

From the Wilderness

BEING

An humble attempt to support the sinking TRUTHS of GOD, against some of the principal Errors, raging at this time.

Or, a JOINT TESTIMONY to some of the grand Articles OF THE

CHRISTIAN RELIGION, JUDICIALLY delivered to the CHURCHES under their care.

By John Murray
By the first *Presbyter* of the Eastward.

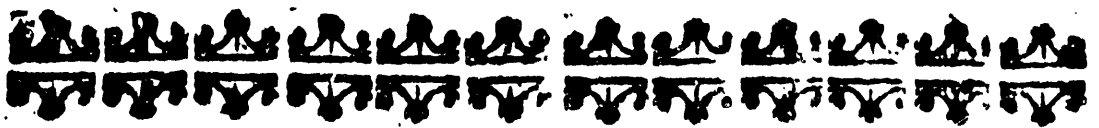
Periculosum nobis ac miserabile est. tot fides existere quot voluntates, & tot nobis doctrinas esse quot mores.
HILARY.

Arise, O Lord! Plead thine own cause.
KING DAVID.

Prepare ye the way of the Lord make his path's straight
JOHN BAPTIST.

When the enemy shall break in like a flood, the spirit of the Lord shall lift up a Standard against him.
PROPHET ISAIAH.

B O S T O N :
Printed by N. COVERLY, between the Sign of the Lamb and the White Horse.
M,DCCLXXXIII. 1782



THIS presbytery taking into serious consideration the present low state of vital religion in this country, the great and general declension in the practice of piety and virtue; the alarming progress of vice and immorality of every kind, and the growing defection from the pure doctrines of grace as they are laid down in the scriptures, as they were taught by the most honoured instruments of the blessed reformation from popery, as they have ever been held by the protestant reformed churches, earnestly contended for by the fathers of such of them as have been planted in New England, and signally owned of God in being made the means through which the greatest effusions of the divine influences have been conveyed to the churches in former and latter times; and the most remarkable revivals of real godliness effected both in Europe and America; and considering at the same time the awful floods of errors and soul-ruining delusions which threaten to deluge the land at this day, the alarming rapidity with which some of them spread, the countenance given them by too many ministers and churches, and the Laodæcian indifference of too many others, who stand by as silent spectators of the havoc now making on the flocks of Christ thereby.

RESOLVED, That in the judgment of this presbytery it is the duty of all the ministers of Christ at this day, and of all bodies of such ministers, openly and faithfully to bear testimony against these things, and solemnly to warn the churches against them, and that the neglect thereof

thereof would be in us a grievous offence against God, and a practical betraying of his cause and people, a virtual connivance at the errors and vices so threatening, and making the guilt of their authors and abettors our own.

RESOLVED, That this presbytery from a sincere regard to God's truth, from a simple desire to promote his glory, to keep those of his churches pure which are committed to our care, to deliver the souls of men from the snare of the devil, and our own from the blood of all men, will proceed, in the name and fear of the Lord, to bear a judicial testimony against the several errors and vices now spreading, and will deliver the same to the churches under our care, **Therefore,**

ORDERED, That a committee of this body be appointed to bring in a draught of a testimony for that purpose; that in the execution thereof they make it their rule; first, to open the state of religion among us at this day, then to lay down the reasons and ends of this testimony; in the next place, to bear thankful record to the gracious dealings of the Lord towards the people of this land, from its first settlement to the present times, with humble acknowledgment of their various backslidings from him; to the end it may appear, that the steps of divine providence towards them, have always corresponded with their moral and religious state; and finally, to take the several heresies now rampant, each by itself, opening up its nature and history; 2dly the several errors involved in it; 3dly, proof of the truth and certainty of the doctrines which it opposes; fourthly, a just view of the consequences of it; and fifthly, a plain and faithful warning against it; and in this course they are desired to begin with Deism, and Origenism, (or the doctrine of Univer-
sal

fal Salvation,) as lying nearest the root of all the impiety and wickedness now leading the fashion in places of public resort.

ORDERED, That when this testimony has gone through the several heresies in order, it be concluded with a serious enquiry into the causes which have brought down these judgments on the Church, and a modest proposal of the means necessary for the removal of them, with suitable addresses to all concerned.

THE Committee appointed at a former diet, to draw up a testimony against errors, beg leave to report that the shortness of the time allowed them, put it out of their power to go any further in that work than the consideration of Deism and origerism; this part of their charge they submit, and ask leave to sit again.

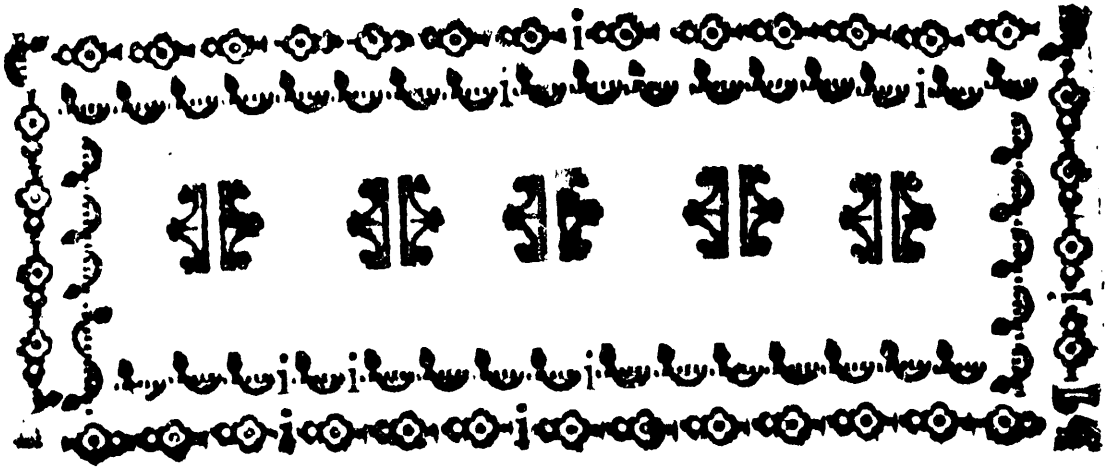
THE Presbytery proceeded to the examination of the draught laid before them; and having carefully perused and examined the same, after some amendments and corrections, it was approved and voted to be judicially delivered to the churches under their care, as the first part of the act and testimony of this Presbytery, and that it be subscribed as such in their name and presence by the Moderator and Clerk.

ORDERED, That the Committee be directed to continue their labors until our next meeting, without taking any notice of whatever may be printed against this testimony until the whole thereof be finished: and afterwards they are directed to make no answer to any thing thrown out in opposition to it, unless the authors shall subscribe their works with their real names.

Given at Windham, May 21, 1782.

A true Copy, extracted from Record, by
SIMON WILLIAMS, Pres. Clerk.

INTRODUCTION.



INTRODUCTION.

IT has pleased the Holy Sovereign of the Universe, for eight long years to continue on AMERICA the awful judgment of a bloody and destructive war. In this, as in all his other dealings, it cannot be denied that righteousness belongeth to him; and sinful mortals should take all the blame--the shame and confusion of face to themselves. Never did he open a controversy with his creatures without just cause--nor ever maintain it longer than was necessary for answering a wise and holy end: whenever then his anger appears to break forth against any people, it is their duty as men, and especially as christians, seriously to search into both causes and end:--Nor should they cease the enquiry until they have discovered the Achan in the camp, and are duly sensible wherefore it is that the Lord contendeth with them.

Under

vi INTRODUCTION.

Under all the smart we have felt by the long pressure of our calamities, it is to be feared, we as a people, are verily guilty in this matter; too generally we have either neglected this research altogether, or contented ourselves with investigating the natural or political springs of our troubles; while the chief, that is, the moral causes have been too frequently quite overlooked--or considered as if they were to be ascribed to the luxury, venality, tyranny, injustice and other crimes of England alone--and as if no body in America had any hand in its present woes, unless the Tories and traitors who have abetted the measures of our iniquitous oppressors.

So far as this neglect may be evidenced by these parts of mens conduct that are cognizable by their fellow men, it appears that the guilt of it lieth at the door, not only of private individuals, but of our most respectable public bodies: Amidst all our annual and occasional public fasts on account of these judgments, little, very little, if any notice has been taken, by the authority that enjoins them, of the public sins and backslidings that have brought those judgments upon us; little, very little, has been said about the state of religion; and nothing at all particularly:

Never perhaps did the moral state of any nation afford less pretext for so favourable a construction of public adversities than that of our country at the present day. The transgressions of its inhabitants were multiplied, and coloured with aggravations peculiar to themselves. Every sober eye observed them with concern; and God has borne a testimony from Heaven against them as loud and alarming, as it is long and sorely felt.

Nor has the progress of our iniquity been in the least retarded by this tender method of handling it; instead of reforming under these judgments, it

may be told, as a truth, however sorrowful to relate, that in general we have been revolting year more and more. He must be a stranger indeed in our Israel, to whom it remains till now a secret, that the regard to religion for which New England was once conspicuous has vanished from among us in a lamentable degree: serious godliness seems to come into remembrance with many, only as Sampson in the dungeon did with his heathen captors, to be brought forth in a ridiculous garb as a subject of banter, to give an edge to their wit, and make the laugh rise and relish high as it circulates round the room: in what is commonly called the best companies the power of vital religion is seldom mentioned, unless to be treated as its great author was by the nobles in Judea;--- its reality and importance are denied by one party, and its appearance and progress opposed by another; and these two classes include no inconsiderable proportion of all ranks in the land. Contempt of the sacred scriptures passes for a token of politeness, and a readiness at retailing low puns and stale criticisms, by which the perfection of that divine volume may be suspected, or its celestial authority called in question, is the only way by which many endeavour to palm themselves on the multitude, for men of uncommon genius and incomparable learning. The glorious doctrines of these oracles of truth are coldly received in almost every part of the land; few seem careful to draw them pure from the fountain; a very small portion of time or attention is spent by the many, in endeavours to obtain a true understanding of their meaning, or just conviction of their truth. Scarce any book is less improved, understood or believed, at this day, than the Bible; and hence it is no marvellous thing, that every error is embraced, and every ab-

terdity

furdity greedily swallowed, that Satan and his labourers think proper to substitute in its place.

The form of religion has sometimes been seen to survive the power of it for a while, but now it seems that the latter being first slain, the former has been buried in the same grave with it. Never was the public worship of God so generally voted away as at the present: Many grudging the expence of supporting it, have dismissed Gods embassadors, and locked up the doors of his house--others have exchanged a learned, faithful, and godly ministry, for ignorant, fanatical intruders; merely because they pretend to deal out to them their wild and undigested effusions without Salary: while of the remainder, among whom their ministers have still made a shift to continue, the greatest number seldom condescend to shew themselves in a worshipping assembly--and not a small proportion of those that attend, pass the sacred hours of worship, in sauntering and gazing at the persons and dresses in reach of their eyes, or in dozing away the time in their seats, or in sneering at the language or manner of the preachers, and withing the irksome service concluded.

Family worship is a stranger to the dwellings of thousands, and the judgments of heaven against sabbath-breaking, are pleaded as an argument for continuing in that Sin: How often is the pious eye shocked with the ungrateful sight, of men hurrying away the most precious moments of the Lords day in sending vessels to sea, or in beginning or pursuing journeys on the business of this world, or wasting that holy season away in sloathful indolence at home, or in impertinent visits, or idle walks about the wharves, streets or fields? and how many are there that habitually combine to kill the time on that sacred day, in coffee-houses and sots holes, in bargains, or in

news, in gaming or intemperance? and if such outrages against God and religion are called into question, the answer in almost every mouth is ready, " 'tis war times."

And that no feature might be wanting to complete the picture of the impiety and irreligion of the times, the profanest language of mouths set against Heaven is become the fashionable dialect: How lamentable a proof of human depravity, and how sad an evidence of mens being judicially given up to harden themselves in their own ways, is here presented to our view! a vice that gratifies no natural appetite, nor affords an object for any particular lust, is quickly learnt, and eagerly copied, for no other purpose, save that of venting their spite against him from whom their beings were received, and by whose hand they are supported every moment, and all their wants supplied! The youth bred in the innocence of a rural retreat, that never was heard to defile his tongue with one profane oath in his life, no sooner gets entred on board of a privateer, or has spent a few days in the camp, than we find him learned in all the language of hell! The most horrid oaths and infernal curses load and taint the air about him, whenever he opens his mouth! and this language passes current as graces of conversation, as a polish of style that should suffice to dab him a fine gentleman, or as certain proofs of his heroism in all the feats of war! O! what tears can sufficiently lament it? Odious as this vice is in itself, and pernicious as its consequences are, it is a leaven that threatens soon to leaven the whole lump, even among the female Sex it has some votaries, and in the streets of our public towns the ear is grated with these unhallowed sounds, even from the lips of little children, as if they had no sooner received the faculty of speech from God's hand, than their

■ I N T R O D U C T I O N .

their parents had taught them to point it as an arrow against him !

Much has been said on some occasions to make men easy in a total disregard to piety and religion, from a fond presumption that they might nevertheless be found walking in ways of safety and bliss, by a steady adherence to virtue and morality ; but an impartial survey of the present times will fully convince us of the fallacy of that sentiment.

Religion and morality are divinely connected together : no man can put them asunder : in our better times they lived happily in concert, and now we see that religion was no sooner proscribed and banished from any people or place, than morality and virtue took wing and followed her.

Benevolence to our fellow-men, was perhaps never less cultivated in any country than it seems to be of late among us ; hard hearted indifference to the distress of the poor, the widow, and the orphan, have risen up and seized her throne : The base-born spirit of selfishness, never had so unrestrained a sway in this land ; this has thrown the apple of discord into every community : and torn society into pieces with quarrels. This has cut out work for all the passions, and kept them in continual employ, "for this," pride and a false sense of honor has disgraced our armies with the Gothic barbarous practice of duelling, and friends have imbrued their hands in the blood of friends ! whilst the connivance of superiors has given sanction to the crime : "For this," avarice stalks in the streets, or lurks at the corners, and has stained the public roads with inhuman murders : Yes, "for this," some stupid and daring mortals venture to be their own butchers ! and multiplied instances of late justly alarm us with fears that

That the horrid and unnatural crime of self-murder is like to become a fashionable one.

To the vice last mentioned, the enormities of extravagance and sensuality have ever led the way: And it is well-known that this period never had its parallel in America, for the general prevalence of all the vices of that class: The vanity of fickle and whimsical fashions, the monstrous deformities of dress, the luxury of the table and equipage, the affectation of shew, and fondness for ill-timed diversions, for frolics, balls, and gaming-tables, and all their concomitant passions never deluged New-England as at this day; and may it not be added that a groupe of follies like this, perhaps never before marked the character of any people in Christendom, whilst their country was reeking with its citizens blood, and heavy judgments from Heaven were filling all its corners with desolation and woe? This was indeed a "strange vine" in this land, it was transplanted into it from an European vineyard: but it has taken too well with the soil, and proved but too fruitful in this foreign clime: The grapes of Sodom hang ripe on its branches. "Intemperance," in an uncontrolled, alien, and immoderate use of strong and spiritous liquors, even to that intoxication that degrades human nature below the brutal herd, is become sadly common among us men: It seems to carry some whole families down to its gulf together, and like certain hereditary distempers appears, to be handed down as an unhappy inheritance from father to son; it is making shipwreck of many professors of religion, and with horror be it added, this monster not content with human sacrifices among the men, a million of whom are yearly laying down their lives as its victims, is begun to ravage and destroy even the gentler sex too!

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When a course of degeneracy has arrived at this length, it could hardly be expected to terminate here: These steps have in all ages been found only to lead on to further abominations. The infamous custom in many places of tolerating young persons of both sexes, to lay themselves down together in the same bed, and to spend whole nights under pretext of courtship, even with the connivance of the heads of the family, is a curse peculiar to some parts of this land, and greatly to the scandal of the christian name: Nearly allied to it is the practice of many families in populous towns in permitting the youth, whether children or servants, to spend their evenings in the streets, in picking or being picked up by any temptation that comes in their way, and even to tarry abroad till the morning, or at least till unreasonable hours in the night: Should these liberties in either case, be followed by the debaucheries and murders that have often been found to ensue on them, it behoves the heads of such families seriously to consider how improbable it is, that they themselves will stand acquitted of the guilt another day; and it cannot but give pain to a mind, not hackneyed in the paths of wickedness, to reflect how numerous, and how shameful, the known effects of these indulgences appear. Uncleanness is awfully increased: Antenuptial communications are so frequent and so slightly censured that it seems almost to be forgotten that it is a crime: Adultries are excused under the name of gallantries; books, utterly unfit for a modest eye, are printed and published, professedly on purpose to teach intrigue as a science; and the poisonous letters of a British nobleman, are eagerly bought up, read and commended as a standard of politeness and taste. Though their direct tendency

tendency is to patronize lewdness and make the world forget that chastity is a virtue.

The love of money, by whatever means obtained, rages universally : Extortion is become an avowed practice ; that fordid covetousness which is idolatry, rears its front without shame, and defies the beams of noon : Fraud and dishonesty in the way of trade, is considered as expertness in business, and passed over with a smile ; glaring instances of speculation, and breach of public trust are sheltered and uncensured, and private robberies, thefts and burglaries abound more and more : to add no more to this doleful list, a lying spirit has never been permitted to go abroad through the land as boldly as at present, slanders have been innumerable, the tongue of falsehood is every where scattering its fire brands, arrows and death, and saying that all this is done in sport.

Woeful indeed must be the end of these ways ! each step in them takes hold of hell ! and is it a time when the messengers of God, should hold their peace ? Will it be said that some efforts to stem this torrent are neither reasonable nor necessary at this juncture ? Or, that such efforts are not specially required from the hands of the Ministers of the sanctuary ? It is in a full and painful view of this alarming state of things among us, that we have ventured to deliver our souls in the following testimony, and to that step we judged ourselves bound at this time, for the following reasons.

B

SECTION

S E C T I O N I.

Reasons of this Testimony.]

1. **T**H E principles of benevolence require every man to do whatever may be in his power, to help his fellow mortals to escape approaching dangers, or obtain deliverance from evils already fallen upon them; and whoever refuses his best exertions on such occasions, has renounced the character of a good citizen, and deserves to be proclaimed a common enemy to mankind.

2. The genuine spirit of christianity feels all the force of those principles coming home with peculiar energy, from the motives specially afforded by that gracious religion, the laws it reveals, the temper it inspires, and the charming example it sets before us in the person of its great author; and the man has forfeited his right to the christian name, who affects a detestable neutrality where the happiness of human nature, especially where the everlasting bliss of immortal souls is at stake. The true christian can never be indifferent when the cause of God and religion is brought into dispute; such men are appointed to be "witnesses" for God, and by acting in a manner becoming that station, they are required to subserve the best interests of mankind. 'Tis thus they must shine as lights in the midst of the gross darkness that covers a benighted world.

3. The Church of Christ in all its branches is erected, as a city set on a hill, on purpose to repel the attacks of infidelity and vice: and by opening and supporting the whole system of revealed truth, to defend the citizens of Zion, from the envenomed shafts of heresy and de-
lusion

lusion: if any church-member then be found in a season of such loud alarm as this, folding his hands in careless indifference, and like Meroz of old, refusing to come forth, in his sphere, to the help of the Lord against the mighty, he ought to be considered as a traitor, who has secretly bargained to open the gates, and betray the city to the besiegers.

4. Ministers are set as watchmen on Zions walls; their business as such authorises all concerned to demand of them that they descry danger in its first approaches, that they sound an alarm on its first discovery, and that they seasonably endeavour to rouse the people entrusted to their care to proper exertions to oppose or escape it. Should any of them then fall asleep on his post, or briefly desert, or deliver it up, or in any other way, should he fail of the faithful discharge of his trust, the punishment due to such a delinquent, should bear just proportion to the degree of his crime; and must be aggravated according to the danger or damage that is the consequence of it: it is awful to consider with what solemnity their Lord and Master has passed sentence in this case, exactly according to this rule, in that memorable passage in the 33d chapter of Ezekiel, the first ten verses. How dreadful the sentence with which that warning concludes. "If thou dost not speak to warn the wicked from his way, that wicked man shall die in his iniquity, but his blood will I require at thine hand!"

5. Apprized of all this they have voluntarily undertaken that awful trust; and, at their ordination, the vow of God has been solemnly laid upon them, that they will persevere to the end in faithful attendance on the duties thereof; if
therefore

therefore their lot falls in a time when an open testimony for oppressed truth is specially called for, if they have any experience of the love of Christ, that will constrain them to lift up such a testimony "as well as they can;"—and if they ever have known the terrors of the Lord, these will engage them to persuade men to attend unto it.

6. To attempt this duty is indeed required of every individual in every station; but that is for each only in his own sphere: the "private station" has a little circle of its own, wherein the cause of God may be pleaded; nor is there an office in church or state, in which something may not be done in its support: Grand jurors, and wardens are sworn to this service, and the manners of the times give daily occasions of putting their fidelity to the test. The magistrate is called to this duty on the bench, as well as the preacher in the pulpit.

7. The weight and influence of public bodies is but that of all their members collected; and they should measure their obligations by the same scale: Whatever duty then is binding on each individual in his separate capacity, each public body, composed of such individuals, should judge itself bound to much more: If a testimony in behalf of virtue and piety, is to be borne by the magistrates in their separate departments, much more may it be expected from executive courts, where they are collected: If this is the duty of our several rulers, how much more of the whole government composed of them all? And if every minister is to attend to it at his peril, why should ecclesiastical bodies of such suppose themselves exempted from so important a part of their trust?

8. The church of God, in ancient times, gave frequent specimens of such testimonies : Whenever any declension appeared, or any heresy crept in, it was their care to call together a council, that should judicially bear their witness against it ; nor were the purest churches in later ages wanting in faithful essays of this kind : The histories of the Waldenses, of the Bohemian, of the French churches, and of that of Scotland in her prime, furnish laudable examples thereof, upon many repeated trying occasions.

9. Something of this kind indeed appears to be the duty of every age : It is a debt of gratitude to Almighty God for mercies received, and of faithfulness to his cause when brought into danger. It is a debt of justice to the present truth, and to the generation now on the stage. It is a debt of charity to the enemies of the truth among whom we live ; by means of which God may peradventure give them repentance to the acknowledgment thereof. It is a debt of nature to posterity ; by the faithful discharge of which they may know how graciously the Lord has dealt with us, how unworthily we have done by him, what attempts have been made to pervert the right ways of the Lord in our days, what truths the Church was valiant for ; and, in a word, what we would deliver off our hands to generations to come, as the truths of religion in doctrine, in government, in worship, and in practice : That so they might see, at once, what we would recommend to them, to preserve and maintain, when we are gone off the stage, and what we would warn future times to avoid as the sins or errors that have ensnared the unwary in our generation, and might endanger them in their own.

Impressed

Impressed with the fullest conviction of its being the indispensable duty of the churches, especially at this time, we have anxiously waited for the meetings of presbyteries and synods, of associations and conventions of ministers through the land, in hopes to find this work undertaken by hands more able to finish it than our own; but nothing of this nature has come to our knowledge from any quarter; We could therefore no longer forbear attempting it ourselves.

S E C T I O N II.

The ends aimed at in this work.

NEXT to a thorough conviction of duty; behoves men to see that their ends are right in the attempt to perform it. The want of these in the present essay, would spoil the work of all its beauty, and forbid the hope of its acceptance with God, or of its proving a blessing to the church or world. The nature of this testimony gives no room to expect that it will meet with a welcome reception from the far greatest part of the generation to which it is offered; nor can it be doubted that various unfavourable constructions will be put upon its design by those whose interest it may be to oppose it: It became hence, the more needful for us to examine our motives as in the sight of our Judge; and after prayerful attention to that subject, we think it necessary here most solemnly to assure our readers that we undertake this work with much fear and trembling,
 least

least the weakness with which we defend God's truths might eventually hurt the cause which we wish to support. We proceed in it, not in order to set ourselves forth as more vigilant, more faithful, or more able for the business than any of our brethren; we can honestly affirm that the sense we have of our own weakness and unworthiness, and the consciousness of our many failures and infirmities in all that we do, would have made us gladly sit at the feet of any faithful ministers in the land, on this occasion. contented to have been permitted to adopt their honest testimony only by our tacit concurrence, or earnest prayers for its success.

Much less do we take this step from any personal enmity against any men, or denomination of men in the country, whose sentiments or practices may be the subject of remark in the following papers; nor have we the most distant wish to expose the characters of individuals to any sort of damage by what we have to say: To create divisions, or promote the private interest of a particular party, is not our aim: The searcher of hearts is our witness that, as far as we know ourselves, we are conscious of no motive to stimulate us to this work but a sense of its being the indispensable duty of the day; nor do we aim at any end in it separate from the glory of God, and the salvation of the souls of men: We trust it will be found another day, whatever may be thought to the contrary by any now, that we have emitted our joint testimony in this judicial way; in the first place, purely for the ends last mentioned; Secondly, for the honor of religion, and the rescuing its precious truths from the reproach and contempt cast upon them at this day.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, for warning and preserving such as have not yet fallen into the depths of satan, against which we testify; and for reclaiming, if it may be, such as have.

Fourthly, for keeping the church of Christ in the land, at least that part of it committed to our care, pure from the imputation of having adopted or encouraged, these errors and backslidings, and to clear them of the suspicion of having countenanced, or connived at the woeful inroads they are making on the Lord's vineyard; or even of having silently tolerated them without making what opposition we could.

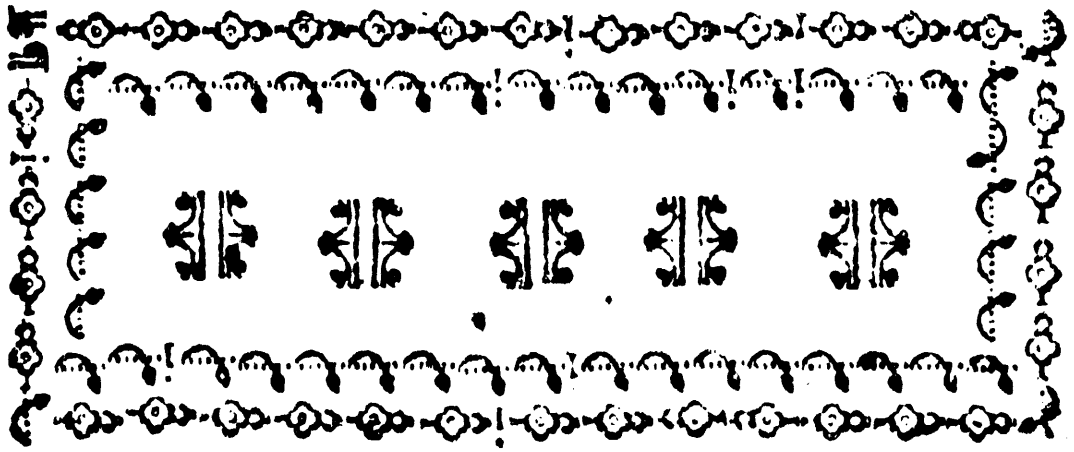
Fifthly, for exonerating our own consciences, that we may not be partakers of other men's sins; nor, by seeming to bid them God speed, make ourselves liable to share with them in the reward of their evil deeds.

But that finally we might be clean from the blood of all men; and especially least the blood of those unhappy mortals that persevere and perish in these perverse ways, should at last be found in our skirts.

And while these are the ends we propose to aim at in the ensuing work, we shall study, by divine help, steadily to pursue them, by treating every part of our subject with as much brevity as may be consistent with perspicuity: with that plainness and simplicity of method and style, that may be level with the lowest capacity; carefully shunning all shew of learning, where it can be avoided; with that candour and meekness that is requisite in a plea for the religion of the benevolent and lowly Jesus; yet with that honest impartiality that becomes an act done in sight of the tribunal. Studious

on the one hand to speak with the gravity of ministers of Christ, who feel themselves supported by the authority of their divine master, in what they advance; and mindful on the other, of that solemnity and warmth with which decency requires us to treat matters so nearly interesting to the cause of God, and the salvation of men.

P A R T



P A R T I.

C H A P. I.

Abstract of PROVIDENCES from the
SETTLEMENT of the COUNTRY
till the general revival of RELIGION.

ALTHOUGH the dark night of Pagan
idoltry continued to envelop this west-
ern continent long after all the other quarters
of the globe had enjoyed the light of gospel
day, the hand of sovereign grace withdrew the
curtain at last. As the light of the natural sun,
coming forth as a bridegroom from the cham-
bers of the east, unweariedly travels through e-
very intermediate clime until, it reaches the re-
moteft western region; so did the more glori-
ous sun of righteousness pursue his steady cir-
cuit; having begun his journey in the east,
and

and kindly illuminated all the lands successively; that lay in the way, he ceased not to chase the clouds before him, until AMERICA, at last, beheld the joyful dawn, and to her own surprise, found herself invited to share with other lands, the sweet effects of God's unspeakable gift; and in common with the rest, was permitted to drink the vital rays of the fountain of light. This Country arrived so late at the enjoyment of the blessed inheritance of the gospel, that, compared with the nations in general, it seemed like one born out of due time; yet it may truly be said, that when its day began, for the clearness of its light, the warmth of its beams, and the perfection of the fruits which were thereby produced, it came not a whit behind the chiefest of those favourite climes which had been blessed with the gospel before it.

We thankfully bear record to the adorable grace, that, in the fulness of time, introduced the gospel into AMERICA, by a chain of providences so deep and wonderful; and, by a set of holy, wise and faithful ministers, whom the peculiar care of the great head of the church, had singularly fitted, and graciously reserved as shafts, in his own hand, polished for that service.

The Colonies settled by Spain and Portugal, in the southern parts of this great continent were intended only for extending the dominions of those nations, and amassing earthly treasures to the adventurers, and those who sent them; they cannot be considered as attempts to enlarge the Redeemer's kingdom; the religion which they imported was Popery, in its grossest form;

So far as that matter was concerned, their settlement was rather, a new establishment of the kingdom of satan in the land, under the more specious, but not less destructive form of anti-christian superstition.

Various essays had also been made by some protestant nations to plant North-America with adventurers from their respective countries: In the year 1584, Queen Elizabeth had granted to Sir Walter Rawleigh, all lands he should discover between the 32d and 40th deg. of north latitude; that gentleman had formed a society selected from among the men of wealth and power, by whose aids several embarkations of settlers were carried to Virginia; among which was a fleet of no less than seven ships at one time, under the command of Sir Richard Granville: But as all these were only bold efforts to raise fortunes for the persons concerned, the frown of the universal proprietor of the earth was upon the project; most of the adventurers perished for want of support, or fell victims to the irreconcilable vengeance of the savages, and the scheme gave way to another of the same kind, which carried off the leaders in quest of mountains of gold in Guiana.

Of the same complexion were the endeavours of the Swedes and Dutch, to fix possessions for themselves on Hudson's river, and the parts adjacent in the new Netherlands, as they then called all that tract of country, now divided between the States of New York and New Jersey: And Providence soon blasted the undertaking by the English invasion, and conquest of the place, and by the treaty of Breda, which confirmed the possession to its new master.

The Plymouth company, was erected by letters patent from King James, I. on the 10th day
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of April, 1606, for the purpose of planting and ruling the territory now called New England, which had been discovered by Capt. Bartholomew Gosnold, on the 11th of May, 1602; this society consisted of a considerable number of nobility and gentlemen of great opulence; it was incorporated upon specious pretexs of the most liberal principles: yet all their strength was employed for fourteen years in sending out vessels to catch fish on the coast, and carry on a fur trade with the natives ashore: Money was on the whole their object---and money was the snare in which their scheme at last, was entangled and lost; for a Capt Hunt, in their employ, having enticed twenty-seven Indians on board of his ship, basely carried them off to Spain, and there sold them for twenty pounds sterling each, whereby their avarice became its own defeat: Their commerce with the Indians was immediately broken off, and all their hopes of prosecuting their plan to effect were finished. Thus the holy Sovereign of the universe intending to reserve this land as the asylum of true religion, saw meet to frustrate all attempts of earthly minds, to alienate it from that use, and offer it in sacrifice to the manimon of unrighteousness.

Not would he vouchsafe his smiles to any attempts to settle, even the protestant religion, in South-America, though that religion was formed on his own word, any more than he would countenance those plantations in North America, which took any thing besides that religion for their foundation: A colony of French protestants about fifty years before, fleeing from a bloody persecution at home, under the protection of the great Gayer Cognin, Admiral of France, were transported to Brazil, by that learned and opulent

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knight Villagagnon, for the express purpose of propagating the protestant religion there ; and in a few years after, at their request, fifteen eminent divines were sent from Geneva. to prosecute that great design, but one part of this embassy was lost at sea : the rest made a very promising beginning in that new world. But discord and danger soon appeared, and made the country too hot for them. Their Governor turned an apostate, and murdered all of them that fell into his hands, a very few escaped by taking flight to the land from whence they came ; and the shepherds being thus smitten, the flock was scattered, some fell under the butchers hand, and the rest were lost among the Pagan tribes, with which they were compelled to mingle.

It was the determination of infinite wisdom, not only to have his American temple erected solely on his own plan, but also to have it built altogether by his own hands : No plan therefore could receive his countenance, that called for men to lift their tools to his altar ; nor any attempt that leaned, for its support, on the wealth or power of the great ones of the earth. When true religion is to be planted in America, it must be the atchievement of the finger of God alone. All other great names, like Gideon's superfluous troops, must be dismissed ; and all spectators, and all succeeding ages, be compelled to confess, of the whole of that great work, " This is the Lord's doing, and marvellous in our eyes." But the set time to visit Zion with so glorious an enlargement, was not yet come. The heavenly stranger could not yet enter on the destined possession, because the iniquity, neither of the Egyptian that expelled her, nor of the Amorite that was to be expelled

elled by her, was yet full. And when that time shall arrive, Brasil is not the place, marked out for the theatre of the most glorious goings of Israel's king in his sanctuary. No. Brasil, alas, must be given to salt! Brasil, and the rest of the vast regions of the south, were reserved, for ages then to come, to be a slaughter house for the dragon and the beast! An Aceldama, in which Popery and Paganism were to try their respective prowess, and each to display that genius and temper in the destruction of the other, which it would otherwise have discovered (as it had heretofore been wont) in the ruin of the precious flocks of Christ.

New-England was the favourite spot. And the year 1620, the time appointed for carrying the triumphs of the cross into the bowels of the kingdom over which the powers of darkness had so long swayed an universal sceptre uncontrouled. The resolution of the English reformed refugees at Leyden, may be considered as an expedition formed against the dominions of the God of this world. The enterprize of this little handful of pious, poor and persecuted christians, to carry the true religion of Jesus into an inhospitable wilderness, inhabited only by savage beasts, and still more savage men; and, unsupported by the wealth or power of this world, to plunge naked into the midst of a numberless multitude of heathen tribes, whose every principle would excite them to combine for the destruction of their invaders; this, in more respects than one, did resemble the undertaking of the Hebrew stripling; who, with the simple armour of a sling and stone, nobly dared to take the field alone against Goliath of Gath, who had deemed himself sufficient to defy the whole army of Israel: The fastings and prayers of July 2d in that year, shewed that, like him, they went out depending

depending neither on their strength, their skill, nor their friends, but only in the name of the Lord of Hosts. Indeed the sailing of this little army from England, on the 6th of September, deserves to be regarded as the most remarkable of all the cru- zades ; and the prayers and praises with which, on the 11th of November following, they prostrated themselves on the shore at their landing, was a formidable assault on satan's strong hold ; a formal erection of Christ's standard in A M E R I C A, and an actual taking possession of the country in his name : This gave date to a remarkable æra in ecclesiastical history, and opened a new field for the display of gospel-grace. Twenty nations of Indians, each under its separate chief, surrounded the invaders ; the sma'llest of which, to human eyes, appeared sufficient to devour them at a breakfast ; yet, in full sight of all, they boldly ventured to spend the month of their landing, chiefly in joint public acts of devotion ; and having first so- lemnly erected the standard of religion, they calmly betook themselves to the work of settling a form of civil government among themselves ; and to the singular goodness of God it must be as- cribed, that, partly by an intestine war that was a- mong the tribes in this quarter, and partly from the havoc made among them, by a pestilential disease, the savages were so reduced at the time of the ar- rival of these adventurers, as not to dare any acts of open hostility against them ; even the enchant- ments of their powows, when employed with all their force, confessed themselves unable to pre- vail : The natives were inspired with a dread of the English ; and, in the spring after their settle- ment began, Massasoit, the head of the Massa- chusetts tribe, having been persuaded by Squan- to,

to, a friendly Indian made them a visit, and entered into a treaty of alliance with them; and several other chiefs followed his example,

Though the first settlers conflicted with numberless difficulties, in which they might be said to suffer a martyrdom of many deaths; yet love to Christ, and his religion, surmounted all: The hand of their God was upon them for good, and they prospered in all the work of their hands; in-
somuch, that in the course of a few years, a number of towns were built, and a considerable number of churches settled in them, walking sweetly together, in the faith and order of the gospel.

It was the glory of the church, in this western hemisphere, to be illuminated, in its infancy, by a constellation of stars of the first magnitude: The holy men that were sent to minister in this part of the sanctuary, at that time, were possessed with a double portion of the spirit of the ancient martyrs; they laboured like workmen that need not be ashamed; and the Lord confirmed their testimony with signs following. We cannot pass unnoticed the zealous and unwearied efforts of the great Elliot, who, with a truly apostolic spirit, penetrated the wilderness, and, enduring hardness as a good soldier, carried the pure gospel of Christ to the surrounding tribes, learned their language himself, and then instructed, and sent teachers among them; gave them a grammar, and a copy of the bible, together with several catechisms, and tracts on practical religion, in their own tongue; and had the pleasure to see numbers of those children of darkness rescued, by those means, from satan's service, and brought to the glorious liberty of the children of God—twenty-four religious assemblies gathered from among
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then, and twenty-four native Indians ministering to them in the word and ordinances of the gospel.

When we mention a Gotton, and an Hooker, a Wilson, a Norton and a Davenport, a Shepard, a Mitchel, and other revered names, whom it pleased the Lord then to use as master-builders in laying the foundations of his temple in this land. The christian heroes of the primitive church seem to rise to our view; and we cannot but adore the wisdom and goodness of Zion's King, that chose out and furnished such Zerubbabels for holding his plummet, and conducting the building of his house.

Perfection of wisdom or holiness we never expect to find in mortal men: and it was necessary, perhaps, that some imperfections should be discovered in these holy servants of God whom we have mentioned, least our veneration of their names should be in danger of rising to superstitious excess: Though it must be said to the honour of divine grace, that their failures were as few as could be consistent with the present state of human nature. We would not wish the church to sit down by their practices in all things as a model; nor did they themselves desire this. Sensible that God never chose to reveal all things to his people at once; they thought it their duty to push the reformations attained by their ancestors as much farther as the Lord should enlighten and enable them: No less than to adore the giver, and improve the gift which they had received through the first reformers hands.

The rights of private judgment and conscience, in matters of religion, these worthy men, in in-
 cibly defended and liberally used: Nor did they
 manifest a wish to monopolize them: Justly per-
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suaded that others had no cause to be offended with them for a difference of judgment, in matters that so intimately concerned themselves, they were far from denying to others the lawful liberty to which themselves laid claim, and were they now on the footstool they would never think it hard, if persons of our known principles, should tell the world, that how highly so ever we esteem and honor them, we are not able to concur with all their sentiments; the points however in which we, in common with all Presbyterians, dissent from them, are not any wise fundamental in religion, nor is the difference so great as to affect the mutual charity of our churches and theirs:

In articles relating to doctrinal, experimental and practical religion, we rejoice to have it to say, that our principles and theirs perfectly agree; and whatever exceptions we have to the mode of church government prescribed in their Platform, we thankfully adore the hand of the Most High, that was upon them for good, in so eminent a manner, that, so early as the year 1638, they saw a hopeful seminary of human and divine knowledge happily created at Cambridge, for training up their Sons to the high employment of diffusing the light of the gospel through the wilds of the country yet unsubdued, and handing it down to generations yet unborn; and that, before the end of the year 1648, a general synod of all the churches unanimously agreed on the Westminster confession of faith, as the public declaration of their own principles; and solemnly avowed their entire concurrence in all material points, with the reformed churches of Scotland, France, Bohemia, Holland, Geneva, and Switzerland.

This was a step which produced very happy consequences to the churches in that infant State ; and greatly tended to silence the clamours of many in Europe ; who either understood not, or wilfully misrepresented their principles : And the character which it established for them in the Old world, was fully supported by the pure, holy, and successful ministrations of the aforesaid, Reverend and excellent Divines, in the New.

