Cor. x. 11. Heb. x. 29. || 1 Cor. x. 13. 1 Cor. x. 17. Eph. iv. 3, 4, 5. ¶ Eph. iii. 19. Gen. xxxiv. 14. ** Matt. xxviii. 19. Matt. xxvi. 26, 27. †† Rom. ix. 11. 1 Cor. xi. 24, 25.

BAPTISM.

Since the days of inspiration, there never was convened an assembly of divines so learned, so pious, so orthodox, or so profound, as the collection of ministers at the city of Westminster, in Great Britain, in the year of our Lord 1643. They commenced their session on the first day of July, in the chapel of Henry VII. They were called together by a law of the parliament, in the reign of Charles I. for the purpose of settling the religious disputes and difficulties which then raged throughout the country. Every party was at liberty to speak. Many of the most learned Episcopal clergy were invited to attend. Few of them, however, complied, as the king was opposed to the convocation. Several Independent ministers were added, that all the proceedings might be open, fair and just. The result was, the adoption of a Confession of Faith, and two Catechisms, the larger and shorter,—together with a Directory for Worship, and a Form of Government; the most sublime and perfect model of wisdom, in ecclesiastical concerns, with which, (the Bible alone excepted,) the world was ever honoured. Let any man, divested of party prejudice, approach this inimitable work, and give it a thorough and a dispassionate perusal;—he will pronounce it as perfect as hu-

man intelligence and piety can make it. For discretion,—for close and accurate distinctions between truth and error.—for the observance of a happy medium between extreme heresies, mutually opposed,—for the recommendation of a pure, a simple, and a spiritual worship, alike free from the wildness of enthusiasm on the one hand, and the burden of unprofitable ceremonies, and “vain repetitions,” on the other,—for the revival of apostolick order and government ; an order and a government adapted to people of all climes, but peculiarly analogous to the spirit of republicanism, the only *legitimate* form of administering laws for the common good,—this confession, and these catechisms, stand unrivalled. The torrent of prejudice, of selfishness, of ecclesiastical ambition and usurpation, has frequently and violently assailed this citadel of truth. But it has remained firm and unshaken. The revolution of ages has served only to strengthen its fortresses. Its foundation is on a rock. Its walls are impregnable.

At one time it has been stigmatized as the offspring of bigotry : At another, as the cunning device of knavery, hypocrisy, and sophistry combined. But it has been always gaining ground. The decisions of the Synod of *Dordrecht*, or *Dort*, composed of ecclesiastical and lay deputies from the United Provinces,—and also of ecclesiastical de-

puties from the reformed churches of England, Switzerland, Bremen, Hesse, and the Palatinate, and which sat from Nov. 1st, 1618, to the 26th of April, 1619, were sound and scriptural. But they by no means gave general satisfaction. Although a *Goman* and a *Hall* were there, the provinces of Friesland, Zealand, Utrecht, Guilderland, and Groningen, could not be persuaded to adopt their decisions, and these decisions were violently and successfully opposed in England, by James I. and Archbishop Laud. At last the Synod, and its abettors, were obliged to resort, (though most unjustifiably,) to iron-handed persecution, that their measures might be carried into effect.

Far different was the fact with the Westminster Assembly. Their sentiments, although virulently opposed by avowed Arminians, who have acted with an honesty becoming a better cause,—and in latter days, by Hopkinsians, who arrogantly and falsely claim the honourable appellation of Calvinists,—have still advanced, and continue to advance, and will finally fill the church with their hallowed influence.

I have made these remarks as introductory to the following quotation.

“Baptism is a sacrament of the New Testament, wherein Christ hath ordained the washing of water, in the name of the Father, and of the

Son, and of the Holy Ghost,* to be a sign and seal of ingrafting into himself,† of remission of sins by his blood,‡ and regeneration by his Spirit,§ of adoption,|| and resurrection unto eternal life;¶ and whereby the parties baptized are solemnly admitted into the visible church,** and enter into an open and professed engagement to be wholly and only the Lord's"††

Such is the answer given to the 165th question of the Larger Catechism. And in answer to the correspondent question in the Shorter Catechism,—“Baptism” is said to be “a sacrament, wherein the washing with water, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, doth signify and seal our ingrafting into Christ, and partaking of the benefits of the covenant of grace, and our engagement to be the Lord’s.” The succeeding question, “To whom is baptism to be administered?”—receives the following reply: “Baptism is not to be administered to any that are not of the visible church, till they profess their faith in Christ, and obedience to him,—but the infants of such as are members of the visible church, are to be baptised.” The answer to the same question in the Larger Catechism, is as follows,—“Baptism

* Matt. xxviii. 19. † Gal. iii. 27. Rom. vi. 3. ‡ Acts xxii. 16. Mark i. 4. Rev. i. 5. § John iii. 5. Tit. iii. 5. || Gal. iii. 26, 27. ¶ 1 Cor. xv. 29. ** 1 Cor. xii. 13. †† Rom. vi. 4.

is not to be administered to any that are out of the visible church, and so strangers from the covenant of promise, till they profess their faith in Christ, and obedience to him,* but infants descending from parents, either both or one of them professing faith in Christ and obedience to him, are, in that respect, within the covenant, and are to be baptised.”†

I presume it will not be asserted that the Westminster divines were actuated by party feelings, and the spirit of bigotry, in thus expressing their opinions. Like the translators of our present vernacular version of the Scriptures, they appear to have been remarkably removed from every vestige of selfishness, and to have regarded the object directly before them, without the least reference to personal consequences. Indeed, as in the time of the translators, the question was scarcely agitated, whether infants had a right to the seal of the covenant of grace, and whether it was a matter of any sort of consequence in the salvation of the soul, to have the body plunged in water, while a few drops sprinkled on the brow, would answer every purpose, as denoting the necessity of the cleansing influence of the Saviour's blood. At least, there was

* Acts viii. 36, 37. Acts ii. 41. † Acts ii. 38, 39. 1 Cor. vii. 14. Luke xviii. 16. Rom. xi. 16. Gen. xvii. 7—9. compared with Gal. iii. 9—14. and Col. ii. 11, 12.

nothing then of that heat, that virulence, and that fell spirit of proselytism, which has been reserved as the disgrace of modern times.

Under such circumstances, the sentiments of the Westminster divines ought to be regarded with reverence, and not rejected but for very cogent reasons. It must be *demonstrated* from the Scriptures that their views were altogether erroneous, or they should be held in high repute. In other words, that exposition of the nature of baptism, which we have been quoting from the Catechisms, must be proved false by arguments drawn directly and legitimately from the Bible ;—it must be shewn clearly, that infants are excluded from the ordinance of baptism, and that immersion is the only lawful mode of administering the rite, or the cause of the Pædobaptists is the cause of truth.

The subject divides itself into two branches.

1st. Is the baptism of infants warranted by the Scriptures ?

2d. What is the true method of administration ?

1st. Infant baptism is evidently a Scriptural ordinance.