The lustre of that bright and glorious morning of the gospel, was, however, too soon overcast with various clouds. New adventurers, tis true, yearly arrived, and their civil establishment, acquired fresh solidity as their numbers increased : The wonders God had wrought for them, drew the eyes of all protestant countries towards them : This, added to the troubles and persecutions that sought to exterminate true religion at home, soured a spirit of emigration, that twenty ships, and three thousand passengers, have been known to arrive in one year, to strengthen their hands ; and it required all the vigilance of King Charles, to prevent their receiving additional consequence, by a Hampden, a Pym, and a Cromwell, actually joining themselves to that list. But it was to be lamented, that their religion did not receive reinforcements, by every such importation, in the same proportion as their numbers and their wealth were increased : Amongst many worthy persons that yearly became adventurers, there were not a few mingled of a very different character ; and though no small care was taken by the government to make the laws of the colony a terror to evil-doers ; and many impatient of that restraint, soon quitted the settlement,

settlement, and sought habitations elsewhere, more suited to their taste; yet a sufficient number of the same stamp, remained to serve as leaven to the lump. In process of time, it began to appear, that a generation had got interwoven with the community, who drove on an interest quite different from that of religion. Many of the principal ornaments of the church, and of the first settlement, had now been called up to the church triumphant; and not a few of their survivors seemed to have so got the errand on which they sought a sanctuary in the American wilds. A worldly spirit gradually crept in: A regard to the godly doctrines, and discipline, to support which so many dangers had been faced, so many distresses endured, was seen to decrease apace: Backslidings spread like an epidemic disease, and the sounding of the gospel-trumpet by the faithful watchmen, who yet remained on their walls; instead of alarming their fears, and rousing them against that in which their danger lay, served only to irritate the corruptions of many, and expose the best shepherds of Christ's flock, to be considered as the chief troblers of Israel in the land. The seeds of division began to be sown; and in some instances they grew up to a spirit of separation; insomuch that Williams, a furiousingleader therein, was expelled the government, and became a leader of sectaries in a new colony, formed on his own principles, in Rhode-Island.

An awful interruption of the peace of the church, thus begun so early as the year 1630, was a seasonable indication of the divine displeasure at the backsliding which led the way to it. Nor did it end here. The fire kindled by this spark, could

could not be extinguished by all the pious labors of the ministry: and the civil authority could not so far prevail to smother it, but that it blazed and raged afresh, on every new occasion: Questions of no moment, were frequently stated, even the cross in the English colours became a test of orthodoxy, and every new breath served but to fan the flame. Many persons who were resolved to take little trouble about religion, went off and settled at Piscataqua, while a colony of a better sort, sought a more peaceful seat on Connecticut river.

But the hour of temptation with them that remained was not yet past. The adversary of Zion seemed but to gather strength from his defeats. The church was after that attacked in a new form. A flood of Antinomian and Familistic errors, imported by GORTON, was poured out by himself and his disciples: Nor did his banishment, in the year 1636, put a stop to the growth of that evil: a notorious female hypocrite whose name was HUTCHESON, took up and improved on his plan; until by her means the churches throughout the colony were very generally disturbed: A Synod was at last called on the occasion; where the heresies aforesaid were justly condemned: And the civil authority having banished the Jezebel who hatched them, she, with her family, removed to a new settlement in the limits of New York government, where they were almost barbarously murdered by the Indians, anno 1637.

Some people, warmly attached to the diocesan episcopacy and ceremonies of the church of England, at different times started up, and attempted to break up the order of the religious societies in

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divers parts : But these never produced such dangerous contentions as the Anabaptists effected : Individuals of this latter sort had been found among the planters of this country, almost from the beginning : their conduct had often given much disturbance to the churches ; and at last they carried their point to raise a party, and then declaring a public separation, they set up an Anabaptist church at Swanzey, and afterwards another at Boston, anno, 1665 ; in which, as in all their more private or occasional meetings, they employed illiterate mechanics for their teachers, and the appearance of their proceedings having carried away the President of the College, and having a manifest tendency to unhinge all the standing churches in the land : The government thought it necessary to lay some restraint on their exorbitancies by law : but a gentle dissuasive arriving, in the interim from the great Dr. Owen, Dr. Goodwin and others in England, prevailed to prevent the carrying these statutes completely into execution. Some public disputations indeed were managed against them : At length a synod, in 1679, bore public testimony against their practices ; and so the separation of that sect was perfected.

The spirit of delusion may justly be ranked among the number of those things that never say " it is enough " ; the fanaticism of the Anabaptists familists, had shaken the credit of a part of the ordinances of the gospel, but something was still wanting to complete the design of the enemy of the truth ; and therefore, a herd of Foxonian Quakers, were let loose among the new plantations, avowedly to oppose, and as far as possible, to overthrow them all : This worked on the New-
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English churches, anno 1656. The rage of the enthusiasm with which these messengers of Satan buffeted the religion of this country, could be equalled only by the success that attended their exertions. This was so alarming to all well wishers to the gospel, and so offensive to all friends of good order and society, that the legislature were betrayed into the unhappy expedient of passing a sanguinary law which forbid the return of such as a former act had banished, and that on pain of death: Whereby sundry of that sect, who prided themselves in giving disturbance to church and state, and obstinately persisted in bidding defiance to all law, contemptuously tarrying after the time limited by authority, or boldly returning from exile in the face of these statutes, furiously rushed on the naked point offered them by government, in its own defence, and, in the year 1669, fell victims to their own madness. Although the three or four devoted wretches, on whom this law was executed, had pursued such courses as proved them dangerous to the state, and exposed them to be indicted as enemies to the public peace; yet it is much to be regretted, that the legislature were led, in an hour of temptation, to do justice to the state, in such a way as seemed to be a bloody persecution, encouraged by the church.

To consummate Satan's project, and at the same time to bring him to the end of his chain, the damage done him in the suppression of the Quakers, must seek for reparation in a general effusion of a pernicious influence on the people; prompting some to pretend to the arts of witchcraft, and others to give but too credulous an ear to the pretence: from which it is too manifest that a season of deep darkness and sore distress overpread the churches:

churches ; and whatever power satan might falsely pretend he had usurped over the bodies, tis lamentable to contemplate what empire he, for a time, actually possessed over the minds of great numbers, insomuch that nineteen unhappy wretches were executed in the colony, from the year 1648 to the year 1692, by the civil authority of the state, for the supposed crime of witchcraft ; who all died, protesting their innocence, besides about a dozen more who were hightened into confessions of guilt.

This gradation of judgments more especially affecting the spiritual concerns of the country, seemed to be particularly directed to the churches in it. And severely were they felt, and lamented with many tears, by those who, endowed with a spiritual taste, laid the interest of religion nearest to their hearts. The carnal minded however, among the generations then on the stage, were, but little affected with them : They grew yet more hardened in their evil ways : Nor did the Lord leave himself without a witness even among them : He had arrows in his quiver that could reach them also ; with infinite ease he could take away their Gods : For this purpose he visited the country with a train of judgments that fell on the earthly interests of its unthankful inhabitants ; the wheat, the pease, &c. were smitten with an annual blast, from which they have escaped but few years to the present day, severe droughts in summer, from year to year, burnt up every green thing, and threatened to desolate the land by famine ; pestilential diseases were sometimes commissioned to spread, and plant colonies in the land of silence ; raging conflagrations devoured great part of their riches, in the principal towns,

and their trade was remarkably frowned on at sea; shipwrecks, destroying great part of what the public enemy did not capture; and that no party concerned in bringing down these judgments, might be exempted from feeling a proper share of their weight, it pleased the Lord to visit the whole community with a very horrible and desolating war, in which hundreds of its most active members felt the whole force of ingenious barbarity, from the hands of their savage enemies; many whole towns were reduced to utter desolation; and the eastern country, though well-peopled, and flourishing in trade and fishery, yet its inhabitants, having never taken any care for procuring or settling the gospel among them, but abandoning themselves too generally, to the pursuit of the world, and the service of their lusts, became a conspicuous monument of divine vengeance, being all the while peculiarly harrassed by the enemy, many of its inhabitants butchered, many of its settlements laid in ashes, and the whole country thrice entirely depopulated.

Reflecting on this remarkable alteration in the course of divine Providence, towards a people so eminently favoured in their first beginnings, whilst we cannot but lament the high-handed rebellions on their part, which not only merited these judgments, but seemed even to require and make them necessary at that time: It is impossible to avoid being struck with the various surprizing interpositions of Heaven in favor of this people under all their corrections, in discovering by most unlikely means the deepest and darkest plots against them, at the critical moment when they were brought to the point of execution: when no means were used by themselves to de-

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test them ; no jealousies having entred their minds that any evil designs were conceived against them : in withdrawing the severest droughts suddenly on the very day when the churches were fasting and praying for the removal of that judgment, and in defeating their Savage foes in the interior parts of the country, and so breaking up their whole design on the day set apart by the people to confess their sins, to renew their covenant with God, and implore his gracious protection against the sword of the wilderness. By these and many similar displays of his goodness to this people, for the sake of his own great name, and for the support of the great cause of the gospel, he raised everlasting monuments to his own honour, melted the hearts of his saints to humble gratitude, put the stupidity of his enemies to the blush, and made even the Indians dread the God of the English ; and surely we, the posterity of that generation, are bound to recognize these mighty works of the Most High, and adore his name for such tokens of his early care of that great interest, which we now behold sinking and bleeding in all parts of the land.

While these judgments were inflicted on the inhabitants of the wilderness ; and the continuance of their backslidings, amidst all the instances aforesaid, that proved God still waiting to be gracious, made it necessary to continue their corrections ; the Lord was pleased to open on them a new scene of trial ; earthquakes had repeatedly struck them with terror ; a great fire, in Boston, had laid in ashes forty-five houses, one meeting house, and divers warehouses, in the year 1676, another, still more severe, in the year 1679, had reduced eighty houses, seventy warehouses,

houses, and a number of vessels in the dock ; and a third in four years after, did more damage than both ; these had not produced the desired effects ; and therefore a new concussion arises. The charter which they had accepted from England, and in which many were now glorying as the bulwark of their liberties, is arraigned in the place of its nativity, and condemned to suffer death ; whilst an arbitrary tool of a tyrannic Prince, fills the chair of government among them, in a manner that gives just cause of serious alarm for the fate of all the privileges, the enjoyment of which had been long envied to this people, by the whole race of the enemies of that religion they were given to defend : The great guardian of that religion, however, soon stilled the tempest by the GLORIOUS REVOLUTION in England ; the news whereof, animated the people so far that they seized Andros, their governor, and sent him prisoner to give an account of his proceedings to the new masters of the nation.

New-England, rejoicing to find herself now under a government more propitious to liberty and the protestant religion, willingly received a new charter from its hands, although as much inferior to the former, in the privileges it secured ; as in glory and magnificence, the second temple at Jerusalem came short of the first. To this was added another mark of their majesties favor, in the appointment of Sir William Phipps, a person born in New-England, to the chief seat of government in it. However, as all went backwards in religion and virtue, with melancholy haste, it could not be expected, that a professing people, so distinguished as this, would be
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suffered in tranquillity to sleep on in so dangerous a course ; and hence we find they were still followed with one trial after another : Their attempt on Canada, in 1690, failing of success, they were continually harrassed by the French and Indians : Several hundreds of the helpless inhabitants were killed, among whom were several ministers, and great numbers carried off as captives to their savage conquerors : Nevertheless, a brow of brass was still seen on the face of the unhumbled community : The arm of flesh was still addressed for reparation of past losses ; and security against further disasters ; fifteen men of war, and forty transports, with seven thousand men, sailed from Boston, July 30th, 1711, to reduce Canada ; but on the 22d of the next month, nine of these ships were lost, one thousand men drowned, and the expedition broken up : This was a disaster that, at other times, would not have failed to rouse a spirit of inquiry and reformation among this people ; but now it produced no other effects than mumblings against the instruments of the distress it occasioned. Various others of the Lord's scourges were therefore plied in the mean time, to awaken this generation : A tremendous fire in Boston, in the same year, threatened to lay that metropolis waste ; and in the year 1721, the small-pox was empowered to carry off eight hundred and forty-four of its inhabitants ; the horrors of war continued still in the wilderness ; and the eastward was by those means depopulated again ; and even the earthquake that happened in the year 1727, with all the displays it gave of divine anger and divine power, availed not generally to work the

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cure of that fatal lethargy which seemed now to sit triumphant on all ranks, in church and state ; although it is to be thankfully recorded, that there is good reason to believe many individuals were, by that means, awakened and brought home.

In considering the events of this period we are at a loss whether of these two to recognize with most astonishment, the amazing patience of the Lord in still bearing with, still cultivating, and still supporting so incorrigible a generation of men, or the stupendous obduracy of the hearts that remained proof against all the pains thus divinely taken to reclaim them ! Irreligion and profaneness had now many votaries, errors of all sorts had taken root in most corners of the land : Arminian tenets were taught and embraced with applause, and even where Calvinism was commonly preached, there was an evident death upon the means of grace. Ministers were sunk into an awful coldness and formality, and people grew up and grew old settled in a false peace, derived merely from the wisdom and virtue of their ancestors---the purity of their churches--the fairness of their own standing in the charity of their brethren, and the greatness of the privileges with which they were blessed : the great and fundamental truths of the gospel, seemed to have lost their energy even where the belief of them was professed.

The same reasons cannot fail to oblige us to condemn this whole course of apostacy amongst all ranks on the stage, that induce us to acknowledge and adore the divine compassion, so eminently

nently manifested in their support under all the righteous judgments which Heaven was constrained to pour out on this guilty land.

Nor was this melancholy state of things peculiar to the colony of Massachusetts Bay, Connecticut kept pace with it in all its declensions; and as these two ever possessed the character of being the most regular and pious among all the new settlements; it may be considered as a violent presumption; that virtue and religion ran low in the rest, when found to have sunk into such lamentable decays even among these.

The imminent danger of the Massachusetts, of being brought under the fangs of popery, and their narrow escape from that snare in the time of Andros, served for a long while to keep alive among that people, the ancient hatred of their fathers, against that slavish system of idolatry. But it was not so in every other part of the land, Popery had received a legal establishment in Maryland, and reigned triumphant in all the extensive dominions of France, with which New-England was almost surrounded. The ceremonies of the episcopal church of old England, so carefully mimicking those of Rome, began to find many admirers in the new; partly among those who affected to be too polite to stoop to attend to the preciseness of religion, and partly with men, whose avarice prompted them to fall in with that church, as an expedient to escape the payment of tates in their own.

This religion had received the sanction of an exclusive establishment by law, in the several royal governments; and the lure of posts of honor and emolument, held up to pensionists, together
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with the exertions of the English society 'for propagating the gospel in foreign parts, gradually made way for it in the colonies that were formed by charter: indeed they seemed to want nothing but the establishment of an episcopate in America, to ensure the universal spread of that profession throughout the land.

Nor was there much more ground of boasting afforded by the face of religion in the governments that were thought free: Anabaptism, with all its kindred errors, was rooted in Rhode-Island, and Quakerism carried all before it in Pennsylvania.

C H A P T E R II,

S E C T I O N I.

Revivals of Vital Religion.

OF the melancholy state of things represented above, the eye of human reason foresees no issue but speedy destruction. While iniquity thus awfully abounded, and the love of many waxed cold; every step seemed to tend towards apostacy itself. The cup of iniquity appeared to be full, and just ready to be dashed on the heads
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of this guilty people. Ministers and Christians, who still retained such a share of sensibility as enabled them to discern the signs of these times, trembled at the thought of the judgments they presaged.

But, blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when judgment was deserved, was expected, he brought forth mercy! When we were going on frowardly in the way of our hearts, it pleased him in his sovereign mercy to see our ways and heal them! This was effected in a very remarkable degree, by a very general, powerful and glorious effusion of the special, gracious influences of his Holy Spirit, to give energy and success to the word of his grace in various parts of the land, from the year 1739, to 1741.

This was not the first revival of religion with which the God of all grace had blessed this new world. We have it from authentic records, that when the churches in the colonies of Massachusetts, Plymouth, and Connecticut, did in the year 1679 set themselves to comply with the advice of the Reverend Synod, convened the same year, by a solemn and express renewal of their covenant with God, the special presence of Zion's king, was very notably discovered among them; and very remarkable was the blessing of God on the churches, in a great advancement of holiness and comfort in their members, and great additions of converts to their fellowship.

This gale of Heavenly wind, though of short continuance was succeeded by another which breathed into many dead souls the breath of life, in many places in town and country, in the year 1703: Societies for reformation were voluntarily set up in almost every church. Solemn covenants

covenants entered into with great spirit to strengthen the interests of virtue and piety, and suppress disorders and immoralities. Praying societies were multiplied: some consisting of males, some of females; some of the young, and some of the more advanced in years; some of whole families together. Family religion was restored, and the public institutions of divine worship were honored by all ranks.

In the days of the holy and laborious Stoddard, the town of Northampton was blessed with five general revivals of religion under his ministry, viz. in the year 1679, 1683, 1696, 1712 and 1718: in each of which a blessed harvest of souls, especially among the youth, was gathered in to the Lord Jesus.*

On occasion of the great earthquake which happened October 29, 1727, many persons in all corners of the land were awakened to serious pursuits of religion, and there appeared for a time a hopeful reviving of the Lord's work.

A far more glorious measure of divine influence was poured out at Northampton and the other towns in the county of Hampshire in Massachusetts, and in sundry places in Connecticut, in the years 1734, 1735 and 1736.

But the revival of religion that took place between the year 1729, and 1744 inclusive, was by far the greatest display of the all-conquering power and grace of the enthroned Redeemer, that ever was made in this land: As it spread itself over all parts of the English plantations in America

* And a remarkable instance of the same kind happened at Windham, in Connecticut, in the year 1721.

rica, as well as no small share of the British European dominions, grasped in great multitudes of all rank and characters, of all ages and sexes, and, notwithstanding great opposition from different quarters prevailed, and was effectual wherever it came: And although it was not always, and in all places, without the marks of suffering from the artifices of satan, and the infirmities of humanity in some who were supposed the subjects of the work, and others who were used as instruments to promote it; yet it did, on the whole, evince itself to be a most glorious work of divine grace, both in the views of divine things it introduced, in the impression of them it made on the heart, and the effects thereof it produced in the holy and virtuous lives of great numbers through all the land.

This work received a very judicious and faithful testimony from sixty eight of the most eminent persons in the ministry, convened in Boston, to examine carefully into the nature of it, on the 7th of July, 1743; and soon after it had very honorable attestations under the hand of forty eight more of the ablest ministers in the land: And though we would not be understood to approve of every thing in the religious appearances of that remarkable day, nor make ourselves party for any delusion of satan, extravagance of imagination, or instance of confusion and disorder that may have mixed with this work; yet, as the bulk and substance of this revival did clearly distinguish itself from these things: We cannot in conscience, pass over that memorable season, without our public, hearty and thankful acknowledgments of the glorious grace then displayed in a great part of this land, in the marvellous power,
by

by which the holy spirit descended to make the word of God successful in the conviction, humiliation and conversion of sinners, and in the consolation and progressive sanctification of believers.

S E C T I O N II.

Abstract of Events from the revival of Religion, to the beginning of the War, 1775.

AMONGST the various objections offered by the opposers of this work, it was thought to be of no small force, that it engrossed so great a share of the time and care of the subjects of it : And some supposed not to prophesy a general famine through the land, as the certain consequence of that neglect of secular business, which could afford so much time to the exercises of religion : Scarce any topic of argument could be more popular than this ; it was however, quite insufficient to deter the people in general, at that time, from the pursuit of the one thing needful, and divine Providence took care to co-operate in promoting the designs of Divine Grace, by affording an eventual refutation of the argument. The persons whom these concerns had most notably diverted from attending

to worldly affairs, declared with one voice, that their temporal interest was rather advanced than impaired in the issue; and it can never be forgotten how remarkably the smiles of Heaven attended the undertakings of this people in their public measures from that time forward: The aspect of their general concerns bore testimony, that from that day God would bless them, having begun to be the glory in the midst of them, he would make even their enemies confess that he was a wall of fire around: The connexion then subsisting between them and Great Britain, obliged them to take share in all the calamities that befell that nation; the inveterate animosities between that power and the French, had plunged this country, in common with all the other dependencies of that crown, into an open war, in the year 1744: It seemed to be a point agreed on by both nations, that the fate of the New-English colonies must be decided by that of Louisburgh; and that so long as that city remained in the hands of France, it might be considered as the Dunkirk of New England. Its reduction all thought necessary to the common safety: but how that should be effected none could point out: To apply to Great Britain, for a force sufficient for that purpose, seemed all that could be done on this side of the water: but the circumstances of that nation, and the time necessary to give effect to such application, forbid all sanguine expectations from it. In the winter following, a plan was concerted by Governor Shirley, and the Massachusetts assembly, to make the attempt with New-England forces alone: this was a new thing in the plantations, the enterprise appeared so arduous in itself, and pregnant with consequences so serious to this coun-

ty : that many of those who felt deeply interested in the event, and most ardently wished success to the measure, yet could not help censuring it as rash and unadvised to undertake it with an armament so little versed in matters of that kind : It was on the 26th of January that a vote was carried, only by a majority of one single voice in the assembly at Boston, for an expedition against Louisburgh : All the other governments were requested to co-operate in it---but all excused themselves except New-England : There indeed they found a disposition to assist them : Connecticut granted five hundred men, New-Hampshire three hundred, and Rhode-Island three hundred, but these last arrived not till after the place was taken. The Massachusetts land forces consisted of three thousand two hundred and fifty men, besides officers ; ten small vessels, the largest being only of twenty guns, made the whole naval force. The command of the expedition was given to Sir William Pepperell, who sailed from Nantasket, on the 24th of March, and arrived at Casco the 4th of April.

The whole series of events, from the first step of this adventure to that time, had given every encouragement to hope that Heaven was on their side ; yet when they considered the weakness of their naval force, and the probability of their being surprized by the sudden arrival of some men of war from France, the hearts of many trembled to go forward, who yet were determined by no means to go back : But at this crisis on the 2d of April, they were rejoiced with the unexpected arrival of Commodore Warren, with some ships of force from the West-Indies : Animated with this reinforcement, the troops landed on the 10th. at Chapeau Rouge Bay : On the 15th

of May, the *Vigilant*, a French 64 gun ship, with 350 men, and stores for the garrison, fell into their hands; and on the 17th of the next month, the city was delivered up, after a siege of forty-nine days. Two East-Indiamen, and one South-sea ship, belonging to France, supposed altogether to be of 600,000 pounds sterling value, were taken at the mouth of the harbour; and the whole loss on our part, by the enemy and sickness, did not exceed 100 men.

This expedition did not only ensure most important advantages to New-England, but also proved the means of saving Nova-Scotia; for DuRoi had sailed from France, with seven ships of war, in the beginning of July, for the purpose of conquering that province: and had orders to make Cape-Breton their place of rendezvous; but taking a prize on their way, and learning from it the fate of New-Burgh, he thought it proper to return home.

Nor was this the only mark of the divine care over the colonies, that followed the happy reformation, which divine influence had brought to pass among them: It may be considered as the occasion of an interposition of Providence, for their protection, in the ensuing year, as memorable as any experienced in the Western Continent, since its settlement. To recover the important fortress, thus wrested from her hand, and to make reprisals for the blow she had received, France fitted out, at an immense cost, a very formidable fleet. Boston was destined its immediate object. But its intention was the conquest of Nova-Scotia, and the destruction of all the English sea-coast from thence to Georgia: Charged with this grand national business, the Duke D'Anville, eluding the vigilance of the English Squadron, which was ordered

dered to block up Brest, slipped out of that harbour, with fourteen sail of capital ships, twenty lesser men of war, and fifty transports, besides fire ships, bombs and tenders, with a vast quantity of stores of all kinds, and eight thousand troops on board: He was to be joined by Conflans, with four ships of the line; and Chibuelo was appointed for their rendezvous:

The terror with which the news of this fleet struck the American coast, was similar to the panic of England on account of the Spanish armada, in 1588.---Every face was pale---every heart trembled: There was no prospect of an English fleet to follow them, soon enough to prevent the execution of their main design: nor could there be conceived the least hope of the colonies making any successful resistance against so powerful an armament. New England's ancient refuge in times of trouble, was her only strength on this alarming occasion; her eye, and her cry was to God alone. Now did the importance of that religion appear, which gives access to the throne of grace; Heaven was besieged with the incessant prayers of thousands, whom the late revival of religion had instructed to wrestle and prevail there, many were the concerts through the land for fasting, humiliation and prayer on this occasion: And it was ordered, for the confirmation of the christians faith, and for an eternal monument to the honour of the hearer of prayer, that on the very day, when many religious assemblies were met, to implore divine succour against this mighty host: The Lord of hosts was pleased to fight their battles for them; a violent storm obliged Conflans, after his arrival, to put off for France, without waiting for the fleet: By the same means three of D'Anville's capital

ital ships were forced to seek their way to the West Indies, and one was burnt at sea: It was not till the 12th of September, that the Duke arrived at Chibusto, and then he was accompanied only by one ship of the line and three or four transports. And after waiting in vain for the remains of his dispersed forces, for three days, he made his exit from this life suddenly on the 16th: And though the Vice Admiral arrived with three or four ships in the afternoon of the same day, yet on the 18th, it was proposed by himself, to return to France; this proposal met with such opposition in council, that it was finally rejected; and its author was so much agitated on that account, that he ran himself through the body: Jonquiere, on whom the chief command now devolved, resolved not to retreat from so great an undertaking, without first striking some memorable blow, sailed from Chibusto on the 13th of October, but on the 15th a violent storm met him off Cape Sables, which shattered and dispersed the fleet and blew final ruin on the scheme; the only efforts made, by such as survived that tempest, were bent towards seeking shelter for themselves in some more friendly clime:

Not to acknowledge the finger of God in all this, would argue an impious denial of divine providence; universal joy was diffused through all the plantations; and the high praises of God the deliverer, dwelt on almost every tongue: Such were the tokens of the divine favour towards this people, when religion was their business: It was, however, their singular guilt, that they but too exactly copied the example of ungrateful Israel, who at the Red Sea sang his praises, but in the wilderness, soon forgot his works. Though the

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impression made on the hearts of many in the late revival, were too deep ever to be forgotten, it is very lamentable to consider how soon the zeal of the bulk of the people died away, and how easily they relapsed into their former tempers and pursuits; herein we may behold a lively proof that no special religious improvement can be made without divine influence, nor continue after its cause is withdrawn. The spirit of degeneracy soon began to put on an appearance that was alarming to pious minds. Worldly interest now was pursued with redoubled eagerness, and worldly means employed to acquire it.---To correct the prevalence of that spirit, the Lord was pleased to permit their savage neighbours to give them no small trouble in the wilderness; 160 of them, with Col. Noble at their head, were slaughtered and taken at Minas, the very first day of the next year; and although the peace of Aix la chappelle, which was concluded on the 7th of October, 1748, promised them rest from the violence of the heathen, yet the secret manœuvres of the French, to whose pleasure the Indians, in this quarter, had generally devoted themselves, still kept the blood of our frontiers a spilling; the sweets of peace could never be said to have been enjoyed with any security, by the inhabitants of the interior parts, until the flames of a new war openly broke forth again in the year 1755.

Warnings of some such public judgment at hand might have been seen in the general backslidings that preceded it; especially as Heaven had already been frowning on them in the disasters already mentioned, as well as in an awful fire in Boston, which laid the State-house, &c. in ruins, anno 1748; in a distressing invasion of their

eastern

capital by the small pox 1752, and in the dreadful earthquake which shook the whole country, November 18, anno 1755. No heed was given to all these alarming messages from on High: Therefore it became necessary that the shower should be poured out, of which these drops had been the fore-runners: and when it fell, it brought with it a train of calamities which overspread the land; and the effects of which this generation will not see completely removed: The symptoms of divine displeasure were upon us every where. Major Washington had been defeated by the French on the 3d of July preceeding; and on July 9th 1755, Braddock and his forces were cut to pieces near Fort duquesne: 'tis true the advantage gained by a body of 2000 of our people in the taking of Beaufejour, on the 16th of June, and especially the success of another corps under the command of Sir William Johnson on the 7th of September, in the same year; in which the Baron Dieskau is taken, with the loss of 1000 of his men, near Lake George; were some consolation for the losses aforesaid: Yet the aspects of affairs were on the whole growing more dismal whenever we turned our eyes: The violence of the Indians nearly depopulated the Eastern country once more; the frontiers of all the colonies were continually harrassed; how many of their settlements now were broken up, how many houses demolished, how many men, women and children butchered, how many more carried off by the Savages, to lead out a miserable life in a captivity of the most horrid species! Mean while, all our plans of operation were crossed. That of an attack upon Crown Point, which was the chief object next year fell through: And the expedition against Louibargh, in which Lord

London

Louden with 6000 men from New York, and Admiral Holbourne with 5000 more from Cork, supported by a considerable fleet had proceeded to Halifax and formed a junction, there, was suddenly frustrated by the news of the arrival of the Brest fleet at the place of their destination. The General returned to York; and the Admiral met with a violent storm on the 25th of September, in which one of his ships was lost, eleven disabled, and the rest obliged to make the best of their way to England in a shattered condition: The enemy all this time were carrying the triumphs of their arms wherever they went. Oswego falls into their hands on August 17th, 1756 after only three days siege: And with that fortress we lost all the command of the Lakes, all our frigates, transports, &c. on them, 100 pieces of cannon, a large quantity of provision, and 1600 prisoners: All our forts in the borders of the five nations, were demolished and abandoned, and our whole frontiers left uncovered; and on the 9th of August 1757, Fort William Henry though defended by 2500 men, and covered by General Webb, with 4000 more, surrendered to Montcalm after six days siege: Many of the garrison after capitulation were scalped and murdered by the Savages; who in consequence of their success, proceeded without interruption till they had destroyed all our settlements on the Mohawk river, German flats, &c. Mournful were the effects of this unioctate campaign felt by the settlements which were not deserted, and which yet were exposed to the ravages of the enemy during the succeeding winter: nor were the events with the next was covered any alleviation of our distresses. General Abercrombie with 16000 troops,

attacks

attacks Ticonderoga, and is defeated on July 9th, with the loss of 2000 men, besides Lord Howe, who had fallen in a previous skirmish.

Thus did we smart, year after year, for our manifold and grievous backslidings: and at all this expence of blood and ruins were we to be taught the evil of slighting the precious visitation of divine grace, with which we had been privileged: and righteous and holy would have been the hand of Providence, had it continued to proceed with us in the same line, till we had been entirely extirpated from the land.

But in the midst of Judgment the Lord remembered mercy; when we were brought thus low, and appeared to lie at our enemy's will; having none shut up or left to whom we might look for help in our distresses, the Most High, resolved to try us in a train of mercies; lest our foes should ascribe all their successes to their idolatrous religion: and all our miseries to Heaven's abandoning the cause that opposes it. It was not for our sakes, but for his own name's sake that the great Arbiter of war turned the scale. In the depths of our calamities, the remnant of his people, who had not swined with the stream of public defection, but wept in secret places for it, were spirited up to wrestle with uncommon ardour at the throne of grace, for their guilty country. Days of public fasting, humiliation and prayer, were frequently observed; and many private concerts for the like purposes, were entered into: "They cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and he delivered them"! Rapid was the tide of success that ensued.

Louisburgh is taken July 25, 1758, chiefly through the exertions of the brave General Wolfe. Niagara falls into the hands of Col. Bra. Street

Bradstreet October 31. Fort du Quesne yields to General Forbes, November 24, the same year; and in the campaign next ensuing, the world was astonished to see with what majesty the Lord of Hosts marched through this land, and laid the enemies of the protestant religion prostrate at his feet.

Niagara, which had been abandoned by us, and was now strongly garrisoned by the French, was forced to surrender to General Johnson, July 25, and on the same day Ticonderoga was possessed by General Amherst, as was also Crown Point, on the 14th of the following month; on the 13th of September, General Wolfe, having defeated the French army under Montcalm, near Quebec, with the slaughter of 1,000 of the enemy, and the three first in command; he himself with five hundred of his men, laid down their own lives in the field of victory; and five days afterwards the city surrenders; and although Monsieur Lery attempted to recover the possession of it the next winter; and though the excessive ardour of General Murray gained a considerable victory at Steeple, on the 25th of April following in which we lost 1000 men; yet, on the approach of an advanced part of Lord Colville's fleet, he raised the siege on the 15th of May; and on the 5th of September, Montreal, and with it all Canada, surrenders to Amherst.

In this glorious way did the God of the armies of Israel, gird his sword on his thigh, and ride forth, in the greatness of his strength, from conquering to conquer! and thus did he delight for his Zion's sake, to cast down the mighty, from their seats, and exalt the men of low degree.

The joy diffused through all the British America in this happy issue of so destructive a war, cannot

cannot easily be described; and now was the time for setting up their Ebenezer, saying, "hitherto the Lord hath helped us"; now might it have been expected that such astonishing displays of divine undeserved goodness would have led us, with one heart, to repent and turn to the Lord; and that the rest now granted us would have been eagerly seized and employed, for the reformation of whatever was amiss; and putting away from among us every evil thing; happy indeed had it been for us, had that been the case; then should our peace have been permanent as a river, and the God that had delivered us would have delighted to dwell among us:

But ah! the stupidity and ingratitude that now appeared to have dominion over us! The Sensibility of the ox that knows his owner, and the ass that regards his master's crib, might justly give the blush to this thoughtless generation, whose hearts appeared to have waxen gross, that seeing they might see, and not understand!

No sooner were they ascertained of the possession of Canada, Newburgh, and Nova Scotia, being ceded to England in the peace of Versailles, which was concluded on the 10th of February, 1763, than all parties seemed to resign themselves into the arms of security; as if the bitterness of death were now past; and they had found themselves sheltered in some impregnable fortress; where the judgments of Heaven, that so frequently had made them tremble, could reach them no more; in the joy of his benefits they lost his ear.

England had been active in various of the advantages gained, and English officers had commanded in most of them; and hence England was now, by too many, looked on as the savi-

our of America. In the favour and protection of that nation, rather than of God, too many now rejoiced; on her hand we chose to lean; to her will we bowed in all things; our lives and fortunes were ready at her call; and the fruit of all our labour was poured into her lap: But as Egypt to Israel, so did England to America, prove a reed that was equally ready to break under the weight, and pierce the hand which leaned upon it: It was not long before it began to appear, that, in every action where we considered England as generously lavishing her blood and treasure for us, we were mistaken; it soon became evident, she meant at once to conquer our enemies and ourselves; and to make ourselves the chief tools of that work; all was designed only for herself.

That she meant to be considered as the owner, where we supposed her only the auxiliary, appeared by the resolutions immediately taken by the British parliament, first to recompence the American soldiers and officers for their services, in certain quantities of land granted in this country; and secondly, to repay the American governments for their disbursements in defending, recovering, and enlarging their territories. And the readiness with which the several governments proceeded to execute these resolutions by actually laying off the soldiers part, and thankfully accepting of their own, was a plain acknowledgment of the claim; and exhibited a serious proof of the depth of the plungers into which they were lured; and of the implicit faith with which every thing was received on this side the water, that was projected on the other.

Of this temper another and a stronger evidence was given in the tameness with which the protestant churches in America, laid their hand on their mouth, while they beheld the authority of the British empire employed to establish Popery by law, in the wide and extensive province of Quebec : It was very remarkable that, although the traders in that country, who had hitherto been petty indifferent in religious affairs, united in a public remonstrance to the throne, against this dangerous measure ; we have never heard of any step taken by these churches to testify against it, and assist the operation of that petition ; and with equal appearance of acquiescence did they stand by, and silently look on, when it pleased the British court to establish a popish missionary, with a commission and salary from the crown ; as an itinerant bishop, entrusted with the care of the souls of his Majesty's subjects, throughout Nova-Scotia, and the parts adjacent in the eastern country.

This season of awful supineness was considered as a favourable opportunity for driving on establishments to those religious denominations which had ever avowed their opposition to the churches with which the country had been planted : It was not long before we saw an episcopal college, founded at New-York ; and another at Philadelphia, put under the government of an episcopal provost ; and by the great zeal of the English society, for propagating the gospel in foreign parts ; and the industry of their missionaries, who were hack down in the midst of settled parishes, wherever they could obtain a few male-contents, upon any pretext, to sign a petition requesting them to do so, the churches, in great part of the northern colonies, were constantly troubled,

until at last the episcopal plan was ripe: The great design was confessed. An American episcopate was openly demanded; the demand granted; the man named, and the public challenged to make any objection against the measure, if they dared.

Now that the gauntlet was thrown down, a pretty general alarm seemed to be spread; but this was not seen so much through ecclesiastical as civil bodies: The idea of tithes, and spiritual courts, seemed to strike more sensibly than that of danger to the precious truths of God in the land: Yet champions were found in New-England, to enter the lists with their Goliath; the able labours of the ingenious Doctors Mayhew and Chauncy, repelled the assault; and new measures being adopted at London, for making all America feel herself in the hands of Britain, as clay in the hands of the potter, this project was for the present deferred; the repulse was, however, to be considered rather as a check than a defeat, although we saw no diocesan prelate landed on our shore; we beheld missionaries, under my lord of London, swarming all over the country, and greatly increasing the numbers of that denomination where ever they came.

Nor was this the only attack made on these churches at this period. The Anabaptists had for a considerable time, been labouring to spread themselves in New-England, and had a number of societies actually formed in various parts of it; and now taking the advantage of the remissness of the times, they founded a college in the colony of Rhode-Island, for the purpose of propagating their party. Various sectaries of other names now crept out in the sunshine of peace, that had kept close to their burrows, while the storm

Storm of war continued; and they were not wanting in zeal and industry enough to trouble the waters of any churches, that lay in the way of their rout: and to finish the plan of satan for overthrowing all that remained. Sandiman at last arrived from Scotland, and with all the spirit of an heresiarch indeed, he continued walking to and fro on the earth; from one corner of the land to another, discharging his gall against the clergy, and the most important doctrines they professed to teach.

Whilst inroads were thus making on the churches, by the enemies of their religion on every hand, it was lamentable to see how little of the spirit and power of that religion remained within themselves; the business of reformation seemed to be almost forgotten; and the vital part of christianity overlooked; we resembled a crew that were quarrelling on deck about their shares of the cargo, while their enemies were boring holes in the bottom of the ship; the main concern of the people in general was how to realize the greatest earthly advantages to themselves from the extent of territory now secured to the nation; disputes about patents, and possessions of land occupied individuals, while public bodies were employed in altercations about the lines of their provinces; so great was the rage of a land-fever at this time, that contests on that subject were managed with the greatest animosities; and the fields at Wyoming, were stained with American blood, shed by American hands; these engagements furnished full employ to the minds of this people, and gave the British ministry an opportunity to concert, at their leisure, a scheme for making us and our liberties an easy prey: Extensive tracts of land were granted
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in the heart of old settlements, to officers and favourites of the crown ; people long fixed in their possessions, are ordered to remove their families, or stipulate to pay yearly rents to the new grantees. Vast quantities of the uncultivated parts are laid out for forests to the King ; and lines of circumvallation seemed to be drawn round all the colonies, by an actual survey of the whole shore, which was more than eight years in taking.

The public eye remained fast shut. These and various other steps of the same complexion, had been pursued by the English court in systematic progression. Little notice, however, was taken of them, unless at Hinsdale, until the train was sprung upon us. The prevailing taste was for English manufactures, and English fashions, in the extravagant use of which we aped their vices to an enormous equality with themselves.

'Tis true, and while we acknowledge it with pleasure, we would thankfully adore the Sovereign grace, by which it was effected ; a very considerable revival of vital religion took place in the mean time, at the college at Princeton, and a great part of the Jerseys ; similar effects of the same special divine influence, made their appearance at the same time, in many parishes on Long-Island, and in some places of New-York and Connecticut ; they were spread thro' Virginia, and various parts of the other southern colonies, under the ministry of the disinterested and indefatigable Charles Jeffrey Smith, and others ; and it was the happiness of several towns and plantations in the county of Lincoln, in the eastern part of New-England, soon after to have a share in that gracious visitation : This event produced blessed effects in many who were the subjects of the work,
and

and who, we trust, will never forget it. But, alas! the state of the country in general, continued to grow worse and worse in a moral view.

At last, the fetters which had so long been in the forge, were brought forth, and the design to rivet them on America openly avowed. The first bold experiment of that kind was made by the stamp act, in the year 1765; and although the framers of it by repealing the act on March 18, 1766, seemed to retreat, on meeting a greater opposition than was expected; yet it soon appeared that the retreat was but a feint. The enemy fled in true Parthian mode in the midst of the pretended flight they shot a barbed and impoisoned arrow in the declaratory act, passed in the same session; which fixed itself so deep in the vitals of America. that it could never be extracted but by the horrible war that has since ensued.

Awakened by these threatening appearances, all ranks among us began to take the alarm: All orders of men made opposition to these measures in their several ways; towns resolved, merchants covenanted, authors drew the pen, and assemblies petitioned: But England quickly thifted the mode of address, and began to argue with us by the mouths of her cannon, and to engrave her laws on our breasts by the point of her bayonets: Troops were poured in to awe us to silence and submission, in September and November, anno 1768. And the castle at Boston is betrayed into their hands on September 1770: At length on the night of the 5th of March 1770, on pretence of keeping the peace, a party of the 29th regiment fire on the inhabitants, in King-Street, Boston, and leaves five dead on the spot, and six

are carried off wounded. This massacre opened a breach between the army and the inhabitants, which nothing short of the removal of the troops could close; that removal was effected with much difficulty, but only to open the way for introduction of greater numbers.

But by what means the fire thus kindled was kept burning still, and what efforts were used on both sides, until the fatal 19th day of April 1775, are well known to all : and need not be recited here.

C H A P T E R. III.

S E C T I O N I.

Religious state of things then.

IT is impossible for a serious mind to review the face of this country, at this period, without being struck with the alarming strides, by which the spirit of ungodliness had advanced upon it, during the last twenty years. Religion was never seen at a lower ebb since the first plantations began on this side the Atlantic. The power of it, in most places, had vanished out of sight; little more than the name was left. Vain-
nity.

nity, intemperance, and a worldly mind, in manifold instances, were found staining the christian profession. Spots of that kind were multiplied in the churches solemn feasts. Discipline was generally dwindled away to a shadow. The doctrines called Calvinistic, were sunk into disrepute; a moderate Arminian was the most reputable name with many. And such as aspired at the character of men of superior learning and genius, thought themselves obliged to invent new theories; or to cloathe old ones in phrases that should make them appear new: Hence the philosophy of Zeno was palmed on us for christianity at one time, and the divinity of Hobbes at another. In one place we might perceive fatalism with all its horrors dressed up in scripture-terms; and in another our ears were shocked to hear men charging the HOLY ONE, as the author of all the sins in the universe, and daring to vouch his own word as the proof of it. Antinomian rant in the mouths of sectaries of various names began now to discharge the ungenerate from the use of any means of grace, and then to absolve the regenerate from all obligation to obey the divine law as a rule of life. Here we behold Pelagian zeal rising in arms against the doctrine of original sin, there the blasphemies of Arius were belched against the Christ of God: To day we find socinianism pave the way, and to morrow deism walks abroad in it. Clubs of these classes of men were found in many of our principal towns and cities; and happy had it been, if all the colleges and pulpits in the land had been clean of that leprosy.

The increase of deism and infidelity at this time was greatly promoted by the preachments of a young man, who called himself Murray, who

had lately been imported from England: This man, with a plausible elocution, and versatile powers of mind, and supported by a sufficient stock of confidence and cunning, to supply his entire want of learning or education, traversed the country, insinuated himself into many families, and intruded into many pulpits, zealously retailing, at first under deep disguise, but at last with avowed boldness, the opinions of Remy, concerning UNIVERSAL SALVATION: This scheme was pleasing to the libertine heart; and his manners being found easy enough for the loosest company, he soon became the idol of rakes and the oracle of deists.

Under all these pressures, there still remained a goodly remnant amongst ministers and private christians, in many of the standing churches through the land, who did not defile themselves with the abominations of this evil time, but constantly lamented them, and opposed them as far as they could.

S E C T I O N II

Review from that time till now.

IN the political or military history of this æra, which is in the hands of all, we willingly acquiesce: Nor shall we trouble ourselves with meddling with it any further than its matters are

are necessarily interwoven with the subject of this testimony.

When the cloud broke which had so long loomed upon us; and the wanton cruelties with which the executioners of British measures began the work of shedding blood, in their way through Lexington, on the 19th of April 1775, discovered the intent of what had been plotting in that cabinet ever since the peace of Versailles; we found ourselves plunged in a war, for which we were very illy prepared. The sword was drawn against us to which we hitherto had trusted for protection. We saw the greatest power in Europe armed for our destruction. And it was that very power under whose wing we had been wont to seek shelter from all our enemies. Our confidence in England was blasted. The stoutest hearts among us faltered. And the best men we had, called it a day of darkness, and doubtful expectation. We had neither the sinews of war, nor the resources of self defence in our own hands. The authority and weight of our own civil rulers were rigorously employed on the side of our enemies. Our mother, as we called her, avowed the design of becoming our murderer. We were unknown and unconnected with the nations of the earth; and separated from all the rest of the world by an ocean of a thousand leagues, we knew not a friend who would take us by the hand. If the Lord of hosts should not appear for us, we all knew how little we could hope from the arm of flesh; and that he would, we had but slender ground to expect; he had indeed been the God of our fathers; and it was not to be imagined that he meant to lose the many wondrous works he had done for the land in their days and our own; but we found ourselves

a people utterly estranged from him, laden with the iniquity of a long course of backslidings, and fit to be cut down as chamberers of the ground.

The panic which struck the whole country at once, on the breaking out of hostilities, was like that, arising from the shock of an earthquake, or an eruption of Vesuvius; many towns were evacuated, in an instant, on the mere imagination of the approach of British troops; great was the confluence to Cambridge: but it was that of a multitude, not of an army; had providence permitted the enemy to attack them at that time, they had more to fear from their friends than their foes:

A general fast was observed, first in Massachusetts and then through the continent, and it might be supposed, that if ever this people meant to be serious on such an occasion, the time to shew it was then come; these were indeed solemn days; and the surprizing union of the colonies, in making a common cause with the more immediate sufferers; the amazing alacrity of all ranks of men, in pledging their lives for the defence of their rights; the undaunted spirit that was still preserved after the horrible carnage at Bunker-hill, on the 17th of June, the wonderful captures made of cloathing and provisions, of ammunition and arms, intended for our enemies; the general agreement to accept of a paper currency as a substitute for silver and gold; and above all, the direction of the minds of the Congress to the choice of a commander in chief, whom Heaven had singularly qualified for that place; all, all were significations from above, that the hearer of prayer had deigned to incline his ear to
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the cry of his people in these days of distress.

The humble petitions of Congress, and of particular legislatures, tis true, were rejected at London: But Heaven smiled on our undertakings, in America, so far as self-defence was their object: The alertness of the people, and the address of their leaders in seizing what arms and ammunition were to be found belonging to the several governments in possessing themselves of such sorts as were tenable, and dismantling and destroying such as were not, will be recognized as evidences of this, when all the prejudices of the present times are buried in oblivion. Nor will this conclusion be at all invalidated by the failure of Col. Eddy, in his attempt in Nova-Scotia, or the more distressful issue of our expedition against Quebec aggravated, as it was, with the loss of the great General Montgomery. However these measures might be justified in policy, as providing against a probable danger to come, they were not strictly within the line of self-defence: and as that is the limit of lawful war, it was the kindness of Heaven to hedge up our way so as to confine us to it, by the force of his providence, as well as the authority of his word.

The terror from the Lord that held the British army cooped up in Boston, till the 17th of March 1776, and frightened them into their ships at that time, may be considered as his offering us a further time to repent, and waiting till the world should see whether we chose to seek peace with God; or only to prepare for war with men. As a people we appeared resolved on the latter: And the hand of providence was from that time turned against us. One disaster trod on the heels of another, until we saw our armies broken
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and escaping from Canada : New-York, and its dependences, with the principal strengths on the Hudson, fallen into the enemy's hands : our forces driven through the Jerseys, and every thing yielding to the conqueror wherever he came : This was the price of that obstinacy with which we hardened our hearts at the evacuation of Boston : But, when we were reduced to this low degree, it pleased the Most High to hold up our sinking head in the midst of the waves. The masterly stroke with which our General surprized and defeated the enemy at Trenton, on December 25, put a stop, for the present, to their career of victory ; and confined them to their sanctuary in Brunswick, till the ensuing campaign. But as all our preceeding woes had failed to awaken us to the reformation they so loudly called for, the campaign 1777, opened upon us with rec'ubled calamities : Who can reflect upon the awful scenes at Brandywine, on September 10, at Germantown and Philadelphia, till it was taken on the 27th of that month ; and on those at Red-bank, and other places of that vicinity, and not feel the frowns of an angry God, discovered against this sinful land in them all ? Melancholy was the gloom that dwelt on our affairs at that crisis. We could turn our eyes no where without meeting fresh marks of desolation : Whilst Howe is thus carrying all before him in the southward, Burgoyne is spreading his horrors on the north : The only place where we expected to stop his hasty advances ; was at Ticonderoga ; there no pains nor cost were spared to fix a post that should bid defiance to all his thunders ; but how great was the consternation universally spread over the country, when we found that fortress abandoned, on the 6th of July, without waiting

waiting to be attacked, and all our artillery, stores and provisions tamely resigned to the first plunderer that should think it worth while to seize upon them. Darkness then sat on all faces; the terror and alarm of the seasons past, seemed but trifling when compared with this.

Whether could this people resort amidst distresses so grievous unless to him who had the word of eternal life? To the gracious Sovereign of the universe the pious remnant among them took their flight, and sought shelter for their sinking country under the shadow of his throne: Days of humiliation and prayer were employed to rend the Heavens with cries for mercy; and the Lord was intreated for them; how suddenly was the boasting of the conqueror silenced! The event at Bennington, on the 16th of August, convinced him that his claim of omnipotence was folly; and the humiliating manner in which he and his army laid down their arms at Saratoga, on the 17th of October following, brake the jaw of Leviathan in pieces, and gave him to be meat for the people inhabiting the wilderness.

Never, perhaps, was there an instance in which a victorious army had less pretext for ascribing their success to their own sword or bow, than this. All parties were forced to confess, that this was the Lord's doing, and wonderful in their eyes. The public thanksgiving observed through the continent on this occasion, was most emphatically deserving of that name; and it pleased the Lord to make that event productive of very happy consequences to America: Among these we may venture to reckon the treaty of alliance with France, which was signed on the 6th of February following, and all the essential aids we have received from that nation since; To this also,

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under Providence, we may ascribe the inactivity of the British army, for so great a part of the time, until they were fain to take flight from Philadelphia, and brought under the necessity of fighting their way through Jersey, with the loss of many of their lives, at Monmouth, on the 28th of June, in the ensuing year.

And had we then known the day of our visitation, and duly attended to the things belonging to our peace; had we taken hold of the further opportunity of grace then so kindly offered us, and returned to the Lord that had rent, and was now so eminently beginning to heal us; it seems hardly to be doubted, that all the enemies of the land should then have been made like chaff before the wind: The reverse of this, however, was our choice; the more wonderful the interpositions of Heaven were in our behalf, the more perfectly did we imitate the conduct of Jeshurun, who, in like circumstances, waxed fat and kicked: Avarice and extortion had never been carried to such lengths, as they were now; fraud and oppression swept all before them; irreligion and profaneness ruled in our military assemblies---and debauchery and vice filled town and country.

Thus grievously did we set at nought the wonderful works in which the Lord made bare his arm for our defence; and grievous sufferings were yet reserved for us on that account; the capital of Rhode Island and its dependencies, became an hold for our destroyers; and all our preparations to dislodge them, all the attempts made for that purpose by General Sullivan, and a very numerous armament, and all the confidence of success, which we generally placed in our own army, and our ally's fleet, stood in a very not-
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tifying disappointment, on the 29th of August, 1778.

The fate of Rhode-Island, was but a faint representation of the distresses of Georgia, from the day the enemy took possession of its metropolis, nor was our confidence in the arm of flesh less blasted in the former, than in the attempt to storm the latter,

Our affairs grew more embarrassed every day; our currency failed us; our army, wronged and discontented, was in danger of crumbling to pieces: A gloomy winter only ushered in a more gloomy spring; All our efforts seemed to be laid out in watching the places where our enemy made their abode; nor could our vigilance suffice to keep them from breaking on the country by surprize. The towns of Fairfield and Norwalk in Connecticut, were attacked and reduced to ashes, on the 9th and 12th of July: And a strong post is fortified at Penobscot, in the Massachusetts, about the same time: An ill-planned expedition is formed at Boston, against the last mentioned place, and timely notice being previously conveyed to New-York, our forces are trepanned by a superior fleet, our shipping burnt or taken, our artillery and stores lost, and our whole armament driven to seek their way home, through a dreary wilderness, on the 14th of August.

This was one of the many events in the course of this war, in which it appeared to be the care of divine Providence, always to cut off those overweening confidences which we were ever prone to raise to an extraordinary height, when our visible resources were to our mind. Very seldom have our preparations been great, without being accompanied by hopes very sanguine; and rarely
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did we thus insult Heaven, by leaning on the arm of creature-strength, without being soon brought to feel its weakness, and our own weight in our fall: And thus was the Lord pleased to teach us to cease from man, whose breath is in his nostrils.

Of these distresses it was some alleviation, that we saw the enemy evacuate Rhode-Island, on the 24th of October following: Many conjectures were formed of the causes, and many hopes indulged with regard to the consequences of that movement; but it soon appeared to be only designed to enable their troops to carry on with greater vigour, the plan of reducing all the southern colonies: To this their chief attention was turned during the winter; they invested Charlestown with almost their whole force; and though it was bravely defended by General Lincoln, it was surrendered to the British commander, the 12th of May, 1780: This acquisition was thought decisive of the fate of all the South: Flushed with the consummation of their wishes in the possession of Charlestown, they sent home the most pompous descriptions of their success, and called on their master to send over Governors and other officers of state, to re-establish civil government in all the colonies in that quarter: With this proposal the court readily complied. The Earl of Dunmore, is dispatched in great form to resume the chair of government: Commissioners arrive to bestow pardons on the penitent provinces; and a Prince of the blood deigns to visit us, to receive the submission of the neck of America to his father's yoke.

About a week after the surrender of the capital city of the southern colonies, the inhabitants of New-England were alarmed with an unusual darkness,

darkness, that hung over all their states, from ten o'clock in the forenoon till midnight; the minds of the people were greatly agitated, and various essays were published to pass it off as a phenomenon easily accounted for in a natural way; but, however, it might be produced by the operation of natural causes, it would be an impious neglect of divine Providence, to ascribe it to a concurrence of incidents that was merely fortuitous; it was a fact that soon became notorious enough, that, whilst darkness covered the face of the states in the southward, and the defeat and dispersion of our troops at Cambden, under General Gates, left the whole of that country open to the incursions of an insolent and triumphant army, without any to oppose them: A cloud of deeper darkness did, at that instant, hang over New-England; and menace a storm more violent and ruinous than any ever fell in that quarter: West-Point was fortified in a most careful manner, and garrisoned with the flower of our troops; great quantities of arms, ammunition, and other warlike stores, were deposited there: The British leaders considered that fortress as the key of the Hudson, and its possession as necessary to their intended operations against New-England; but they durst not trust to their arms for its reduction; recourse is had to bribery and treason.---General Arnold, who had the command of the place, did, at this very time, enter into a secret treaty with the English commander; and that American Judas, in fine, actually sold the fort, and all the lives in it, to this arch tempter, for a bargained sum of silver and gold. The horrid scheme went swarmingly on; and the day was anticipated when the enemy were to enter on the bar-

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gained possession ; and then, nothing remained to hinder them to push their cruelties and their conquests through the settlements on the river, and through New-England at once.

But, eternal praises to the Lord ! In the mount of extremity his hand was seen ; his eyes beheld their darkest plot ; his purity abhorred it, and though we were very unworthy of his favour ; his wisdom blasted their counsels, and at the critical moment, flung their Babel down : On the 25th of September, the plot was discovered ; Major Andre, the agent on the English part, was taken and hanged, and the traitor Arnold escaped to New-York.

Whilst the goodness of God was thus eminently displayed towards New-England, the storm of his anger continued still raging in the South ; Lord Cornwallis was marching through the Carolinas and Virginia, and conquering wherever he came ; the ball of victory was at his foot, and he tossed it before him with such velocity during the winter, that it seemed to require but a moderate continuance of his diversion, to play it through the streets of Philadelphia in the ensuing spring ; a few difficulties, however, that obliged him to a more circuitous march, retarded his progress, until he should receive supplies from New-York ; and to secure his communication with the auxiliaries he expected from thence. He resolves to take post at York-Town ; and now the wisdom and power of the Lord of hosts again appeared : This prescribed to Cornwallis his bounds ; this said to that haughty and unmerciful conqueror, " hitherto shall thou come, but no further." General Washington suddenly quits his encampment, and makes as though he intended a descent on Staten-Island in force : The

enemy that had embarked at York, for the succour of Cornwallis, are deceived into the belief, that our troops had now cut out work for them: there, are suddenly landed, and employed to defend that important post; and while they are thus busied, the American commander passes the Delaware, and is found close on the back of Cornwallis, in Virginia: Mean time the French Squadron arrives in Chesapeak, defeats the English fleet, and enters the bay, on the 5th of September; and the British Annibal is at last constrained to deliver himself, his army, and shipping, into our hands, on the 19th of October, 1781.

Never was a people under greater obligation to acknowledge the finger of God in their deliverance, than we were on this occasion; and scarce was there a nation ever so much more guilty of robbing JEHOVAH of his praise: 'Tis true, some few churches were opened, and thanks given to God in them; but no public thanksgiving was appointed through the land, nor even through any single state: In the proclamation for the anniversary thanksgiving, indeed this was mentioned among the materials of praise; but nothing further was done for giving glory to the great Deliverer of America: Instead of this our rejoicings on the occasion bore all the marks of the heathen Orgies. Feasting and drunkenness, the ringing of bells, and the discharge of cannon, the display of colours, and illumination of windows, the blaze of bon-fires, and the pomp of balls; these were the goodly tribute paid in our towns and cities, to that holy and merciful Being, that rises in the armies of Heaven and earth, for a deliverance wrought by his own power, in a

manner that will make the ears of generations unborn to tingle at the rehearsal of it!

Great indeed were the effects of this victory in the South; the remains of the enemies forces there were vain to contract their camps within posts of strength: And the prudent and brave General Greene, who had been sent to cover the country from their depredations, was a terror to them even there; Encouraged by his presence, civil government is restored even to the states that had but a little while ago been swallowed up by the tyranny of martial law. And the people were animated to such exertions for the recovery of their country, that the strong holds of the enemy became very uneasy lodgings: insonuch that Savannah is evacuated, Georgia restored to a state of tranquility, and Charlestown is abandoned by the English army on the 14th of December. 1782, whereby the whole of the southern states obtained rest.

Not were these the only important effects of the event at York-town. Britain herself seemed thereby to have received conviction of the error of her ways, and of the impossibility of succeeding in them. Their unsuccessful commanders are recalled; an act of parliament passed, enabling the King to make peace with America; a new commander, of more experience and policy, is sent to New-York, who begins his administration with a pretended offer of our Independence, and insidious overtures for a separate treaty of peace: Mean time, while he is endeavouring to induce America to break faith with France, other emissaries of Britain, are labouring at Paris, to persuade that nation to forget her treaty with America: But through the mercy of God to us, both parties saw the fraud; both spurned the proposal

proposal with the'd stain its wickedness deserved: And to crown all the evidences of Heaven's care of us, though the English had obtained an important victory over the French fleet in the West-Indies, on the 12th of April, the United Provinces of Holland, declared American independence on the 23d of the same month. And, however, the combined forces of France and Spain, failed in their attempt on Gibraltar, yet, by the exertions of Hyder Ally, the French and Dutch, the affairs of the English were ruined in the East, and their Jamaica fleet was almost entirely destroyed by a storm; all things turned against them, so that, on the 21st of September, a commission passed the seals, to empower Mr. Oswald, to treat with the commissioners of the United States, and recognize America as an independent nation; and on the thirtieth of November following, a provisional treaty of peace was signed at Paris, by the plenipotentiaries of the two contending countries!! And on the twentieth of January, preliminaries for a general peace were signed by the commissioners of France, England and Spain; in consequence of which hostilities soon ceased.

American Antiquarian Society.

CHAPTER

C H A P T E R. IV.

S E C T I O N I.

Reflections on the religious State of Things during this Period.

THE serious circumstances into which the opening of the present war had cast us, were indeed sufficient to call this people to remember from whence they had fallen, and to repent and do their first works: It was supposed by many that the aweful providences we felt, would have been followed by a solemn and general attention to the business of religion: But the fact did by no means answer to the theory; for, strange to relate, instead of reviving such a temper where it was dead; it quenched the few sparks of it where they had been previously kindled. The chief concerns apparent among the people were personal safety, private emolument, and their country's defence: Each of these objects had its votaries, but the three divided the generation among them.

The progress of the tenets of Sandeman, received a check by their author's death; they were not, however, without adherents still. in Boston, Portsmouth, Danbury, and elsewhere; and they were improved on and spread soon after. by a new scheme of divinity, propagated
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from Connecticut, under another name : It was surprising to many, with what facility the principal abettors of that gentleman's doctrines, embraced the universal plan, and enlisted under the banner of Murray. The scheme broached by this last mentioned teacher, has had a more extensive currency among us in this day of darkness, than any other that chose to be tacked to a christian name ; but every error that was in vogue at the commencement of hostilities continued unrestrained, and gained ground among such as were of the particular complexion to which they were respectively calculated : The Anabaptists, divided into divers parties, roamed abroad wherever parishes were discontented or deprived of pastors, and produced no little disorder and confusion where they came ; Quakers dispatched their missionaries into various parts of the country ; and, in many places, their labours were crowned with proselytes not a few. Deism advanced in our populous towns from year to year ; private societies for its support were multiplied ; in some, its principles began to be taught in public ; and in others, self-murders became frequent, under the shape of martyrdoms for the attestation of its tenets.

A new sect of religionists appeared, in the state of New York, in 1779, who have commonly gone by the name of Shakers, from the unnatural motions, and convulsive contortions of the body which distinguished them from all other sectaries ; these shocks of nature, were attended with so much violence, and pain, as to afford ground to conclude them the issue of some diabolical influence, yet, with them, they passed for acts of the

the most exalted devotion : sufficient to authorize them to overthrow the christian religion, and entitle them to be regarded as the final judges of the quick and dead. These visionaries have dispersed themselves in New England ; and given no small trouble to sundry places in each of its States.

The churches of the episcopalian party were mostly served by clergymen who were high in favour of the measures of Britain ; these gentlemen in general thought proper to repair to the places possessed by the English troops ; and of course the greatest number of their churches had been shut from the beginning of the war ; but they have lately put on a different appearance ; school-masters, and other lay-men, have been employed in many of them, to read prayers and sermons on the Lord's day ; and thus their societies appear to have regained a collected state.

The calamities of the times have had a baneful influence on the interests of learning ; buildings erected for the seats of science, never failed to suffer peculiar marks of British indignation when they fell in the way of their troops : Some colleges have been rifled, some reduced to ashes, and not one in America has escaped, DARTMOUTH alone excepted : Under such discouragements education languished ; and many of the youth destined for the service of the church, betook themselves to livings to the law, to trade, to the army, and the navy. Something has, indeed, been lately done in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, for the revival of learning, in erecting academies of arts and physic, and some incorporated schools : New-Hampshire has incorporated a seminary at Exeter ; and there have some steps been taken for reviving the college at
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Rhode-Island. Several new professions have been instituted at DARTMOUTH and CAMBRIDGE : But learning seems to have received more advantage from the worthy and indefatigable exertions of the ingenious and Rev. Dr. STILES, President of YALE-COLLEGE, than from all the rest.

The regular and standing churches through the land, have suffered sorely in the common storm; as if the British army had been sent, not so much against New-England, as New-England's God, the houses sacred to his worship, became the prime butt of their vengeance, wherever they went. Some were turned into stables, some into riding houses, some consumed with flames, and some raised to the foundation. Of those that remained, not a few were shut, by the deaths or removals of their pastors; many deserted by the dispersion of the congregations which used to improve them; and in the rest, it was observable, that while one part were occupied by ministers that prophesied, as in sackcloth, loaded with discouragements from the penury, the avarice, or the caprice of their flocks; others were filled with doctrines with which the fathers of the country would not have borne; and, on the whole, matters in them have been rapidly hastening towards the state mentioned in the introduction.

The only encouragement that has been found on the face of the churches in these parts, since the public troubles began, was a very considerable revival of religion, which took place at DARTMOUTH COLLEGE, and in twenty-four towns in its vicinity, in the year 1781 and 1782: Something of the same kind has been observable in divers parts of the county of Hampshire, and

its neighbourhood, and in some places in the county of Bristol, in the Massachusetts; at Canterbury and its vicinity, in Connecticut; in some places in the state of Rhode-Island, and at Machias, at the Eastward: We wish for a more particular and authentic account of this comfortable event than any yet received; but from the narratives, given by some Reverend and pious Ministers known to some of us, and in good esteem in the churches, we cannot but conclude it to be the effect of a special divine influence, graciously poured out on the churches in these evil days, that God's cause might not be left without a witness, and that many souls ready to perish might be plucked as brands out of the burning: We therefore thankfully adore the sovereign grace of the Lord of the harvest, for this happy omen of further good yet in store for his American church: And while we earnestly pray for its universal spread through all corners of the land, we cannot but flatter ourselves that such an event would do more to prepare us for the restoration and establishment of the public peace, on a fair and permanent basis, than all the counsels and armies in the world.

In every other respect, the face of religion has worn all the features of a fatal decay; amongst the people at large, it seemed to make no part of their business; and there was but little evidence of its being an object of concern with the public bodies into whose hands they had committed the reins of government over them.

It was an unequivocal proof of the fortitude of Congress, that, in so dark and discouraging a crisis as the 6th of July, 1776, that body calmly dared to look the public danger in the face, and declare **AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE,**
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even almost at the point of the enemy's bayonets : But it is felt a matter of fore lamentation, by serious minds, that a step so important as the laying the foundation of a NEW EMPIRE, should be taken among christians, without the appearance of regard to the KING of KINGS, to whom all the nations of the earth belong, who planteth and who plucketh up kingdoms at his pleasure. It will be hard to reconcile it to the profession of religion, publicly made in America ; it will be hard to represent it so as to escape the censure of generations to come ; it would have been impossible to have obtained the consent of the first planters of this land, that all former connections should be solemnly broken off with an earthly King, and the highest authority in the land should formally announce to all the world the commencement of a new state of existence for this country ; without one public step taken to acknowledge our dependence on, or any public recognition of our allegiance to the monarch of the skies ; that we should venture on a solemn renunciation of all subjection to the crown of England, without setting apart so much as one day to implore the countenance of Heaven on the measure, and invite him to the CROWN of AMERICA.

That lamentable neglect of the Lord of hosts, which was so notorious in the first step towards our national existence, was not confined to that alone ; every following step of general importance spoke the same language ; the confederation of the states into one great body, and the contracting alliances with other nations, were all matters of the highest moment to America ; but was there any care taken to call on its inhabitants to wait upon God for his direction and blessing in them ?

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Time was when steps of such importance would not have been ventured on, in this country, without their being prefaced by the setting apart days of humiliation, fasting and prayer; and calling on all the churches to a solemn renewal of their covenant with God: But---now---tell it not in Gath--- all these things were forgotten! will not posterity be tempted to enquire whether America, at this time, believed the being of a God?

This disease in the head was communicated to all the body, new plans of government were devised, yea, were received, ratified and entered on, in most of our states, with as little reference to the Most High, as the measures mentioned above: Even in Massachusetts, a constitution was framed, and sent forth for the approbation of the people, without any public acknowledgment of God in the matter: and although a fast was appointed before the next form was ratified; that measure appeared to be compelled by the remonstrances of some serious minds against the want of it in the former.

Whoever will be at pains to take a serious review of American affairs, during the course of this war, will find that no prejudices or party-opinions will be able to prevent his conceding that God has done many great things for this country in that period; but where is the impartial observer that will undertake to excuse its inhabitants, as a people, from the charge of most outrageous ingratitude to that divine benefactor? The evidence of our guilt in this respect, is engraven as with the point of a diamond. How plainly has Providence often shifted hands, and changed our scenes of prosperity and woe according as this principle and its operations rose or fell? The
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firming and measuring of our ebbs and flows of success, in the public struggle has steadily kept pace with the alterations visible on the moral state of things among us.

Providence has been careful to punish us in kind: The species of our guilt was pointed out in the stroke that corrected it. This observation may with equal truth apply to the civil and the religious troubles that have come upon us. In the former view it was very obvious. We had leaned on England as the staff of our strength, and instead of supporting, it wounded the hand that too fondly trusted it. But in the latter, the proofs were multiplied every day; conviction of its certainty would flash in our face, did we pause but a moment, and recapitulate the general heads of its evidence. e. g.

Through stupidity and carelessness the divine ordinance of infant-baptism was by many neglected, and by many misimproved: Here, we could see whole families of children, descended from christian ancestors growing up unbaptized, and shut out of the visible kingdom of Christ: and there, we beheld perjured parents that had solemnly recognized the vow of God's covenant over their every child, and yet bred them up hardened in ignorance, profaneness and debauchery, and see the righteous judgment of God! we were at length given up to Anabaptistic errors, to deny the authority of that ordinance altogether.

Long had we trifled with the worship and ordinances of God, indifferent as to their purity; and tired of their strictness: and lo! we are abandoned to the will of Ranters, and Shakers; who, as locusts vomited out of the pit, have

spread their darkness over the land; and turned all ordinances and every act of worship into burlesque.

The means of grace had been grossly slighted in families, closets and the houses of God: and to punish this impiety the scourge of new schemes has been inflicted on many parts, to deny the existence of the means of grace, and persuade men they had better be employed in the tavern than the church on the Lord's day, that cursing and swearing is as much their duty as praying to God, or reading his word, unless they have first been regenerated.

The holy sabbath has been long the eye-sore of the profane, it was grown into such contempt that all the force of civil laws could scarcely suffice to preserve the appearance of regard to it, and Quakerism at length is permitted to step forth and boldly oppose the institution itself.

We had been gradually lowering in our zeal for the preservation of the pure doctrines of grace: With complaisant facility we opened the door of communion and the bosom of charity, for those who doubted or disbelieved them; we had been giving up one of them after another, as if they were matters of no moment to the church; and as if articles of faith had nothing to do with christianity, or persuading ourselves that Laodicean indifference was a beauty in religion, or latitudinarian confusion of principles the best evidence of greatness of mind; and in awful justice a jealous God left us to harden ourselves in the delusion; and floods of ancient errors that of old had been buried in their native womb of darkness, are now cast out of the dragon's mouth; every one of which impugns some of the peculiar doctrines of the christian religion.

Exion.—Here Antinomians rave against the law; there Socinians, Arrians, and Pelagians join their forces, under the more acceptable name of the disciples of Arminius, and spare no pains to overthrow the gospel.

The fashionable vices had bid habitual defiance to the divine threatenings and the fear of hell: And now the plague of Originism receives its dire commission to deny at once the truth of the former, and the real existence of the latter.

The natural progress of wickedness, had led sinners first to indulge in, then to defend it; and last of all, to boast of it, and glory in their ~~name~~; and, behold the issue! Ancient Hebraism under a modern name, starts up and justifies the whole, and makes it a fundamental article of religion to lay all the blame on God, as the author and cause.

From neglecting the Bible, and forgetting its contents, we proceeded to despise it, and at last are left to the kindred judgments of Originism, to expose it in a ridiculous dress; and deism to deny the authority of the whole.

But we forbear:—To pursue this investigation cannot but overwhelm the mind to which the dust of Zion is precious. From this review of our deplorable case, it appears impossible for the faithful watchman to hold his peace: If he should would not the stones of the street cry out? Could this malady be covered and yet cured, gladly should we go backward; and, with charity's kind mantle, hide its putrefaction from the eyes of the world, and from our own; whilst our sorrows for the wound of the daughter of our people would first vent in secret, till our "heads were waters, and our eyes fountains of tears;" yet would we never

tell this doleful tale in Gath, nor publish our In-
 quiries there in the streets of Askelon: But the na-
 ture of the case forbids the hope of cure without
 the discovery of the disease. And indeed the facts
 above related are so notorious to all men, that it
 is too late to seek to hide them: The love of
 Christ therefore constrains us to cry aloud and
 spare not; tender concern for immortal souls com-
 pels us to lift up our voice like a trumpet, to
 shew Israel their transgressions, and the house of
 Jacob their sins.

S E C T I O N II.

Declaration of our own Principles.

IT is the intent of this essay to bear our joint
 and public testimony, against the errors and
 vices, the sins and backslidings mentioned
 above: For such a work it is but justice to the
 public to declare in the first place what we
 profess to maintain as truth: We are willing
 therefore that it be known to all men in the pre-
 sent, and in every generation to come.

That we openly profess our firm belief of the
 great articles of natural religion, e. g. 1. the
 being of one, eternal, infinite and all-perfect spi-
 rit, who is the true and living God, and the crea-
 tor of all things. 2. his universal providence,
 sustaining and governing the whole created uni-
 verse,

verse, and all beings therein, even to its minutest parts. 3. the essential and eternal difference between right and wrong. 4. the immortality of the human soul. 5. a future state of eternal and equal retribution after this life.

Secondly, we openly avow our belief of the necessity of divine revelation to lead man to bliss: that such a revelation it was possible for God to give, and man to receive, and that those parts of natural religion which evince the goodness of God and the morality of his government oblige us to conclude that it is extremely probable, nay, that it is morally certain, that some such revelation has actually been given.

Thirdly, we solemnly avouch the **P I B L E** as such, and believe the whole of the divine revelation to be contained in the sacred books of the old and new Testament, exclusive of the apocryphal writings, often found bound up with them; and this divine volume we receive as the word of God, and the only standard of our faith and practice.

Fourthly, we acknowledge that the Confession of Faith, Catechisms and Directory, published by the Assembly of Divines at Westminster, anno 1646, have well explained the sacred oracles in the sense in which we understand them, as to doctrine and practice, as to worship, discipline and government, and therefore, judging that system to be founded on, and agreeable to the word of God for the substance thereof, we publicly own it as the confession of our faith.

P A R T



P A R T II.

The particular Parties described, their History,
Errors, and Confutation of them.

C H A P T E R I.

Of Deism.

S E C T I O N I.

Its History.

IF there were no other argument of the simplicity of the nature of the human soul, and consequently of its immateriality, that great point might be well infered from the union of all its faculties in every one of its operations. No idea is conceived by the understanding, without reference to taste ; approbation or disgust awaits its first entrance into the mind ; its object is relished or rejected ; it is considered with complacency or aversion.--And thus it appears that one faculty of the mind never acts alone ; and the acts that, in loose talking, we commonly ascribe to this or the other power, are in truth nothing else than
acts

acts of the whole soul, respecting objects according to their supposed relations to ourselves: Hence we see reason for the reciprocal influence of what is called one faculty upon another, and learn why the understanding dictates in the one instance to the will and affections; and these biases and fetter the understanding in the other: This also serves to shew the ground of the connection which we discover every day between the sentiments and the passions of men; and of course between their principles and practices. A judgment established in favour of piety and virtue, must needs prove an uneasy neighbour to passions that are abandoned to wickedness. Therefore it is found in fact, that, to escape the lash of an inbred censor from which there is no fleeing; the heart, enslaved to vicious appetites, and unable to keep up a noise in the chase of its objects, sufficient at all hours to crown the clamours of the reprover within; collects all its arts, and spends all its powers in dosing the conscience with some opiate that may stupify its sense, and lay it fast asleep; or at least intoxicate it so that it shall be ready to put light for darkness, and not be able to discern the right hand from the left: And hence we so seldom find a system of principles that are naturally dangerous to the interests of virtue zealously pleaded for, without soon perceiving the efficacy of the poison which they have cast into the springs of action, by the corruption thence flowing down in the streams of the lives and conversation of their advocates: and no less rare are the instances in which men, led headlong by their passions, are hackneyed in the broad way of licentiousness, without racking all their ingenuity to invent subterfuges to justify all the devious paths they have beaten. Libertines
in

in all ages have laboured to become sceptics; to the fascinating mists of affected doubt and uncertainty. The free-thinker flees to shelter him from the stings of conviction; with equal reason and with the same success as impenitent sinners shall at the last day, cry to the rocks and to the mountains to fall on them and hide them from the unsufferable presence of their Judge. It is a natural transition from licentious acting to licentious thinking: This has made more free-thinkers in one year than argument has since the foundation of the world: The true source of scepticism never was effigiated better than by him, who said, "he that doth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light lest his deeds be reproved."

Pride of singularity might indeed suffice to lead Pyrho their father, thus openly to renounce his title to the character of a rational being, but whoever traces the crooked lines drawn through life, by the whole tribe of his disciples, down to Spinoza---to Vanini---to Des Cartes, and to the free-thinkers of the present day, will find evidence from every step that the conflict between the love of lusts and dread of punishment, issuing in hardened enmity against God, has carried profligate minds, first to wish, then to hope, and then to presume his non-existence:

To flatter this presumption, and secure the pleasures of gratification to lawless appetites, all the schemes of atheism have been fabricated that have ever affronted reason in the world: These schemes indeed have been very various; but all is inconsistent with themselves as each was with the rest. Atheism, however, continued to hold

hold up its head under one or another form until about the year 1530; when it was found that a popular odium was annexed to that name; to ward off which the atheists in Italy and France, without any alteration of their principles, slyly changed the title they had hitherto possessed, for the less obnoxious name of Deists. The first account we have of these men, is a dedication to the second tome of a book called *Instruction Chretienne*, written by the celebrated Viret, and published in the year 1563; little more is known about them, until their tenets were reduced to systematic form by lord Herbert, Baron of Cherbury, in England, who published his theory in the year 1624: This nobleman may be considered as the father of deism in England; and his five universal points which he supposed natural notices of truth given to all men, remained the established creed of deists, until the year 1651, when it underwent some considerable alterations by the labors of the noted Mr. Hobbes of Malmsbury, who published his *Leviathan* in that year; in him the boasted succession of deistical writers was begun, which has been continued through many hands, and under various shapes until now. Charles Blount, Esq; stood up as the champion of that cause, in 1680, Mr. Toland in 1696, the ingenious and insinuating Earl of Shaftesbury 1711, Anthony Collins, Esq. 1707, Mr. Woolston, 1727, Dr. Tindal, 1720, Dr. Morgan, 1727, Mr. Chubb, 1728, Lord Bolingbroke, and Mr. Hume, 1750: None of these writers passed unanswered, nor unconfuted by many able and learned advocates for christianity in the several times in which they wrote. So much light was then thrown on the subject of the controversy, as may well suffice to support the

holy Scriptures against all the attacks of Deists in future: It did effectually silence the writers on that side, at the time.* The mode of their carrying on the war against religion, has been changed; what could not be effected by a fair engagement in the open field, they have since attempted by stratagem in secret ambuscades; the heavy artillery of argument has been laid aside; and the more manageable weapons of wit and buffconry taken up in their stead: Sneer and satire; low puns, and malicious innuendos invented in private clubs, are slyly discharged in the dark, to stigmatize the character of that revelation which they never will be able to overthrow.

This leaven was spread with the books that contained it; many were eager to obtain these, that took no care to peruse the answers that had been given them: America, at last, received the infection. There were to be found among the gentlemen of the sword, as well as of the bar, in some of the principal towns in this country, certain persons who had drank in this poison, from the same motives that had induced others to invent it. The last war sowed this seed plentifully

* Vide Luck's reasonableness of Christianity. Whitty's necessity of the Christian Revelation. Joly Tuxton's insufficiency of natural religion. Jennison's examination of Hobbes's creed. Earl Clarendon against Hobbes. Westburton's Law of Nature. Dr. Nichols's conference with a Theist. Dr. J. Clarke against Smythor. Stephen Nye against Smythor. Lucinet's credibility. Dr. Brown against Shaftsbury. Dr. Bentley on Free Thinking. Dr. Chandler's vindication of Christian Religion. Ray on miracles. Conybiere's Deferes. Chapman's Falsities. Harvey against Bolinbroke. Adams against Hume. Douglas's Criterion. Jenkins reasonabler, &c. &c.

tifully : Large quantities of it were imported in the British fleets and armies : Officers, in some of our forts, were found valuing themselves on having read Chubb, and being able to prove his book unanswerable : The growing profaneness of the times nursed this baneful weed ; it grew apace ; and the chair of Government, in more than one of the English provinces, in this christian country, was seen disgraced by being filled by men noted as principal abettors of deism. Some zealous members of that fraternity, in the profession of physic, were detected in carrying their doctrines to the beds of their sick and dying patients. Thus dastardly have been their uniform attempts in this country : And they have been attended with success, which kept pace with the growth of immorality, in the places where they were made : And hence their opinions were become the necessary qualification of fine gentlemen among the youth ; and especially such as affected to class themselves with the politer part of society : This was sadly remarkable when the present war broke out.---But since that period their growth has been much greater than ever. The spirit of licentiousness that has been daily on the increase ; the importation, reprinting, and circulating of the letters of the late Earl of Chesterfield to his son ; and the coming of great numbers of foreigners into this country, who professed these tenets in their own ; all these causes have combined to bring Deism to the height mentioned in the introduction.

SECTION

S E C T I O N II.

Its Errors.

IT was remarked above that when the name of Deists was first assumed, the men of that party had renounced the name of Atheism, but still held the thing, they never indeed maintained uniformity of sentiments among themselves. Some carried their scepticism much further than others & many of them leveled their weapons against all religion. Others were content with aiming at the destruction of that of christianity alone: Some only denied the scriptures to be a divine revelation, others denied them to be true as to the historical record of facts: Some pleaded that any revelation from God to man was impossible in the nature of the thing. Some only held that it was unnecessary, and therefore improbable. Some were zealous advocates for what was called natural religion; others denied a future state, the immortality of the soul, a providence, and the very being of a God, some held the obligation of the law of nature; others denied all difference between good and evil, virtue and vice.

Yet all these differences notwithstanding, as all united in the main design, the overthrowing the christian religion, they willingly embraced, and considered each other as brethren, of the same party, and entitled to the same name. There

was indeed an appearance of a schism in their body, about the beginning of the present century, when they who held to the doctrines of natural religion took the name of Immortal, and they who denied these, as well as christianity, were denominated Mortal Deists : This difference however had no effect upon their union in every measure against divine revelation.

There is no symbol or form of profession established among them ; there is therefore no way of charging the sentiment of their public advocates on their private members with any certainty ; however, as far as can be learnt from the best evidences the case will afford, the theory of the mortal Deists, prevails in America much more than the other ; and even where that is not the case, they seem fully to agree to the description given of them by the great Viret at their beginning, and with that we shall close this section.