No man who reads, and who believes the Bible, will deny, that under the Old Testament dispensation, the infants of Jewish parents, when they were only eight days old, were expressly commanded to receive a certain seal or token, which distinguished them from the children of the Heathen. This

was to them either a privilege of a signal character, or it was not. If we maintain the latter position, we at once impeach the wisdom of Jehovah. If the former, then we naturally ask, whether a privilege equally great, in all respects, is withheld from infants under the New Testament dispensation? And we make the inquiry for an especial reason. The Christian system is, in all respects, milder, and more humane, and doubly indicative of the benevolence of God, than the Jewish ritual. We might reasonably expect, then, that no favour enjoyed under the latter, would be excluded by the former. But what seal or token of heaven's mercy can, under the Christian dispensation, be applied to infants, except baptism. Circumcision is abrogated. The whole train of Jewish ceremonies, every thing attached to the theocracy, but the moral law, has been repealed by the death of him who came to "fulfil all righteousness."

Now, therefore, it is incumbent on those who deny the validity of infant baptism, to put their finger on some passage of the New Testament, which declares, in so many words, that infants shall not be baptised. It is perfectly ludicrous for them to demand of us the quotation of some scriptural assertion, that infants ought to be baptised,—as much so, as to maintain, that females should not be permitted by pastors of the different churches, to approach the sacramental table, because there

is not express authority, in unequivocal language, that they should discharge this duty. It would be, in every respect, quite as reasonable for the Antipædobaptists, to demand of us, the citation of some Scripture to this effect,—“both men and women may approach the Eucharist,”—or the latter be ejected, because only males were present at the original institution of that sacrament. If the infants of Christian parents are to be debarred certain high and exalted privileges, enjoyed fully by the offspring of the Jews, then, with the utmost reason we may expect to find to this effect some positive precept in the Bible. But it is vain to institute the search.

The *onus probandi*, therefore, lawfully rests on the shoulders of those who deny infant baptism, and not upon its advocates.

But although the subject might, fairly, here be laid to rest, we are fortified with other abundant and irrefragable arguments, drawn from the fountain head of truth. There the most satisfactory evidence is afforded that the King of Zion is influenced this moment, by the same tender regard for the infant offspring of his people, as when, in the days of his humiliation, “he laid his hands on them and blessed them, saying, suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven.”* In Luke and Mark, the words

* Vide Luke xviii. 15, 16. Matt. xix. 13. Mark x. 13.

used, literally mean, "the kingdom of God,"—*ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ Θεοῦ*.—In Matthew, "the kingdom of the heavens,"—*ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν*. The import in both instances is the same, however. In the beautiful parable of the Prodigal Son, he is represented as saying to his parent—"Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee."*—"I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight :"—that is *against God and thee*. The expressions, as occurring in Matthew and Luke, although apparently different, are synonymous. Thus Daniel, in the interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream, says, "Thy kingdom shall be sure unto thee, after that thou shalt have known that the *Heavens* do rule."† The prophet had, in the preceding verse, declared,—“seven times shall pass over thee till thou knowest that the *Most High* ruleth in the kingdom of men.”§ Thus he, who, in one verse is denominated the Most High, is, in the following, termed the Heavens. The Psalmist Asaph, says of profligates, “They set their mouth against *the Heavens*,”||—that is, *they vent blasphemies against God*. The phrase, in the New Testament, *ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ οὐρανοῦ*, is almost as common as *ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ Θεοῦ*. And though it may be affirmed that the regimen in the one, expresses the

* Luke xv. 18. 18. † Luke xv. 21. ‡ Dan. iv. 26. § Dan. iv. 25.

|| Psalm lxxiii. 9.

proprietor of the kingdom, and in the other, the place,—it is evident that this does not hold always. In parallel passages, in the different gospels, where the same facts are recorded, one of these expressions is used by one Evangelist, and the other, as equivalent, by another. Nay, the phrase *ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν*, is adopted when it is manifest that the place of dominion suggested is earth, and not heaven; and that therefore the term can be understood only as a synonyma for *δύναμις*.*

Accordingly, “the kingdom of heaven,” is a figurative form of speech, which is used sometimes to denote the Gospel dispensation;†—in other instances, the reign, the dominion, the government, which God has established in the Christian church,‡—again, the visible church with its varied privileges,§—and, finally, the literal glory and blessedness of the celestial paradise.|| The passages in the eighteenth of Luke, in the nineteenth of Matthew, and in the tenth of Mark, cannot import, that of children is *the gospel dispensation*. It may

* Campbell on the Gospels: Preliminary Dissertation, No. 5. Part 1st. Section 4th.

† Matt. iii. 2. iv. 17. x. 7. ‡ Matt. v. 19. xi. 11. xiii. 11. Luke viii. 1—9. Matt. xxi. 43. xiii. 24. 31. 33. 44, 45. 47, 52. xviii. 29. xx. i. xxii. 2. xxv. 1—14. xvi. 19. xviii. 1—4. xxiii. 13. Luke xvii. 20, 21. § Matt. xvi. 19. Luke vii. 28. ix. 11. ix. 27. ix. 62. xviii. 29. xxii. 16. xxii. 19. 2 Thess. i. 5. || Luke xiv. 15. John iii. 3. Matt. v. 3. Acts. xiv. 22. Rom. xiv. 17. 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10. Gal. v. 21. Eph. v. 5. 1 Cor. xv. 50.

mean that the government which God has established in Zion, is intended to promote their benefit. It certainly does mean either that they are, by baptism, to be made members of the visible church, or that they shall all be the subjects of grace in the heavenly world. If the latter, I know not for what reason they may not be regarded as members of the church on earth,—if not members in full communion,—still as placed under the immediate inspection of “the household of faith,” and instructed, and exhorted, and admonished, and “trained up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.” If the former, I should like to be informed by what ordinance or rite they are to be brought into an immediate relation to the church, if not by baptism.

In the first Epistle to the Corinthians, we discover the following remarkable passage,—“The unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband : else were your children unclean, but now are they holy.”* The Apostle here decides upon the case of those children but one of whose parents is a believer. He concludes that the federal or covenant holiness, of the believing wife or husband, descends to their common issue,—and that such children are to be reckoned not as unclean, but as holy,—not common, as the heathen, but as *saints*,—the ordi-

* 1 Cor. vii. 14.

nary designation by which the members of the Christian church are distinguished throughout the New Testament. As the children of believers have the appellation of *saints* from Paul, so they receive that of *disciples* from Peter. "Why tempt ye God," says he, "to put a yoke on the neck of the disciples?"* The yoke here principally intended, was circumcision, which the Judaizing Christians attempted to impose on the children of the believing Gentiles. By calling these children *disciples*, Peter recognizes their relationship to Christ. *Saints*, or *disciples*, in the strict sense of the word, mean real Christians. But the terms are also used in Scripture, to denote persons who visibly belong to the church, and are entitled to the privileges of the church.

It would be an easy matter to multiply quotations from the sermons and writings of the Apostles, in which they uniformly consider the offspring of believers as included in the profession of their parents, and with them standing in covenant relation with God. But the same idea will be included under another head.

In regard to the passage first referred to, in the preceding paragraph, it may be necessary to be a little more particular. The inspired Paul uses this expression: "Else were your children *unclean*: but now are they *holy*."