“ They profess, says he, to believe a God,
 “ but pay no regard to Jesus Christ, and con-
 “ sider the doctrines of the apostles and evangeli-
 “ lists as fables and dreams : They laugh at
 “ all religion, and yet they conform themselves,
 “ with regard to the outward appearance to the
 “ religion of those with whom they are obliged
 “ to live, whom they are desirous of pleasing, or
 “ whom they fear. Some of them profess to be-
 “ lieve the immortality of the soul : others are
 “ of the Epicurian opinion in this point, as
 “ well as about the providence of God with
 “ respect to mankind, as if he did not concern
 “ himself in the government of human affairs :
 “ Many among them set up for learning and
 “ philosophy, and are and would be looked upon
 “ to be persons of an accute and subtil genius ;

but,

“ but, not content to perish alone in their error,
“ they take pains to spread the poison and to
“ infect and corrupt others, by their impious dis-
“ courses, and bad examples.”

S E C T I O N III.

Confutation of them.

HA V I N G already declared this work to be professedly designed only as a testimony in favor of truth, we consider ourselves under no obligation to combat the several errors we condemn, with all the formalities of disputation; such a method would require as many volumes as there are heresies to confute, and disputed truths to be supported. If we should be enabled plainly to testify to the church and world, what judgment we form concerning each of them; and briefly offer some reasons inducing us so to judge, and thus fairly warn mankind of the danger of embracing them, we shall leave the field of dispute to abler combatants, whose pens we would
wish

will to rouse in the cause of religion : For thus we shall have answered our end, and we trust will thus have delivered our own souls.

In attempting to discharge this duty, with respect to the American deists of the present day, we shall not trouble the reader with separating the arguments addressed to those called mortal, from such as are more directly pointed at the immortalists among them ; for though the former party deserves to be considered as more express and avowed Atheists ; yet it is not difficult to shew that the principles of the latter, if carried as far as they naturally tend, will not fail, whether the abettors thereof mean so or not, to land us in Atheism as their final result ; both parties therefore may be regarded as united in this argument ; and the principles that serve to overthrow the theory of a mortal Deist, will avail no less to raise the foundation on which the whole structure of the other, the milder sort of Deism is raised.

Viewing them as a combination against the christian religion, formed upon principles eventually subversive of the religion of nature too, we freely declare our abhorrence of their whole scheme, as inimical to the glory, the government, and even the existence of the ETERNAL JEHOVAH, and utterly inconsistent with the salvation of the soul that shall embrace it.

If we are called on for the reasons of this sentence, we scruple not to appeal to the rational world, whether it is not sufficiently supported if it is once shewn that the principles which Deism opposes, are certain and important truths ; and that the denial of them is incompatible with salvation ; and to essay the proof of both these points, we now address ourselves.

Attending

Attending to the former, we conceive it quite needless to take any pains with those gentlemen, whose sceptical pride has carried them to deny the validity of the testimony of their senses, or the certainty of their own existence, and of the identity of their persons, from day to day, on the evidence of immediate consciousness. Such men have no title to be treated with argument; they have renounced all affinity to the reasoning world. their own reason is their burden, and the nature it belongs to is their curse.

1. But to him who gives credit to his own eyes, the existence of a material world needs no other proof: And if that point is granted, the existence of God necessarily follows. The mind, convinced that a world now is, naturally enquires was it always in being? or had it a beginning? That it was not eternal the enquirer is assured from the variety of changes in its several parts, daily coming under his own observation; for as his reason will convince him that the whole being nothing else than the several parts collected; the nature of the whole must be the nature of that; and an unchangeable whole can never be made up of changing parts; so will it certify to him that nothing can be eternal that is subject to change; since in every nature that is altered, something begins to be which was not there before, or something ceases, which had existed until the change took place: Without one or other the nature of the thing remains the same, and to this the supposition of a change is a contradiction. But in either case, all pretensions to eternal existence are overthrown: That which begins to be owing to the altered nature, could not be eternal, since it had a beginning; and that

which

which ceases, or is lost from the subject, could not be eternal since it had an end.

2. Convinced by this single thought that the world had a beginning, the true reasoner can no longer deny that such beginning required some active cause. If that cause also was not in existence from eternity, it must have had a beginning too; and if a beginning, then a cause. This was not less necessary to that, than that was to the world: And thus, let us rise ever so high in a series of second causes, we must arrive at some first cause at length; each of the subordinate causes depends on one prior to itself; and if every link is dependent, we cannot imagine the whole chain to be otherwise, which is composed of them all: Wherever this first cause is found, all the rest must owe themselves to it; and it must be acknowledged as the cause of them all; but as it is the first in the series, it cannot depend on any other; for so it would cease to be the first, and we should still have to look for another. That alone which is independent in itself, being capable of sustaining the rank of that first link, on which all the rest of the chain must hang. Now, as this could not owe its being to any other cause, so it was impossible it should be cause of existence to itself: If it was its own cause, it must also be its own effect; but as the absurdity of this will immediately be felt by every reflecting mind; it is not necessary to push it further, than only to add that this argument can conclude no less than that the first cause possesses eternity within its very nature. For since the being of the second depended on the first, if ever there was a period when that first did not exist, that must be a time when nothing else existed; and if ever that was the case, even
from.

from eternity, nothing must have existed to eternity. This we cannot help concluding, unless we choose to heap up contradictions; for, departing from this conclusion, absurdity will unavoidably entangle us in every step; which side soever in the dilemma we determine to accept, either that nothing made something, yea, made all things; and so no cause was the greatest of all causes, and indeed the cause of them all; or that something made itself; and thus acted before itself existed, and so necessarily was before it was.

3. To avoid these contradictions, appears impossible, without the acknowledgment of one first cause eternally existing. And if some of the foregoing reasonings of this section are just, we cannot stop here, for from them it will follow, that to whatever nature we ascribe eternity, we must assign immutability also.

Nor is this all, for as **the** Eternal subsisted before all other beings, **he was** without them; and this proves that **his who's** nature is utterly independent of all others; possessing it's existence, and all the powers thereof in himself: Hence we infer that all this he possesses necessarily; since he derived it from none else, no could give it to himself, and yet holds it unchangeably, and as from eternity: And thus we find that whatever he may be, as a necessary being, he must be; this existence he then must be conceived to possess perfectly, there being none to share it with him; and infinitely too, since there was none to limit him, and short of this he could not limit himself. He must then possess all perfections alone otherwise he would be but imperfectly perfect: but for perfection to be want-
ing

ing to itself, is a contradiction : for this would be for perfection to be but imperfection at the same time.

The power of infinite existence surely includes that of all finite being. He that possesses the former, then cannot be destitute of the latter. And this infers that he can make, move, manage or destroy all possible, second beings with the same facility as he can live, or possess his own ; and so he is omnipotent ; but if that is true, he must be omniscient also : Since whatever can be made, can be known ; and whoever is capable of making what is an object of power, and yet incapable of or without the knowing what is an object of knowledge, must be supposed able to make he knows not, and cannot know what.

Nothing infinite can have parts. Every single part is in the nature of the thing, necessarily supposed to be less than the whole : To be less than infinite is to be finite : But finite parts, however multiplied, can compose only a finite whole. One that is infinite, can no more be the result of the assemblage of any number of such ingredients, than an infinite effect can be produced by a finite cause. Time and body consist of parts ; these can, therefore, have no more relation to the being of the infinite and ETERNAL NATURE, than this hath to nothing. It follows that God is an immaterial substance, or in other words, PURE SPIRIT : This is the ground of ascribing to him active power ; for matter, the only substance besides, that comes within our ken, being wholly inert, is naturally void of such power. The operations of the MIND, are nothing else but thinking and willing : From these all the effects of
divine

divine power proceed.---Hereby then, matter was created : It could not indeed have existence any other way : Since to suppose it an emanation from the divine essence, is either to deny its being matter, or to conclude matter and spirit to be the same thing ; and to deny it any beginning, is to ascribe to it no less than self-existence ; and that must be necessarily linked to all possible perfection. Now as the nature of the whole mass cannot be essentially different from that of its minutest part, he that denies the immediate creation of matter, must maintain every single atom to be the ETERNAL GOD.

Thus easily, and thus necessarily are we brought to a conclusion in favour of two doctrines, which have ever been justly reckoned the grand pillars of natural religion : of which the one is the necessary and eternal existence of one infinite, independent and immutable spirit possessing all perfection in himself ; and the other is the immediate creation of the world by him.

4. From these two points proved, the doctrine of Providence necessarily follows ; it is a dictate of natural light, that the father of the family should take care of the members : the foregoing argument presents us with a created universe as one great family ; and an infinite all-perfect God, as the father of the whole ; one who is omnipotent, and therefore we are sure that nothing in his creation can take place against his will, nor fail of taking place when he wills to effect it ; one who is omniscient, and so nothing can be in it without his knowledge ; one who is the first cause, and hence all second causes are ever dependent on him. And finally, one who is infinite perfection, therefore must be essentially good : And, if so, will be communicative of himself,

himself, and of his care to his own work wherever it needs. And thus from the known perfections of the divine nature, his constant providence over all creatures, might be argued a priori: And to feign a God, who made the world and yet rules it not, is a theory as contradictory to itself, as it is to reason and truth: That fate which is only a blind, unmeaning, eternal necessity of things, independent of a God, or any intelligent cause, as it was held by the stoical philologists after Zeno, their leader, is not a whit more capable of accounting for the phenomena of the moral world, than the order, magnificence, and utility of the natural, can be ascribed to the chance which was taught by Epicurus and his followers; which, being itself a non entity, a mere nothing, could be no cause; and so could never produce any effect whatever; nor can true philosophy be more easily reconciled to the doctrines of the Peripatetics, which ascribed to God an indolent indifference and neutrality about the universe; though it allowed him a general knowledge, and general government of the whole, yet, confining his agency in it, merely to the giving being and motion to the heavenly bodies, without descending to any particular beings, events or actions.

Plato was the first, among the heathen sages, that can be said plainly to have asserted a providence; and his doctrines on that subject were much more consistent, and more favourable to the truth than those of any that had gone before him, but his restraining the providence which he held to things inferior to free agents, forfeited to his whole scheme the honorable title of true philosophy; for that could never con-

sider PROVIDENCE, without bringing into view the divine omnipotent energy, always, every where present, and employed in sustaining and governing all things.

1. It considers him as first sustaining all things, or keeping up the being he once made, both in its essence, qualities and powers; this conservation is necessary to their continuance in existence; the parts of their duration exist not together: Nor is there any necessary connexion between any two moments in the succession. The nature of creatures is not infinitely perfect; therefore this existence was not necessary.---If not necessary, then it was not eternal; and if not eternal, must depend on a cause. As extension is only body continued upon body, so duration is nothing but being continued upon being. What was not necessary in its first moment, cannot be necessary in its second, or in any other that follows. Being, continued, is a positive effect; and so it requires a positive cause: That cause is not to be found in the creature itself; since its being begun, at first required another. If it continued a moment after the agency of that other had ceased, it must, in that moment, be considered as an effect without a cause: If the creature then be immediately dependent on God for its first moment, it must be so also for its last, and for every moment that intervenes: To deny this is to assign to creatures that independence which is the prerogative of God alone; or at least to suppose them, at some times, more dependent on other created beings than on God: For if, after creating them, God did no more than only forbear to annihilate; this would be to do no more for their conservation than their fellow-creatures do; indeed it would not be doing so much;

for all are convinced that the connexion between various parts of the creation is such that one cannot subsist without the help of several other parts; and truly, if any creature, as such, could sustain itself, all creatures could; and so none could ever perish by its own inability: For if they could be their own supporters for one moment, they might for another; and no reason can be offered why they might not forever. In a word, this theory would issue in making every creature independent, and thus all would be Gods; and therefore the clear voice of reason maintains it to be more honourable to God, and more agreeable to the created nature, to have all worlds and all beings in each world, continually depending on his energy for their existence, and their all, than only to suppose them to be so for one instant when their existence began, and from that time to have outgrown his care, and their dependence on it.

This it affirms in the most universal and unlimited sense, conscious that it will apply with no less propriety and truth, to the greatest of creatures than the least, it being evident that the greatest created nature contains most of that which needs foreign support, and the least possesses least of those powers which are supposed helpful to support themselves.

2. Not content with considering the creator as ever engaged, by his providence, to uphold all things which he has made, true reason calls us to view him also as governing all that he supports: Nor can it conceive this part of the business of providence, to be less necessary than the former. All creatures, it believes, to have been brought into being by a cause whose

wisdom

wisdom is perfect: Such wisdom it cannot imagine should ever act without some end in view. If creatures miss of answering the end of their existence, the wisdom that formed them for it is disappointed: To ~~perfect~~ ^{attain} this end they need some superior director; as of themselves they cannot certainly know the road that leads to it, or the means necessary to arrive at it. If they knew those means they could not furnish them. The power of acting is greater than the power of meer existing. If creatures are dependent on God for the latter, surely they cannot be less so for the former. If they had this power they would still be liable to pervert it.--And thus it appears that a supreme power to govern the creation is just as necessary as to support its being.--It is evident that this is an office which none but God is fit to sustain; and to assume this honour no being has a right, save he that created and upholds the world; for reason adjudges it to be his absolute property; and concedes him the indefeasible right of doing what he will with his own.

The same principles which evince the necessity of a governing providence, and Gods right to the throne therein, constrain us likewise to believe such government to be no way impossible: As it surely implies no contradiction to affirm, that he who made does perfectly know the creature of his hand; or that he who wills it to exist, and sees it cannot do so of itself, should exert his power to support that being which he had exerted power to frame; or that he who supports it for an end, which it can never be sure to attain if left to itself, should condescend to govern it, so as to secure the object for whose sake it was first brought out of its primitive nought.

Nor can such interposition be unworthy of his supreme dignity: If his power were insufficient^s for this, why do we grant it was sufficient to create? Or did it bring into being creatures only to be witnesses of its own imperfection? Whoever supposes that he can, but will not, must needs ascribe to him an ability that is vain; must conclude that he thought the world worthy of the exercise of his power and wisdom, and for that reason made it; but not worthy of his care and therefore disdains to govern it. Operation is the next end of being. If we say that God gave this, but refuses to govern that, then we impeach him as taking care of the means, but overlooking the end; and thus, that part of providence which lies in the government of all creatures, is proved from the same source of argument as the other; and it seems impossible for a reasoning mind to admit the certainty of the existence of God, and yet suppose that of his providence to be doubtful.

To all this it would be very easy to add many indubitable proofs of this point, a posteriori; for, without this, how can we account for what we find to be plain and important facts, obviously presented to our notice every day? Whence the notion of government universally prevailing among all created things we know? Why else do we conceive of matter ruled by motion, motion by life, sense, fancy, things by reason, &c. &c. the greater power ever governing the lesser? Why is matter, and why motion, continued in the same quantity as when first produced? Why do all the heavenly bodies, with such exactness, keep to their respective stations? Whence do the laws of nature still continue to operate as at their beginning? Why have not the powers of

attraction and repulsion shifted sides before now? Who preserves the species of vegetables, and of animals distinct, with all their properties or instincts? Whence the preservation of the moral world, with all its conscious fears? But we forbear; the evidences of a divine providence are as many as the creatures and events we have access to know.

And if it be the providence of God, it must be such as is worthy of him, and so must needs extend to all worlds, to all atoms, and to all vital substances in each; the least one of these being as really the effect of infinite power as the whole, to make that in vain, would be as inconsistent with divine wisdom as to make this. But in vain it would be if for no use; or, if that use were not designed; or, being designed, sufficient means were not provided to obtain it, or if only some of the uses designed were regarded and secured, and not all.

The dignity of providence appears to be concerned also in its works being carried on by means of second causes; not indeed from a defeat of power sufficient to do all immediately, which should therefore make the help of creatures needless: No, but it is one thing in which the grandeur of the divine government eminently appears that the whole created universe is but one movement, complicated indeed, but adjusted with the most exact perfection. All creatures then are to be considered only as lesser engines, or organs of the whole. They are made as the instruments for doing all its work. Now, why make any tool, if not enough for the work to be done? And why make tools for work, and not use them in it? Why use them for a part of the purpose they were made for, and not for the rest?

will any presume to say that there is one atom made by him for uses the maker knew not what? is not he an enemy to the divine honor, who dares to set forth the exuberance of the creator's power, to demonstrate a sufficiency in his understanding?

5. Providence being intended for the display of God's glorious perfections, must consist in a series of acts in which these perfections are exercised: It must be therefore worthy of them all---and so, most powerful, and most wise, ever governing creatures in the way best suited to the natures respectively given them. Hence, whilst matter and motion are ruled by mechanical force, or the impresses called the laws of nature; brutes are led by unerring instincts; and man, as a rational being, is governed by reason, and as a moral agent, by a moral law. In all which, to be worthy of God, divine providence must be holy, just and good; and if so, it will not fail, on the whole, to discover his approbation of virtue and goodness, in his rational subjects, by conferring on them such happiness as may sufficiently reward their labors in those pursuits; and to manifest his abhorrence of vice, by punishments that shall observe a just proportion between the penal evil inflicted, and the moral evil that deserved it. This, however, is so far from being universally the fact in this present life, that the most conspicuous virtue is often found loaded with adversities of every sort, through all the time of its appearing on the stage of this world; and at last sinking under the pressure of its calamities, in some torturing or ignominious death; while on the other hand, enormous wickedness, that spares neither God nor man, is seen rolling along as in a triumphal

umphal chariot, denied of no pleasure, withheld from no pomp, derived of no wealth after which its heart aspires, and at last, sleeping away into the arms of an easy dissolution: to dispute the reality of this fact is at once to give the lie to the history of mankind in every age and clime, and to deny the veracity of our own eyes; and to grant it is to reduce ourselves within this dilemma, either to believe the certainty of a future state, where the scale shall turn, where virtue shall be rewarded, and vice punished in the proportion due, and so where all these inequalities shall be fully ratified; or to deny the morality of the government of the world; the reality of a providence, and the existence of a God; and hence we see that the certainty of another state of existence awaiting men after this life, rests on the same evidence with the being of the eternal first cause of all.

6. Indeed, if this doctrine were not true, man's nature and life would be of all contradictions the most absurd: Of all the matter and all the motion brought into being at the first, we cannot shew the least part annihilated, nor any new creations wrought to repair the loss: That hypothesis would require God to be ever busied in doing what he could as well have done at once:---And what is worse, it would impeach him with all the inconsistency of weaving a Pe-reope web, and undoing to-morrow all the works of to-day. All the dissolutions we see take place in bodies are only so many alterations of the mixture of the atoms which composed them; but amongst them all no instance of an annihilation can be found. And is the nobler soul behind inert matter in this privilege? And nobler we may venture to call it, since we find

find it capable of thought. Thought is evidently inconsistent with the nature of mere matter : All changes wrought in matter, or by it, are only the motions of its atoms : All such motions require a moving cause : If matter could produce motion in itself, then it could give existence to a being quite new, and quite foreign to itself, but whatever can do this, can create : Every such cause then must be supposed a God. But if every motion in matter require a foreign mover, than the motion of any atom moved must be in the same direction with that of the moving power : And, as that power is only another atom moving, it will need another power moving in the same direction still : And so on, ad infinitum. And thus it would follow, that if that belonged to matter, it must consist in motion ; and if motion owed its existence to nothing but matter, there could be no more than one motion, and so no more than one thought to all eternity . all thinking substance then must be spirit. Conscious of this power within ourselves, we cannot scruple to pronounce our souls of a nature nobler than the material world : And if so, why should it be suspected that the existence which is still indulg'd to bodies after their dissolution, is dea'd to human souls when parted from them ?

This argument will gather strength, if we reflect that these thinking principles within us are in nothing more different in their nature from that of matter, than in respect of that composition of parts, infinitely divisible, which is essential to its being. Perfect simplicity of nature is the inseparable property of spirits. Possessed of this, the souls of men are incapable of dissolution ; there being no parts into which their essence

sense can be resolved, as that of bodies is. Death therefore has no relation to them; it leaves their natures quite untouched. When liberated from these tenements of clay, they must remain as whole, as perfect, as much one thing as before.

As the simplicity of their nature puts the spirits of men beyond the reach of dissolution or death; so the immateriality above stated, as essential to them as thinking subjects, removes from their nature all that extension, by which they could fill up place, or occupy any quantity of local room in the universe. And hence it appears that nothing can be created which naturally must thrust them out of being, as having an existence with which theirs cannot consist, any more than two bodies can fill the same place at once.

Thus we must conclude, from natural arguments, that the human soul is immortal; since from its nature it cannot be excluded by the creating of any other being; nor destroyed by a dissolution of its own parts; it remains that there is no way to deprive it of immortality, but by annihilation of its substance; and how absurd that supposition is, we may learn from some part of the reasoning above.

But the moral arguments, in proof of this doctrine, are at least as cogent as any other. When the infinite perfection of the creator is considered, and the moral excellence of his providence is taken into the review, who can reconcile it to the notion, that he pre-ends the soul cannot survive its body; to find it possessed of faculties that are capable of perpetual progress to its perfection, without ever arriving at it? Filled with an essential love of existence, and

horror

horror of losing it? Constantly impressed with the idea of ever-during life? Acted by the most ardent desires for that privilege? And big with the hopes of enjoying it? Whence the inward joy that follows the practice of virtue, though in secret? Whence the pangs of conscience, resulting from a vicious deed which no human eye beheld, nor any earthly power could punish? If all these are not proofs of the design of the creator to bestow immortality on human souls: We must conclude the original constitution of their natures to have been preposterous and absurd; since otherwise it must be granted that their faculties are higher than their end.

Thus obvious and certain we find the grand articles of natural religion; thus plenary the proofs of the being of a God, of the reality of providence, and the morality of his government; ----- Thus undeniable the evidences of the immortality of the soul of man, and of an endless state of retribution when this life is at an end: And thus easily are the foundations of the mortal Deists raised, and the superstructure they have raised upon it overthrown. These arguments were immediately addressed to the men of that class. What follows shall include them with their younger brethren, who granting all these principles, yet deny divine revelation.

7. Man is now considered as an active subject of moral government; endowed with intelligence and power; immortal in his nature, and animated with a strong desire of happiness, acted by motives, and so a fit subject of law; possessed of liberty, and hence capable of right and wrong: with capacities for progress, and therefore also for increase or diminution of his bliss.

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The ultimate end of his being is the display of his maker's glory, in the attainment of the height of that perfection and felicity of which his nature is capable: This end is to be obtained in a course of action adapted to it; and that this may freely be pursued, 'tis essentially necessary that the end itself be ever sufficiently present, to the rational creature's mind; as well as that the means of arriving at that goal, and the motives that must urge him on in the race towards it, be always suitably within his view: Therefore a divine revelation must be necessary for that purpose.

1. Reason was indeed the first rule given to man. As a rule it might direct, but as a rule given from God it must bind as a law. Its dictates were congruous to the natures and relations of things, and inscribed on that of man; and hence it takes the name of Natural Law; and this as a law given from Heaven, and clad with its authority, must be considered as DIVINE.

2. Whatever might be said of the sufficiency of this rule during the continuance of man's integrity, as in that state its notices were clearly understood, and its motives felt in their proper force; yet it would be no difficult matter to discover in it, certain circumstances which seem presumptive arguments that it was not designed to stand as man's only law even in a state of innocence. Its first dictate was that God was to be worshipped; but the particular rites by which this was to be done in every case, were not plainly notified by its general directions; all its commands displayed the morality of God's government; but they never brought the knowledge of GOD'S WILL into view;

ror (as on some occasions might be fit) did they ever call the creature to any duty without shewing him a good and special reason for it. And therefore man, even then, seems to have been left in need of some intimate intercourse with his lawgiver: And as it thus appears that some positive communications from above, were very desirable for securing the attainment of man's chief end; does it not seem congruous to that wisdom and goodness, that would leave no expedient unprovided, that God should condescend to discover to his innocent creature all that was necessary to his perfection and bliss?

2. But it is evident that some event has happened, whereby the original notices of nature's law, are much effaced. The present dark state of the human understanding cannot be an effect of which the father of lights can be supposed the cause: Whence moral evil took its origin; or how it was introduced into the world, it is no part of our business at present to enquire: But nothing can be more evident than that it has so bewildered the mind of man, that he now cannot attain his end without instruction: That the object of his truest bliss, and the means of pursuing it, are equally out of sight with the bulk of mankind, the slightest views of the state of the world will convince us. If we look into Japan, Corfu, China, or any other country, not enlightened by intercourse with the nations which enjoyed a revelation, there we shall see the extent of the discoveries in religion, which human evil left to itself can make: How mean and how absurd their best ideas of God! How preposterous the worship with which they treat him!

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To go to the nations that have cultivated science for the instructions mankind needed in the case before us, is hardly fair: Amongst them the sacred tradition has had many opportunities to circulate; we can therefore have but little confidence in ranking their speculations among the discoveries of the untutored mind: And yet, even there we should find the people but little above the brutal herd: Knowledge was all engrossed by their poets and philosophers; the former never rose much above the opinions of the vulgar. It was the latter only that struck out any thing new: But what advantage in this dark state could the people ever derive from them? Into how many sects were they divided? And how dark the views of each? Even the chief good was so far hid, that Varro assures us they held no less than two hundred and eighty different opinions about it! No perfect rule of morals was ever found among them; no sufficient motives to obey it, if there had been. Many of them indeed held a future state probable: Yet they described it in colours so fantastical and absurd as to destroy its credit with rational minds. That moral evil is in the world, they could not but admit: But whence it rose, what was the beginning, or what the end of things, which of them could tell? Whether sin might be forgiven; and if so, by what means, none of them could satisfy an inquisitive conscience. So far from persuading others to virtue, their precepts did not appear to influence themselves: Their greatest philosophers were stained with some habitual follies: Their sacrifices were often attended with the most obscene rites; yea, their very Gods but public examples and patrons of the most flagitious crimes!

No

No wonder then, if the law of nature did not effect the cure. Whilst some thought nothing about it, some denied its being; nothing was seen clearly enough by it; some things, not at all, which yet were absolutely necessary to be known; and the clearest conceptions obtained by the most knowing, failed to influence the heart.

Hence the wisest legislators have ever thought a pretence of revelation necessary to give credit to their laws; and the doctrine of retributions in a future state requisite to enforce them. If then a thorough reformation of mankind was necessary to their bliss; if that could never be obtained without a system of new notions, if these must be derived from instruction, if that was not to be had from the wisest men on earth, then we must conclude that, without a revelation from Heaven, the whole race of men must be surrendered into the darksome arms of everlasting despair.

4. And who can pretend this favor impossible to be conveyed? Can one human spirit however imperfect, convey its ideas to another; and cannot that spirit which is infinite perfection, make known his will to both? Can an excellence belong to the creature, and the creator be without it? Or has he alone who made the human mind no access to it? Nor is it inconsistent with the dignity of God, to communicate his will to creatures, any more than to behold them, to dwell among them, to be present intimately with each, and to uphold their beings every moment. May we not then infer from the divine goodness, that a divine revelation has in fact been given? We not only may, but must draw this conclusion; unless we would affirm that
 infinite

infinite goodness made a world of rational creatures capable of immortal bliss, and yet denied it what was absolutely necessary for obtaining it.

The wisdom of man has found it impossible to keep society in order, without the supposition of a revelation ; if, then, it was certain that God had given none, would not the wisdom of Providence have been impeached by that of creatures ?

Religion is confessedly essential to the government of the world. If that is all mere fiction and deceit, had it not been better in itself, and more to the honor of divine providence to have given a revelation that is truth, than make it necessary, for the very being of virtue in the world, that every nation should forge a false one? Or shall we say that men have done more for the good of men, in pretending a revelation, than God would do for his own creatures in giving one? Could not the omnipotent ruler have established virtue by truth? Or did the HOLY ONE choose rather to establish it by falshood? Or has infinite wisdom so constituted the world, that the latter is better, and more necessary for its government than the former? If not, we must concede that the expectation of a divine revelation, which has indeed been common to all nations, was founded on the strongest reason ; since the notion of a providence, and therefore of the very being of a God, the plainest dictate of reason and sense, must be given up without it.

5. Will it then be unwarrantable for us now to assume a little assurance, and assert that it would be as irrational to contend that no divine revelation has been given, as to deny any article

of natural religion ? If not, then it remains incumbent on every man first, to search it out wherever it may be found, and then with serious impartiality to enquire what it saith, and steadily to obey its voice. To give some assistance in this investigation.

1. Let it then suffice now to remark that how far soever the religion of Paganism has been spread through the world, it has ever been destitute of every certain mark of a divine original. The pretended miracles were only tricks, done in the dark, before one or two, whose minds were previously unhinged by an heated imagination, and so their eyes easily deceived; or performed for carnal ends, wrought by magical rites, and always defective in themselves: The predictions of its oracles were of no general importance, nor of any moral tendency, contained in dark speeches, always ambiguous, contrived so as not to be directly contradicted by the event, let that be what it would, generally delivered in shrewd conjectures of events that might arise from natural causes already existing, ever calculated to encourage immoralities, often contradicting each other, yet sometimes over ruled to speak out truths that tended to the total overthrow of themselves and the religion they supported.*

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2. Nor

* Their whole worship consisted in the most irrational superstitions, or in cruel and obscene rites. Their laws justified rapine, revenge, lewdness, and self-murder. Their philosophers encouraged the holy theism in vogue; and SOCRATES himself, though condemned for opposing it, died in the idolatrous practice.

2. Nor can the Mahomitan religion, which is next to this in number and extent, produce any better evidence that it came down from Heaven: The History of its author is sufficient to discredit that whole scheme. Ignorant and fanatical, but at the same time possessed of consummate artifice and deceit; and stimulated by unbounded ambition, that man, about the year of Christ 606, conspired with Sergius, a Nestorian Monk, and by his aid, under pretext of secret communications with the angel Gabriel, he, for twenty three years, continued compiling and retailing in fifty two separate chapters, which he called the ALCORAN; a system collected from a mixture of Pagan, Jewish, and christian traditions, and designed to gratify and comprehend all these parties, so far as to raise himself to empire over them.

From such sources it could hardly be expected that any system should be drawn without some things agreeable to natural religion. Some such things the Alcoran contains. But, at the same time, it is found to be impure in its morals, commanding, polygamy, justifying fraud, robbery, adultery and murder: It is stuffed with legendary romance, unworthy of God to reveal, and of reason to receive; it is contradictory to itself; it aims only at a political end; it shews no way for the pardon of sin; and holds to a future state, utterly inconsistent with immortality. Most of his prophecies have already proved false. His miracles were only acts of legerdemain. His religion was propagated by ignorance, and established by the sword.---All this can easily be proved; and when it is, do we need any more

to assure the rational mind, that it was never authored by that wise and holy being by whom the world was made?

The Torah of the Jews has other claims to our belief than these. If it be fact that all fiction is but the disguise of antecedent truth, the antiquity of the Jewish code affords to be sure, a strong presumption in favour of its original: This is incontestably the most ancient book in the world; however probable it is that all the other ancient writers drew many of their traditions from it, we are certain that it could derive nothing from them. Pagan history took its rise from the Olympiads, but these were not begun till two hundred and fifty years after the days of Solomon. Sanchaniathon the Phœnician, the most ancient of their historians; and Orphius the Grœcian, of their poets, lived about the time of Sampson; and Homer, the father of their fable, was nineteen years later than David; the eldest of them all was almost five hundred years after Moses.

1. The longevity of the patriarchs gave this last mentioned author the greatest advantage for knowing the truth of the facts he has recorded by way of ancient history. The sacred tradition had but six removes from Adam, till it came to his hands, viz. through Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Jacob, Joseph, and Amram; that Joseph had used letters in his great work in Egypt cannot be doubted. 'Tis very probable they were in use from the beginning: Hence materials might be furnished from certain records for the book of Genesis, and the rest of his writings regard facts seen with his own eyes. The same circumstances which favoured his researches after ancient facts, afforded also an easy mean of dictating.

detecting any fallacy in his narrative. The sacred tradition was in the possession of the whole nation: Every father of a family considered it incumbent on him to transmit it to his household: It was the care of the patriarchs named above, to have it communicated to that whole people; and from the beginning the faithful preservation of it, was the chief distinction between the holy seed and profane race, which, with the loss of this, lost all the fear of God, and fell off to idolatry: In this tradition was laid the ground work of their common law; its being circulated through so many hands effectually secured it from alterations: And had Moses attempted any, a people, boasting of their ancestors, jealous for their honor, and valuing themselves on their tradition as a sacred deposit, which ennobled their race above all the rest of the world, could not have failed to take the alarm, expose the imposture, and maintain the credit of the abused truth.

2. The facts which are related by this author, as happening in his own time, were of the most public notoriety; most of them concerned the whole nation; the people of all ranks and stages of life, were the present witnesses. If Moses had been destitute at once of inspiration, and of honesty, it was impossible for him to falsify in his accounts of these things; never was an historian so incapable of deceiving; the eyes, the ears, the honor, the interest, the prejudices of his whole nation, were all ready to give him the lie the moment he deserved it. Nor did it less concern the whole kingdom of Egypt to have corrected him if they could: But no attempt of this kind appears to have been made. The Jewish nation received his history as infallible:

fallible : and an Egyptian monarch, who swayed that sceptre, at the period in which the country was the seat of science, and its learning arrived at the meridian, was at vast expence to obtain an authentic translation of this code in the Greek language ; and instead of any essays to confute it, even in those parts in which the honor of his nation was most nearly touched, he deposited it in the Alexandrian library, as a precious and indubitable fragment of ancient records.

The credit of this writer being so well established in these things, we may safely hear him in the rest : Indeed all he says is so interwoven with his history, that, if that be true, nothing in the whole can be false.

3. Of this veracity it is a shrewd presumption, that Moses opens his narrative with the discovery of two facts, which never could have come to the world, had he concealed them ; and which had never dropt from the pen of one, whose view was to build up a name for himself ; or to recommend his countrymen, and so make himself popular among them : The one is his own refusal to obey the divine command ; and the other his people's obstinacy in rejecting the messages he brought them from the God of their fathers. These faults he opens with the greatest frankness ; and confesses to the world that, in either case, nothing less than a MIRACLE could bring the offenders to their duty.

4. A miracle is an effect in nature, beyond its ordinary course ; wrought by some unknown power, above the reach of the visible agents ; but limited to its circumstances by divine ordination, for a worthy and laudable end. A work thus done manifests the finger of God, whatever natural causes may be used in effecting it :

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And our first ideas of that wise and holy being will not permit us to suspect that this omnipotence can be employed in a matter so unworthy of him as the confirmation of a system of deceit and imposture. Whenever then an uncontradicted miracle appears, it must finish all controversy about the truth of whatever it comes to attest. The divine legation of Moses, is attested with a series of such miracles, wrought in all elements, in all situations, in the sight of thousands; before friends and enemies, before the greatest monarch of the age and his whole court, in the presence of the most learned men, then in the world; yes, many of them were in opposition to all the force of Egypt and its prince, and to all the wiles of satan in the same mimicry of the magicians; whilst all their prodigies laboured under so many marks of deceit, as sufficiently to prove the weakness of the hand that wrought them, and to refute their claims to the title of real miracles, till even the colleagues of the devil owned the finger of God, and confessed all their arts to be done.

Who can pretend to retain his reasoning faculties, and remain an infidel when he calmly examines the evidence of these facts? When he sees the nation, which opposed the same light against which he is fighting, utterly destroyed for that crime, and beholds the people that yielded to the conviction, delivered from the most abject slavery under it, and that without the aid of human means? When he sees seas and rivers dried up to give them passage; the sun and moon stopped, to afford them light to conquer and pursue their foes; bread rained from Heaven daily, to support 600,000 men with their families, for forty years; the rearing rocks of the desert

desart dissolved into refreshing streams to quench their thirst ; and the birds of the air casting themselves down in heaps around their camp for an occasional feast ? These miracles were real, profitable and public ; and they continued among them daily for two succeeding generations ; public monuments of the principal facts were erected. Solemn memorials of them were instituted and annually observed, to preserve them from oblivion.

The œconomy now introduced was not more eminently supported by miracles than by the lives of its defenders. If we trace the characters of their greatest leaders, how widely different from the rest of men ! They affected no emoluments to themselves or their families by the highest trusts ; they are generally styled only by their single names, content with the same plain manner of living with the lowest in the nation. Their only distinction appears to have consisted in stronger oppositions, more eminent dangers, and more violent deaths than others. All acknowledge them to have been patterns of godliness and humanity, and eminent examples of heroic virtue ; and even their foibles are branded by themselves, and held up to future ages as a foil to set off the perfection of their law, and the holiness of God its author.

5. The gift of Prophecy distinguished the advocates of this system too, in every age, till it was completed.

Prophecy is a declaration of the divine præsience, looking through a train of second causes which could not come within human knowledge, to a sure effect at any distance of time. This is no less wonderful than miracles. To
suppose

suppose this gift bestowed to set the great seal of Heaven to a scheme of falshood, is to abandon the idea of truth or goodness in the Governor of the world :

The matter of the prophecies, uttered from time to time by the men of whom we speak, is an evidence of their truth : if that was an event to happen within his own time, the prophet might expect death by the law in Deut. 18. 20. 21. 22. If the event failed to justify the prediction : Yet of such events these men often spake with the greatest plainness, in the most public manner, and with a confidence that shewed their own persuasion of the truth ; and they saw the events follow accordingly. But if he predicted some matter at a great distance, what ground could the prophet have for conjecture ? What motive could induce him without warrant to pronounce it ? Yet of this kind of prophecy we see them spinning out a thread from the days they lived in to the end of the world. Many of them have been already fulfilled : and this is good security for the certain accomplishment of the rest ; although many of them cannot have it till the end of time.

6. When to all this, we add the consideration of the doctrines attested, and the law promulged under the sanction of all this proof, we cannot avoid being overpowered with conviction of the divine original of the whole.---The purity of the morals it inculcates ; the importance of the truths it discovers ; their perfect harmony among themselves, and entire consistency with the principles of the religion of nature ; the sublimity with which they greatly surpass all former discoveries of men : The perfection by which they appear

appear worthy of God, and their tendency to the best happiness of mankind, all stand forth as unimpeachable marks of the divinity of their author.

7. Nor was the manner of the publication and custody of the several parts of the sacred code, other than befitted a revelation from God. The law of the two tables delivered with so many awful solemnities, may be considered as the centre of the work. A set of ceremonies of religion, commenced as an exposition of the first table; and a system of civil institutes as a comment on the second: An order of sacred persons are commissioned to see to the observation of the one, and an august bench of secular judges to guard and enforce the other; and both are solemnly inaugurated, and kept up in a constant succession. The tables were immediately deposited in the ark; and so were preserved, first in the tabernacle, and then in the temple, until the Babylonish captivity, and then Polyhistor, a heathen author, informs us that the Chaldeans, fearing the fate of the Philistines at Bethshemesh, if they should presume to touch the ark of God, lest it, unexamined, in the care of Jeremy the prophet.

The PENTATEUCH was written in one book by Moses, with his own hand; this book was, by the writer himself, publicly committed in a very solemn manner, to the charge of the priests, and laid up in the most holy place. The seventy elders received from his hands, an authentic duplicate of it, with authority to compare it with the other whenever they pleased: The awful punishment inflicted on two of the priests, Nadab and Abhiu, was a caution to the rest how they ventured, on any future occasion, to im-

Muce any thing in the room of what God enjoined. And the aforesaid power of the seventy, was a sufficient check on all suggestions of any innovation from the priesthood. The whole CODE was publicly read at the feast of tabernacles to all the assembly, both of Jews and strangers, every seventh year. Each of the seventy, as a public magistrate, had a copy for the direction of his own administration. Many of the priests and levites, had separate copies of their own. Joshua himself, and after him every judge and King of Israel, was expressly obliged to take ore with his own hand. When Jehoshaphat dispatched the embassy of five princes, two priests, and nine levites, through all his dominions, to teach the law to the people; each prince carried a copy with him, in his respective circuit; and by him priests and levites were appointed in every city; to each of whom one was committed. Certain levites were kept employed continually in writing copies, and had the name of scribes given them on that account: By them every prophet in commission, and every school of the prophets, was supplied with ore. In the time of the captivity, it is not more probable that Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the other good men, who were scattered every where, would live without copies, then it is that Haggai, Zechariah and the levites, would return to Jerusalem, destitute of ore.

All the other original books, whether historical, poetical or prophetic, were kept among the public records, and copied into many hands, as well as the LAW. And after the return from Babylon, when a constellation of prophets, such as never before had shone out at one time, appeared; Ezra, Ezekiel, Daniel, Mordecai, Ze-
 rubbabel,

rubbahel, Nehemiah, Haggai, Zechery and Malachi, foreseeing that no prophet was to appear after them, until SHILAH should come, saw it needful to fix the Canon of scripture; they therefore carefully collected, compared, and perfected the dispersed books, bound them up in one volume, and committed it to sacred custody in the temple. And that book, ever after, was universally received by the whole Jewish church; it was found in the temple at the coming of Christ; and in all his corrections of their manner of explaining it, he never charges the priests or doctors with any fraud committed on the original text.

Such corruption indeed was impossible in the case; for, besides the innumerable copies dispersed, and in all hands, the several sects amongst the Jews were a strong guard on their CANON: The animosities kept up between them, by their different sentiments, made each of the parties a check upon the other in this matter. If one had ventured to adulterate any passage, all the others would be zealous in detecting the cheat; as the credit of the forgers must fall with the discovery; in such an attempt it is by no means probable, that these opposing parties should all agree; and without this, the end could not be attained by either of them; either might indeed corrupt the copies which themselves had; but the design must be frustrated, by comparison with those they had not. The corruption never could be passed upon the generation then alive, and much less transmitted to posterity, undiscovered.

The care of the Jewish church to prevent alterations creeping into the sacred books was never paralleled in any other case. The MASORA was begun in the time of the Maccabees,
and

and continued, by many hands, for several hundred years: The design of this work was critically to remark the various readings and writings, the number of chapters, verses, and letters in each book; the first, middle, and last verse in each chapter; the first, middle and last letter of each verse; how often every word, yea, every letter of the alphabet is found, and where. The work of the school of Tiberias called KERI and KEFIB, was another labourious effort to preserve the purity of the text: This book shewed how often, and in what places, any word is found read one way, and written another, or read but not written, in any of the copies, or written but not read.

And finally, the Hebrew punctuation was a greater security to the sacred books, and left less ambiguity than the matres lectionis: Whether we assert it to be an invention of the school aforesaid, or rather suppose it to have been equally original with the letters themselves. And, if any thing was still wanting to carry the security of the integrity of the Canon to the highest possible point, the translations of these writings into all the different languages in the world, must complete the business. Some of these were very ancient. The Penteteuch, was translated into Samaritan, when the temple on mount Gerizim was built. And the constant antipathy between that people and the Jews made it impossible for either to alter these books. They were also rendered into Greek before the days of Alexander. Ptolemy, Philadelphus King of Egypt, had the whole Bible translated by the seventy interpreters. Three other versions appeared in the infancy of christianity, &c. those of Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion. Origen gives us eight. Unkelos,
contemporary

contemporary with Gamaliel, published a Targum or paraphrase on the law, and Jonathan, at the same time, another on the prophets, both in the Chaldaic language. A Syriac version of the whole, was published about the time of the Apostles, as were also the Æthiopic, and the Samaritan.

Upon the whole, the adversaries of the credit of that sacred CANNON, which the books of the old testament contain, may now be challenged to shew any writings since the world began, in the publication and custody of which so little room was left, for the suspicion of fraud, or the possibility of imposition: or any reason why the most critical enquirer should not feel himself obliged to rest cordially satisfied in that book as a revelation from God.

8. The evidencies referred to, in what has been thus far received, will be felt more cogent than only to satisfy a reasoning mind, of the authority of the Jewish religion, they will constrain him to receive that religion home to his own heart. Nothing indeed could forbid his declaring himself settled on it forever, but this only consideration: In examining the substance of that revelation, he finds sufficient intimation given, that its great author designed that oeconomy only as preparatory for another. That its end was to shade out that other to view, and to end only till its substance should appear: and that the theocracy was local and temporary, and appointed in due time to expire, and give place to another kingdom that should be universal, and without end.

The chief strength of that whole volume appears to be laid out in pointing to a person to come for the establishing of that kingdom. The

affairs of that person seem to be the centre and substance of the Hebrew code : If we take away what relates to him we shall leave but little matter behind : The prophecies concerning him have descended to so many minute particulars, as if they had been designed to compose a history of the life of some individual, of whose whole conduct themselves had been spectators. They tell us his name, *a* that he was to come of Abraham's seed, *b* and that in David's line, *c* that he should be introduced by a fore-runner, *d* and be born of a virgin *e* at Bethlehem Epratah, *f* be called out of Egypt, *g* preach in Gallilee, *h* work miraculous cures, on the bodies, and minds of men, *i* and yet not be perceived in his true character by the very people who heard and saw him. *k* But on the contrary, that tho' he should indeed ride into Jerusalem on an ass colt. *l* shouted with Hosannas by many, *m* yet he should be despised and rejected, and live a life of grief and sorrow, *n* and at last be betrayed by one of his own family, *o* sold for thirty pieces of silver, which should purchase the potters field ; *p* that he should be put to death as a wicked person, and in his execution should be wounded and bruised, *q* have his hands and feet pierced, *r* yet no bones

a Isa. 7, 14. *b* Gen. 22, 18. *c* 2 Sam. 7, 12-17. Isa. 53, 1. *d* Mal. 3, 1. *e* Isa. 7, 14. *f* Mic. 5, 2. *g* Hos. 11, 1. *h* Isa. 9, 1, 2. *i* Isa. 35, 5, 6. *k* Isa. 6, 9, 10. *l* Zeck. 9, 9. *m* Ps. 118, 25, 26. *n* Isa. 53, 3. *o* Ps. 41, 9. *p* Zeck. 11, 12, 13. *q* Isa. 53, 12. *r* Isa. 53, 5. *s* Ps. 22, 16, Zeck. 12, 10.

bone broken: be mocked with his confidence in God, *v* be served up with vinegar and gall, *u* have his garments parted among his executioners, and his vestire despoiled of by lot, *w* that he nevertheless should not see corruption in the grave; *x* but after death prolong his days *y* ascend up on high; *z* be king of his church; *aa* and sit at God's right hand forever. *bb*

Moreover, the time was fixed by the prophets for all this. One tells us it must be at the end of seventy weeks, from the decree for the rebuilding of Jerusalem; *cc* which, if we follow the Jewish writers, and the express direction of the law, Levit. 25, 8; and extend them to weeks, every day of which shall stand for a year, they make but four hundred and ninety years; and if of the three edicts of the Babylonish court about that matter, we consent to come down to the last, even that issued by Artaxerxes, *dd* it is plain that it will not extend the time to any period later than the days of Tiberius, and so it must be expired almost eighteen hundred years ago.

Another prophet declares, that SHILAH must appear before the sceptre of government, finally forsakes the tribes of Judah. *ee* All the Targums, and every ancient Jewish expositor of that text, agree that SHILAH there means no other than

bb Zech. 12, 10. *c* Exod. 12, 46. *Pf.* 34, 20. *v* *Pf.* 22, 7, 8. *u* *Pf.* 69, 21. *w* *Pf.* 22, 18. *x* *Pf.* 16, 10. *y* *Isa.* 53, 20. *z* *Pf.* 68, 18. *aa* *Pf.* 2, 6. *bb* *Pf.* 110, 1, 2. *cc* *Dem.* 9, 24-27. *dd* *Ezra.* 7. *ee* *Gen.* 49, 10.

than the Messiah. Now the last of the Hasmo-
nian family ended his rule when Herod, an
Idumian, was, by the Roman power, made king
of the Jews; and from that time to this day,
no government has ever been in the hands of
that people; which is a space of eighteen
hundred years nearly.

We are informed by another, that he must
grace the second Temple with a personal appear-
ance in it. // This temple, built by Zerubba-
bel, was indeed defaced by Antiochus, and much
ruined by Pompey; yet it still stood in the days
of Herod, and was greatly repaired; and, even
in part, but not wholly, rebuilt by that king.
But it remained, as to the substance of the struc-
ture, the same, until the city was taken by Ti-
tus, when it was burnt to the ground; and Tur-
nus Rufus, the Roman General, plowed up the
ground where it stood, which was above seven-
teen hundred years ago.

The result of all, is an absolute certainty that
the time fixed by all the prophets for the ap-
pearance of that wonderful person the MESSI-
AH, is long since elapsed. Here then the en-
quiry is brought into this dilemma; either that
person is indeed come, and treated as was fore-
told, or he is not.---If not, then all the pro-
phesies concerning him are false; and then, so
must all other parts of that book be supposed
too, for, though the evidences which support it
are of the highest kind, and not to yield to them
is to deny a providence and a God; yet, as
the

the evidence of the truths of these prophecies is the same with that on which all the rest depend; if these fall, the whole code must fall with them.

But, if he is come, then that whole body of rites points us to him and retires; not to receive them, and obey him, would be to cast the greatest contempt on them; it follows, that he who believes the greatest articles of natural religion, must give credit to the religion of the Jews as divinely revealed; and he that does so, must become a christian, or be inconsistent with himself; and destroy, with the one hand, what he had built up with the other.

II. To determine us what side of this dilemma to embrace, it remains necessary only to enquire, whether any such person did actually come on the stage, at the period fixed by the prophets, or not; and if so whether his life and death corresponded with their descriptions. By the result of this enquiry, reason will find itself fully authorised to decide upon the question of our duty, with respect to divine revelation, and the religion it has taught, whether to embrace or reject it.

III. To investigate the truth of this matter we shall now address ourselves. And here we find one thing granted on all hands, Christians, Jews and Pagans, are agreed, that, in consequence of the credit given by the Israelites in all ages to these prophecies, there was an universal, earnest expectation of the Messiah, notorious among that nation, at the very time referred to above: This was a matter so publicly known, that several men, of seditious principles, and ambitious minds, took the advantage of the spirit of the times, assumed the Messiah's name, ensnared the people

people into factions, and rebellion against the Roman government; and into furious efforts to place the several impostors on the Jewish throne. The historians of those times inform us of sundry slaughters among them on that account; and no less than five hundred thousand of that people were said to be slain by Adrian, at the city Bitter; where they had actually taken the field on this pretext, in favour of Bar-Cozbah, one of the the most popular of all that had aspired at the title of the Messiah.

2. It cannot be denied that the Sybylline and Delphian oracles had uttered some speeches (to which divine providence had over-ruled the lying demon that managed them, contrary to its own nature and intent,) by which the expectation of the heathen nations were awakened about the same time, that a prince should be born in Judea, who should rise to the empire of the world, and the jealousy of their princes was daily alarmed at every new appearance of any remarkable person or event in the East.

But it was fatal to the pretences of all the assumers of the Messiah's character, that every thing in their temper and conduct was quite opposite to the picture given by all the prophets of the man that should deserve it. And every distinguishing mark which they had said he was to possess was wanting in them.

3. Several Pagan historians, of the best credit in other things, among the writers of this day, have told the world of the appearance of a certain person in Judea, at that very time, whose name was JESUS; who was as remarkable for the temper and conduct which distinguished him from these impostors, as he was for those virtues which raised him above other men. Suetorius,
in

In his history of Claudius, mentions him under the title of Christus. Tacitus in the fiftenth book of his annals, gives us an account of his life and death, and of the hand which Pilate had in it. Pleny the younger, being the Roman Governour, or Prefect of Bithynia, employed under the Empe or Trajan, to suppress and exterpate the christ an relig on within his province, in an official letter to his matter, gives a character of Jesus and his followers; and informs him that they were a people of blameless lives, and worshipped him as God. ^a Lucian declares that the christians renounced the Graecian Gods, but lived according to the laws of Christ; that they worshipped him with divine honors, and at the same time takes notice of his crucifixion. ^b Julian the Emperor, one of the most virulent persecutors of the religion of Jesus, that ever was, yet records his miraculous deeds? ^c Celsus, who employed all his power to overthrow christianity, yet attests the truth of his history in most of its principal parts; such as his nativity; his flight to Egypt; his pilgrimage; his life; his miracles; his being betrayed; and his death. ^d Justin Martyr in a public disputation against Crescens before the Roman senate, quotes the journals of Pilate's administration of the government of Judea, in which a particular account of Jesus is related; and though we have no access to

consult

^a Plin Epist. 1, 10. Ep. 97. ^b Lucian de morte peregrini.
^c Cyril, Alexi. contr. Jul. 1, 6. ^d Cels. in Orig. contr. Cels. 1.
 3. Joseph, Antiq. Judaic. 1. 18.

consult those journals, yet when we consider the assembly where, and the occasion on which this quotation was used, we cannot help being convinced that his extracts were authentic; when we find them pass uncorrected by Crescens himself, or any of the judges to whom it was offered. It is an acknowledged fact, that Tiberius, the Emperor of Rome, proposed it to the Senate, to enrol JESUS in the list of their Gods; and would have carried the point, but for a previous law which forbid the introduction of any foreign deities. Many of the facts related in the gospels, which were nearly connected with his history, are found to be attested by cotemporary authors, among his heathen enemies. The taxation which took place at his birth, is confirmed by Tacitus, Suetonius, and Dion. Chalcidius reports the journey of the Magi, under the direction of a new star. Macrobius attests the massacre of the babes by Herod, on that occasion. Phlegon, in his annals, gives us an account of Christ's prophesying, and of the preternatural eclipse at his death.

It would be endless to rehearse what might be found among the Pagan writers of best authority, in confirmation of the truth of the gospel history of Jesus; what has been offered is sufficient to shew that the appearance of that remarkable person, and the accounts given of his life and death, by the christian writers of that time, must be admitted as certain and indubitable, or the faith of all history, and of the most authentic public records in it perish.

Nor have the Jewish historians of that era, been silent on this subject: However the honor of their nation was concerned in raising the whole story concerning Jesus, buried in everlasting oblivion; they

they yet seem to omit no opportunity to reproach his name with ignominy of his sufferings; and to revile his followers as worshipping Talui, a man that was crucified. Josephus expressly records his life, miracles, death, resurrection, and the fulfilment of their ancient prophecies about the Christ in him; but we have no need to press more numerous testimonies on this point.

1. Infidelity itself, will not deny the fact, that such a person as JESUS lived, preached, and wrought miracles in Judea, in the reigns of Augustus and Tiberius, and was publicly crucified at Jerusalem, under Pilate. Nor will it attempt to dispute whether a sect, called christians then arose, who believed him to be the promised Messiah, and avered that he was raised from the grave soon after his death, and carried up to Heaven bodily; that they worshipped him, and regulated their lives by his precepts; and that no torture, nor prospect of tormenting death, could deter them from the most zealous endeavours to convince the world that all this was true; and finally that they had certain records of these things in their hands; which they supposed to be drawn up by men divinely inspired, and should therefore be received by all as a revelation from God.

1. These records it is therefore incumbent on us now to consult, and whoever is at pains to do so with impartiality and attention, will find them possessed of every credential that can prove them to deserve all the credit that is demanded. They indeed pretend to derive no respect from mathematical demonstration. Their chief subjects are facts, and facts all allow to be of a nature incapable of that kind of proof.

Nor is it to be expected, that of any of the facts related in this book, they can offer us secular evidence, now that they are past: Moral proof, resulting from credible testimony, is the only species by which matters of that sort can be made certain. Where this is afforded, we are obliged either to admit the sufficiency of it, or to deny the moral government of God's providence over the world.---When this is offered it would be irrational to require any other; and the refusal of it will run us into the greatest absurdities: And when the facts related in the gospel are examined by this rule, it will be evident to every rational enquirer, that moral proof never did rise higher than it has in them, and that it is impossible in the nature of the thing, it ever should.

2. Every thing found in these records adds to the credit of the testimony they give. They were made at different times, in different nations, in different languages, and by a number of different hands, one unknown to the other; yet it cannot be denied that there is a perfect agreement among them in delivering the same doctrines, and precepts; and also, in all the facts of any consequence; yet not in every word, not in style; not in the number or arrangement of the matters related. Various circumstances left out by one writer are supplied by another: And this, while their harmony shews that they all breathe the same spirit, propose the same end, and have the same scope; and therefore that they all were acted by the same dictator: At the same time, the diversities observable among them, remove every species of suspicion that they had combined

combined to fabricate a testimony, and pass it on the world; or even that they copied one another in what they wrote. But,

Had these men lived together, and plotted a method of deceiving the world; the very circumstance forbid them the hope of ever carrying their point: Simple, illiterate rusticks like them, were incapable of having a leptonene; and, destitute alike, of rank, opulence and oratory, they could neither bribe nor influence a party to follow them. The faultiness of their writings shows they were not a pack of crazy enthusiasts, but sensible men, and in full possession of themselves: This, generally, compells us to conclude that, on the one hand they were able to see that, instead of being gainers by endeavouring to impose upon mankind, they must prepare to see the heaviest effects of the resentments of all parties; which, however differing in other matters, would not fail to unite in opposition to them; and, on the other hand, they would take all possible precautions to prevent being imposed on themselves, as the case in which they embarked was directly opposite to their own interests, to all the prejudices of their education; yea, to the religion itself, in the peculiar privileges of which, they and their whole nation boasted above every other advantage; for the most thorough scrutiny of the ground they had to go on, they wanted not sufficient opportunity; as the matters to be treated of were not done in the dark, but publicly obvious to the examination of all their senses, for several whole successive years.

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The number of the witnesses was too great to preserve consistency in a plan for palming a fiction of this extent upon the world. But, had they agreed in planning, it were impossible they should in concealing such a scheme; especially when contentions had parted them into interest, quite opposite in other respects; yes, even when their differences had risen to excommunications of each other.

But, if they had been able, their moral character assures us, they could never be willing to undertake so horrid a cheat: The ideas of God, of virtue, of sin which they inculcate, the views of the divine law, of mans accountableness, of the concerns of time and eternity itself, they give, could never come from a vicious mind; nor even by its contemplation, without affording inward torment. To a scheme so strict, so pure as this, an heart enslaved to lust could with no success, much less consent to spend its strength, forsake its all, and venture life itself, to propagate it. For, if it succeeds, it requires them to deny all and seek no rest, no portion in this life; if it fails, they must expect to loose all, and be exposed to every measure of distress the whole world can inflict. Besides, had any blemish been found upon their character, what hindered all their enemies, spiteful and numerous as they were, to publish it? When, instead of charging them with any crimes, we behold them trying to root up their religion, only by destroying their lives; we are constrained to believe that their souls found their lives to be a grand support to the doctrines they taught. This we find was the chief aim of Church and State, of Jews and Gentiles, wherever they went. And yet they went on with unshaken fortitude, in the face of shame, dangers, persecutions, and we find death in its

most

most frightful forms, patiently enduring all sufferings, and sweetly exemplifying the virtues they taught, in unwearily bearing public testimony to small and great of these facts, as matters of which they had the fullest assurance.

3. And the facts they report are truly of the last importance, both in their nature and their consequences. All meet and centre in the history of this same JESUS. When they rehearse his speeches, we are instructed in a complete system of doctrines, both speculative and practical; more pure, clear, spiritual, perfect and sublime, than any the world had ever seen. A perfect code of laws, or moral and religious precepts, a thread of prophecies, in which we are presented with a scheme of the history of the church to the end of the world; and all crowned with a set of the most precious promises, to animate us to the practices he enjoins, and point us to the truest happiness in the endless fruition of God's favour, in a spiritual world to come. When they relate his conduct, we behold a complete, living copy of the moral law, without blot or defect, exhibiting a perfect model of every human virtue, and of every divine grace: All his steps distinguished by something miraculous attending them.---Indeed, we are astonished in the review of this part of the history, with a multitude of most evident and uncontroled miracles, in all circumstances, and elements, and on all sorts of subjects, wrought entirely for the benefit of mankind, in the most public manner, and often before thousands of witnesses, for several years successively, and all professedly done to prove his divine commission, and to attest the truth of what he said.

In addition to all this, they have given a narrative of a series of unparalleled sufferings.

borne by this teacher, through his life. and especially at his death, which yet are the more striking and convictive of the truth, when it is considered that the most exact agreement is found between them and the ancient prophecies concerning the Messiah; so that scarce any thing can be found in him, but what had been foretold, and nothing had been predicted that is left unfulfilled. Who can read the evidences that he was called by the very name the prophets had assigned him; *a* proceeded from the line; *b* was ushered in by the harbinger; *c* born at the place; *d* of the very mother; *e* took the very night, *f* preached in the places; *g* wrought the miracles; *h* met the treatment in all respects which they had described? Who can trace him through the concluding scenes, and see him betrayed; *i* sold for the very sum spoken of; *k* and that sum applied to the very use foretold; *l* crucified between thieves; *m* his body wounded and bruised; *n* his hands and feet pierced, *o* yet not a bone broken; *p* mocked in his sufferings, *q* with vinegar and gall; *r* his garments parted by lot; *s* himself rising from the grave; *t* ascending up to Heaven, *v* and sitting on the right hand of God; *u* and all this at the very time, and in the place named by the prophets; and not be shocked.

a Mat. 1, 23--23. *b* Mat. 1, 1. *c* Mat. 3, 1--3. *d* Mat. 2, 1--6. *e* Mat. 1, 18--25. *f* Mat. 2, 13--21. *g* Mat. 4, 13. *h* Mat. 4, 23, 24. *i* Mat. 26, 23--25, 46, 50. *k* Mat. 26, 15. *l* Mat. 27, 9, 10. *m* Mat. 27, 38. *n* Mat. 27, 26, 30. *o* Mat. 27, 35. *p* John. 19, 31, 36. *q* Mat. 27, 39--44. *r* Mat. 27, 34. *s* Mat. 27, 35. *t* Mat. 28, 6--10. *v* Mark 16, 19.

blocked that there should be found amongst the human race a stock of infidelity sufficient to hold one mind from yielding to this deluge of light and evidence, that this is the very person of whom they all spake?

But the most remarkable of all the facts reported by these men is the resurrection of Jesus himself from the dead: Before this was proved to their own conviction, they confess that this faith in him was staggered by the awful sufferings in which they saw his public life closed: This was an event their master had often foretold, and on which he staked the honor of his whole character. Yet they acknowledge that, so strong were their prejudices in favor of his setting up a temporal monarchy, that all these predictions made so little impression on them, that in the shock their hopes had received from his death, the very memory of them was lost: they frankly declare they had not a single hope of such an event while he lay dead,----and could not believe it when repeatedly told them by some of their friends of whose veracity they had never otherwise made question: Yea that, to so great a pitch had their incredulity arrived, that some of them refused to believe their own eyes: And required the attestation of the other bodily senses too: However, they forgot not to assure us that, at last, they were overwhelmed with the glare of evidence, and forced to believe; several hundreds having seen him at once: They themselves having repeatedly heard him converse, beheld him eat and drink, and feasted with him, several of their number having handled him, and one in the presence of the rest, receiving his assent until the condescension of his master permitted him to probe the wounds in his body with his own hand. They affirm that they en-

joy: I full opportunity of examining into the truth of his appearance, during forty days free converse with him successively; and it would be very hard to suppose that, after all their former intimacy with him, they could not in all this space discern the difference between their master and a stranger.

On this fact, it seems these writers lay the stress of confirming all the rest. And it must be acknowledged that it was the greatest of all the miracles they told. To see a living man raise a dead one to life may prove him privilege! with use of omnipotence: but to behold a dead man raise himself, is to witness what exceeds all other works: and what infidelity itself, cannot hesitate to pronounce a work truly divine. What opinion then must that man have of the character of the Almighty, who can suppose he would thus eminently interpose in giving the highest display of his power on purpose to put a sanction incontrovertible upon a vile imposture?

No fact related in the gospel has been so thoroughly canvass'd or any more fully proved than this. The number and character of the witnesses, the sensible knowledge each of them personally had, for so long a time, of the truth of the fact, the pains they took to search it to the bottom, and the open testimony which they, with one voice, bear to it, all these tokens together make the moral proof of this point rise beyond rational scruple.

When we seriously reflect on the severity of the law of the Jewish nation against false witnesses, and behold these men boldly testifying this matter on the spot, where every one was interested to detect the imposition, if any such there was, at the very time, when the matter was fresh in every memory, and the best oppor-
tunities

tunities for discovery might be had, in the most public manner, as bidding defiance to enquiry and contradiction; and with the utmost solemnity appealing to God above for the truth of what they said; we must suppose them madmen, on the one hand, and atheists, on the other, if they spoke the language of deception.

How strong were the marks of conviction and confusion on the consciences of those whose interest it was, if possible, to prove their testimony a cheat! The Apostles, in the face of public assemblies, charge their senators and priests in a body, with bribery and forgery, committed after deep contrivance, wickedly to smother this event. The accused parties wanted neither power nor motive to clear themselves, if the charge had been unjust: Yet, instead of confronting their accusers, or bringing the case to a public trial; they speak behind the curtain of their authority, and meanly content themselves with having recourse to threats and violence, to stop their accuser's mouths.

What then shall infidelity, in latter times, be able to object against the credit of a fact, the evidence of which could not be resisted, in the time and place where it is said to have happened? Will it pretend the thing to be impossible? Is there, then, any contradiction in supposing that Being who gave me, supports it, and takes it away, to restore it again when he will? Or would it be unworthy of God, thus to perform a work which should put the highest authority on a religion which cannot be said to contain one sentiment unworthy of his patronage? Or will the modern adversaries of this truth recur to the idle invention of their predecessors at Jerusalem, and whisper the hear-say of the disciples stealing the

the corpse, while the watch was asleep? Of all evasions that ever were tried, this appears the most absurd. Every circumstance in the state of the affair, reflects shame on the retailers of it. The measures taken by the Sanhedrim to secure themselves against such an adventure, were satisfactory to their own jealousies, though they were sufficiently wake: The funeral was too public to leave room for the grave to be mistaken for another; and the tomb, being new, and never used before, prevented the possibility of mistaking the body: Its being hewn out of one solid rock removes the suspicion of any supererogatory passage being dug into it by his friends, and would effectually discover any marks of violence offered to it. A huge rock is fixed on the door. There it is carefully cemented, and stamped with the public seal; which it would be treason to break. And to carry the measure as far as possible, a strong guard of armed soldiers is stationed round the tomb, to watch and defend it on all sides.

Against all this precaution what could the disciples of Jesus do? If they knew him to be an impostor, why should they attempt any such violence or fraud in his favor? They knew they had no reward to expect from him; and nothing but judgments from the hand of God. All the world would abhor them on the discovery, as the greatest part would before hand: Men of conscience could have no heart to such an enterprise, and men so discouraged and disappointed as these, were not likely for any soon to run new, needless, and hopeless risks again; especially, disconcerted as they then were by the revolution of their own number, and hence naturally jealous of each other. And men too

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who had, on the late trial, shown so much cowardice as not to venture to adhere to their master even as far as the women themselves did: The supposition of their now meeting up courage for this desperate attempt in favor of a desperate cause, is beyond all serious belief. But, had such attempt been made by force, why was there no tale of a skirmish on the occasion? The disciples themselves were no match for the guard in a field of battle; and whom could they engage to come into their aid? Not good men surely: All such would have abhorred, and zealously divulged the proposal. Not bad men, what bait could they offer to allure them into the plot, having no money to give, no honors to confer? And why did not some of them open the whole matter, when they had every thing to expect from the Jews for their pains? and thus we see that:

4, Absurdity attends on every step taken to fasten a suspicion of fraud on the disciples of Jesus in the case. It remains then that the relation they have given of the resurrection of their Lord, deserves to be received as infallibly true. And if it is, then all his pretensions to the character of the CHRIST, the King of Israel, the SON OF GOD, and Saviour of the world, are ratified and confirmed by the highest evidence the nature of the thing would bear. It will necessarily follow too, that then, all his doctrines are true, all his laws binding, and all his promises and threatenings sure. And hence the commission he gave his Apostles sufficiently authorized them to their work. And the miracles which they wrought, and the prophecies they delivered, in the discharge of their trust, fully proved that their exalted Master approved

approved of their exertions and thus attested, their words: And, granting this, we must conclude that all the doctrines they taught were true, and were just what God had sent them to teach. And consequently that they were inspired by himself with the whole of their message: And therefore infallible in whatever they wrote or preached in that view. And finally that the whole of the New Testament, being the completion of the Old, the one may be considered as a confirmation of the other mutually: And thus both parts make but one book, and that book contains a complete, and the only standing revelation of the will of God to mankind.

5. To this conclusion no small force is added from calm reflection on that book itself. Its antiquity is unrivalled; its matter perfectly consistent with natural religion, but far beyond all its discoveries; yet altogether worthy of God, and of the highest importance to man. The perfection of the system of truth and morals which it contains, and the harmony of all its parts, the variety of its style, the innate energy by which it takes hold of the human heart, the unremitting opposition of devils and wicked men, who, in every age, have united their forces for its overthrow, the miraculous interpositions of providence for its preservation from the attempts of Antiochus, Dioclesian, and all its enemies, from time to time.---The wonderful effects produced by its means, in the propagation of the religion it contains through the world, in spite of the opposition of all nations, and of all ranks in each and this by means so so unequal to the end, as a few, poor, plain, obscure, unlearned countrymen, without any connections, but the favor of God; without any arts, but those of truth and

and simplicity; without any arms, save those of sincerity, and an holy life; men who were despised, hated and persecuted in all nations: and, at last, by cruel deaths, cut off by their opposer's hands: All, all conspire to convince us, that the book, of which this is a true account, must be heavenly and divine, for reason assures us, that a work so pure, so holy, so perfect, could never be the forgery of evil men or devils; and good men, or angels, surely, would not attempt to palm it on the world as a divine revelation, if the pretence were not true in fact.

6. Nor was the care taken in the publication of the new testament, less calculated to secure its purity, and integrity, than that which we already have observed in the preservation of the old.

The history of religion, in the Apostles' age, has descended to our times, lame and imperfect, many works written, and much valued then, are lost: Little can now be found besides fragments of any other writings, save those of the Apostles. From the ravages of time, however, enough has been preserved to inform us, that the gospel of Matthew, being written before he left Judea, had so early a circulation, that Pantænus, on his mission to the Indians in the East, about the year two hundred, found it among that people, and brought it back on his return; a copy of which was thenceforth kept in the library at Cæsarea. Mark, the nephew and disciple of Peter, wrote his at the request of the Christians at Rome; which, after being revised by that Apostle, was commonly read in the churches afterwards. Luke, a physician at Antioch, bred in the city of Alexandria, one of the seventy disciples, who had been Paul's companion for eighteen years, wrote his gospel, and the book

of Acts, for the use of the Gentile converts ; the whole of which was inspected by Paul, and published in the churches, by his desire. John survived them all ; and having received the writings which they left, he, at last, by request of the ministers in Asia, wrote his own gospel, to stop the way of Ebion, Cerinthus, and other heretics, which had already sprung up in the church.

The other work of his pen, called the Revelations, was not written till about the close of Domitian's reign ; he entrusted it with John, the presbyter, by whom it was then given to the churches ; but the prophecies which it contained against the city and government of Rome, induced the churches to use it separately for a time, lest its being found in their public Canon, should afford the Emperor a new pretext for another persecution. The greatest adversaries of christianity, in these early times, never denied that the several epistles, found in the new testament, were really written by those men whose names they bear.

The age to which some of the disciples lived, was one security against the imposition of counterfeits for scripture, on the church. Mark lived till the year of our Lord 65 ; Peter and Paul to the year 70 ; Luke to 84 ; John to 100 ; and Simon Zelotes to 120. During this time, innumerable copies of all these books were gone abroad into the world. Every church, every church officer, every converted philosopher, and every believer, who could afford it, were supplied with one. Great numbers of them were attested with the Apostles own hands ; and, at their deaths, they left over the churches, men every way fitted to give unquestionable evidence in the case ; having been the close companions of

of the Apostles, and well acquainted with their hand writing; such were James and Simon, at Jerusalem: Linus at Rome: Polycarp at Smyrna: Timothy at Ephesus: Titus at Crete: Dionysius at Athens &c. &c. And that spirit of prophecy which Eusebius affirms, remained in the church for 150 years, furnished all parts of it with innumerable copies, under the inallible attestation of the prophets.

The attempts of heretics to usher in spurious books in that period, obliged the church to take the utmost care to detect all such impostors.-- The strictest scrutiny was undergone by every book pretending divine authority.-- Many spurious ones were condemned, and rejected; and no pains spared to prevent their getting entrance into any christian societies.

7. The sacred books, which were received by the christians, were very early so handled, as to put it out of the power of deceivers ever to make any alterations in them. Each book was soon divided into very short chapters; then again into segments, and both were numbered, at the beginning and end of each book. Tables were also made, with great care, numbering the words and letters of each book; of each chapter, and of each segment. A concordance of all the books were composed, noting every word in which they agree; and every word found in the one, how often and where that is omitted, or exchanged for its synonyma in the other. Thus strong were the bars against corruptions of the text; and thus impossible was it for imposture to break through them.

8. Nor was this all; the translations of these books in the languages of the surrounding countries, made the suspicion of any unfair dealing with them afterwards, still more unreasonable: and

and the practice still more difficult, if it were possible, than even the numberless attested copies, that were every where dispersed in the original; as the man that would go about such a business, must not only persuade his own nation to submit to his will all their original copies, but must also prevail with foreign countries to bring in the books, in their several tongues; lay them down at the correctors feet, and let him dictate how much of them they might carry away. The gospel of Matthew was, from the original Hebrew, in which he wrote it, translated immediately into Greek, by James the lesser; as was Paul's epistle to the Hebrews, by Luke, under Paul's own eye. The immediate disciples of the Apostles translated the whole new testament into Syriac. This, as well as the Vulgar Latin translation, appears to have been cotemporary with the Apostles themselves. Very soon after these, the care of the churches was laid out to furnish the several nations with copies in their respective tongues. One in the Coptic was given to Alexandria, and Ægypt; one in the Æthiopic to the country next to them, one in Arabic, to the people of the East; one in the Persian, for the regions of that name; and one in the Gothic tongue, was the work of the great UPHILAS, bishop of the Goths, and the inventor of their letters, about the year three hundred.

Copies of most of these ancient translations are yet extant, in all which an universal agreement is found. - A certain evidence this, that the translators, in every language, found the scriptures the same, and left them as they found them.

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From all this, it seems to amount to a certainty, that there never was a time, in the christian church, in which any heretic was able to effect any corruption of the sacred books, undiscovered. Had any forgery been inserted while the Apostles were alive, would they have been silent spectators of the fraud? And would not all parties have heard them, if they had spoken a word to detect it? While their hand writings were preserved, would not all appeals be to them as much, as to the authors when alive? And Tertullian assures us in the third century, that these were still extant and well known.

Now, if any ~~adulterations~~ have been practised since that time, we would enquire by what hands? Not by any sect adhering to the scriptures: All the opposing parties, who were ever jealous of each other, would not have failed to ring the discovery through the world; but that there ever should be an alteration of the text, agreed on by the unanimous confederacy of all the differing and opposite sects on the face of the earth, and that such agreement should be brought into effect, by the corruption of all the copies, in all the languages in the world, and yet that this should, for eighteen hundred years, remain a profound secret, this, surely exceeds all the bounds of credibility: And thus it appears that no friend to the scriptures can be suspected of this matter: And still less practicable would it have been for an avowed enemy to effect it. All the sects who professed to receive the canon, however they differed in other things, would have united in exploding the new coined paragraphs, for all were too deeply interested to suffer the innovation to pass current unobserved. If now a corruption could be carried into the text of the sacred books, either by friends

of foes, the contest about the purity and integrity of the New Testament is at an end. Its authority at this day is as truly divine as when it first came from the pen of inspiration: And no objection can be brought against it that will not eventually carry its author up to a denial of the grand articles of natural religion, and either overthrow the doctrine of the moral government, and moral character of God, and so destroy the credit of his very existence, or be itself overthrown.

S E C T I O N IV.

Consequences of embracing Deism.

THE business of the preceding section has been to hold up to view the direct proof that the scriptures of the Old and New Testament, are a revelation from God. On this we are willing to rest the confutation of every error which the deists have broached, The plan of this work forbid our taking up the particular cavils of these men; nor was there any need for it. They never will be able to offer any objection against the scriptures, but what has already been answered by various learned writers on these subjects, by whom the direct evidences stated above, have been laid down in a more masterly way. The works of those advocates for the truth, are so well known, and in so many hands, that we need not trouble the reader with any other attempts to stop the mouths of

modern gain-sayers, than only to refer them to the books by which the deistical authors, mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, have been particularly answered; we cannot however forbear remarking, that, if the direct evidence here produced, be sufficient to prove the scriptures to be divinely revealed; that must suffice to remove all the objection, which ever have been offered against them, or which ever will. If that is once established, it will follow, that no objection can ever be alledged, but what arises from the ignorance, or perverseness of the mind that brings it; for, after that, the caviller must be considered as dictating to his maker, and wrangling because he has not been obeyed: And that the scripture is possessed of the highest evidences which a standing written revelation is capable of, we flatter ourselves, must sufficiently appear from what has been said. It therefore now behoves the enemies of that book, either fairly to overthrow that evidence, by producing higher proof that the facts on which the stress of this argument is rested, never did really happen, or cease their quibbling, or expect to have all rational beings unite in contending, and their ridicule and satire against the Bible, as blasphemies against the God that made them.

If the scriptures, then, be indeed the word of God, every thing they teach must be considered not only as truth, but as clad with divine authority; every one to whom they come is therefore, required to receive them with the most thankful reverence; to give the fullest credit to their report, and yield cordial obedience to all they enjoin.---The man who complies with this, believes the record which God has gi-
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ven, and thus sets to his seal that God is true ; but he who refuses the divine testimony, calls God a liar, and casts avowed contempt on the character of the Most High.

This is the direct language of the Deist's practice, and it may be justly considered as utterly inconsistent with the being of any principle of piety and religion, in the heart from which it proceeds: For what veneration can it entertain? What love can it exercise? What sincere act of devout adoration can it pay to a being whom it considers as ruling the world by falsehood, rather than truth?

The Bible has exhibited the truest views of virtue, as well as piety; and afforded the strongest motives to the pursuit of it, that ever were offered to the world. Virtue has ever been cultivated in proportion as that divine book was regarded. He that rejects its authority never can build the practice of morality on another basis, equally firm and permanent: And hence it is an incontestable fact, that wherever the principles of Deism is embraced, they have sowed the seeds of every vice, disgraceful to humanity. Why does the drunkard the adulterer and the profane, flatter himself that he shall have peace though he persevere in walking after the lusts of his own heart? because he hopes the book that threatens him with future punishment is not true. This notion is the grand patron of the wickedness and debauchery of the present time. This has taken off the restraints arising from the awe of God's tribunal, and laid the reins slack on the neck of every lust. This is the arch-murderer that, having made its votaries the pests of society, while they lived, hurries them on to be their own butchers at last. To the spreading of this principle we may attribute the overgrown wickedness

ness of AMERICA at this unhappy period. This is the monster that threatens to extirpate all the remains of virtue and piety from among us: And has already actually hardened so great a part of this generation at once, to cast off the fear of God and the regard of man: that we are now habituated to the news of self-murders, committed in the shade of these principles with the greatest deliberation, yea, of the husband and the father imbruing his hands in the blood of the beloved wife and all the tender offspring, to give a sanction to their scheme.

By this it may appear, how dangerous the principles of Deism are to the happiness, and even to the being of society. But its ravages do not stop with this life. It is infallibly destructive to immortal souls, in the life that is to come. The grand errand on which God has sent the scriptures into the world, is to reveal to man the way of being saved from the eternity of punishment to which their sins had deservedly exposed them. This way the Bible has opened as laying in that cordial faith in Christ which takes its rise in, and is inseparable from the believing reception of the gospel as the word of God. This the sacred books declare to be the ONLY way, and most solemnly assure us, that it is impossible to escape eternal ruin, if we finally neglect it, for that "he that believeth not, shall not see eternal life, but the wrath of God abideth for ever on him."^d

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^a John 3, 18, 33, 36. ^b Acts 4, 12.--Heb. 11, 6. ^c Heb. 2, 3, 4. ^d John 3, 36.

Now the Deist avows his contempt of this way of salvation, and instead of believing, rejects the divine revelation that offered it to him. It is certain then, that every argument which proves the truth of the scripture, serves at the same time, to prove the eternal damnation of the man that dies in those sentiments, to be infalibly sure. Nor can he possibly conceive a single hope of escaping this dire fate, but what arises from a flattering presumption that the Bible is not true.

S E C T I O N V.

Warning against it.

IT is not improbable that somethings suggested in the last section may be the motives which induce many persons to embrace the scheme we oppose. The licentious practice, which has been ever found growing and decaying in society, as that party dwindled or increased, affords a strong presumption that it is the purity of its doctrines, the strictness and perfection of its laws, and the awfulness of its sanctions, and not any defect in the evidences of its truth

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that has raised up enemies to the Bible. Rooted in the love of their lusts, wicked men view the scriptures as their foe, because it is a foe to those crimes in which lie all their pleasures. Hence the language of their hearts, as expressed in their actions, towards the book of God, is like that of one of Israel's wicked kings, about a faithful prophet.---" I hate him, for he never prophesieth good concerning me" Such men, however, had better stop, at least long enough to consider whether their pleasures be worth what they risk to obtain them. Life is short. Their Judge standeth at the door. An eternal state of anguish and remorse is poorly paid for, in the paltry joys of wickedness tasted in time. We are far from wishing misery to the immortal souls of these unhappy self-deceivers. Heaven is witness how great is our desire of their rescue; and how abundant would our joy be if, by any labour of ours, a mite might be contributed towards the escape of one of them from the snare of the devil, in which they are entangled. With the utmost sincerity, we invite them to a share of that happiness which we choose for ourselves; we pray them to make trial of the consolations of that religion which they vain would extirpate; and, if they do, we are content that the appeal lay to their own hearts, and that the experiment decide, whether these are not sufficient to counterballance all the satisfactions they have forfeited for them: But, if they refuse, and resolve rather to persevere in their infidelity to the end, and in the end perish, we call God to record, that they have been fairly warned, and their blood is on their own heads.

But let the consideration of the unhappy consequences, above charged on the deistical scheme, stimulate every mind that remains yet uninfected
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with that leaven, to consider it with all the abhorrence due to the deepest, darkeſt plot of hell, againſt the honor of the divine perfections, and government; and againſt the beſt intereſt and eternal ſalvation of the precious ſouls of men: Shun the company of ſuch perſons, as men infected with the plague; they aim to give you their own diſtemper: Their dart is leveled at your life; at that life that never ends.