* Acts xv. 10.

Unclean. The admirable Parkhurst, in giving the meaning of the original Greek word, says that it means "unfit to be admitted to the peculiar rights and privileges of the church, and particularly to baptism."^{*} The word translated *holy*, signifies to be set apart from an ordinary to a sacred use,—or to be *consecrated to God*. We discover, then, the peculiar aptitude of this passage to the subject of infant baptism, in which believers dedicate their offspring to the Sacred Trinity. The learned and eloquent Doddridge, famed for his ardent piety, his extensive erudition, his heaven-like candour, and his patient, laborious investigations of the Scriptures, on these words, *now are they holy*, makes the following remarks.—“On the maturest and most impartial consideration of this text, I must judge it to refer to *infant baptism*. Nothing can be more apparent than that the word *holy* signifies *persons* who might be admitted to partake of the distinguishing rights of God’s people. Compare Exod. xix. 6. Deut. vii. 6. and xiv. 2. and xxvi. 19. and xxxiii. 9. Ezra ix. 2. with Isa. xxxv. 8. lii. 1. Acts x. 28, &c. And as for the interpretation which so many of our brethren, the Baptists, have contended for, that *holy* signifies *legitimate*, and *unclean*, *illegitimate*; (not to urge that this seems an unscriptural sense of the word,)

^{*} Parkhurst on the Article *ακαθαρτος*.

nothing can be more evident than that the argument will, by no means, bear it; for it would be proving a thing by itself, *idem per idem*,—to argue that the converse of the parents was lawful, because the children were not *bastards*; whereas all who thought the converse of the parents *unlawful*, must, of course, think that the children were *illegitimate*.”* The Apostle most clearly inculcates the doctrine, that in consequence of the faith of one parent, the mutual children of both parents had a title to the seal of the covenant of grace,—and by being dedicated to God in the rite which he had himself established, were brought into a visible relation to the church on earth, and were thus distinguished from the children of the heathen. *The privilege was signal*. For although it did not necessarily confer grace, yet by putting them under the immediate superintendence and instructions of the duly constituted officers of the church, it secures to them as their *right*, at least, and secures to them effectually, if these officers are faithful to the trust reposed in them,—a religious education. Accordingly we do discover, that God, in his providence, puts the broad seal of his approbation upon the ordinance we now defend. Who rise up, the pillars and ornaments of the

* Doddridge's Family Expositor. Ethridge's Edition, 1807. Note, pp. 255, 256.

Christian community, when the veterans, who have stood the heat and burden of the day, are called to rest? Who constitute the great bulk of converts, in every revival of pure religion? Who form, in each successive generation, "the sacramental host of God's elect, to fight the battles of the Lord?" Those who were brought to the temple, while infants, in the arms of anxious, believing, pious parents, and there dedicated to the Father, Son and Holy Ghost: afterwards reminded, solemnly and repeatedly, of the interesting and responsible station which they held, and with prayers and tears exhorted to choose Jehovah-Jesus for their portion. "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it." So said the wisest mere man that ever lived. He said it under the immediate influence of inspiration.

Is it contended that all the foregoing arguments are inappropriate, because baptism has not taken the place of circumcision, as the latter was no seal of the *covenant of grace*, it is only needful to make a short reply. If the covenant established with Abraham, were not, to all intents, the covenant of grace,—then, for four thousand years from the Creation, God had no church on earth. Is any man, in his senses, prepared to say, that the pious patriarchs, that all the devout and holy, who, like Simeon, had, in each revolving century, "waited

for the consolation of Israel,"—that the multitudes who cast their exclusive reliance on the merits of the Messiah who should come, stood in no covenant relation to God. What! when they daily held sweet communion with him, and panted after perfect conformity to his moral image, and anticipated, with almost angelick rapture, the joys of Paradise, did no spirit of *adoption* descend upon them, had they no connexion with God's *household*, were they bound by no *special ties*, did their Redeemer give them no *certain pledge* of glory,—and as a covenant is an agreement entered into by two parties, requiring the voluntary consent of both, and involving reciprocal engagements,—were they not commanded to be *faithful to the end*? No church on earth, until the advent of the Saviour! When, in every age succeeding the apostacy, God called those whom he had selected as the depositaries of his laws,—“*a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation* ;”—declaring “*the Lord's portion is his people, Jacob is the lot of his inheritance ;—the Lord hath chosen Jacob unto himself, and Israel for his peculiar treasure* ;”—denominating them a congregation of saints. “*Sing unto the Lord a new song, and his praise in the congregation of saints* ;”—and styling them *converts* ; “*Zion shall be redeemed with judgment, and her converts with righteousness* !” The covenant of grace was, in fact, proposed to our first parents in Eden, when, after they had

sinned, the promise of a Saviour was given to them, and their family was constituted the visible church of God. Long before the time of Abraham, we observe a line of distinction drawn between the *sons of God*, and the *daughters of men*. But with that patriarch the covenant was explicit. And I would desire, living and dying, an interest in no better covenant, and in none more *gracious* than that which contains these precious words,—“*I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee, in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee.*” Gen. xvii. 7.*

But such reasoning, although legitimate by way of inference, is by no means our main reliance. The burden of proof rests on the shoulders of our antagonists : As it is, however, one “grievous to be borne,” we will undertake to remove it from them. We pledge ourselves to demonstrate that infant baptism was observed in the primitive ages of the church, without intermission, from the days of the Apostles, until the year 1130, when it was called in question by a few of the Waldenses, on

* *Note.*—If any reader wishes further satisfaction on this point, let him peruse, with care, the fourth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, and the third of that to the Galatians, and he cannot fail of being convinced that the covenant made with believers under the Gospel, is essentially the same with that which was established with Abraham.

the ground that small children *were incapable of salvation* ;—but the sentiment speedily became obliterated, and the orthodox practice continued unopposed until the year 1522,—and Pœdobaptism has, since that period until the present moment, been observed by far, very far, the greater part of the Christian church.

We maintain that *the Apostles of our Lord Jesus baptised children.*

Paul, who declares that he came “not to baptize, but to preach the Gospel,”—deeming it a matter of infinitely greater importance to communicate “glad tidings,” than to administer an external and initiatory rite, did dispense this sacrament in six cases only ; at least no more instances are recorded ;—and out of these, three were of so many households : the household of Stephanas, the household of Lydia, and the household of the jailer at Philippi. The circumstances of the two last, are minutely related in the sixteenth chapter of the Acts. The former is referred to in the commencement of the first letter to the church at Corinth. From the account with which we are furnished respecting Lydia, and the jailer, it appears that both of their families were baptised on the professed faith of their respective heads. There is not the slightest intimation of any faith, or re-

penitance, or humility, or intention to seek God's favour, or any thing else being professed on the part of another member of the household. Now, is it not strange, "passing strange," that if, under the Christian dispensation, it was not intended that children should, in this rite, be dedicated unto God; the voice of inspiration should have directed Luke to use a form of expression which, at once, and in every instance, where the vision was not jaundiced by prejudice, would compel the reader to think of children? What idea do we naturally and invariably attach to the word *household*? Does it in no case include *children*? Suppose a minister of Christ should, this day, for the first time, be introduced to your acquaintance, and should inform you that he had just arrived from Labrador, where he had, for many years, been preaching the Gospel to those who had, hitherto, been untutored Pagans,—that, in the course of his exertions, he had paid, comparatively, small regard to rites and ceremonies;—still, he had administered the ordinance of baptism in six instances; and in three out of the six, to *households*. He makes no comment, but here drops the subject. What would be your impression? Would you not be warranted in supposing it, at least, *possible* that in the three households, there might be found *one child*?

In common speech, the word on which we are remarking, always conveys to our minds the idea

of children. So does it, emphatically, in the *Bible*. Compare Genesis xlv. 18. with Genesis xlvi. 5. Ponder these words in 1 Tim. iii. 4.—“*One that ruleth well his own house, or household,*”—(for it is the same word in the original Greek,)—and the explanation which follows instantly “*having his children in subjection, with all gravity ;*” together with a parallel passage in the sixth verse of the first chapter of Paul's Epistle to Titus, “*having faithful children.*”

The conclusion is irresistible, that the baptism of entire households, includes the baptism of the young equally with the old.

While on this part of the subject, we cannot, in justice, forbear recurring to a striking historical fact. It is this. No people were ever more tenacious of the spiritual rights and privileges of their children than the Jews. Those of them who had been converted to the Christian faith, were extremely reluctant to part with circumcision, even after they knew that baptism had been substituted in its place : Had this then been refused to their children, how infinitely would their reluctance have been increased ! And as to those of their countrymen, who were eternally stigmatizing the Gospel, and urging against it every objection that had the shadow of plausibility, with what eagerness would they have alleged, that if they embrac-

ed Christianity, their infant offspring would be in a much worse condition than that in which they were placed by the institutions of Moses,—that they would be ejected from the church of God,—and never after have a title, as children, to the seal of the covenant of grace ! But vehement as were their clamours, on a thousand other topicks, not a syllable of this can we find in the sharp controversies which they waged with the primitive Christians. We may examine, again and again, with the most diligent scrutiny, the writings of the Fathers, which contain elaborate answers to all the objections and the calumnies of the unbelieving Jews,—and never see this subject hinted at, even by the most remote allusion. Why ? Because, as infant baptism was an Apostolical usage, the mouth of gainsayers, on this point, was silent.

As those who were first commissioned to *teach all nations, baptising them*, practised on the natural and self-evident principle, that the command could not be executed without admitting infants within the pale of the church,—and upon the facts, that children form a numerous and important part of every nation, and are always included in the meaning of the word,—so their immediate successors, without so much as one exception, for nearly 1200 years, in this respect, imitated their example.

The author of this treatise, has sifted this subject with rigid scrutiny. After a careful, and, he trusts, a candid perusal of all the writings of the Fathers, touching the article of baptism, which have reached our times, the fact above stated is, as it presents itself to his mind, irrefragable. The testimony has been, again and again, laid before the Christian publick. But I know of no treatise, in which it is so lucidly, so accurately, and, withal, so concisely stated, as in a discourse, published several years ago, by the learned and venerable Osgood. To avoid tautology, therefore, (for *historical* evidence must be related in language very similar, if not the same,) I call the attention of my readers to the following paragraphs.

“Of the writings of the primitive Fathers, the immediate successors of the Apostles, some scattered fragments only have reached modern times; yet, in these fragments, we have unquestionable evidence that infant baptism was the general practice in the very century after the Apostles. They had been dead about forty years, when *Justin Martyr* published his apology, in which he mentions some “aged Christians, who were made disciples in or from their infancy.” This is understood as implying that they were baptised,—as that was the known method of making visible disciples. *Irenæus*, who was born before the death of

St. John, is yet more full in his testimony.* *Origen* was born about one hundred years after the decease of the Apostles,—and from him we have these words, “The church received a tradition, or order, from the Apostles, to administer baptism to infants.”† About fifty years after this, or one hundred and fifty from the Apostles, baptism then being universally considered as supplying the place of circumcision, a question arose, whether it ought not, as circumcision was, to be deferred till the eighth day after the birth of the child. For the decision of this question, a council of sixty-six bishops, or pastors of churches, was assembled at *Carthage*. In their result, they gave it as their opinion, that “baptism ought, least of all, to be refused to a new-born infant,”—and as to its being put off to the eighth day, they add, “there is not one that approves of it : it appears to us all, who are here met in council, far otherwise.” Undoubtedly some of the elders upon this council could remember what the practice of the church had been for seventy or eighty years before, at which period there were, probably, many living who were born within the age of the Apostles, and must have

* *Irenæus*, who was intimate with Polycarp, John's disciple, declares expressly, that “the church learned from the Apostles to baptize children.”

† In another part of his writings he affirms, that “the custom of baptizing infants was received from Christ and his Apostles.”

known what their practice had been. If the baptising of infants had not originated with the Apostles, is it credible that all the churches of Christendom should have so soon, and so universally, departed from the Apostolick institution. If so striking and notorious an innovation had been attempted, is it not beyond all belief, that it should have been every where received without a single objection, from any of those myriads of saints, confessors, and martyrs, who lived in the purest and best ages of the church ?*

“After this period, as we come down to the third and fourth centuries, the writings of *Austin*, *John Chrysostom*, *Pelagius*, and a multitude of others, show, that in those centuries, there was not a single exception to the baptism of infants. The learned *Dr. Wall*, who inquired most accurately into this subject, says, “for the first four hundred years, there appears only one man, *Tertullian*, that advised the *delay* of infant baptism in some cases ; and one *Gregory*, that did, perhaps, practise such delay in the case of his own children ;—but no society so thinking, or so practising ; nor any one man, saying that it was unlawful to bap-

* *St. Augustine* declares, that he never heard or read of any Christian, catholic or sectarian, who denied infant baptism ;—and *Ambrose* asserts, positively, that the baptism of infants had been the practice of the Apostles themselves, and of the whole church, uniformly, to his day.

tise infants. In the next seven hundred years, there is not so much as one man to be found that either *spoke for*, or practised any such *delay*, but all the contrary. And when, about the year 1130, one sect among the Waldenses, declared against the baptising of infants, as being incapable of salvation, the main body of that people rejected their opinion; and they of them, who held that opinion, quickly dwindled away and disappeared,—they being no more heard of, who held that tenet, until the rising of the German Antipædobaptists, in the year 1522.” This account by Dr. Wall, brings us down to the era of the Protestant Reformation. Amidst the commotions attendant upon that great revolution, sprang up the founders of the present sect of the Anabaptists. “Soon after *Luther’s* appearance,” says Dr. Robertson, in his history of Charles V. “the rashness or ignorance of some of his disciples, led them to publish tenets no less absurd than pernicious, which, being proposed to men extremely illiterate, but fond of novelty, and at a time when their minds were turned wholly to religious speculations, gained too easy credit and authority among them. The most remarkable of their religious tenets related to the sacrament of baptism, which, as they contended, ought to be administered only to persons grown up to years of understanding, and should be performed, not by sprinkling them with water, but by dipping them

in it. For this reason they condemned the baptism of infants, and rebaptising all whom they admitted into their society,—the sect came to be distinguished by the name of Anabaptists. To this peculiar notion concerning baptism, they added other principles of a most enthusiastick, as well as dangerous nature. By a most monstrous, and almost incredible conjunction, voluptuousness was ingrafted on religion, and dissolute riot accompanied the austerities of fanatical devotion. Luther, who had testified against this fanatical spirit, on its first appearance, now deeply lamented its progress, and exposed the delusion with great strength of argument, as well as acrimony of style." Not *Luther* only, but *Calvin*, *Melancton*, *Bullinger*, *Zuinglius*, *Gualter*, *Sleidan*, *Zanchy*, and, indeed, all the eminent reformers, united their voice in bearing solemn testimony against the principles of this sect, reprobating them in terms of great severity.