Spare no pains to make your families well acquainted with the Bible, Ignorance of its contents is one great ſource of men's objections againſt it. Many are daily heard venting their cavils againſt it, that never read one hundred pages in it, ſince they were forced to read it at ſchool. The bulk of its enemies, at this day, could not give an account of the ſcope and matter of any one book it contains. Let none under your roofs ever dare to play with that ſacred volume, or uſe its expreſſions in jeſt. No book ever was publiſhed that has undergone ſo ſevere examination as this, none ever was ſo able to bear them. It fears no ſcrutiny. It loves the light, The more it is ſearched, the more worthy of all acceptation it will appear. Search the ſcriptures daily; make them the men of your council; there, and no where elſe, will you find the way of everlaſting life. Pray, and watch againſt the ſly attacks of the cowardly enemies of the chriſtian religion, who care only ſtab it in the dark. And eſpecially get confirmed in the love of God and virtue, and then you will not fail to be eſta-bliſhed in the faith, that the word of God, in the Bible, is true, ſo that the gates of hell ſhall never be able to prevail againſt you.

C H A P T E R. III.

Of Origenism.

S E C T I O N I.

Its History.

EV E R since the first revolt of firming angels, it appears to have been their constant endeavour to set up, for satan their chief, an empire in opposition to that of JEHOVAH, their offended sovereign; and, as the law of holiness was the grand establishment of the government which they had abandoned, so it was the professed purpose of the rebellious legions to cement together the subjects of their usurped dominion, by the maxims of hardened wickedness. By these they proposed to enslave and secure such of the envied race of man, as they could seduce from their allegiance to God. To this project they might expect no small opposition from the sanction of the divine law, which plainly denounced utter destruction against sin. Conscious of subjection to this law, man naturally considered the threatening with dread. This passion was posted as a guard to his innocence; it aimed either to deter him from enlisting under the banner of rebellion; or, at least, to forbid his continuing easy in that service, by pointing to the penalty annexed to transgressing, it kept the

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conscience of the sinner in alarm ; and, while it fixed the eye on the goal, it made the race to future misery tardy and painful. It was, therefore, indispensibly necessary to the grand design, to disarm the threatening of all his honors ; as there could be little hope of effecting an universal revolv' among a race of rational creatures, naturally bent on their own happiness, and made to be actuated by hopes and fears, unless some means could be devised to ensure them this, in the ways of wickedness, or at least immunity from any punishment on that account.

To accomplish this purpose, therefore, the power of darkness have ever exerted all their strength and skill. Man was, by turns, baited with the lure of sensual pleasure, tickled with the amusements of fancy, and engaged in the restless chace of riches and honors ; these enchantments however, were found sufficient only for the giddy hour of dissipation ; or while man was held plunged in the whirlpool of business ; an opiate was still wanting for the moment of retirement : And, without it, the tyrant, in whose works the sinner had drudged, was in danger of losing in the evening all he had gained in the stratagems of the day. The fears that weakened the sinner's hands arose out of the prospects presented to his mind from the laws of religion : It is from religion, then, and from that alone, must be sought the remedy that can effectually allay them. And hence it has ever been the chief plot of hell to devise a religion which might comfort evil minds in all their evil ways, and so support and secure the interest of vice : This has been the one design of all the false religions ever hatched by the cunning of infernal hosts. In this undertaking they have been unwearied. Many plans have they contrived ; and many inferior

ferior craftsmen have found constant employment under them, in bringing these projects to execution. Some have been retained in order to propagate suggestions of the opposition between the law and light of nature, and the fears of future punishment; others to devise various means of appeasing the divine anger against sin. In this the ingenuity of hell has been most fruitful of expedients: For this costly temples have been built, and sumptuous hecatombs offered on their altars. For this grievous penances have been borne, and tedious pilgrimages undertaken. But of all the stratagems that infernal councils ever have contrived, to keep men constricted in a course of wickedness to their latest breath; none hath been so well calculated as that which strips the divine threatenings of any meaning, or denies their truth in any view which leaves meaning in them: and thus, by extinguishing the fire of hell, and placing all the human race securely on the thrones of celestial blessedness to all eternity; at one stroke, annihilates all future punishments for sin, and puts an end to all those fears which interrupt men in the practice of it.

1. This was indeed the *Proton Pheudos* of the old Serpent.--The first card ever played, in the game of catching souls in this snare, was by the doctrine of **UNIVERSAL SALVATION**. The truth of the threatening which God himself had expressly delivered in paradise, the destroyer dared, in the same paradise, as expressly to deny.--"Ye shall not surely die, though God has said you shall," was the first sermon on this subject; it was delivered by the original author of the doctrine, and had its genuine influence and effect in the seduction and ruin of the innocent and unsuspecting mother of mankind.

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2. Flushed with the success of this, his first attempt, the enemy of souls has proceeded to use this doctrine as the grand instrument to enslave and destroy them ever since. The deceit has, indeed, been laid in a great variety of colours. In the philosophy of Chaldea, and the other nations of the East, it was couched in the doctrine of the final victory of the good principle, Ormazdes over the evil one Arimanes.*

3. The notion of the transmigration of souls, which the Ægyptian priests held among the articles of their occult doctrine, appears to have been borrowed from the same philosophy; and, however disfigured in the managing, was evidently intended as a vehicle, of the supposition that on the whole, there is no final difference in the state of the virtuous and the wicked.

4. To recommend this doctrine to the fancy, the most ancient heathen poets were instigated by the father of it to array it in all the dress of fiction. Homer, Hesiod, and their followers, poetically described future punishment as all consisting in ridicule and absurd employments, or in wandering 100 years on the banks of the river Styx, and then drinking of the waters of Lethe and so forgetting all that was past, and entering on the enjoyment of the Ellysiac bliss. In this they were copied by the Latin poets; and Virgil, and Ovid, in many things, improved on their hints. Hence we find the doleful complaints they put into the mouths of ghosts, that they were not relieved from punishment, nor admitted

* Pléthon in Oracles. Zoroast. Plat. in Essai and Ovid, Metamorphoses de Ovid. Magie, page 200

mitted to Elysium; for want of funeral rites, sacrifices, libations, &c. And hence the prince of Latin poets asserts, that the punishments of the future life are of a purging nature, and that the guilt which the waters there cannot wash away, shall be burnt out by the fire.^a

5. Zoroaster the Persian, though much later than his nameake, the father of the Chaldaic philosophy, appears to have learnt this notion from some tradition of the fall of angels and the temptation in paradise, which he received through the hands of Itam: And Pythagoras of Samos evidently borrowed from the Ægyptian priests, the notions he inculcated on the Italic sect of philosophers, which took rise from his school; concerning the pre-existence of human souls, and their transigrations from body to body, ever atoning in one state for the crimes committed in other, ^c which was only a dilution of this doctrine: And to carry it out into a more extended system, the Stoics, after Zeno their leader, planned the dream of periodical conflagrations, and restorations of the whole world, and all the creatures inhabiting it, after certain intervals of time, kept up in constant revolutions for ever.

6. From the same fountain did Plato drink in his doctrine, that the souls of men continued shifting their habitations through a succession of bodies, until they were purified sufficiently, and all

^a On. 6. ————— sub gurgite vasto. Infectum eluitur
 scelus, out exurit igne. ^b Photius, Biblioth. and Suidas in
 Zoroastri, and Barnab. Brissius de magor, philos. ^c Tamblicus
 in vic, Pythag. Porpheta de vit, Pythag, 183.

all their guilt atoned.* But that this purgation of souls never required longer than a thousand years.† Although the power of truth at other times, so far convinced, that philosopher of the impossibility of supporting this latter tenet, that we find him repeatedly asserting the everlasting duration of the future punishment of the wicked, in other parts of his writings.‡

7. Thus it appears that the principles which deny the eternity of hell-torment, are not derived from the christian religion. They draw their origin from the atheistical. And, since the first promulgation of them from his own mouth, the spirit that worked in the children of disobedience never wanted chosen ministers, among philosophers, poets and priests, to publish and support them. The great tendency of these principles to promote the interests of the kingdom of darkness, easily accounts for their being insinuated into the false regions of the Pagan nations. But how they came to be stuck on the face of the Christian system, may seem more mysterious. This, however, will cease to astonish us when we reflect, that, upon the preaching of the gospel in various countries, assigned teachers to the instructions of these heathen teachers. Many converts were gathered in. Even the infidelity of many of the philosophers themselves yielded to the superior force of the Christian doctrine. Converted to a new religion, these men found it no easy matter at once to lay down all the prejudices of that in which they had been educated.

And,

* de Republica l. 10, and in Gorgia, p. 231 † Just. Mart. Apol. 1. 6 8, ‡ Phaed. p. 84, and in Gorgia, p. 357.

And, in the warmth of their zeal for proselyting the world to the faith; and, unaware of the devices of their grand adversary, the primitive churches easily tolerated the well-meant reversies of their new advocates. While to cook up the doctrines of Christianity so as to please the palate of its opposers and persecutors, they served up its most delicious parts in Pagan covers, and relished every dish with a sauce, extracted from the fashionable philosophy of the times. The converted philosophers, therefore, to reconcile their new religion to the ruling taste, melted up its doctrines into the mould of their former theories. And the age of Platonism becoming the epidemic distemper of the new divines, gradually stopped the doctrines of the Apostles in their primitive simplicity, and exhibited them in a foreign dress.

8. Hence Manes, that Persian monster of wickedness, in the third century, grafted on the Christian name, the most horrid impieties which he could gather from the philosophy of his native country. And, to keep his followers in countenance in the practice of all the enormities which he patronized, he soothed away all their un-
 apprehensions respecting future woe, by the doctrine which represented it as altogether temporary and evanescent. But as the Mani means could with no propriety be called Christians, it must be acknowledged that Origen, who is also called Adamantius, a learned and ingenious Catechist in the school at Alexandria, about the middle of the third century, was the first abettor of the doctrine of Universal Salvation among Christian Divines. Fired with extraordinary zeal for giving universal currency to the religion of Jesus, and conscious of talents far above the common level, this man set himself professedly

to accommodate that whole system to the more plausible parts of paganism. In prosecution of this design, he drew many heathen fictions into his theories. And, to evade the evidence of the sacred oracles against them he maintained the necessity of rejecting the literal sense of all scriptures, as being only the husk or the true meaning. In support of this principle, he published a set of expositions which reduced the whole Bible into an allegory. And under cover of this device, he introduced a great variety of errors: Amongst the rest this was one, that all the fathers, of the Old Testament ages, were kept in hell till the death of Christ; when he went down into their prison, preached the gospel to them, and carried them with him to Heaven. Another was that the intermediate state between death and the resurrection was a state of sleep, in one common receptacle, called HADES by the Greeks, where the righteous and the wicked are reposed together promiscuously. And, to omit a multitude of dreams no better founded than these, he affirmed, that the fire of the future world would purify the damned; so that, after a temporary suffering of its severity in which, however, none could be held longer than 1000 years, all the damned spirits, both of men and devils, shall be finally delivered from their woes; and received to the Heavenly glory, in full fellowship with the other saints in light.* However, he worthily depreciated this exaltation, by adding that the highest favorite around the throne of
 (God)

* Contr. Cels. l. 4, 5, 6. ——— l. 11. c. 6. And Homil. in Joh. 12. vii. contr. Cels. Lib. 4. l. 15. and Comment. in Egill. Rom. 1, 8, and in Mat. 12, 32.

God was still left liable to fall from all his bliss ; and so to be rananted back to a new state of trial in an earthly body. And thus the whole celestial choir of men and angels would continue filling up an eternity to come in alternate falls, trials, purgations and restorations, one after another.

9. The zealous exertions of this prodigy of learning filled the world with his fame. That fame drew disciples from all quarters to attend his lectures, in the Academy over which he presided. By these, his voluminous writings on almost every thing in religion were dispersed far and wide ; and their contents were implicitly swallowed, in bulk, by such as knew not how to distinguish in them between the precious and the vile. Two sects soon arose that called themselves Origenists or Origeniani after his name ; the one of which zealously propagated all the errors which were found scattered through his writings, but lived in strict appearances of virtue and devotion.---The other added to the most absurd principles, the most lewd and impious lives. These last, however, have been disowned by the other sect ; and great pains have been taken to suther them upon another Origen, of a character very different from that of the Alexandrian doctor.

10. Scarcely can an instance be found, in which the tyranny of prejudice over the human mind, was more conspicuous than in the treatment which this great man and his works, received from the world. Many who were alarmed at the errors he broached, could have patience with nothing that came from his pen ; whilst not a few were so charmed with his eloquence, dazzled with his learning, and won by his extraordinary zeal, as to think favorably of
heresy

heresy itself, when found about Origen; and hence we find some of the most zealous advocates of religion, in those days, so far infected with the poison of his doctrines, or awed by his credit and popularity, as, sometimes, to drop expressions favoring of his opinions; though the uniform strain of their writings clearly proves that they were very different from their own. Thus we see Justin Martyr, greatly passing over the tenet we here oppose, with laying only that the souls of the wicked shall be punished as long as God shall please, that they should exist and exist punished. * Jerome too, in one place, contents himself with modestly suggesting that human weakness cannot know the judgment of God, nor form a certain opinion of the greatness or measure of future punishment, but ought to leave it to the pleasure of the Lord, whose it is to weigh both mercies and torments, and who knows both when, how, and how long to punish. † And thus Gregory Nazianzen, speaking of the eternity of hell torments, complaisantly checks himself with this salvo, "unless one had rather understand this more mildly with respect to men, and more worthily with respect to God the punisher." ‡ And his name-fake of Nylsa is pleased to threaten the sinner, whose obstinacy proves incurable in this life, with sharper and more bitter remedies that shall cure it in the future. § Even Irenæus ¶ himself, as well as Tatian, and Arnobius may be heard

* Dial. cum Tryph. p. 223. † Comment. on Isa. 66. ult. and on Isa. 24. ult. ‡ Orat. 40. p. 665. § Orat. catch. c. 8. and contraim. p. 229. and de epis. bogianis c. 21. ¶ lib. 2. c.

He wd talking of souls after a long time consumed away in the fiery torments of the world to come. And Augustine sometimes compliments, with the fitting character of merciful doctors, those who taught that future punishments were but temporary. bb And of all this, notwithstanding, we sh^d have full opportunity to shew hereafter that there was no principle of the christian religion in which these writers were more firmly established than that of the eternal duration of the future misery of all the damned.

11. When the extravagant admiration of Origen's name began to abate among the people; and the eyes, which had been blinded by the blaze of his fame, by degrees recovered their sight; his doctrines in process of time were examined by the touch-stone of scripture. That very JEROME quoted above, and whom the revivers of Origenism at this day appear so happy in pressing into that service, was the man that detected and publicly exposed the errors of that scheme, and had them judicially condemned by the unanimous sentence of the Synod of Alexandria in the year 299. The Origenists were consequently banished from Egypt and Palestine, as enemies to religion, and a nuisance to civil society. They fled to Constantinople; and so far prejudiced JOHN CHRYSOSTOM, the minister of that city, in their favor, that Epiphanius refused him communion on their account. cc Yet the leaven of their doctrines was never thoroughly

64: bb de civitate dei, lib. 21. c. 17. cc Howel's Synodical Council, vol. 2, p. 243.

ly purged out of the church, until the year 548; when the second council of Constantinople, consisting of 135 bishops, and which is known by the name of "the fifth œcumenical council," solemnly condemned the several errors of Origen, and this we are now considering in particular, and anathematized himself and his followers.

12. The father of the doctrine of universal salvation, had been not a little gratified in having found so accomplished an advocate of his favourite principle, even among the ministers of that religion, that most openly opposed it, and from which he expected the chief disturbance to his design of converting sinners in his service; and he was now too sensible of the advantages which might be derived to his cause, from the assistance of such as were entrusted with the office of public instructors in the church of Christ, to be deterred from attempting to avail himself of their help, by the severe blow he had received from the sentence of the General Council, mentioned above.

Slender acquaintance with ecclesiastical history will be sufficient to assure us that the opinions which began to spring up, towards the close of the second century, concerning the dead, prepared the way for praying for them in the third.* This was a business so well calculated to bring revenues to the clergy, that every thing among them, but piety itself, conspired to embrace the principle by which it was promoted. And it corresponded so exactly with Satan's grand design, that, instead of disturbing the practice, it was the

* Tertull. de cord. mil. c. 3. de exhort. c. 23. Cyprian. Epist. 34, 37. Epiphanius. Hæret. 75. l. 3. v. 3.

the policy of hell to find out and employ the best weapons to defend it: But, as that whole scheme was built on the notion that future punishments were but temporary; the foundation sinking under the weight of the foregoing sentence, the fabric erected on it must sink with it. The adversary of the truth, thereupon, found it necessary to hoist more friendly colours, and ascribe to the prayers of the clergy, that limitation of the future woe which formerly was argued from the nature of the thing itself. The mystery of iniquity had for some time been working in the Romish church.---And the time was gradually sliding on, when gain should be all the godliness of the Papal chair. The Roman Pontiff had, in the year 538, given sufficient proof that he considered this doctrine capable of being applied to such purposes as should make it a richer fund for the support of his sovereignty, than the mines of either Indies. For, however, a modern letter writer may sneer at the suggestion, all who are but a little versed in the history of the church, are at no loss for proofs that, of the metal of this very doctrine, was cast the whole mass of fiction about purgatory and its appendages, which has proved, at once, the richest and the strongest pillar of the ANTI-CHRISTIAN THRONE. This devise gave a new modification to the doctrine, and introduced a new set of names to express the same ideas which in Origen had been condemned.---It crept up into establishment by secret steps. All discussions about it were proposed doubtfully till the days of Gregory the great. Hence it may be said, that it was not publicly known in the church of Rome, till the seventh century. And in the Greek church it has never been received

to this day. † Amongst the Papists it remained, as the choicest jewel that bedecked the mother of harlots, until Faustus Socinus, an Italian, in the 16th century, thinking himself authorised at once to separate from the church of Rome on the one hand, and protest against the greatest part of the Bible on the other, started up as the author of a new religion; in which most of the doctrines of the scriptures were rejected, and most of the ancient errors raised from the grave. Among other fragments with which he disgraced the name of the reformation, the doctrine which denied the eternity of future torments was one. This tenet indeed suffered a considerable alteration in his hands, for, to avoid some unanswerable objections against the incorporating all the damned with the saints in light, he was fain to shelter his tenet under the Epicurean doctrine of annihilation. In all these different disguises did the Origenian tenet of the non-eternity of future punishment lurk about, until the famous Chevalier Ramsay stripped off the foreign garb, and presented it naked to the world in its original form.

12. To the last mentioned writer, those gentlemen seem to be indebted who, since his time, have vented it in the British dominions, in any other than the Socinian form: Amongst this the chief praise has been lavished of late on the name of Mr. Jeremy White; who is said to have

† Aug. de civit. l. 21. c. 18...22. and enchirid. c. 67, 68, 69, and ad Dulcid. quest. 1. ma.

have been an eminent abettor of the doctrine of universal salvation. 'Tis happy for the world that the truth and falshood of religious principles do not depend on the good or evil characters of the men who defend them. They are to be examined by another standard, by which, if they were not proved as true before their advocates came into life, they are not true after they are numbered with the dead. We have no inclination to detract from the real worth of any man.--But, as the high character of Mr. White, seems to be played off as an irrefragable proof of the truth of his opinions, we think it but a piece of justice to the public, to refer them to the character given him by an unexceptionable author, nearer the place and time of his life, and who had no party to promote by what he said of him. Dr. Edmund Calamy in his account of the ministers ejected after the restoration, in 1666, vol. 2. p. 57, 58, tells us that Mr. White had been household chaplain to Cromwell; that after the restoration, he lived privately, without ever undertaking any pastoral charge; that his conversation was very facetious, and much valued by some persons of rank and figure; that he died anno. 1707, Æt. 78: Having never published any thing but one funeral sermon, and that nothing of his had been printed since his death, save a persuasive to moderation. In this character, it is true, there is nothing base or vicious; but it is very far from being such as an eminently pious and ingenious, a faithful and industrious minister of Jesus does really deserve. Very few such ministers would wish to have their characters finished off just in that style. Facetious humour has indeed often made persons of another class, necessary companions to some persons of rank and figure; but we

must

must be excused if we cannot admit it to be the
 culminating point of ministerial dignity ; and
 when we consider the candor and judgment for
 which this author is noted, and the fair picture
 he has given of many other divines, who were
 cotemporary with Mr. White, we cannot but
 conclude that, if any thing more favorable
 could justly have been said of that gentleman,
 it would not have been concealed. Whether
 the treatise on universal restoration be really the
 work of Mr. White, or not, is a matter in
 doubt.--But, if it is, it comes into the world
 as a posthumous performance ; which the au-
 thor, though living in private to the 78th year
 of his age, did not think proper to publish. Whe-
 ther its long suppression was owing to a consci-
 ousness that the theory it contained was destitute
 of foundation ; or whether we must ascribe it to
 the same policy which led Origen himself to
 wish this doctrine might not be published to the
 vulgar ; least, from it, they might take free-
 dom to go on in their sins, it is not for us to de-
 cide. It is very observable however, that all
 the advocates of this opinion, seemed to have
 been conscious, that it tended to lay the reins
 on the neck of men's lusts. Hence we find Soci-
 nus, in his 6th epistle to Volkelius, expressing
 his wish to use the utmost caution, in his public
 disputation with Puccius, least his opinions on
 this matter should be commonly understood.
 Hence the late Dr. Burnet too, in a book writ-
 ten professedly on this subject, concludes his work
 with declaring that ' whatever we think in our
 " hearts about the non-eternity of future punish-
 " ment, still, when we preach or speak to the
 " people, we must use the doctrine and language
 " commonly received ; for the vulgar run head-
 " long

" long into wickedness; and can be restrained
 " from their vices by nothing but the fear of pun-
 " ishment. Besides, even among good men,
 " there are babes that must be fed with milk, as
 " well as men with strong meat; and we must
 " not rashly change the diet of the weak, lest
 " we bring on some distemper." And, to crown
 all he leaves his reader with this memento,
 " that if any body shall ever translate this work
 " into the vulgar tongue, he shall judge such
 " translator to have done it with an ill mind,
 " and for a sinister purpose." *

On double-dealing like this, in a matter of
 divine revelation deemed of so great importance
 to the vindication of the divine character, we
 need make no reflections. It will be natural for
 every reader to enquire, if the sacred writers have
 concealed this cardinal point, how did these
 gentlemen discover it? if not, why may not eve-
 ry minister divulge it? Or if these men are to
 be rewarded for their prudence in secreting this
 doctrine: Shall not the Apostles expect at least
 a temporary punishment, for their temerity in
 proclaiming it?

Notwithstanding this caution, it seems the
 great secret has leaked out. It had found warm
 friends in the ablest Socinians in England. And
 Dr. Hartley, who was of a very different cast,
 laid out no little labor in support of it. But, it
 seems to us, by no means, a certainty that he

Q. 3.

le.int.

learned it, as we have lately been told from either of the Wesley's: For, though one of these brothers, has ventured so far as to wager his salvation on the truth of the doctrine of Universal Redemption. Yet that he ever was a believer in Universal Salvation it doth not appear. The Messieurs Relly's indeed seem to have deviated greatly from the paths of their predecessors in this matter,--- They have lifted up their voice like a trumpet, on the subject: And what they wanted in talents or education, they have abundantly made up in the fervor of zeal. A congregation, we hear, was set up by one of them in the city of London, in the year 1765: And, from that school, it seems America has borrowed a disciple, who has carried its lessons through great part of the United States. And, with the art of a true son of such prophets as these, has sown the seeds of Origenism in the minds of the unwary and unstable wherever he came.

It is true, that the Socinian form of this opinion had stolen a passage into this country, long before the arrival of the itinerant last mentioned. Some church records, within forty miles of Boston, can shew that it was not first imported by him. And it is soundly asserted by many, that nothing but a flock of Dr. Burnet's honesty has prevented its being fairly opened up to the world, under the sanction of the name of another Doctor, thirty years ago. Whether the success of the traveller mentioned above awakened a jealousy, that the honor of so important a discovery in theology, should be carried off by an illiterate stranger; or whether the great activity of the present æra, in the invention of improvements in all departments of learning and science, sung the divines now on the stage to emulation,

we list not to enquire : One thing is become certain, that, no sooner did the author of a pamphlet, called "Salvation for all Men," give the word, then great was the multitude of the preachers that suddenly rose up, in almost every quarter and published it. And, if the best accounts we can obtain deserves credit, this doctrine rings from so many pulpits thro'gh the land already, that every minister of the gospel, who does not with it to become universally taught and received, is now called on, as he tenders the cause of God, and the best interests of souls, to stand forth and openly disavow it.

h

S E C T I O N II.

Its Errors.

IT is by no means for sake of any pleasures arising from the study of the serpentine wiles of error, that we have given ourselves or the public the trouble of this testimony. And much less from a delight in finding them employed by any who are considered as public teachers of religion. To sift out all the chaff from the works of Origen is not the purpose of this attempt.

Many

Many of his absurd opinions have slept in silence for some centuries. Sound and lasting be their slumbers! Let the right hand that tries to wake them forget its cunning! but be it our aim, to contribute the mite of our feeble efforts, to the assistance of those, who are honestly endeavouring to hush those errors only, that we find roused into action at the present juncture.

A degree of self-denial is requisite to bring gentlemen of education, to fall into the ranks with the followers of an illiterate leader. To avoid this humiliating character, certain of the abettors of the tenet of Universal Salvation, have been at some pains to draw lines of distinction between their own opinions and those of Mr. Murray. If any advantages can be derived to their scheme from such distinction it is but fair that they have full liberty to avail themselves of them. In stating the principles which we mean to oppose, we shall therefore endeavour to keep the theories of these two parties separated as far as there is any real difference between them. As the person above-named has not thought proper to give the world his system from the press, under his own signature, we have not any other means of knowing it, unless by preachments: But many judicious persons who have heard these deliver such accounts of them as make it difficult to say, with any certainty, how far he really has plunged into the Oratorical abyss; it having been his frequent practice to hold up at one time and place sentiments which he warmly disclaims at another. A late account however, concurs in this, that in general he is willing to adopt the notions scattered through the works of Kelly, his master,

and from these we should have gathered them; were it not that the pamphlet has lately been published in the form of a Chatechisin, which professes to open and defend his principles in a systematic way. As this pamphlet plainly refers to him as the grand source of its authors information, as it delivers his thoughts in the very language which he has been known to use on the same subjects: As it is known to have been published from an original manuscript, seen at his usual place of abode: And his followers, professing to adopt it as the confession of their faith, it has been, with great probability, ascribed to the combined labors of his own pen, and those of certain of his preachers in this and a neighbouring state; any pretences to its being the work of his Landlady alone, notwithstanding. This pamphlet therefore may be fairly used as a declaration of his sentiments, so far as they are settled and intended, as yet, to be declared: And, if we may draw his creed out of that work, it will constrain us to conclude that he holds:

1. That there is but one real person in the godhead; and that this person being called by three different names, arising from three of his principal works is all the Trinity we are to believe. * 2. That this person is the redeemer of mankind: † 3. That God gave man a law which
is

it was impossible for any one to keep, *a* and to which God could not expect any conformity. *b*

4. That the weight of the divine wrath for man's breach of it, fell on the old serpent, and the substance of the sentence passed on man was only a curse upon the ground, and a threatening of labor and sorrow, and the promise of a Saviour. *c*

5. That the Deity in his second character, called the Christ, was united to the lost nature of all mankind, antecedent to the fall, as truly and as nearly as a vine to its branches, a husband to his wife, or a head to its members. *d*

6. That when he expired, the soul that sinned indeed died. *e*

7. That after death he went to hell, to preach deliverance to the spirits that had been there even from before the deluge. *f*

8. That this was a full satisfaction for all the sins of all mankind. *g*

9. That God's election of individuals to life spoken of in scripture, is only his choosing some of mankind to bear witness to the truth; and wisely hiding that truth from the rest till the day of universal restoration. *h*

10. That, at the day of judgment, every son and daughter of Adam shall be set as the sheep on the judges right hand, *i* and that the goats on the left are only the fallen angels. *k*

11. That all men shall then be carried up to the kingdom of God; and all devils sent to a kingdom prepared

pared for themselves. 12. That such as have judged themselves here, shall never be judged by God, but be the the judges of the rest of men, who, therefore, will be filled with terrors of that great day, till Jesus appears and opens to them the book of life; and then, they knowing him, will rise up with the rest into the same grand happy assembly. 13. That there is no other damnation for men, but by their own opinion of themselves and their actions here. * 14. And nothing more is meant by our being born again, than Christs being born into human nature. " 15. That baptisim with water is only a figure; and that there is no propriety in using it since Christ died. • 16. And that the Lord's supper is no particular act of public worship, but only that a christian receives it whenever he beholds bread and wine on any table; and taking it thankfully, is led from the figure to adore the grace contained in it. P 17. That the first day of the week is not a sabbath, and there is no authority for changing it to that from the seventh, 9 which was itself but a type of Christ, and therefore to cease when he appeared.

The judgment of the other gentlemen, who appear in defence of Universal Salvation, and yet affect to differ from the teacher referred to, in what has now been said, we are authorised to consider as expressed in the anonymous pamphlet called

called SALVATION FOR ALL MEN. Great part of that work, indeed, consists of extracts from some former champions of that cause. But the manner in which these materials are introduced, the use made of them, and the conclusions drawn from them, leave it by no means a doubtful matter, that the writers and publishers of the pamphlet, would have the world consider the sentiments as fully their own, as if they had not expressed them in the words of others. It is with these gentlemen then, and not with the authors they have cited, that we have to do in the present case; and, so far as their principles may be learnt from this pamphlet, they would have us to believe, 1st. that mankind universally shall finally be partakers of the eternal felicity of the sons of God, in heavenly glory. * 2d. But that many of them must pass through a state of great misery, for a time, in order to prepare them for the joys of the presence of God in Heaven. † 3d. Hence that it is quite consistent to suppose the same persons to be the subjects of election and reprobation, of salvation and damnation at the same time. ‡ 4th. that God irresistibly wills the salvation of all men, § and nothing shall hinder it. ¶ 5th. Yet not all, in the next state, after death. ** 6th. Yet all men have the one God for their God, (he standing in the same near and tender relation to the elect and the reprobate.) * And the one mediator as
their

* Salvation for all men, pref. p. 1. § ibid p. 2.
† Salvation, &c. p. 2. ¶ 4. ** 4. w 5, 6. x 6.

duration. c. 15. That the Popish purgatory is but a corruption of the genuine doctrine of the ancient fathers about that fire of hell which will burn out sin and lust. 16. And that this fire shall certainly effect the death of wicked men, a second time, and then itself be ended. d

1. From this brief synopsis of the contents of these two treatises we may easily see wherein they agree, and wherein they differ far from it, it will not be difficult to discover that they are perfectly agreed in the grand point aimed at in both, viz. that every individual of the human race shall be completely blessed in the immediate presence and full enjoyment of God in Heaven, to all eternity; they seem also to concur in the device of the way to purchase this bliss, both tell us that Christ was united to the whole human race, and was equally the federal head of every man; and, in that character, paid down the full price of every man's ransom; and that this price was equally accepted for them all. Both seem agreed, that there is no state of retribution, between death and the resurrection, in which souls are conscious of happiness or misery: That after the resurrection Christ will bring all sinners to faith and repentance, who had never repented or believed before. That every one of the fallen angels will also be at last restored to God's favour and celestial bliss; that they, and all wicked

wicked men, shall be everlastingly happy, in the same company with the martyrs, apostles, prophets and angels that never fell: And finally, that there shall never afterwards be either sin or suffering in the whole universe.

2. They do not appear to harmonize so well in the steps necessary to effect this universal restoration: There are indeed, sundry subjects handled in the one, which the other wholly overlooks; the writers of the extracts, have not informed us whether they embrace or reject the Sabellian notion of the Godhead incarnated in the catechism, nor whether they concur therewith in its ideas of the divine law, or of Christ's being indeed the soul that sinned, or of our being born again in his incarnation, or of baptism, the supper, and the sabbath being only figures, and so done away when Christ died; perhaps their judgment on these points is reserved for some future publication:

3. In the main there is an obvious difference between the two schemes in the scenery of their drama. The one supposes the scripture doctrine of election to mean God's choosing a few to be witnesses of his truth on these points here, and aiding them from the rest of mankind until the great day. The other explains it by his choosing some to be happy in the next state, but others not till that state is ended; the one affirms that reprobation and election may belong to the same subject, the other denies it.—The catechism concludes the whole business at the day of judgment. The extracts not till a great while afterwards. The former places all men on the Judge's right hand at that day; and immediately carries them all up to Heaven together. The latter sets off the impenitent and unbelievers

lievers them, to the left hand, and plunges them into hell fire, untill they repent. The one places all in Heaven, solely, on the footing of the merit of Christ. The other raises some to that blessed state, at least partly, by their own sufferings in hell.

4. In this view we think it must be acknowledged, that the scheme of the catechist has greatly the advantage of the other; in as much as the latter would lead us to infer, that for some God had love enough to save them at last, but not enough to save them without inflicting on them unutterable pains in hell for unknown ages: That Christ saved some of his saints but in part; that some of the blessed procured their own discharge from the prison of hell, by dint of their own patient enduring, and wise improving of hell torments; and that these torments were better means of grace to them than all the word and ordinances of God; and, in short, that all the heavenly world shall not agree to eternity, in their sentiments of the love and grace of God, and of their obligations to it, nor in ascribing the whole of their redemption and eternal bliss, to the blood of the lamb, nor in rendering ALL the praise and glory of it to him: Whereas the former plan, however inconsistent with itself, and with the truth, seems to be guarded against these absurdities.

SECTION

S E C T I O N III.

Its confutation.

EVERY point belonging to the question now in controversy, is acknowledged on all hands to be a matter of divine revelation. To the law and testimony of scripture, then the appeal must lie. Both parties must stand at its judgment seat. And it is the sole prerogative of that infallible umpire to pronounce the decisive sentence. But when we repair to that sacred Oracle, with the enquiry in our mouths "what saith the scripture," it is very dangerous to carry with us hearts prejudiced to a side by a set of preconceived opinions. Influenced by these, we are utterly unprepared to search the divine volume fairly. They rather prompt us to dictate to it; than to receive instruction from it. — Guided by then we shall examine the Bible, just as a man reads a book which he means to confute; pursuing the research with a previous determination what the scripture must say, rather than any disposition to wait for and receive the law at its mouth. This is to treat the revealed

word as the Jews did the word incarnate.' First, to blindfold it, and then smite it on the face, and tell it what it must prophecy.

If the preceding chapter has not been quite unsuccessful in its essay to prove the authority of the scriptures to be divine, it has warranted us now to build on every thing they say as infallible truth; and to assure that, instead of requiring its sacred doctrines to submit to be tried for their life at the bar of our reason, and to stand or fall according to their conformity to conclusions already drawn up by us; it is the truest reason, that, having conducted us into the school of this unerring instructor, humbly resolves to sit at its feet, and learn to adjust all her decisions to the law of wisdom, that dwells on its lips. Reason commands our firm belief of whatever it finds revealed in the Bible. Without suffering us to demand an account of the modes and reasons thereof; or permitting us once to enquire how the thing can be true. To reason it is enough that the scripture has said it. Once assured of the divine original of that book she never doubts that all its declarations are perfectly consistent with every truth in natural religion, nor deems herself entitled to see how this consistency may be in every thing maintained. Far from being offended at meeting with mysteries in the sacred pages which she is not able to comprehend, reason would consider it as no small objection against their claim to the character of a divine revelation did they contain nothing but what she herself could sufficiently explain.

If, therefore, we can make it manifest to the candid enquirer after truth, that the doctrines which the modern Origenists, of either sex, attempt to destroy, are plainly asserted in the

scriptures

scriptures, or necessarily deduced from them by the common rules established for the just interpretation of any author, sacred or profane; we shall be in no pain for the fate of our argument. Although the gentlemen we oppose should not find the result to consist with the opinions they have formed concerning the justice, mercy, or goodness of God.

The witnesses which must be cited from the sacred oracles, in the cause before us, will necessarily rise to a very considerable number. To transcribe them all, at full length, would swell this volume beyond its intended size. Nor would that be any addition to the evidence to the serious and impartial reader: As he would naturally turn to his Bible for a full view of the texts where they stand: Knowing that it is there that their genuine sense is to be most easily discovered, and with the greatest certainty too: we shall therefore excuse ourselves from the labor of transcribing, wherever it may be done without detriment to the truth: And content ourselves with referring to the margin for the texts on which we rest the proof of the several matters in hand; in the meantime begging it of the reader, as a piece of justice to himself and to the truth, to pass no citations unexamined at leisure.

As the principal question to be considered is whether the scriptures warrant us to believe that the torments of hell, or the punishment of the damned there, are really everlasting, or whether the plan of salvation is represented, by that sacred book, to be so formed as to assure us that in order to its complete accomplishment, all rational creatures must, at some future period, whether at the day of judgment or after it, be collected into one general assembly, and dwell together

around

around the throne of God and the Lamb, in the fulness of celestial bliss to all eternity; our main business will be to search out the evidence of divine revelation on that question. To this business, it would be very foreign to follow the track of our opponents in the catechism mentioned above. As that pamphlet affects to cast itself on the mercy of men; by pretending itself to be the production of a female pen; we wish to resign it to the care of some good Lady to give it the nurture which it deserves; We cannot doubt there are many of the fair sex in the land able to dress this foundling with propriety: And think it necessary, for their honor, that the world be made to know, that, if America produces one mother, who can devote the hours of her childrens tuition to the work of bringing forth, in a systematic shew, a string of texts to burlesque and ridicule them; it furnishes many others who will rise up to hand the milled little ones an antidote against the poison, by restoring the dislocated passages to their natural posture and place.

To the pen of some of these we refer the chastisement of this Catechist's indecent reflexions on the doctrine of the Trinity; which suppose the Deity transforming himself, sometimes into one person, and sometimes into another, comparing him to water that is found now in the form of rain, then in snow, and then in ice: To the same correction we commend that writer's gross impeachment of God's law as a rule which the maker knew to be impossible for any one to observe, together with the mystic jargon of our regeneration as all consisting in Christ's being born a man; as well as the multiplied, wild and unintelligible absurdities which stuff that whole performance,

performance, as the only materials which the author can find to support the grand point of Universal Salvation; to which they are all resigned to be subservient.

11 We are happy to find the authors, with whom we have to do, speaking in strains that lead us to suppose they fully agree with us in the scripture doctrine of the state of total depravity, in which all the natural posterity of the first Adam came into the world, in consequence of the fall of their first parents. As this was the thing in which their need of a Saviour originated, it was necessarily presupposed to all that was done in his undertaking. And therefore the scripture has been at more pains on this, than on most other articles of our creed. In the most pointed terms it has pronounced all mankind since the fall to be naturally sinful, & quite ignorant of God, and things spiritual and divine, & their wills enmity itself against him, & their every affection alienated from him, & and turned only to evil, and that continually, & their nature destitute of any thing spiritually good, & and themselves morally incapable of pleasing God. g

From this view of their nature, it could not be expected, that the scripture would speak very favourably of the state of fallen men as such; and so far has it been from flattering them with pleasing prospects in this condition, that we find it

a Ps. 14. 1, 2, 3. Rom. 3. 10---12. b 1. Cor. 2. 14.
 c Rom. 8. 7. d Job. 5. 2. e Gen. 6. 5. f Rom. 7.
 18. g Rom. 8. 8.

it plainly declares them to be universally laid under the sentence of condemnation by their holy lawgivers, & already the proper objects of his wrath; and actually under the awful curses of the Most High.

Every trait in this dark picture frowns on the hope of man's deliverance arising from himself: The best obedience of a subject who hath once broken the law must ever be accounted imperfect. And with such conformity as this, no perfect law could ever be satisfied. For that would imply the countenancing of a practical denial of its own perfection, and a real insult on its authority. The obedience then in which the divine law can rest must be the work of one that never sinned. It can, therefore no more be looked for from any of the fallen and guilty sons of men.

Nor can we expect an essential relief from the friendly efforts of holy angels on our behalf. If it had been consistent with the dignity of the law given to man, to justify the human race, in universal opposition to it, merely because some beings of a very different nature, had observed its injunctions: It had still been impossible for angels to obey, for more than themselves. A work of supererogation could never be performed by a meer creature, all whose powers are his masters property, and all his obedience due for himself.

Besides,

b John 3. 18. Rom. 5. 18. *i* Rom. 7. 18. Eph. 2. 3. 5. 6. John 3. 36. *A* Gal. 3. 10. Deut. 27. 26. *l* Heb. 2. 2. Luke 12. 59.

Besides, it was the natural consequence of the introduction of sin, that the just recompence of reward, denounced against it in the law, must be duly paid to the party on whom its guilt is found. Whoever would effectually redeem the sinner, then, must bear the weight of that penalty, without the abatement of a single mite : And this alone is sufficient to prove the collected strength of the whole angelic order unequal to the task.