"Perhaps these great and good men, would have used less severity in speaking of them, had they been chargeable with no other errors besides those relating to baptism: but in that age, they did not content themselves with disturbing the peace of religious societies, and breaking up of churches:—they committed outrages upon civil society, which united all the states of Germany against them. They were subdued and dispersed by military

force. But as it generally happens in this mode of suppressing any sect or party, the fugitives were the more confirmed in the belief of their principal peculiarities, and spread their tenets in every country whither they fled for shelter. Dropping the extravagances which had armed the civil magistrate against them, they rigidly adhered to many of their other notions. "The party," says Dr. Robertson, "still subsists in the *Low Countries*, and a small number of this sect is settled in England." Having found their way into England, some of them very early appeared in America, —formed a society at *Swanzy*, and another at *Boston*, in the year 1665. Of this last, Dr. Mather relates, "that they admitted into their society persons whom our churches had excommunicated for moral scandal, and employed them as administrators of the two sacraments." From such an origin, and such beginnings, has this sect arisen. *If there be any truth in history, their opinions are wholly modern, and unknown to antiquity.* If infant baptism be an human invention, and an absolute nullity, as they pretend, it is certain that three centuries ago, there was not a society of baptised Christians in the world, nor had been for many preceding ages. What then are we to conclude? Did the church of Christ remain, during the lapse of centuries, overpowered by *the gates of hell*? If we could suppose this; yet, would it not be more dif-

ficult still to suppose, that it was at length recovered by the *madmen of Munster*, the German Anabaptists ?

“Though the Scriptures be, at last, our only sure guide, yet it is a satisfaction to know in what sense our fellow Christians understand the Scriptures with reference to any disputed point, and how they have been understood by the church of Christ in former ages ;—and if we are able, as in this question concerning infant baptism, to trace the practice of it up through all preceding ages, to that of the Apostles, it must be allowed a strong presumptive argument in favour of its having originated with the Apostles themselves. It is in this way, that we argue the change of the Sabbath from the last to the first day of the week. The New Testament contains no express order, or command, upon the subject ; but as we can trace the observance of the first day of the week, up to the age of the Apostles, and find that *they* actually met on that day for religious worship, we conclude that the practice originated in their authority and appointment. In my view, the argument is equally full and strong in favour of infant baptism.”

In regard to the *mode*, in which the ordinance should be administered, we observe, that, compared with the subject already discussed, it is of very trifling import. Therefore, we shall be brief.

Much of the controversy that has been agitated on this subject, turns upon the proper meaning of the Greek word βαπτίζω. Now, it is perfectly obvious that it no where in the Scriptures signifies to *dip*, to *plunge*, or to *immerse*. It denotes a mode of cleansing; and the mode is only the ceremonial part of a positive institution;—precisely as in the Supper of the Lord,—the time of day, the number and posture of communicants, the quality and quantity of bread and wine, are circumstances not accounted essential by any party of Christians. Consult Heb. ix. 10. Here the original word is applied as expressive of the various ablutions among the Jews;—such as *sprinkling*, *pouring*, and the like. It is evident that it does not mean the manner of doing, whether by immersion or affusion,—but only *the thing done*: that is, the application of water in some form or other.

Baptism, is the Scriptural term most commonly and properly used *for the communication of divine influence*. *Pouring*, then, must be the mode of administration. No object, in the New Testament Scriptures, is so often and so definitely signified by baptism, as the influence of the Holy Ghost.*

The expressions *into* and *out of*, when referring to baptism, are urged as proofs that immersion is

* Matt. iii. 11. Mark i. 8. 10. Luke iii. 16—22. John i. 33. Acts i. 5. Acts ii. 38, 39. Acts viii. 12. 17. Acts xi. 15, 16.

the only authorised mode. But they are more frequently translated *to* and *from*. No man, in his senses, will assert that our Lord Jesus Christ went into the bowels of a mountain, because it is declared, "He went up *into a mountain*."* Surely it will not be pretended that Philip, when he baptised the Ethiopian, was *dipped*, because it is asserted, "they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch."† The Greek words *εἰς* and *ἐκ*, are far more frequently rendered *to* and *from*, than *into* and *out of*.

But we are reminded that John baptised in Jordan,—*εἰς*. The very same word is used, when it is declared that the disciples should be baptised *with* fire. Who is ready to assert that they should be *plunged* into fire. The apostle John, speaking of Christ, says, he came not *by* water only, *εἰς ὕδωρ*, but *εἰς*, by water and blood. Here the same word, *εἰς*, is translated *by*, and with evident propriety, for it is impossible to ascertain any correct sense in which it could be declared that he came *in* water.

More than an hundred times the Greek particle *εἰς*, is rendered, in the New Testament, *at*, and in an hundred and fifty other cases, it is translated *with*. Hence, if we read, "John baptised at Jordan,"—I only wish to have the evidence lucidly

* Matt. v. 1. † Acts viii. 38.

placed before me, that he *plunged* his disciples in that river,—and if he did so, whether, when the Gospel, which is destined to travel round the globe, shall be established in *Iceland*, converts will be *immersed there in the month of March*. There is, doubtless, such a thing, and the world's Benefactor spoke of it, as *straining at a gnat, and swallowing a camel*.

Add to all this, John's baptism was not Christian baptism. He was the harbinger of Christ,—not the Saviour. He came to *prepare the way of the Lord*. The Son of God introduced the Gospel dispensation. When Paul came to Ephesus, he found certain disciples, and he said unto them, "Have ye received the *Holy Ghost* since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any *Holy Ghost*. And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptised? And they said, unto John's baptism. Then said Paul, John verily baptised with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, That they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. *When they heard this, they were baptised in the name of the Lord Jesus.*"* If they had not heard of a *Holy Ghost*, they surely were not baptised in his name. But Christian baptism runs in these words,—“In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the *Holy Ghost*.”

* Acts xix. 1—5.

To close this article,—it is altogether ludicrous to cite the example of the Saviour, as obligatory on us, in reference to his baptism, even could it be demonstrated that he was immersed, because he who was “harmless and undefiled,” was not, could not, be baptised as a *sinner*. He was, in this rite, consecrated to his office, as was Aaron. If we are to *follow* him in *all* respects, let us die upon a cross, and become the Saviours of the world.



THE LORD'S SUPPER.

A short time before his crucifixion, the Son of God resolved to establish an ordinance which should perpetuate, on earth, the remembrance of his great Atonement. Assembled with him at supper, his disciples hung with rapture on his heavenly discourse, and heard, with unutterable grief, the account of his approaching unparalleled and tragical death. With a prophetic eye he penetrated the designs of the traitorous Judas, and for the good of his little flock, exposed those designs to the light of day. And then, to keep alive in their hearts a perpetual memento of his sufferings and his love, and to transmit this memento to the

end of time, he consecrated the elements before him, and instituted the ordinance of the Supper.

The advantages of this rite are obvious. It is calculated to comfort the heart, to inspire the zeal, to increase the love to extend the joys, to enliven the faith, to deepen the humility, to animate the hopes, and to invigorate all the graces of the Christian. It links together in love and unity, the family of the faithful. It elevates the affections to Jesus, the dying Lord. It helps to take up the cross and follow him, through good and through evil report : and fills the soul with compassion for the miseries of the unconverted world.

The bread broken, strikingly represents the body of Jesus broken for our sins,—the wine, poured out, as strikingly denotes the blood of our dying Lord, streaming from his side, pierced with the cruel spear ; from his head, mangled with the crown of thorns ; and from his agonized and perforated hands and feet. Here we behold the harmonious union of all the divine attributes on the cross of Christ. Here we behold mercy and truth meeting together ; righteousness and peace embracing each other. Here we behold a God, compassionate, and yet a God of holiness ; a God, forgiving, and yet a God of justice. Here “ the violated law speaks out its thunders ; and here, in strains as sweet as angels use, the Gospel whispers peace.”

The discriminating features of the Lord's Supper are, an affecting representation of the communion which believers have with Christ Jesus :—an exhibition of the union and communion of believers with each other ;—a view of that point in which the leading doctrines of redemption concentrate their rays, and where they shine with united lustre ;—the infinite evil of sin, the rigours of Jehovah's justice in the punishment of sin, the riches of the Father's grace, in the article of our salvation,—the astonishing love of Christ,—the harmony of the divine attributes in the redemption of sinners,—the bestowment of a wondrous efficacy in quickening the graces, and mortifying the corruptions of believers,—and the privilege of a near intercourse with the God of the spirits of all flesh.



ECCLESIASTICAL GOVERNMENT.

That plan, which the Scriptures have designed, for the order, the peace, and the purity of the Christian church, is most lucidly and systematically arranged at the close of the Westminster Confession of Faith, between pages 375 and 435, in the Philadelphia edition, of 1806.

The substance can be stated in few words, and comprises the following particulars :—That all ministers of the word are equal : that next to them, in office, are Ruling Elders,—and, in the last grade, Deacons, who are appointed for the exclusive purpose of distributing the alms of the church.

Nothing, in the compass of divine truth, is more easy than to elucidate and establish the first article, to wit, the doctrine of *Ministerial Parity*. And it is somewhat remarkable, that the very same Scriptural proofs, which are advanced on this head, settle the question in regard to *Ruling Elders*. In 1 Tim. v. 17, we find these expressive words,—“ Let the elders that rule well, be counted worthy of double honour : *especially they who labour in the word and doctrine.*” Here is a direct reference to an order of men, who are invested with authority in Christ’s house,—whose duties are appropriate, and, in some respects, different, as being inferior to those of the *Presbyters*, who labour in the word and doctrine. Let any man, of ordinary intellect, whose mind is untinged by prejudice, and whose opinions are not already rivetted, by education, to a contrary belief, peruse the above cited passage. What will be his inference? Evidently this : That at the period when Paul wrote his First Epistle to Timothy, there were, in the visible church, *two kinds of elders*,—one, whose province it was, to attend with fidelity and zeal, upon the preaching of

the gospel,—and another, whose labours were confined to the exercise of government and discipline. Both classes are, in the original Scriptures, entitled *Presbyters*, which is, with marked propriety, translated *Elders*. The first class have several names assigned them, expressive of their various duties. As they have the *oversight* of the flock of Christ, they are called *Bishops*. In the twentieth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, we read, that the Apostle Paul, on his way from Assos to Jerusalem, where he had a particular desire to be on the day of Pentecost, from Miletus sent to Ephesus, and called the *Elders of the Church*. Among other things, he said to them, “Take heed, therefore, unto yourselves, and to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made you *Bishops* ;”—or, as it is very properly rendered in our version, “overseers,”—as that is the prominent meaning of the original word,—the same word, moreover, which occurs several times in the New Testament, and which is translated *Bishop*, in the third chapter of Paul’s First Epistle to Timothy. The argument is irresistible.—*Teaching Elders and Bishops, are one and the same office*. In other words, *every regularly ordained Minister is a Bishop*. The same class of men, are, moreover, as they feed the flock of Christ with spiritual food, termed *Pastors*, or *Shepherds*. In a prophetick promise to his church, God directed Jeremiah to write, “I will give you

pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding." And the Apostle Peter says, in the fifth chapter of his first letter, which was addressed to several churches,—"The elders which are among you, I exhort, who am also an elder—feed the flock of God :"—*feed*, a word of the same derivation with that translated pastor, and which you will find in several passages of Scripture, more particularly in the fourth of Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians, at the eleventh verse,—and in the concluding part of the passage I now quote, "feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof ;"—*ἐπιτρονέειτε*.—A word of the same general signification with Bishops. So that, again, it is evident, that Bishops and Teaching Elders, are precisely the same office.

As it respects Ruling Elders, besides the passage already quoted, there is a vast variety of others.

By recurring to the fourteenth chapter of the Acts, we learn that Paul and Barnabas, during their evangelical labours in Asia Minor, having preached at Derbe, went "to Lystra, and Iconium, and Antioch, confirming the souls of the disciples and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must, through much tribulation, enter into

the kingdom of God. *And when they had ordained them Elders in every church*, and had prayed, with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed." Now observe, the Apostles ordained elders to them, that is, to these several churches,—for this the original most explicitly teaches, admitting fairly of this translation, although our own is abundantly good to answer our purpose.—“And having officially constituted to them Elders, church by church, they commended them to the Lord.”