2. It is the glory of the gospel to open to such ruined men a door of hope in this desperate case.---When it calls us to behold the lamb of God, ^a it points to a deliverer in that very nature of which the law took hold; ^b but in a person of which the absolute deity, in his second divine subsistence, was the chiefest part; ^c a person, therefore, innocent and perfect, so far as he was human; ^d and possessed of omnipotence and infinite dignity, as He was divine; ^e and thus qualified to answer all ends, surmount all obstacles, and perfectly discharge all parts of the work. ^f On this glorious person the scripture leads us to behold the whole business of men's redemption devolved by the authority of a divine legation, concerted by the sacred Trinity in the council of peace, before the world
was

^a John 1, 29. ^b Heb. 2, 14. ^c John 1, 14. 15. ^d Heb. 7, 26. ^e 11a. 9, 6, 7. Col. 1, 17, 18, &c. ^f Hebrew 7, 25.

was made. ^g Taught by the oracles of truth, we must consider the plan of this mighty work as then ratified by solemn covenant, ^b in which the Father points out the task, ⁱ engages to reward the performance of it with a certain stipulated premium; ^k the Son, satisfied with the terms proposed, freely offers to comply with the requisition, ^l even at the expence of his life; ^m and the Father well pleased with the gracious overture, gives his Son over to the work, ⁿ authorises his proceeding in it, by a divine commission, and fixes the time when he shall appear on earth to execute it.

2. Such is the foundation which the Bible assures us, was laid for the salvation of sinners, before one stone was placed in that building, or even in the building of the world that was reared for the theatre of the work that procured it. Nor was the glorious surety renish in carrying up the edifice at the appointed season. Born of a woman, but not in the way of that natural generation by which human depravity is propagated; he was at once holy and immaculate, and yet the brother of the man who is the chief of sinners. The innocence of his nature was never stained with any blemish in life. Ever mindful of the crown of joy set before him, he neglected no step of the race that must win it. Conscious that it became him to fulfil

^g Pl. 70, 10. Prov. 9, 22. J:1. 1, 4. 1 Pet. 1, 22.
^h Isa. 42, 1-6. 1 Isa. 49, 6. 1 Pl. 40, 7. Heb. 5, 5. John
 17, 4. ^m John 10, 15-18. ⁿ Isa. 61, 1-4. Luke 24
 26. Pl. 170, 2. Isa. 50, 8. Pl. 2, 8. Heb. 1, 12. and 7
 21-28.

fill all the righteousness of the law, he proceeded unwearied in a course of obedience to every precept of it; and ceased not, until he could say that work was finished: A work, which, if thus completely finished by a mere man, must have satisfied the law, and entitled the performer to the eternal life, promised to perfect obedience, in the covenant of works annexed to it. But when accomplished by the divine person, it did more than satisfy-----it magnified the law; it made it honorable, and merited a reward equivalent to the eternal life of millions beyond numbering. Nor did he refuse a literal submission to all the depth of woe, which the sanction of the law had threatened to the sins of the people whom he represented. Of that sentence he bore the whole weight. The Father, supporting the dignity of justice, did not spare him, nor suffer the bitter cup to pass from his lips, until he drank the last drop of its dregs. The threatened vengeance kept hold of his body, and penetrated through all its vital parts, until its life expired in torture. But the chief part of that deluge, flowed into his soul, until it sunk in deep waters, and was made an offering for sin. Had the sufferer been himself a sinful man, the impressions of divine wrath, how long soever they might last, could have sunk no deeper, could have been carried no farther against him: This was the last sacrifice which offended justice could demand.--But as offered by a sufferer of perfect holiness and infinite worth; it was a sacrifice of value, sufficient to satisfy as an equivalent in lieu of the eternal punishment of innumerable worlds of guilty angels and men; if it had been offered, by divine warrant, in the stead of them all.

2. By this it is evident, that the decision of the question respecting the extent of the redemption purchased by Christ, by no means depends on the intrinsic value of the price he paid: If that consideration alone were to determine the matter, the debate is forever at an end. We freely acknowledge, nay, boldly affirm, that the Omnipotence of the Deity will not be able to all eternity, to create more worlds than the worth of this one offering, once offered, is sufficient to save. We cannot but think it quite impertinent then, in the abettors of the doctrine we oppose, to make a parade of drawing together on this argument, a number of such expressions as are only intended to set forth the greatness of the price which Christ paid down for the sinner's ransom. This method is often used for the purpose of leading the multitude to suppose that our doctrine is founded in a denial of the infinite value of that great sacrifice.---Nor will our maintaining, that every individual of our fallen race shall not be finally saved by it; be at all sufficient to prove the injurious insinuation to be true; since themselves must allow, that their own opinion regards the Redeemer with a number of subjects as really inadequate to the value of his purchase as ours. The happiness of all finite beings together, is but a finite good, and, if they believe the ransom that bought it to be of infinite value, they must grant that happiness, however great, an object to be as far from bearing any proportion to this price, as nothing does to that. The question here, is not whether Christ's obedience and suffering had merit sufficient to purchase eternal life for all; nor whether all who come to him shall be saved; nor whether these are many or few; but, whether

whether the Lord Jesus was, by his father's appointment, delivered up to death, as a vicarious sacrifice instead of all, and gave his life with an express intention thereby to satisfy the law and justice of God for all sinners; and so, actually to reconcile Jehovah towards them, and purchase for them the everlasting enjoyment of him in heaven. If this question may be answered in the affirmative, and that answer is supported by the word of God, it will bring the controversy to a close. We are not unapprized that many persons of learning and ingenuity, who hold that affirmative, yet deny the doctrine of Universal Salvation: But the consistency of these two opinions, we frankly confess, we have never seen defended to our satisfaction: Nor do we know of any fair and rational vindication of the divine character given as yet, on these principles, against the objections of such as have thrown out queries of this purport, &c. If the price which Christ paid for the redemption of sinners, was not sufficient to the end for which it was offered, why did God prove his having accepted thereof, by raising him from the dead, and setting him on his own right hand? And if it was sufficient, where is the justice of depriving him forever of the subjects he had thus dearly bought? Will the Most High deal unjustly with his beloved Son, in whom he is well pleased? Will he grieve Him with the sight of those souls eternally wallowing in the lake of fire, whom He had loved so dearly as to give his soul a sacrifice to redeem them? Will not this give him cause of eternal complaints that he has laboured in vain, and spent his strength for nought? Where then is the Father's covenant-engagement? Where his justice? And where his promise

promise to his Son, that he shall see his seed, that he shall receive of the travail of his soul, until he shall be satisfied?

Nor will it be more easy to account for his conduct towards the damned themselves, upon this plan. If Christ acted as surety for them in his obedience and sufferings, was not his sacrifice sufficient for their ransom? If it was, why are they continued captives still? Did not this ransom pay ALL their debt to God's justice, and to God's law? If it did, where is the justice of holding them eternally in prison for it? Of putting them to never-ending tortures, because they can never pay it over again, to the last mite, a second time? Moreover, how will it be found consistent with divine goodness, to bestow upon them the gift of his own Son, the greatest gift it was able to give, and yet refuse them deliverance from pains, and the finite quantity of bliss, which their natures can contain; which is a favour as far inferior to it, as a created and limited good is to one that is infinite? What must we think of that love that was great enough to give the life of his son for them; and yet not great enough to give them their own? And is there no force in the argument used by our Lord himself, on this subject; where the premises are, "I lay down my life for the sheep"; and the conclusion drawn from them, is nothing less than, "they shall hear my voice, and follow me, and I give unto them eternal life; they shall never perish; neither shall any pluck them out of my hand?" If this argument is conclusive, it will establish a necessary connexion between Christ's dying for any man, and that man's enjoying eternal life. If, then, he gave his life for all sinners, or

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He did not: If not, he has not redeemed them all; nor shall they all be saved; if he did, then has he purchased eternal life for them all; and it is impossible that one of them should ever perish. On the reverse, the scripture has plainly declared that some sinners, at the day of Christ's second coming, shall be punished with everlasting destruction, or they have not.---If they have, then some sinners shall never escape that destruction, and so shall never enjoy eternal life. And, if any such can be found, then our Lord's argument constrains us to say, "they were none of the sheep, for which he laid down his life."

It is not, therefore, without reason that our modern Origenists have marshalled, in the most pompous array, for the defence of their cause, all the texts which Arminians have formerly employed in the service of that of Universal Redemption. For all the aids, of which the Arminian ever could avail himself, from them, only entangled him in more numerous and palpable absurdities; and so increased the embarrassments of his cause, unless he allowed them force enough to carry him over to the camp of Origenism. They could do nothing for the one, without supporting the other.

That general, and even universal terms are sometimes used in scripture concerning the objects of Christ's death, no person acquainted with that sacred volume, can deny, and it may perhaps, be the business of some following part of this work to enquire how far they will go towards the support of the cause which our opponents have undertaken to plead. In the mean time, it is worthy of notice, that scripture is ever to be understood in such a sense, as to preserve its consistency with itself; and no interpretation is ever to be

fastened on an obscure expression which shall make it contradict the obvious meaning of a passage that is plain, and can hardly be misunderstood. Now the plainest declarations in the Bible, represent the redemption of sinners as absolute; and independent on any uncertain volitions, acts, or deserts of men: as perfect in itself; and obtaining its end fully without needing the help of any supposed additions from the work of the creature: And as certainly secure of effecting all it designed. ^a And therefore all the means necessary to that end, are held forth, not only as foreseen, and provided; but procured, in it, and given as absolute gifts, no less than the end itself. ^b The sacred books assure us, that Christ redeemed men, only by acting the part of their surety, ^c that this suretyship respected a covenant, and that, that covenant did not include all sinners. ^d In the surety's character the scriptures lead us to consider three offices contained, viz. those of prophet, king and priest. That all these offices he faithfully fulfills to all for whom he is a surety, and that all the acts of each office relate to the same men as their objects. Therefore, that his oblation and intercession are coextensive: Both of them belonging to his priesthood, and the latter being directly founded on the former. ^e And therefore that these two acts must respect the same persons; for, if diversely applied, they destroy each other; it being as ineffectual for him to pray for those, for whom he did not die, as it is improbable that he should choose

^a John 6. 37. ^b 2. Peter, 1. 3. John 10, 16. 28. P 61. 210. 3. Heb. 9. 12, 14. Rom. 5. 20. 1. Thess. 5. 10. ^c Heb. 7. 23, and 9. 15. Psal. 40. 8. Isa. 53. 6. ... ^d Eph. 2. 3, 12. ^e Isa. 53. 12. ^f Rom. 8. 34. 1. John

choose to die for such, for whom he refused to pray. Now it is acknowledged, on all hands, that there are some sinners for whom christians are forbidden to intercede. *g* Such must then be certainly supposed excluded from the intercession of Christ himself. But nothing is more certain than, that the Redeemer prays for all whom he has died to save. *b* And hence their eternal life is infallably ensured, since he is an advocate whom the father heareth always. *i* This however, will not warrant us to conclude that all men shall be saved; for he himself has publicly affirmed that he prays not to the Father for all the world; but for a people given unto him out of the world. *k* And therefore he did not offer his life in sacrifice for all. Nor could it be less than an absurdity to die, to buy forgiveness for men, whose sins himself declared should never be forgiven, neither in this world, nor in the world to come: *l* For this would be to counteract his fathers will, his own end, and designedly to die in vain.

Hence it is, that however we find universal terms used in the scripture respecting the grace of the gospel, yet it is a fact that cannot be denied, that wherever the scope of the passage is expressly to declare the end of Christ's death, persons for whom he died are described under restrictive characters; with such care as proves it to be designed to distinguish between them and others of mankind, for whom no sacrifice was offered. Thus we are therein characterized as his
body,

g John 5. 16. *b* John 17. 20. *i* John 11. 42. *k* John 17. 9.
l Matt. 23. 35.

body, ^m his people, ⁿ a peculiar people, ^o his sheep, ^p as distinguished from other men, who are not his sheep, ^q his church, ^r children of God, ^s persons given him out of the world, ^t persons redeemed from among men, ^v out of every people, ^u &c. &c. Now, if these are the just denominations of the persons for whom Christ died, and scripture is ever consistent with itself, we shall never be able to find any thing in the Bible that will fairly prove that the sacrifice of the Redeemer was offered equally for all mankind.

In all these descriptions, reference is evidently had to that covenant of redemption between the persons of the DIVINE TRINITY, of which mention has already been made; in which every member of the mystical body of Christ, was written in his book, ^a as legible as it now is on the breast plate of the high priest above; was then given over into his hands by the Father, ^b as one of the seed which should be accounted to him for a generation, ^c which he should see brought into vital union with himself, in due time; ^d and which he should certainly bring to glory, with all the children which God has given him. And, if we rightly understand the writers on the other side of the question, this is really their own view of the matter. Great stress is laid by those gentlemen upon a sup-
posed.

^r Eph. 5. 23. ⁿ Mat. 21. Tit. 2. 14. ^p John 10. 15. 26. ^q John 10. 26. ^r Eph. 5. 25. ^s John 11. 52. and 10. 26. ^t John 17. 9. ^v Rev. 14. 4. ^u Rev. 5. 9.

^a Heb. 10. 7. ^b John 17. 6. ^c Psal. 22. 32. ^d Isa. 53. 20. ^e Heb. 2. 10. 13.

posed union between Christ and the LOST NATURE antecedent to the fall." Where a lost nature can be found, antecedent to its fall, it is not easy for us to conceive; and it will be kind in those authors to tell us, if they can. For, if none such existed, there could be no union of any being to it; it is true they have not been sparing of their illustrations of this matter, nor of round assertions of its reality. They repeatedly inform us that Christ, as the Redeemer, was the actual head of all men; that they were actually in vital union with him from eternity; that his birth was their regeneration; and his death, the death of the very soul that sinned, &c. &c.

It has been proved above, that the transaction in which the Redeemer was appointed, and the covenant settled, took place before time began.---All, before time, was eternity.---And, in that duration, we cannot distinguish first and second.---We therefore readily agree to call that covenant eternal. Nor shall it be denied that all his seed were considered as virtually in him, in consequence of the divine designation, prae-science, and contract; wherein it was settled that they should in due time be really united to him, and dealt with as his members: But this was only planning an operation which was to be performed at some future period; and is as different from effecting that union as any mere purpose is from the work which fulfills it. The bare decree could no more be considered as giving real existence to this union; than it did to the heavens and the earth before their creation. With the same reason, and with no less good sense, might it be asserted, that the resurrection was past before man was made, and that Christ had planned the whole administration before he had any

any kingdom formed. For all these last things were settled in the divine decree, before the first had actually come into being. Indeed, if any such actual union between Christ and his people, had really been effected by the divine purpose about it, instead of calling him the second Adam, the Apostle ought to have called him the first. As he is the Adam to whom men are first in union. But if this be the fact, may we not ask how come they afterwards to be a lost nature? Or who brought them into a subsequent union with another Adam? Did the former cut off his members? Or did the latter pluck them away from him? Or were they in actual union to both the Adams at the same time? If so, we shall no longer wonder at what appeared otherwise a sublime mystery indeed; when these gentlemen instructed us that the salvation of any man is quite consistent with his damnation at the same time; and his reprobation is no objection against his election. O what difficulties might men of learning and genius often scrape, would they but stoop to take a little common sense into the company with their other excellencies! We cannot but think a moderate share of that article would have saved great trouble on this question: as it would certainly have told us that, as there can be no union between bodies, unless by their contract. So none can take place between spiritual beings, but by their mutual consent. And therefore, that whatever may be said of our being virtually in Adam or Christ, merely by virtue of the divine purpose that we should one day be so; yet as none can be actually in the first, by legal subjection to him, or representation by him, until they have actually derived their natures from him; that is, until they

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they actually come into natural existence in men: So none can be said to be in actual union to the second, until they have derived a new nature from him; that is, until they actually come into a spiritual life as believing Christians.

5. Were it not that Origen the father of these sects, has established it as a rule, that all scripture is best interpreted in an allegorical sense, we should be greatly surprized to find his disciples so fond of declaring their belief of the doctrine of election; an election too not only of some nations to the enjoyment of gospel privileges, as Arminians in general explain it, but even of individuals by name.

Of all the schemes of religion, which ever have been fabricated by men, we should have thought this would be the last to give any signs of countenance to that scripture-doctrine; in as much as their whole system is founded on its overthrow.

The sacred pages have indeed represented, "that act of God's sovereign grace in which he has, even from eternity, chosen some of the sons of men to obtain salvation, by the Lord Jesus Christ, through the sanctification of the spirit and belief of the truth," as the very foundation of all that has been done, or ever shall in the important business of sinners salvation. It is very usual with the inspired writers to run up into this every doctrine they handle, respecting the way to eternal life. And hence all religionists find themselves obliged to draw it into their systems

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in one shape or another. But it is doubtful whether any word, in any language, has ever been tortured into so many, and contradictory senses; or any subject suffered more transformations than that of the election of grace. Almost every different scheme attempting to explain it into a different meaning. And when it is considered that the Bible has spoken so plainly and copiously on this doctrine, it is hard to say why any party of Christians should be warmly engaged in contending for a false and absurd interpretation of it, unless the life of their theory depended on winking out of sight, the truth. Error is ever inconsistent with itself, and it has happened to all the sects which have attempted to bear a testimony that should crush this doctrine, as it formerly did to the scorned evidences against the persecuted Jesus; "neither so did their witnesses agree." This is obviously verified in the Originists of this day. The one departs as far from the sentiments of the other, as both do from the concurrent testimony of all the penmen of the sacred Oracles.

We are told by one, that Election means God's choosing out some to bear witness to the grand truth; but, at the same time, 'tis added, that this is a truth which, for wise reasons, God chooses to keep concealed from all the rest of the world to the last day, and then he will publish it himself, to the conviction, yes, to the conversion too of all gain-sayers. But if this be true, is it not shrewdly to be suspected, that these elected witnesses will lose all their labour? And if they do, we can hardly think their election to so fruitless an office, has done any mighty favor to them; if this is all, they that are
elected

elected, may indeed be as if they had not; for their election, in the issue, is no better than no election. The other sect steps forth to correct this error of their brethren; and will have us to know that the true meaning of the election of grace is, that God has chosen some to begin their heaven, as soon as Christ opens the scene of his last coming; while others shall not begin till the curtain drops, and the scene is closed, which they very modestly confess will make a difference of, they cannot tell how long a time. However, for the comfort of the reprobate, they forget not to assure him there is no reason to suppose he is not elected too. The damnation he lies under is quite consistent with his salvation. The day will come, when this younger brother will be up with the elder: And from thence to all eternity, be as happy a man as he. The certain prospect of that day may turn his hell into a little heaven in the mean time; and the sufferings of the fleeting intervall will be no more to the rest and bliss that remain for him, than a single moment to a million of years. So that we may well say, on the whole, election is nothing, and reprobation is nothing; but Origenism is all in all.

If the authors of these expositions were not known to sustain the office of christian teachers, one would be apt to suspect they had never read their Bibles; since he who is but moderately acquainted with that book, needs not to be informed that in opening up this doctrine, it has taken no small pains to represent it as an eternal purpose of God, to give eternal life to some; it dates it thus high, because it cannot suppose, any time when the Omniscient JEHOVAH did not know what he should finally do with his

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creatures.

creatures. It States this as an act flowing altogether from his sovereign will, because it considers God as acting from the highest motive; and, there being none higher than the highest being, and that being is himself; it follows, that there could be no cause of his volitions, without the eternal mind, since there could be no cause of the first cause, and nothing in him could be an effect. When this high act was done, all creatures were mere non entity. And that which was no being, could be no motive. The scripture views election as absolute, for this being the ground of God's great scheme, it must not miscarry: It must therefore be as much independent on any doings of the creature, as it is irrevocable by the great determiner himself.^a And, therefore, whatever must be a mean, or step to attain it, is taken into the decree, and fixed as a part of the thing itself. This, it by no means leads us to think equally includes all men. The very idea of election being inconsistent with indifference, as there can be no election where there is no choice, and no choice where all is taken in the lump, because there is no preference, where none is rejected: Nor does it leave us to imagine that God left the object of election indefinite or uncertain, since there can be no doubting in the divine understanding; nor any opposition between that and his will. It asserts the choice to be of particular persons, even by name.^b But strongly proves that all such were chosen to be saved only by Christ; without this, indeed there had

^a Isa. 40. 10. Job 23. 13, and 18. 20. Psal. 33. 11.
^b John 17. 6. and 10, 3. 4. Exod. 33. 17. Isa. 43. 1.
 Rev. 13. 8, and 17. 8.

had been no foundation for his dying for them ; nor for their justification by his righteousness if he had ; & that they are chosen to eternal life ; & and to faith and holiness as the only way to it, and finally that all this is settled in one act, and that God's will therein signified concerning his creatures is immutable. /

And now, whoever will be at pains to consult the scriptures already cited, will find that the foundation of the whole theory of Origenism, sinks under it ; and that there is no ground in scripture, which will give support to the notions of these writers concerning an union between Christ and all mankind from eternity, nor concerning all mens being equally elected, and redeemed by him : But that every part of their scheme respecting these things is obviously contrary to the Bible account.

6. Nor would their superstructure stand even if the foundation were less faulty ; for if their notions in these articles could be admitted, it would not thence follow, that all men should be saved, though living and dying impenitent in their sins. Something more then election, and redemption too, is necessary to the effectual bringing of men to everlasting life. Several of the texts mentioned above, plainly declare that, be the number of the redeemed great or small, the sacrifice of Christ was never designed to save any of them without its being personally applied

e Rom. 52. Eph. 1. 4. Phil. 3. 14. Jude 2. Eph. 2. 10. d 2 Thoss. 2. 13, 14. e ibid, Rom. 8. 29. Eph. 1. 4. 5. Rom. 8. 30, and 11. 7. 2 Tim. 1. 9. Tit. 3. 4, 8. f. Mat. 3. 6. Heb. 23. 8. James 2. 17. 1 Sam. 15. 29. Rom. 11. 29.

plied to them. The best salve can heal no sore, if it is not used: Nor the richest garment warm or adorn, unless it is put on: Nor the firmest roof shelter from the tempest, him who comes not under it. Even so, that Ark which is provided in Christ, can save from the deluge of Divine wrath only the souls that enter into it. How large--how strong--how well calculated forever it be to save, he that gets not within it betimes, must perish in the waters. The application of redemption contains all that is done towards fitting the nature of the redeemed, for the complete enjoyment of the salvation purchased, and towards actually bringing him to that enjoyment. The sketch of the features of human corruption already drawn, from the full portrait thereof found in the Bible, may suffice to convince us that a great deal must be done on the hearts of sinners, before their temper be capable of the heavenly bliss. Without this being done, they never can enjoy eternal life; because it is alike forbidden by the nature of the thing and the divine constitution.

1. "By the nature of the thing"; for that assures us that there can be no happiness but in the enjoyment of God. Enjoyment is impossible without agreement. And there can be no agreement between opposite natures. Light and darkness, fire and water, heat and cold, can never coalesce. Bringing opposite natures near to each other has no tendency to promote a coalition between them. Each nature, still continuing possessor of its own respective principles, will

will continue to act like itself still. And acting thus, will be so far from promoting the advantage of its contrary, that each will, in every exertion, seek the others destruction. The depraved nature of fallen man is opposed to all the moral attributes of God. An entire change of nature is therefore indispensibly necessary, in one or other before they ever can agree. The nature of JEHOVAH is perfectly right. It therefore needs no alterations. And indeed, could never change for the better. Besides, it has already been proved to be a necessary nature; and as such to be eternal; and being eternal it must be naturally immutable. *d* It is on the sinner's heart, therefore, that the change must take place. *e* The oeconomy of salvation has provided that, in bringing men to endless happiness, each person of the Sacred Trinity, should bear an important part. As the Father chooses the object, proposes the plan, gives the Saviour, and justifies the sinner for his sake? and the Son, by his incarnation and obedience unto death, procures redemption and all the benefits of Saivation, for those whom he represented; so it is the part assigned to the Sacred Spirit to testify this great news to them, and apply its fruits to their hearts. The exertion of his divine energy for this purpose, was, therefore, plainly promised by the Saviour himself. *f* This promise was fulfilled. The Holy Spirit, is sent down. *g* And, by him, the oracles of God indited, and circulated through the world.

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d Mat. 3. 6. Jam. 1. 17. *e* John 3. 3. *f* John 14. 16. 17. 26. *g* John 16. 7. 14.

The express errand on which they come, is to open up this glorious plan, to offer salvation as God's free gift to men, and to call them, by faith, to accept that unspeakable favor. ^a A treaty of peace between God and man is therefore carried on by the gospel, wherever it is dispensed : ^b In the management of it, men are treated as rational and moral agents. The consent of their wills to the proposal made, is solicited by motives. They are drawn with cords of love, and bound with hands of a man. ^c These motives are all fetched from the truths unfolded in the gospel. The gospel then, is the grand instrument by which the spirit of God wins over subjects to the Redeemer. This he prints on the hearts of all the redeemed--makes it effectual to their persuasion, and forms them a willing people in the day of his power : And for effecting this purpose in a rational way, a day of grace is afforded them, in which this work must be done. ^m

Nor is the application of Christ's sacrifice to the persons of the redeemed, more necessary from the nature of the thing, than it is also proved to be.

2. "From the divine constitution," ^a revealed in the scriptures : For wide as is the door of hope which God has opened to sinners there, it is the uniform strain of all that word of truth, that there is no entrance for any of fallen men into the kingdom of Heaven.

1. Without

^b Mark 16, 16. Isa. 55, 1. ^c 2 Cor. 5, 20. ^d Heb. 11, 4. ^e Pl. 110, 3. ^f 2 Cor. 6, 2. ^g John 9, 4.

1. Without regeneration. • Of so great importance is this part of the work of grace considered in the Bible; that it is made the foundation of all the rest, and the very first step in practical religion, or true godliness: The accounts given of it, by the passages cited in the margin, clearly instruct us, that it is a work wrought in man's heart, which produces as great a change of dispositions, of sensations, of actions and manner of living, as was effected by that natural birth which introduced him into this world: That this consists not merely in an alteration of external conduct, but in a real renovation of moral taste, and that produced not by the regenerate on himself, but solely by the spirit of God; that it is so universal as to denominate the whole man a new creature; and that, instead of its consisting in our entering into the world of spirits, or being deferred till our probation is finished, it is held forth as necessary, in order to a man's being in Christ, i. e. to the very beginning of that vital UNION, between Christ as head, and him as a member of his body, which we have already considered, necessary to his overcoming the world, to his forsaking sin, to his loving of God or man aright: yea, necessary to the very first act of that faith by which a sinner receives Christ, or really believes that Jesus is he. Reviewing the testimony of scripture on this important point, the unbiaised reader

• John 3, 3, 5--8. Tit. 3, 5. John 6, 44, 45. 1 John 4, 7, 8, & 3, 9, & 5, 1, 4. John 1, 12, 13. 2 Cor. 5, 17.

reader will scarcely be able to suppress the emotions of surprise, at the pitiful shifts made by the Origenists to evade the light ; for the powers of imagination can but just conjecture how it could come into the head of any writer, that all this means no more than Christ's assuming human nature. or man's entering into another world.

2. The sacred authors assure us also, that as Christ is the only way by which we can come to God, *b* so that way is only to be found by the light of the gospel shining into our hearts ; and that without this we remain still in our natural lost estate, *c* and cannot possibly be saved ; but, on the contrary, must be consigned over to damnation, unless we receive that truth in the love of it. *d* They strongly testify that without faith it is impossible to do any thing pleasing to God ; *e* that the unbeliever is to every good work reprobate ; *f* that any man shall surely die in his sins, if he die without faith ; *g* nay, that he is condemned already by the sentence of both law and gospel ; and, in this state of unbelief, shall never see life ; but the wrath of God abideth on him. *h* For that there is no getting the privilege of becoming the adopted children of God, without that faith which consents to receive Christ as the gospel offers him ; and that none but they who are brought to this were ever ordained to eternal life : *k* They cease not to inculcate, in almost every page, the absolute necessity of faith, as the tye of union between Christ and us. Nor do they seem to
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b John 14, 6. *c* 2 Cor. 4, 3, 4. *d* 2 Theff. 2, 10--14.
e Heb. 11, 6. *f* Tit. 1, 15, 16. *g* John 8, 24, & 10, 26,
27, 28. *h* John 3, 18, 19, 36. *i* John 1, 12. *k* Acts 13, 48

know any thing about such an union without it. It is in the reality of this union, that any just and reasonable ground is given, for looking upon Christ and us as one party in the eye of God's law and covenant. The Omniscience of the Deity which ever sees things as they truly are, cannot be imagined to perceive this union where it is not. As it is the union of two free and spiritual beings, Christ and the soul, it cannot be effected but by their mutual consent. This consent on Christ's part, is openly declared in the gospel-call and offer; on our part, it is yielded by that act of faith, by which the whole heart chooses the Saviour, resigns itself into his hands, and seeks all its rest in him. It follows, that where this faith is not, there is no union; and so no legal foundation for the imputation of Christ's righteousness, or the conferring on men that justification, or title to eternal life, whereof that righteousness is the sole matter and price. And hence, so far is it from being probable that sinners shall be brought to Heaven without it, that the scriptures declare this faith to be the basis of the whole life that leads towards that happy state. * The gentlemen that oppose us, constrained by the irresistible evidence, of the necessity of faith, which all the inspired writers pour in upon them, seem to confess that all must believe in order to their final happiness;

1. John 5, 47, 48. & 6, 35. Mat. 11, 28. Act 8, 37. Rom 10, 10.

* Col. 2, 20.

happiness ; but then, lest this concession should overthrow the whole scheme of Universal Salvation, they carefully subjoin that they who die without faith, shall certainly obtain it, in the future state, either at the day of judgment, or some other time. But the gentlemen seem to have forgot the difference between faith and sight.-- This distinction did not appear frivolous to Christ and his Apostles--In their view, faith which is seen is not faith ; that grace looks not at things open to sight. *b* It is the evidence of things not seen. *c* The greatest degree of it, by which any saint has ever walked, did not amount to sight. *d* But was a discovery dark and mediate. And therefore of a quite different nature from that which is immediate and intuitive. *e* Faith believes on the credit of a mere report *f* ; now as this kind of belief can exist no longer than the kind of evidence on which it rests ; it is impossible, in the nature of the thing, but that faith must cease when the glorious realities of the spiritual world are presented to open vision. Whatever knowledge of these realities the Saint had received through the glass of faith, and whatever confidence it had produced in the truth of its discoveries.--All these shall cease when he comes to see them face to face. *g* Faith and hope having conducted the believer to the mansions of bliss, having opened the door of the presence chamber, and introduced him to the blessed company who dwell around the throne,

a 2 Cor. 4, 18. *c* Heb. 11, 1. *d* 2 Cor. 5, 7. *e* 1 Cor. 13, 12. *f* Isa. 53, 1. John 3, 32, 33. *g* 1 Cor. 13, 2, 3.

throne, retire at the gate, resign their convey into the arms of immediate vision and enjoyment, and bid him an eternal ADIU. Hence it appears that however strong the belief of divine realities may be, which shall eternally fill the minds of men in a future state; nothing is believed there by faith. Their assurance rests altogether on the evidence of sight: ^b Which is an evidence of quite a different kind. ⁱ It may therefore be truly affirmed that there is no faith in Heaven or hell. If ever we would find that grace, it is on earth alone where it be sought for.---And, if it be granted that faith is necessary to salvation, it must be obtained and exercised while we are sojourners below. If we miss of it here, we shall never find it hereafter: And he that is not made a true believer before he leaves this world, shall never mingle with the spirits of just men made perfect in the world to come.

2. Repentance, too, is insisted on throughout the code of divine revelation, as absolutely necessary to be found in us, and exercised by us, in order to our entrance into life. This stands in front of the gospel commands. ^k 'Tis stated as an indispensable prerequisite to finding acquittance at last. ^l The lip of infallibility affirms, that the soul that remains without it, must unavoidably perish; ^m and, that so long as we retain impenitent hearts, we are treasuring up against ourselves wrath, tribulation and anguish, against the great and terrible day of the Lord.

Nor

^b 1 Cor. 13, 9, 10, 11. ⁱ 2 Cor. 5, 7. ^k Acts 17, 30.
^l Acts 3, 19. ^m Luke 13, 5. ⁿ Rom. 2, 5, 8, 9.

Not is this more than we could have expected; for reason itself declares that every moment a man refuses to repent of any sin, he renewedly approves it. Every renewed act of approbation is a vindication of his conscience, and in the eye of justice, is a repetition of it. Every impenitent moment must then heap a new mountain of guilt on the pile; and so must ensure a dreadful addition to the fire of divine wrath kindled to punish it.

Between that godly sorrow which worketh repentance unto salvation, and the sorrow of the world which worketh death, the scriptures have declared as wide a difference, as that which is between grace and sin; ^a This was the more needful, because the word repent had sometimes been used to express the remorse of some sinners, whose consciences smote them only with a conviction of guilt and danger. ^b This repentance, however, in the chief instance of it, fully discovered itself to be quite different from that which is true; it hurried its unhappy subject to that dire deed, which, by cutting the thread of his own life, snuffed his space of repentance forever, rivetted the chains of his sin and guilt upon him, and plunged him incurable into that state where every transgression must receive a just recompence of reward. Need we, then, any further evidence that this repentance was specifically different from the grace which goes by that name? That scripture which affirms that, whatever is born of God, sinneth not, leaves no room to doubt whether

^a 2 Cor. 7, 10. ^b Mat. 27, 8. ^c Heb. 2, 2.

ther that be a divine grace that hurries men to wickedness, & no more than we can doubt what spirit that was which led Judas to betray his master, and drove the herd of swine into the depths of the sea. The Repentance which the gospel requires is entirely different from the legal terrors of convicted sinners here, or hereafter. The account of it which the Bible gives, will furnish a striking contrast between it and them; whilst it leads us to contemplate the one, as the throws of inward anguish, because so much misery must be the price of sin: but the other as the bleeding of a broken heart, because by sin we have violated so glorious a law, dishonored and opposed so Holy a God, and crucified so gracious a Saviour. The horrors of the one arising from enmity against God, the means of the other from a heart melted by divine love.

This is painted as the product of hardened unbelief, which refuses to have its wounds healed, by the balm which is provided in the Redeemer's blood, that as the natural fruit of a faith which looks to the Saviour as one whom we have pierced. The one regrets his doom because he despairs of escaping it, the other mourns his crime most, when most assured in his hopes of pardon. This rears under the pain of the sins he yet loves in his heart; that loathes the sin, and would loathe it still if there were no punishment denounced against it.

This is the grace which Christ is exalted as a Prince to bestow.^d To bring all his redeemed to it, his purchased spirit was promised and sent,

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to take away the heart of stone, *g* I give an heart of flesh. *f* And when he comes, he never fails to work this gracious temper in immediate connection with true conversion, *g* and inseparable from a gospel faith. *h* This makes every true believer a mourner in Zion: and it is to such only that all the comforts in the gospel are addressed: And for them the oil of gladness, in all the work of the spirit, as the comforter, is provided. *i* Every consideration then, by which may be proved the necessity of regeneration, conversion, or faith in Christ, in order to salvation. Every description of the traveller whose face is set Zionward, yea, every promise of consolation too, all, all, with one voice, proclaim, in the loudest accents, the absolute necessity of repentance towards God, in order to admission to the joys at his Right hand.

But we forbear.-----Further discussion of this point is superseded by the candid confession of the advocates of the doctrine we impugn. These gentlemen frankly own that, without repentance there is no hope of final acquittance. Pleased with this appearance of their being won over to the truth, we give them thanks for their ingenuity, we cheerfully join issue, and congratulate them on their deliverance from the dangerous delusion in which they had been entangled; when, to our mortification, we see them suddenly turn upon us, with "a hand off, come not near to us," we are still as much the foes of your religion as ever: This concession
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f Ezek. 36. 26. *g* Act. 3. 19. *h* Zeph. 12. 10.
i Isa. 61. 2, 3.

we meant not as giving up the cause of Universal Salvation. What though some sinners die impenitent? The future state will cure them of this folly. Those, whom the goodness of God here could not lead to repentance, his terrors there, will surely persuade. If, in this life, their hearts were hardened against those terrors, it was because they doubted of their truth. This doubt however, the experience of them will fully remove in the other. The sensible and astonishing displays of God's majesty, and wrath, either at the last day, or in the place of future torment afterwards, will convince them of their error, and fill them with relentings: Is not this evident from the language of scripture? With what humility do we see Dives in hell, lifting up the eyes of penitence and devotion? With what earnestness does he there cry for mercy? And as conscious of deserving nothing better, content himself with begging the small boon of a drop of water,? ^a Nay, does not Christ himself lead us to consider those unhappy sufferers, brought to themselves at length, and weeping, wailing and gnashing of teeth in deep sorrow and abhorrence of their crimes? ^b

And must we now believe that the fig-tree that remained barren in the vineyard, under the blessing of all the cultivations of its owner, shall begin to bear fruit when it is cut down, and laden with the curse of "no fruit grow on thee from henceforth for ever?" ^c Shall they who would not know the things of their peace, while

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^a Luke 15. 23, 24. ^b Mat. 8. 12, and 13, 42, 50. and 22. 13, and 24. 51, and 25. 30. Luke. 13. 28. ^c Mat. 21. 19. Luke 13. 6, 7.

they were laid before them, in the light of a day of grace, be more likely to see them with improvement, when their day is over and these things are for ever hid from their eyes? Are the torments of hell, means of grace? Are they better means too than all the gospel affords? Where is the promise that they shall succeed where the ingrafted word has failed? Is it certain that the spirit of God shall follow the damned, with all his sanctifying influences? Or can these prisoners enlighten themselves without the help of either the word or spirit, in the deep dungeon of utter darkness?

That there are legal convictions and penal terrors, in great abundance, in those gloomy shades, will easily be granted. But, in all these no man can trace one footstep of genuine repentance. That weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth, is the usual employ of the damned we are assured. But the first is only an exercise and expression of agonizing remorse, the second, of despairing horrors, and the last, of spite and malice, against God the punisher. And what of repentance is in all this?-----If these gentlemen would reason to purpose, they would do well to give some instances of true repentance, wrought by unmixed punishment. Did Pharaoh's tenfold successive plagues, melt him down into the kindly temper of a penitent? or, has the vengeance of 6000 years wrought that salutary effect on any one of the angels that fell? The instance of Dives, is the only one in scripture that looks any way like it. But it is a
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most unlucky instance for the doctrine in question. He complains of his flames, his torments 'tis true, but we hear not a word of sorrow for his sins. He begs of Abraham, a creature, but will not petition God his Maker. From Abraham he would accept mercy, but from God nothing. He lifts eyes, but it is in all the obduracy of despair. Though he consents to ask a drop of water to cool his tormented tongue, he wishes not for a drop of redeeming blood to cleanse his polluted soul. And hence he asks and has not, because he asks amiss. None of his requests are granted, none of his pains relieved. The gulf remains unpassable; and he must stay beyond it for evermore.

The testimony of universal experiment declares that they who were proof to the mercies of God, and bid defiance to the calls of his word, while their space for the enjoyment thereof continued, have never been reduced to ingenuous sorrow for their sins, by the most awful judgments of Heaven afterwards. ^a And the voice of revelation concurs herewith; while it leads us to behold the objects of divine vengeance, in a kingdom full of darkness, scorched with the fire, and gnawing their tongues for pain; but, so far from repenting of their deeds, that they still go on blaspheming the God of Heaven, because of their pains, and because he has power over the plagues which inflict them. ^b

4. What hath been said of repentance, of faith and of regeneration, itself, may be applied to that holiness,

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^a Rev. 18, 20. ^b Rev. 16, 9, 10, 11.

holiness, in general, of which the last affords the principle, and the others are the primary exercises. It being not more true of these parts that they are absolutely necessary to admission into Heaven, than it is of the "whole temper" of the person voluntarily dedicated to God, "and separated from every end unkindly thereunto." The necessity of holiness, in order to eternal life, might well be argued from the nature of the pure abode assigned for the blessed, as well as from that of every business, and of every enjoyment there; but in this matter we are not left to depend on any inferences of our own. The word of God has never declared his will more peremptorily than here; that the beatific vision is the peculiar privilege of the pure in heart; that this is a felicity which, without holiness, no man ever has attained, nor ever shall; that sanctification is as necessary for that purpose, as being justified can be; and whoever thinks the unrighteous or unholy, may inherit the kingdom of God, will find himself egregiously deceived. Nor need we multiply citations; he that denies this doctrine will have work enough on his hands; for he must controvert the point with the whole Bible, nor ever think he has gained his cause, until he has confuted and silenced every penman of the sacred pages.

7. But it is of importance in this debate to have it still remembered that, for the attainment of

Mat. 5. 8. & Heb. 12, 14. • 1 Cor. 6, 9-12. Gal. 5. 19, 21.

of all these necessary qualifications, every sinner of the human race will find, that the present life is his only day of grace.--The only season granted him, by Heaven's indulgence, in which to prepare for a state unalterable. That created moral agents shall be forever subject to the law of their creator, is readily conceded: Nor can they ever be released from obligation to obey his will: Nor could an endless existence ever bring them to one moment in which they would not find true happiness immediately connected with due obedience to their maker's pleasure, and misery the natural and necessary consequent of sin. But this will not prove their state of probation to last forever. Made moral agents, they were to be ruled by moral government. To this rewards, distributed by the ruler in exact congruity with the demeanour of the subject, are essentially necessary. Should the season of their trial endure as long as their beings, they could never come to receive this reward. It was the pleasure of divine goodness, therefore, that His rational creatures should not be kept forever in a state of suspense with regard to their happiness; ever surrounded with temptations, and ever in danger of a fall, in which they might see all they ever had attained lost at one stroke: No, The gracious sovereign was pleased to order matters so that after they had endured a trial suitable to their rank---and given proper evidence of the integrity of their allegiance; their probationary state should be finished; their natures raised above seduction, and confirmed in the rewards suitable to their trial and capacity; and that with a security which was necessary to the perfection of such rewards, or even to render the possession of them a blessing.