Turn next to the first chapter of the First Epistle to Titus, and read the fifth verse,—“For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldst set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain Elders in every city.” The very forcible language of the original again occurs : the word which we render “*in every*,” denoting distribution, “*in every city*,” that is, *in each individual city*. What, then, is the legitimate inference ? Manifestly this, that Paul, and Barnabas, and Titus, did, by divine authority and direction, appoint a number of Elders in each particular church :—Consequently, they were not all set apart for the purpose of publick instruction. That were needless. Every association of believers did not require a plurality of Pastors ; some of them were few in numbers, and there was not, at that period of the world, when Christians were persecuted unto death, and when

the demands of the church were continually enlarging,—as, notwithstanding all intervening obstacles, the kingdom of Christ rapidly spread from province to province—thus extending itself over a wider surface; there was not such an abundant supply of ministers as admitted either the policy, or the propriety, of allowing several to be the collegiate pastors of one flock. This appears self-evident. Wherefore we must conclude that some of these officers, chosen for the benefit of the church, and ordained by the Apostles, were *rulers*, not public teachers,—and were appointed for the purpose of assisting the minister in maintaining proper order in the church.*

* For further information on this head, consult the twelfth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, and the third clause of the eighth verse, together with the twelfth chapter of the First Epistle to the Corinthians, and the twenty eighth verse, where *helps* and *governments* are evidently contrasted with *teachers*. In both these passages explicit reference is made to the offices instituted by the Supreme Head of Zion, for her benefit,—some of temporary, others of perpetual continuance;—some adapted to the exigencies of primitive times, and of use no longer than their existence,—others, profitable and indispensable during all the vicissitudes, and hardships, and local and peculiar circumstances of the church on earth. And, in each of these Epistles, Paul evidently designates the office of a *ruler*, as distinct from that of a pastor or teacher,—and obviously assigns to the former a place inferior to the latter. Now, this institution, for purposes of government merely, whatever it be called, and however it be disguised by ingenuity, is, to all intents and purposes, the very same with that which Presbyterians distinguish by the title of *Ruling Elders*.

As to the third class of officers, those whom the Scriptures denominate *Deacons*, it is only necessary to refer to the first chapter, and first verse, of Paul's Epistle to the Philippians—the First Epistle to Timothy, the third chapter, from the eighth to the fifteenth verse, inclusive,—the sixth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles, the first, second, third, fifth, and sixth verses,—to be thoroughly convinced, that Deacons are distinct officers in the church, whose powers are inferior to those of Ruling Elders, and who are appointed for the exclusive purpose of superintending and providing for the wants of the poor.

Thus Pastors, Ruling Elders, and Deacons, are the proper and the only officers, appointed over the church of Christ.

In separate associations of believers, the two first, constituting the *Church Session*, have a controlling power over all the spiritual concerns of the congregation. They examine and receive candidates for the privilege of enjoying the sealing ordinances of the Gospel,—and can rebuke, admonish, suspend,—and, with the concurrence of the judicatory next above them, inflict the sentence of excommunication. That higher judicatory is called a *Presbytery*, and is composed of a certain number of Ministers and Elders, from some

particular district,—who meet semi-annually, to consult together respecting the affairs of all the churches in that district. To them appeals are made by any individuals, who consider themselves aggrieved by the decision of the inferior judicatory. They also examine candidates for the ministry, superintend the course of studies they pursue, and license them to preach the Gospel, when they shall have become duly qualified. From them also emanates the power of dispensing the sacraments of the New Testament; and they instal pastors over individual churches, as well as ordain them to the office of the holy ministry. Appeals can be made from their decision to two other judicatories;—first, to the Synod, which comprises several presbyteries; and, as the dernier resort, to the General Assembly, which is composed of delegates, in the ratio of one to five, from every presbytery within the bounds of the whole church. But neither the Synod, nor the Assembly, can suspend or depose from the ministry, nor excommunicate an individual, nor inflict any other censure, either on a clergyman, or layman. Their sole power lies in ratifying or reversing the decision of the inferior judicatory. The fundamental principle of Presbyterian government is this—*the power that creates, can destroy*. Hence, a pri-

vate communicant can be affected in his church standing only by the session who first received him. The Presbytery can do nothing in his case, except to approve or censure the decisions of that Session. Hence, also, a licentiate, or a minister, can receive no censure of any kind, from the Synod or Assembly, but from that body alone who invested him with his office. In case of an appeal, the Presbytery is the party arraigned at the bar of the Synod, and they are either acquitted or condemned. Their acquittal, however, involves the confirmation of the sentence previously passed on the appellant. But if he has not been suspended or deposed,—if no formal punishment has been inflicted on him, by the Presbytery, the Synod cannot touch him. They may censure the Presbytery for not having been more rigorous,—and may command them to arraign him, and try him, *de novo*. But if, in the stretch of their power, any judicatory of the church, except that from which he originally received his authority, should pass a censure of any description on a minister, it would be null and void, because such an act is diametrically opposed to ecclesiastical usage, and subversive of the vital principles of Presbyterianism.

In closing this article, I refer my readers, for scriptural evidence on these distinct judicatories,

from the Church Session, up to the Assembly,—to the passages which are marked at the bottom of the page.*

* Acts xv. 2, 5, 6. 1 Cor. v. 4. Heb. xiii. 17. 1 Thess. v. 12, 13. 1 Tim. v. 17. 2 Thess. iii. 6. 14, 15. “The church of Jerusalem consisted of more than one, as is manifest, both before and after the dispersion—from Acts vi. 1. 6. Acts ix. 31. Acts xxi. 20. Acts vi. 2. That these congregations were under one Presbyterial government, is proved from Acts xv. 24. 28. Acts xi. 22. 30. Acts xxi. 17, 18. Acts vi. That the church of Ephesus had more congregations than one, under a Presbyterial government, appears from Acts xx. 31. Acts xix. 18, 19, 20. 1 Cor. xvi. 8, 9. 19,—compared with Acts xviii. 19. 24. 26. Acts xx. 17. 25. 28. 30. 36, 37. Rev. ii. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6,—joined with Acts xx. 17, 18.” Consult, moreover, 1 Tim. iv. 14. Acts xv. 2. 4. 6. 1 Cor. xiv. 26. 33. 40. Acts xiv. compared with Acts xi. 18. Acts xv. 19, 20. Acts xviii. 24. 27,—compared with Acts xix. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7. Acts xiii. 2, 3. Acts xv. 28. 1 Cor. v. 3. Acts xx. 17. Acts vi. 2. Acts xv. 30.

A SUMMARY

OF THE PRINCIPAL HERESIES WHICH HAVE IN DIFFERENT AGES INVADED THE PEACE AND PURITY OF THE CHURCH.

THE *Gnostics* endeavoured to corrupt the Christian Doctrine in the first century. They are alluded to in several passages of Scripture, particularly in the 1st Epistle of John, 2d chapter and 18th verse ; in 1 Timothy vi. 20, and in Colossians ii. 8. They, themselves, assumed the name, on the presumption, that they were the only men who possessed true *knowledge*. They mixed in a heterogeneous mass the tenets of oriental philosophy, founded on the system of Pythagoras and Plato, with the doctrines of the Bible. They held, that every thing corporeal was essentially and intrinsically evil ;—that all sin resided in matter, and, therefore, treated the body with contempt, discouraged marriage, and denied the doctrine of the resurrection and the reunion of soul and body. They maintained, that the world was created by one or more malignant spirits, who were still inferior to the good spirit. They alleged, that Jesus Christ came to deliver the world from the oppression of matter and evil beings ; but, that he was only the Son of the Father, inferior to him, and that he had no human nature. Their doctrines were an odd, and enthusiastic, and debasing mixture of absurd metaphysics, and were pointedly condemned by the Apostle John in several parts of his First Epistle, but more particularly in the third verse of the fourth chapter. They flourished greatly during the reign of Adrian, and for some succeeding years, but afterwards split into a variety of sects, and like other enthusiasts dwindled to nothing.

The *Sabellians*, the *Arians*, and the *Socinians*, have already been described in the beginning of this book.

Our next attention is drawn to the *Pelagians*, a sect who made their appearance about the close of the fourth century. The founder of the sect was Pelagius, a native of Great Britain. He travelled into different countries, first privately, and then without

2. 1 THE CHRISTIAN'S VADE-MECUM.

disguise, disseminating his doctrines, which were in substance as follows :—That the consequences of Adam's sin are not entailed on his posterity,—that every man comes into the world in the same situation in which Adam was placed previous to the apostasy,—that men can be saved by the moral law, which conveys equal promises with the Gospel,—and, that the favour of God depends on our merits.

A council held at Carthage, A. D. 412, condemned his tenets, and the celebrated Augustine, Minister of Hippo, (who held the very same doctrines which Calvin afterwards so ably illustrated,) by his learned and eloquent writings, had the principal honour of suppressing this sect in its very birth.

The *Arminians*, in several respects, strikingly resemble the *Pelagians*. Their immediate founder (although the heresy prevailed to a greater or less extent from the days of the Apostles,) was *James Harmensen*, called in the Latin language, *Arminius*. He was born at *Oude-Water*, in Holland, and became eminent in propagating heresy at the close of the sixteenth and seventeenth century. His discriminating tenets, and those of his followers to the present day, respect the *five points*, as they are called, and in regard to which, they differ widely and materially from the abettors of Calvinistick truth. These points are *Predestination*, *Universal Redemption*, the *Corruption of Human Nature*, *Conversion*, and *Perseverance*.

As to the first, they maintain, that " God from all eternity determined to bestow salvation on those whom he foresaw would persevere unto the end in their faith in Christ Jesus, and to inflict everlasting punishments on those who should continue in their unbelief, and resist to the end his divine assistance :—so that election is conditional, and reprobation in like manner the result of foreseen infidelity and persevering wickedness."

On the second point, they contend, " that Jesus Christ by his sufferings and death, 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 divine benefits."

On the third point, they hold, "that man is not totally depraved by nature,*—that he has power to do as he pleases in the article of salvation,—and still, that he is dependent, in part, at least, on the influence of the Holy Ghost, for regeneration."

On the fourth point, they believe, "that divine grace or the energy of the Holy Ghost, begins and perfects every thing that can be called good in man, and consequently, all good works are to be attributed to God alone;—that nevertheless, this grace is offered to all, and does not force men to act against their inclinations, but may be resisted and rendered ineffectual by the perverse will of the impenitent sinner." This article is, however, interpreted by modern Arminians with much greater latitude.

And on the fifth point, they contend, "that God gives to the truly faithful, who are regenerated by his grace, the means of preserving themselves in this state;" and although the first Arminians had some doubt with respect to the closing part of this article, their followers *uniformly* maintain, "that the regenerate may lose true justifying faith,—fall from a state of grace,—and die in their sins" *Such is the progress of error.*

The *Antinomians* have also been too successful in corrupting the Church of God. Their name is derived from two Greek words, *anti* and *nomos*, which signify, against the law:—their prominent article of faith being, that the moral law is not a rule of life to believers under the Gospel.

This sentiment was ingrafted on many heresies which have sprung up since the Apostolick age; but the founder of modern Antinomianism was *John Agricola*, a Saxon divine,—a contemporary,—a countryman,—and at first, a disciple of Luther.

He taught, that "the law ought not to be proposed to the people as a rule of manners, nor used in the Church as a means of instruction; and of course, that repentance is not to be preached from the Decalogue, but only from the Gospel;—that the Gospel alone is to be inculcated and explained, both in the Churches and

* Arminius, however, was not quite so corrupt. This was reserved for his successors. He believed in the doctrine of man's entire depravity while unconverted.

the schools of learning ;—and, that good works do not prethote our salvation, nor evil works hinder it.”

There is no sect of Christians who call themselves Antinomians. This is an epithet of opprobrium derived from their sentiments, which are maintained by no particular denomination as such, but by individuals scattered among the different denominations.

The substance of Antinomianism at the present day, comprises the following particulars :—“ That men ought never to question their having true faith in Christ ;—that as our iniquities were laid on the Saviour, and his righteousness imputed to us, he became as completely sinful as we, and we as completely righteous as the Son of God ;—that believers need not fear, either their own sins or the sins of others, since neither can do them any injury ;—that the new covenant is not made properly with us, but with Christ for us, and that this covenant is all of it a promise, involving no duty on our part—that Christ repented, believed, and obeyed for us ;—that sanctification is not a proper evidence of justification ;—that our righteousness is nothing but the imputation of Christ's righteousness ;—that a believer has no holiness in himself, but in Christ alone ;—and, that the very moment he is justified, he is wholly sanctified, and he is neither more nor less holy from that hour to the day of his death.”

Such are their licentious and ruinous doctrines. They form one extreme : the tenets of Arminianism another. The doctrines of John Calvin, and his coadjutors, are a happy medium between these two heresies.

The sentiments of the *Universalists* have been stated and refuted. It is only necessary, then, to give a short account of their origin and progress. Their tenets, like all others which have been propagated by the “ Father of lies,” are not new. *Origen* wrote in favour of them, in the third century. *Augustine* speaks of their existence in his day. Many of the *German Baptists*, at the period of the Reformation, held it. The denomination called *Tinkers*, in America, descended from the German Baptists, generally speaking, maintain the doctrine. The *Chevalier Ramsay* espoused the cause. *Archbishop Tillotson*, in one of his sermons,

declares future punishment to be of limited duration,—and so does the celebrated Dr. *Burnet*, in his treatise on the state of the dead.

But the writers, who, in latter days, have most zealously defended this heresy, are, *Newton*, Bishop of *Bristol*,—*Stonehouse*, Rector of *Islington*,—Dr. *Chauncey*, of *Boston*,—Dr. *Hartley*, Mr. *Purves*, Mr. *Elhanan Winchester*, and Mr. *Vidler*. But it would be ungenerous to omit the names of *James Kelly*, an apostate from the adherents of *Whitfield*,—and *John M'Murphy*, the *Spittalfield* weaver, or, as he called himself after he came to this country, Mr. *Murray*. The unhallowed sentiments of these men are, probably, gaining ground,—and will, wherever the Spirit of the Lord does not lift up his standard.

ERRATA.

- Page 76, 14th line, insert the word *to*, between the words *come* and *destroy*.
 - Page 88, 19th line, for *Henry*, substitute *Hervey*
 - Page 99, at the bottom, read "*the chief part*" of these Scriptural declarations "*is taken.*"
 - Page 100, 1st line, read "*the greater number.*"
 - Page 139, 26th line, for "*urged.*" read "*advanced.*"
 - Page 177, 24th line, for *submission*, read *submissive*
 - Page 224, 18th line, insert "*at the commencement of the,*" between the words "*and*" and "*seventeenth*"
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