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Thus were the angels dealt with, who stood firm to their duty in that day of trial, in which their fellow angels fell. Their beings and their bliss remained; but their probation was over—over forever, and with it all their dangers; and thus the spirits of just men, when the present life expires, having washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, shall be for ever freed from all dangers, tribulations, all their wants supplied, all enemies banished, all temptations removed, and themselves confirmed in the delightful work of serving God without ceasing, to all eternity. ^b That the state of probation is not continued through a period of equal length with all rational creatures, is just as evident, as it is that the lives of some men are shorter than those of others: And that the trial is terminated before the existence of the subject comes to an end, none can rationally deny, who believes the existence of a world of spirits, and supposes any perfect happiness there. To determine for any intelligent creature, how long it shall be held in the jeopardy of a trial state, must be owned to be the absolute prerogative of the sovereign, whose creature and whose subject it is. To this he has the same right as to decide on the question, what rank in the scale of beings, this creature shall fill, what powers shall be given it, or how long its life shall last. But there is nothing in reason, nothing in the nature of the thing, nor so

^a 1 Tim. 5. 21. Heb. 12. 22. Mat. 18. 10. ^b Rev. 7. 14--17. ^{aa}

so much as one hint in all the word of God, to induce us to believe that he ever brings his rational creatures on the stage of trial oftener than once. The Pythagorean notion of Præexistence and transmigration, which Origen has taken from its natural soil, and transplanted into the Christian religion, is inconsistent with the nature of a system produced by a Creator, whose power, wisdom and goodness, are all infinite; and whose work; instead of those starts and chasms, which keep the creatures rising up to eminence in holiness and bliss, and then losing all; passing through ages of misery, and then having to begin anew, where they at first set out; as if himself childishly destroyed to day the good he had yesterday effected; ought to be supposed ever growing upwards, in an uninterrupted gradation, to as great a degree of perfection in all that is excellent, as he can give them: It is equally inconsistent with the possibility of any unmixed happiness being ever tasted by rational creatures; since an happiness, of which they see themselves in perpetual danger of being robbed, loses both the name and the nature of bliss, constant jealousy turns it into constant woe. Had this notion been suggested in the scriptures, it would have afforded a stronger objection against their divine authority, than any thing at which the spleen of Deism has ever cavilled; it is to the honour of that divine volume, that it has not given even the most distant countenance to the supposition of more states of probation designed for the same moral subject than one.

Now the whole current of scripture language, carries irresistibly to this conclusion that the only state of probation allotted to men is finished with the dissolution of their bodies. The trial of our
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first parents began and ended here. No acts of obedience in a future state could have regained the title to the reward forfeited in this; and although their descendants were, by their fall, rendered incapable of securing life, by the righteousness of their own deeds; * yet, when it was the project of infinite grace to bestow it, with advantages infinitely superior to those the fall had lost, and to bestow it only on sinners prepared for it; the wisdom of the sovereign determined that all that preparation must be acquired in the present life. That period may therefore be considered as the only part of man's whole duration, in which he stands candidate for happiness, the only state of probation, through which he must pass into a state of retribution, the only day of grace in which those qualifications may be obtained, that can fit him for an endless day of glory and joy. This is the light in which the scriptures lead us to consider the matter; while they assure us that the decisions of the final judgment will respect only the deeds done while in the body †; without the least hint of any part of the acts or exercises of any other state being taken into the account. Now every state of existence, through which an immortal soul does pass, must be a state of consciousness and activity.---For of the existence of an unextended thinking substance without any thought, or conscious exertion, we can form no idea. All those acts, as being founded in moral agents, must be full of virtue or of vice,

* Rom. 3. 20. † 2 Cor. 5. 10.

and the state that is filled up with them, is vastly longer than the present; what reason then can be assigned for all these actions never being brought into the last reckoning; unless because they were not done within the compass of the state of probation? They are therefore considered as no more the grounds of the final retribution, than the everlasting series of acts, that shall take place after that last solemn scene is closed. Hence it is, that the inspired writers, give us so many warnings that, on the present fleeting state, our eternal All lies staked.-- This being our only accepted time; this, or no other, being our day of salvation. Hence, we are so warmly admonished to remember, that all our opportunities can last only while this day is in our hands; and that the man that hardens his heart against the voice of God, that calleth him to repentance; until that day is over, and the night of death and darkness is arrived, in which no man can work; shall never enter into that rest, that is prepared for the people of God. Hence too, we are solemnly assured, that he that neglects during this day, to strive to enter into the strait gate, will find, when it ends, that the master of the house has risen up and shut that door, which no knockings, from them who then begin to see themselves standing without, shall avail to unlock to all eternity: And, to add nothing further on this point, we are stimulated to apply to the work of

c 2 Cor. 6, 2. d Heb. 3, 7-19, and 4, 7. John 9, 4.
e Luke 13, 24, 25.

of our preparation, with all our might, while we remain on this side the grave; from this consideration, that this life is hastening to fix us, at its close, in a state where nothing further shall ever be done towards it. *f*

§. All the change which has been proved necessary to be effected on the nature of a sinner, in order to his entrance on the joys of Heaven, must then be wrought in this present life; death itself alters not the hearts of men from sin to holiness, and that it cannot be the agent, or work this effect as a cause, we need not now be told; as that has already been evinced to be the sole province of the Spirit of God. And we shall not expect this from it as a mean, if we recollect that, in the list of means divinely instituted for the sanctification of men, death is not found enumerated. To what a stubborn size then must that presumption have arisen, that flatters the sinner in slighting and rejecting all the means which God has appointed, by a groundless dependence on obtaining all their end, by something of a very different nature from them all; and which is designated to a very different use? Instead of its being a mean of grace, death is represented in scripture as a legal punishment, "in which sin is finished, and its wages paid. It acts the part of an officer of justice, arresting the criminal and committing him to prison. It instantly conveys him out of the reach of every appointed mean of grace. No more shall the word

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f Eccles 9, 10.

• Gen. 2. 17. Rom. 5. 12. and 6, 23. Jam. 1. 15.

word of God call him! Nor the ordinances try to affect him more! And the spirit of truth, so often quenched and resisted, has now taken his final departure; and never shall strive with the rebel-creature again^b! Hence it follows that in the article of dying, all the moral restraints, that had formerly chained down the sinners lusts, are taken off; and the ruling principle comes out naked, and in full force. This principle being totally evil can have no tendency to become good. On the reverse, as all habits grow by exercise, every exertion must carry it forward in the dire progression from bad to worse. Agreeably to this, there is not, in all the Bible, the suggestion of one glimpse of hope that the unregenerate sinner shall be made a saint by death. Nay, that book describes him as then drawn away in his wickedness, & carrying all his sins along with him, and cut off from all hope: Nothing remains but for God to cast at him the due reward of his hands. And though he is wishing to escape from the hands, or hide from the sight of the Almighty, we discover in his temper no symptom of reconciliation, no signs of a softer heart, but hardening himself more and more continually, we find him that at death, was proved filthy, continuing filthy still.^f

9. Whatever be the nature of the process, or in whatever mode carried on, the scripture leads us to expect a sort of private personal judgment immediately, treading on the heels of death, & in which as soon as the dust returns to the

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^b Gen. 6. 3. c 2 Tim. 3. 13. d Prov. 14. 32. e Job 27. 22. f Rev. 22. 11. g Hab. 9. 27.

the earth, the spirits of all return to God who gave them, *b* and receive a reward which fixes their several states, until the public general judgment at the last day. This instantly separates some in Abraham's bosom, *i* while hell from beneath is represented as being moved at the arrival of others there, *k* and both sorts we are assured must abide by their respective lots, the great gulph between them cannot be passed by either: *l* And as the tree has fallen so it must lie. *m*

Some expressions there are, 'tis true, dropped from the pen of inspiration, which have been abused at sundry times by such as wished to make them speak the intermediate state, to be taken up in a profound sleep of souls as well as of bodies. There is, however, enough in the texts themselves to shew that the parties of whom it is said, "that they cannot praise God," are only considered with respect to that part of them that is now laid in the grave, *n* and turned to dust *o* which must remain senseless and insensible till the resurrection: And when the dead are spoken of as "having no memory, nor affection," it is immediately explained to mean their "having no portion here under the sun," being quite withdrawn from earthly scenes, and departed from the concerns of time. *p* Enough is laid, in all such passages, to prevent our suspecting that they treat of the state of Souls.

Consciousness

b Eccl. 12 7. *i* Luke 16 22. *k* Isa. 64 9. *l* Luke 16 26. *m* Eccl. 12 3. *n* Isa. 38, 18. *o* Psal. 30, 9---and 135, 17.

Consciousness and activity has already been hinted to be essential to their nature. With these a sleeping insensibility seems altogether incompatible. But, be that as it may, we have sufficient documents from the word of God to assure us that the state on which the souls of men enter at death will be found to be a state of sleep neither by the saint nor the sinner.

1 Not by the Saints, these are transported with all the joys of a paradisaic state in the presence of Christ the same day on which they die. ^a No sooner are they absent from the body, than they are present with their Lord. ^c The dissolution of their earthly house here being only to usher them into their eternal one in the heavens, where they mingle with the church of the first-born in one general blessed assembly, ^e and live together with Christ. ^f Even as soon as they depart out of this life, which makes their death a present gain, far preferable to any thing arising from serving God in the best manner of which they ever were capable before. ^g And to sum up all in one comprehensive word, they that die in the Lord are pronounced to be truly possessed of a state of blessedness from the very moment of their dying.

2. Not by the sinners, who die unsanctified; what has been already offered about their death, may shew that nothing in their nature, nothing in the state of retribution: and nothing in the oracles of truth will permit the thought of their enjoying

^b Luke 23. 43. ^c 2 Cor. 5. 8. ^d Heb. 12. 23.
^e 1 Thess. 5. 10. ^f Phil. 2. 21 & 23. ^g Rev. 14. 13

enjoying the refreshment of so long and deep a repose as from the moment of their death till the last trumpet wakes them up. No! the faithful witness has declared that no sooner are they dead, than they are found lifting up their eyes, in hell, toments, where they have no rest day nor night, for ever and ever. †

What must we then think of a scheme which makes it necessary to fly in the face of all these express testimonies of scripture, and in open defiance of their authority, to maintain that the next state of conscious existence after the present life, begins at the day of judgment, and all the interval between death and that to be lost in sleep? The authors we are now considering have indeed been sparing of their plain declarations on this point: they seem, for the present, rather to wish to wink the intermediate state out of sight; perhaps, reserving their arguments thereon, as a New Discovery, for the subject of a future pamphlet. They, however, plainly enough lead their readers to conceive the next state to begin Christ's second coming. If that be true, then all between this life and that must pass for nothing. They have not indeed professed to adopt the Socinian annihilation. And if they do not, there remains no way of giving any tolerable sense to the insinuation above referred to, but by its supposing all that interval to be mere insensibility: And so 10,000 ages of it, being utterly imperceptible, would be no more than a single moment. And in this respect the congregation of the dead, would be

next state is then only to begin, it can hardly be imagined how it could be applied sooner; unless we had rather submit to it in this present state: and that would be a great inconvenience to many good-natured gentlemen, and utterly spoil the sport of a life of pleasure and licentiousness: But, as this would be to defeat the end of the whole scheme, it is by no means to be admitted.

To this fire, as the dernier resort for the cleansing of souls, all the abettors of the scheme of Universal Salvation have taken flight: Tho' they have not been able to agree in the effect it shall finally produce, the manner of its operation, or the time in which it is to make its experiments: Some confining it to the intermediate state; others limiting it to the conflagration at the judgment day; while a third class extend its fury through ages unknown, to commence after the transactions of that great assize.

Certain it is that some figurative speeches, found in scripture prophecy, pointing directly to the sore tribulations which should come upon the church of the Jews, about the time of the destruction of Jerusalem and upon the christian church soon after it, were strangely applied by many ancient writers to this subject: *b* What has been said already relating to the opinions of Origen, shews that this fire was the principal wheel that turned in his machine, he does not indeed

b 1 Cor. 7. 12-16. Origen. contr. Advers. lib. 4, and lib. 15.

indeed preserve consistency in what he affirms about it. for at one time he declares that this purifying fire will totally consume all evil together with the world itself, and declares he has so learned from the sacred books of the prophets; and at another, he confesses that the sin spoken of as unpardonable, is one which that fire cannot purge out. ^d He is very sanguine, however, in the opinion that the wicked are reserved for penal purgations by fire. ^e Jeronimo too insinuates that in the future state the works of wicked christians are to be at once tried and purged by fire. ^f And Gregory Nyssen, imagines an universal purgation by it in the world to come. A nobius suggests that the wicked will waste away in the flame. Hence Vo kelius, the Socinian, borrows the dream of their annihilation by its force. ^g And Burnet hence supposes that a true material fire which shall burn up the earth at the day of judgment, shall be the grand criterion of saints and sinners--then--that this will by fusion change the bodies of saints into a nature immortal and incorruptible; after it has reduced into a general chaos, the earth out of which they shall be raised. It is by no means a doubtful matter that it was from this supposed purifying influence of the fire of the world to come, that Popery patched up the figment of purgatory. A very zealous defender of the extracts before us is pleased indeed to look with
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^e Origen in Mat. 12. 32. ^d Comment in Roman. 1. 8
^f Jeronimi Comment. on Isa. 66. ult. Greg. de anima. p. 229.

so little different from non entities, that they could scarcely be said to be in any state: If these Gentlemen have shewed great modesty, on this article, their predecessors have been less reserved: They did not stick to say, that in the intermediate state, souls neither go to Heaven nor hell, that, being without bodies, they are utterly incapable of pain or pleasure, and therefore could neither see Christ, nor enjoy God; nor be set before his tribunal, nor separated from each other: That no judgment therefore can pass on them in that state, but all are huddled together promiscuously; and to them the whole time between death and the resurrection, is made of no account. For if they had any idea at all, they could have no change of ideas, if any power of perception or action, it must be in the most imperfect manner possible.

In a word, they have given a representation of them that better agrees with the state of the unborn fœtus in the womb than with the character of spirits made perfect; and from which we must conclude that of the highest and most favored spirit among them, it might be said a living dog is better than he.---And yet this is the glorious and happy state by which these writers have chosen to explain Abraham's bosom, the abode under the altar, the mansions in our father's house, and even that paradise which Jesus promised to the dying penitent, and to which he himself ascended!! A celebrated writer on this side of the question, by whom all this is maintained, has paid the compliment to the primitive ages of ascertaining this rare divinity, to have been commonly held by all but Heretics, until the council of Florence, in the 15th century; and quotes eleven of the fathers

in confirmation of it. • That this author has judged himself warranted to take great liberties with the script res, we are sufficiently apprized by the whole of his book; but from what ideas of "the nature of human souls," he, or the others who join with him herein, were able to collect materials for this theory, we are at a loss to conceive; unless from the sentiment of some atheists and mortal Deists, who supposed the soul to be nothing but the crisis of the body, and as a mere accident, dependent on it for all its faculties; or at least from some wire-drawn inference from the old notion of material vehicles vitally united to immaterial spirits and inseparable from them.

• It is difficult to say what opinion about the nature of souls can be reconciled to the doctrine of their purification by the action of fire; unless some such as consider them as matter, possessed of extension, solidity, and parts infinitely divisible. The system of the authors of the catechism makes but little use of this sort of purgation, unless it be included among those terrors of the last day, which shall have influence on the conversion of all who then are found unbelievers: But with the other gentlemen, this fire seems to be the grand catholicon for the cure of all the diseases incident to spirits. It is a remedy, however, which they incline to reserve till after the general judgment. Nor ought we to chide them for this delay of administering so important a relief; for if the
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very haughty disdain upon a Reverend Gentleman, who had appeared against that scheme, and candidly given his name to the public, as if he had "conjured up the ghost of a popish purgatory," to frighten honest minds from the belief of it. It is not improbable that the same temper may lead that anonymous writer, under the mask of some hieroglyphical or fictitious name, to assassinate the testimony in the dark; however, we must venture, at all hazards, to believe, that the popish doctrine of purgatory was understood by the council of Florence and Trent, as well as by himself; and they have agreed to sum it up in this view---that God, for Christ's sake, will remit the eternal punishment due to sin, but not the temporal punishment; that this must be avoided by sharp penances in this world; and that, where these fail, the sinner must be plunged into the punishment of fire in the next; in which he may be held longer or shorter. But that when the sufferer is purified by that fire, and his sins atoned by the sacrifice of the Mass; he shall be delivered from that prison, and let into Heaven. Adversity between this opinion, and that held up in the extracts, is easily to be perceived, so far as relates to the time in which this punishment is inflicted; this the papists assign to the intermediate state; the extracts to that which ensues. But in what other respects the one varies from the other, it will be very kind in that candid gentleman to shew; and until he does, we shall deem that fire a real purgatory which is the grand purifier of guilty and depraved spirits: And reckon it very immaterial to the question whether it is employed for that use before, at, or after the general judgment. For, at
 whatever

whatever period it is applied, the doctrine which leads sinners to expect that effect from it, is equally liable to these objections, viz.

1. That it is altogether unscriptural. These sacred records, on the contrary, ever represent the heirs of glory, as, at the moment of death, entering into a state of activity, in which they walk in perfect uprightnes, crowned with perfect rest and peace, and are from that moment taken away for ever, from all evil to come; and therefore blessed and happy from the instant of their dying in the Lord; and, instead of passing through any fiery purgations first, they are said in the word of God, to be immediately carried by the Angels into Abraham's bosom: to be in paradise with Jesus, without delay, and present with their Lord, as soon as they leave their mortal clay. g 2. That it is blasphemous, as it greatly depreciates the value of Christ's satisfaction to sin on whatever side we view it: Since if it is true, that great sacrifice was insufficient for man's redemption, without some additional price being paid by the sufferings of the sinner himself: And, on the whole, has availed to do no more for the redeemed than they themselves could have done by passing through a temporary fire.

3. That it is very dangerous to the souls of men; encouraging a hope never suggested in the gospel; that however men live in their sins, and die impenitent, yet, after a while, they shall be purged in a future state from all their guilt and defilement, by the help of fire.

4. That

e Isa. 57 1 2. d Rev. 14: 13. e Luke 16, 22. f Luke 23, 43. g 2 Cor. 5, 8.

4. That it is unreasonable and absurd; as it promises and ensures the attainment of the end when all the appointed means for coming at it have ceased forever, draws that renovation of heart from the action of fire, which can only be wrought by the spirit of God, and ends the punishment before it is adequate to the guilt, releasing the prisoner before the debt be paid: And finally, that scheme that asserts that all men shall be delivered from the punishment of sin, "because satan alone must bear it," to all the other absurdities of the other asserters of Universal Salvation, has added this.--that it has joined the ancient Ophites, if not exceeded them in wickedness,---it has put satan in the place of CHRIST,-----and has had recourse to the devil for the Salvation of the Soul.

If then the notion of a Purgatory, be loaded with all these difficulties, whosoever it be supposed, we may with certainty conclude, that the intermediate state is nothing of that nature: For what cannot be true at any time, cannot at this. Nothing remains then to hinder our now proceeding one step further in this argument, and affirming:

10. That the General Judgment will but confirm and complete publicly, the several decisions pronounced on souls privately at death. For, since what has been already offered, it will follow that it will find their state of heart and nature, the same in a moral view as it was found at death; the same their guilt, their title to reward or punishment the same, without the least alteration, since they died.

This trial is to be held before the same Judge, whose mind is without all variation or shadow of turning: It is to proceed by the
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same rule as the other; and is now attended on purpose to display to the universe, the righteousness and propriety of the judgment passed on each at their first entrance into the invisible world, therefore it is impossible that any who were condemned before, should stand acquitted at that awful bar.

Agreeably to this we are taught by scripture, that the Great Day will not fail to bring shame and terror to all who died impenitent. ^a That so far is the scheme of the catechism from the truth, when it says, "the men who have judged themselves before, shall not be judged then," that ALL men, both good and bad, shall then be judged, and that for all their works both good and evil, ^b for all their words, ^c and for all their secret thoughts. ^d And finally, that it will treat persons and things as they are, and deal with all, according to truth and righteousness. ^e

Nor has the word of God left it a doubtful matter that, while the issue of the process at that day is the full acquittance and acceptance of the righteous; all the wicked shall be publicly and finally condemned by the sentence of the Judge; and not only by their own minds, as the catechism supposes. ^f Yes, and that they shall be punished too, ^g that they shall be separated from the assembly of saints, as chaff to be burnt with unquenchable fire, ^b or as bad fish rejected and cast away as loathsome or poisonous things, ^h or as tares bound up in bundles by themselves as offensive

^a Dan. 12, 2. ^b Rev. 20. 11, 12. Ecc. 11. 9, & 12, 14.
^c Mat. 12. 36. ^d Jam. ^e Eccl. 12, 14. Rom. 2. 16,
 & 14. 12. ^f 1 Pet. 4, 4, 5. ^g Rom. 2. 2, 12. Plat. 96, 10,
 33, & 58, 11, & 98. 8. ^h Ac. 17, 31. ⁱ 1 Thess. 1. 8, 9.
 Ma. 25, 41, 46. ^j 2. Pet. 3. 7. Jude 12, 13, 14. ^k Luke
 3. 17. ^l Mat. 13, 48, 50.

offensive nuisances, and thrown into the furnace of fire, kindled by the breath of the divine anger. * Yea, moreover, that they shall then be forever separated from Christ's presence, † and from Heaven, and all its joys. † And all sent away together with devils into hell fire, † to suffer the full weight of God's vengeance against sin, to their everlasting misery, in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone. °

Such is the manner in which the transactions of the last day are stated in the Bible; such the view of things exhibited throughout the sacred pages, so far as the fate of those who died impenitent and unbelieving is concerned. And may we not appeal to any reader of common understanding, who will be at the pains of comparing the texts together to which the margin refers, whether there is the least foundation, in all the descriptions we find in scripture of that day's work, for the fancy insinuated in the catechism; and frequently held up in the preachments of the man from whom it originates; that all parties who at that period are brought to judgment, shall then be converted, shall become truly penitent believers in Christ, and so
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* Mat. 13. 40--42. † Mat. 7. 21--23 and 25. 12, 41, 46. Luke 13. 25, 27. † Mat. 5. 20, and 18, 3 and 7, 13. Job 3, 3. 1 Cor. 6. 9, 11. Gal. 5, 19--21. Eph. 5. 5. Rev. 2 and 20, 15, and 22, 15. † Deut. 32, 22. Ps. 11, 6, and 52, and 97, 3. Isa. 14, 9, and 39, 14, and 35. 4, and 66, 1. 24. Mark 9. 43. Rom. 9, 22. Phil. 3, 18, 19. 1 Thess. 5, 2 Pet. 3, 10, 12, and 2. 9, 10. 2 Thess. 1, 8, 9. Heb. 1 27-31. Rev. 3. 3, 16, and 14, 9, 12. ° Rev. 19, 20, 21 10, 10, 14, 15, and 21, 8, and 28, 5.

he received to endless bliss. Where is the hint of any such conversions effected at the tribunal? Where can we find one word to countenance the supposition that such as were brought to the tribunal, enemies to Christ, shall then be regenerated, and become his friends? Is it not manifest that the whole of this theory is founded in ignorance of the plain and obvious meaning of the scripture; and in a determination to encourage themselves and others to continue undisturbed in the service of their lusts, be the issue of that resolution what it will?

II. He who would wish to draw from the word of God his opinions of the doom to be pronounced on the wicked at the last day, and of the torment which must ensue upon it, will consider with serious attention the picture thereof drawn in the texts just now quoted; and, yielding to the force of their evidence, he will readily confess that colours darker, or features more frightful can hardly be imagined. But that shade which spreads the deepest gloom on the whole, is the emphatical assurance given, that **THE DOOM IS IRREVERSIBLE, AND THE TORMENT WITHOUT END.** This doctrine is the tower which most directly opposes the aim of the tenet of Universal Salvation. Against it therefore, the Origenists have ever planted their main batteries. It was chiefly with design to demolish this, that they have thrown up all those works which we have already reconnoitred: These were indeed employed to attack some other doctrines more immediately; but all the vengeance poured on them was only because they were considered as obstructions to the regular approaches designed against this as the **CITADEL.** If this fall, the safety of all the rest will
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give no pain to the conqueror ; he will sit down satisfied, and consider his work as done. To protect this fortress then from destruction, we have hitherto taken care to defend its out-works, and to guard the several passes which lead to it. And, if our efforts have not been unavailing, the whole apparatus of the enemy, which lately threatened us with so dreadful a storm, now presents to the eye of the rational reader, the spectacle only of rubbish and ruins. Less trouble then will remain on the hands which undertake the defence of the central-work ; and fewer dangers will attend them in the execution of that task. We honour the names of the generous men who have ventured singly, to expose themselves on that part of the ramparts where the greatest breaches have been made, and bravely stood the brunt of the fire and smoke, the sulphur and charcoal, so plentifully poured on them by the noisy explosions of the Ætnean artillery, plied by the furious assailants.---Gratitude compels us to throw ourselves into the ranks that follow them ; and cheerfully to take post wherever we may do any thing to support them, until they shall be relieved by some more effectual reinforcement. The war we wage is entirely defensive. Nothing very terrible or destructive then, is needed among the weapons we must employ. If we be enabled so to manage the shield of faith, as to cover the parts that have been chiefly attacked ; and so to wield the sword of the spirit, as to prevent the adversary from scaling the walls, if, by a series of fair and solid arguments, drawn from the magazine of truth in the Bible, we can honestly defend the doctrine which maintains that the torments of hell are without end, and repel the fiery darts shot by our antagonists
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against it, we shall ask no triumph over the foe; nor wish him any further hurt than only to be obliged to surcease his invasions of the truth for the future.

To this single object then shall be directed all our feeble efforts in the remainder of the present section; and to evince this important point let our

1st Argument be taken from the **JUSTICE** and rectitude of the moral character of the Lord **JEHOVAH**. Every idea of his nature, suggested either by reason or revelation, represents him as possessed of wisdom sufficient to discern the natures of all things, and thoroughly to see them as they are. It is one of the first and plainest dictates of reason, that every object has a definite essence of its own, separate from all others; and the next to it is that hence must arise essential differences in the nature of things. The first being, containing all perfection in itself, must be absolutely right.---Every other is entirely wrong so far as it disagrees with it; and in proportion to that difference, it deserves to be treated with hatred and contempt, as really as this is worthy of adoration and love.

Rectitude of nature will not permit this difference to be over-looked; it will ever treat things as they are, and cannot be brought to call evil good, and good evil. Moral beauty is amiable in its nature. To give it love, in proportion to its quantity, is therefore only rendering a tribute of which it is worthy. This is nothing more than paying a debt justly due; and the neglect or refusal of it is fraud and injury, and the native marks of evil disposition. To restrain this disposition, and effectually to secure to worth its rights, is the great business of moral government.

government. Distributive justice is therefore to be considered as essential to such a government. That attribute is bound to treat every being and every action according to its true nature; to see that this is done by all within its jurisdiction in all parts of their conduct; and where it is not, to deal with the neglect and the neglecter, according to the degree of injustice they have done; and so as to show how far that is different from real rectitude. All beings may thus be said to have their respective rights. These must be in proportion to the greatness and worth of each being. Those of Deity then, must be as much greater than all others, as the natures of the rest are inferior to his. For any moral agent to violate one of these rights, must be a wrong, infinitely greater than to offer violence to all the rest: And for the moral governor of such agent to connive at this, or suffer it to pass with impunity, must therefore be infinitely worse than to abett a conspiracy against all the rights, of all the creatures in the universe. Whilst the voice of nature proclaims that Justice must give to every thing its due, the language of revelation echoes in unison to its strains. Far be it from the Most High, that it should fare with the righteous and wicked alike! The Judge of all the earth will surely do right. ^a He will by no means clear the guilty. ^b Under his government it shall indeed be well with the righteous; he shall eat the fruit of his doings.---But evil shall overtake the wicked; the reward of his hands shall

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^a Gen. 18. 25. ^b Exod. 34. 7.

All be given him. • However a mixture of providences may be necessary for a state of probation, the time will come, when all shall discern a difference in the lot of the righteous and the wicked. † The countenance of the great law-giver shall, with a smile of approbation, regard the upright. • But every transgression and disobedience shall receive a just recompence of reward. ‡ These concurrent dictates of reason and scripture, lead us then to argue thus; if there is a God, he is the moral governor of the world.---If he is such a governot, he is just. If just in his nature, he is so in his administrations. And if so, he must give to every thing its due. Doing thus, he will not fail to manifest his approbation of virtue in his subjects, by distinguishing it with proper marks of his favour; and much less can he ever neglect to signify how far he judges vice to be in the wrong, by inflicting upon it the punishment fit. If this character oblige him to punish any sin, it must also lead to punish every sin.---For there can be nothing in any sin worse than its sinfulness, and nothing else in it deserves punishment. As this, however, is essential to the nature of every sin, the same reason that necessitates the punishment of one sin because it is sinful, will not suffer another to escape, since it is sinful too. And, if justice requires that sin be punished at all, it equally requires that it be punished as much as it deserves. Without this, the justice that would rest satisfied in the deed, would be manifestly imperfect.

• Isa. 3, 10--12. † Mal. 3, 18. • Psal. 11, 7. ‡ Heb. 2. 2.

fect. Imperfect justice can never be ascribed to a perfect being. IMPERFECT JUSTICE, so far as its imperfection extends, is perfect injustice.

To ascribe this to the Deity* is blasphemy : As it impeaches his nature not only with what is an imperfection, but with something that is a contradiction in itself. Now an inadequate punishment of sin, is as really, though not so highly, inconsistent with perfect justice as none at all. For that which leaves one degree of moral turpitude uncensured, unpunished ; and so connived at ; can not more truly deserve the name of perfect rectitude and justice, than that which overlooks ten. One defect being as inconsistent with perfection, as it is to be blemish all over. On this ground then, we may safely aver, that it is the blasphemous language of Atheism itself, that asserts, that any sin ever has, and ever shall pass unpunished, with as much punishment as it deserves. I now, we would enquire how much it deserves ; we must reflect on some of the principles laid down above. The right of the Creator to demand the obedience of his creature, is absolute. He is infinite in nature. All his rights then must be so too. The creature is therefore under infinite obligation to obey him. This is the obligation which he breaks in every sin, every sin then is infinitely wrong ; and if so, deserves infinite punishment. Less can never express the displeasure of the moral governor due to it. This punishment then justice is concerned to see inflicted.

But the finite nature of the creature on whom it is to be laid, as possessing only a limited capacity,

capacity, can never bear this infinite burden at once. Sooner might all the waters of the Atlantic be contained in a Lady's thimble.

What cannot be inflicted at once must be dealt out piece-meal. The sufferers must make up in duration what is wanting in strength. If infinite punishment is due, his sufferings must needs have one infinite dimension, or justice is not done at all. And, if so, it follows, that the punishment deserved by one sin, could never be inflicted on a mere creature, unless it were extended through an endless duration. To object, as some of our opponents have done, that this argument would prove that Gods justice required a punishment which his power should never be able to inflict, is really to cavil; as well might they say that the promised bliss of Heaven must not be eternal; or the DIVINE truth has promised what it never can perform. The same answer will equally suit both sides; for, since in both cases, the retribution awarded by the judge is endless and unalterable, it is as such the subject enters on it. It is an everlasting portion in its very nature; and the possessor is conscious of this in every stage of his experience of it. Instead, therefore, of the sentence never being executed, the truth is, that it is executed from the first moment. An everlasting happiness is then actually put into the possession of the saint: And an endless misery lies on the sinner from that juncture. Nor can there ever arise any occasion to doubt of the fulfilment of the sentence, in either case, until the moment arrives when its execution has ceased.

Nor is there any better ground for the insinuation, that this reasoning would make all punishments equal in the world to come.--For the

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whole force of it is bent to prove them to be founded in the JUSTICE of God ; and, if so, it will follow that the greatest guilt must meet the forest blows. The sinner who violates the most numerous ties, must be beaten with the most numerous stripes. * And hence, though the woe of each is unutterable, yet it will be more tolerable for some among the unhappy than for others ; † although it be granted that the torment of the greatest sinner shall not continue a moment longer than that of the least ; yet, where is the inconsistency of maintaining at the same time, that one criminal in that dungeon shall be laden with heavier irons, or stretched on a more torturing rack than another ? It is no strange thing among men to see punishments of equal duration extremely different in degree. We all believe the joys of all the saints in Heaven to be everlasting, and so we suppose them equally durable ; and yet we do not scruple that in that blessed state, one saint shall rise in degrees of bliss above another, even as one star differs from another star in glory : ‡ Who can tell what variety there may be in the objects, the avenues, the instruments of pleasure and pain opening forever on the inhabitants of the world to come ? What new and different capacities ? What variety of new scenes ? What diversities of sensibility may be then imparted to each ; according as justice and wisdom shall find to be congruous to the degrees of maturity to which

* Luk^e 12. 47, 48.

† Mat. 10. 15, and 11. 22.

‡ 1 Cor. 15. 41

which, their virtues or vices had arrived in the preparatory state, who amongst mortals is wise enough to tell? ^d

It follows then notwithstanding these objections, that the doctrine that denies the eternity of hell-torments, eventually denies that they are inflicted by perfect justice; and so affirms that the world is not under moral government; or that, that government has no justice in it; it either denies that the ruler over all, is the LORD JEHOVAH, or affirms that he is a ruler in whose eyes there is no real difference between a virtue and vice, nor any distinction between good and evil in a moral view!

On this argument we have dwelt the longer because the adversaries of the principle we are endeavouring to establish, have made great use of the word Justice in their objections against it. Justice, they pretend, could never consent to inflict an eternity of punishment for the sins of so short a term as is the present life:---As if there were any reason for limiting the time of punishment merely by the time taken up in committing the crime! The government that would act by this rule, would be practically exhorting sinners every day, to exert themselves in sinning with greater diligence and vigour. This would afford the sharpest stimulus to excite them to husband their time better in the works of darkness; for that by how much faster they sinned, by so much the better bargain they would have; as they would satisfy for it in a shorter time: Some crimes that are most atrocious in themselves, are shortest

shortest in the time of the commission. Some acts which produce the most lasting effects are done in a moment. Murder does an injury which never can be repaired.--But it often does it by an instantaneous act. Where would be the justice then of proportioning the time of its punishment to the time of its commission? Would not such a rule rather be an outrage against all justice, as it inflicts the least punishment on the greatest crime? The only rule of congruity to which justice essentially requires adherence in this case, is that the quantity of penal evil be proportioned to that of the moral evil on which it is inflicted. And if that is to be measured by the obligations violated, or the rights infringed by sin, it will never lead us to expect that the sinning creature can receive sufficient punishment for it in less than an everlasting duration: To this it may be added, that truly the man who dies impenitent has continued to sin as long as he could: He has given very sufficient proof that it is not owing to any want of inclination on his part, that he did not sin longer. The same temper, that led him to sin ten years, would have conducted him on in the same service ten thousand, if his time and strength had permitted him. It has continued him sinning in all the eternity he had: and evidenced a disposition to have persisted in it through an endless one, if he had been indulged so long. An eternity of punishment then, when laid on such a sinner, is just, fit, and congruous, not only as it is in quantity equal to the desert of his sin; but also, as it treats himself in a manner exactly suitable to his own temper, and the plain language of his conduct to the end.

This

This thought offers us room to draw our
 2d ARGUMENT, from the nature of things. The constitution of the universe is adjusted to display the perfect wisdom of its great architect. Complete self-consistency prevails through all that vast machine. Its beauty is at once discovered by the order of its arrangements, and preserved by the congruity among causes and their effects. Every derangement here breaks the harmony of the system. Every disorder spoils the beauty of the whole, and proclaims war against the nature of things. The divine nature is not only the standard of all perfection; it is also the fountain of all happiness. And hence, as nothing can be virtuous or holy but in so far as it is conformed to that pattern; so nothing can be happy any farther than it is blessed with the enjoyment of its smiles. It is therefore the prime law of nature, the first effect of the order of things, that happiness is the necessary result of virtue. This effect as naturally follows that cause, as health and ease of body ensue on the harmony of its several parts, and the suitableness of the elements in which it subsists. By a parity of reason vice produces misery, as its inseparable consequence.—A consequence arising out of it as directly, as bodily pain does from a fractured or dislocated bone; and if this is true, then it must be granted that how long soever vice shall last, the nature of the thing ensures its misery shall be coeval with it. Since it is unreasonable to suppose the effect will cease, while its natural, necessary and immediate cause continues, and continues as it was when such effect was first produced.—If then the vicious habits

habits of the impenitent sinners, which were in full force at his death, continue so forever; nothing can hinder the misery resulting from them to be everlasting.

To suppose vicious habits to have any tendency to change their own nature, is to suppose them not to be vicious. But, on the reverse, to be endowed with a virtuous principle, strong enough to work out all the vice of them in process of time. But this is supposing contradictions in the nature of things: And affirming moral principles to be principally of self-destruction, or to be, and not be what they are, at the same time. Nor can the nature of vice be altered by its age. What was a moral evil at the first moment, must continue such in every other period of its existence. Nor can punishment change it into virtue and goodness. Sinful dispositions still persisted in, are far from being rendered innocent by their subject's hardness in adhering to them, in spite of all the woes he in the mean time suffers for their sake.

But enough has been already said to shew, that the sinful habits which ruled the impenitent at his death, must continue, acting according to their nature, and by every exercise, must be still further confirmed for ever unless God himself be pleased to interpose, either to annihilate or regenerate the soul in which they dwell.

And if nothing else can hinder the everlasting permanency of every criminal disposition to which the impenitent dies subjected, the disease may be pronounced desperate. We have already proved the human soul immortal. Incapable of dying it must still exist. The absurdity of any regeneration after this life has been

sufficiently exposed in a preceding part of this essay. So long as souls exist, they exist the same as when the final sentence began to be executed. With the immortality of their natures they possess immortal desires of happiness. But of the enjoyment of it they remain ever incapable. Eternal thinking, without one pleasing object, without one delightful thought! Desires eternally craving what they never can obtain! Horrible state! This must kindle desire into passion. Immortal passions, ever ungratified must be immortal distempers indeed: And immortal distempers cannot fail to breed immortal pains.

Convinced that the holiness of God remains immutable, we must conclude the purity of Heaven to continue still as great as ever. The divine law still undestroyed, the creature's obligation to compliance with it can never be relaxed. If therefore the condemned sinner continues still in being, and still in his filthiness, and enmity against God; it necessarily follows, that he still remains unfit to receive the legal approbation of his Judge, and therefore unfit for being restored to the favor of the Lord of all. Yes, he still continues incapable of any enjoyment or employment in Heaven; and hence, as unfit to enter there, must, in the nature of things, remain excluded for ever.

Added to this it ought to be remembered, that as was observed above, whilst this temper lasts, it will continue to act according to its nature. And acting thus, will be ever offending. Hence the reason for which the punishment was first inflicted exists, in the same force for ever. Nay it is perpetually gathering new strength; as every repeated exercise augments the corruption

ruption of the sinner's heart, it makes him ever grow more and more odious, and offensive in the sight of God's holiness. His filthiness ever increasing, and his guilt increasing with it, every moment of his duration affords a stronger reason for his misery than the moment that preceded it. And thus all hope of deliverance is inconsistent with "the nature of the thing." Since the moment never will arrive when the reason of the continuance of his torment shall not be found greater than it was the moment it began.

Argument 2. "The ends of the divine government of the moral world, require that the punishment of the disobedient, be everlasting. The foregoing chapter has offered some proof, that it is not less reasonable to believe, that God rules the world, than that he made it. And to leave moral agents ungoverned, would be more absurd, than to commit the material world to the management of blind chance. The moral world being the chief part of God's dominions, in the government of it, his glory was principally concerned: That it be administered in a manner suitable to the being of both the ruler and the subject, seems to be required by the nature of things. The subject was an agent rational and free. The government then adapted to his make, must be managed by a law. It may be considered as the end of such government to enact a law, whereby the holiness and perfection of the Divine ruler, should be illustrated and proved. Such law must therefore contain a copy of the consummate beauty of that glorious Legislator's character. And hence, perfection must adorn its own: And that perfection must appear to be valued by its author, in proportion to its real worth. This makes

makes a sanction necessary. Without that guard the naked precept, neglected by the Sovereign as unworthy of his care, would soon be slighted by the subject. Divested of the force of a law, it would degenerate into a lifeless rule.

Every reason requiring a sanction, demands such an one as shall fully display the perfection of the law, and the value set upon it by the ruler. They must openly manifest God's right, to give law according to his pleasure; and his worthiness of all the respect and obedience it demands of the subject. If such be their design it behoves them to present motives to obedience, that, in their nature, are sufficient to interest the rational agent under such law; and to preponderate over every consideration that might be offered to induce him to violate it. Nay the sanctions must be such as shall annex a consequence to disobedience that may deserve to be considered by the rational mind as of infinite importance. To affix a finite penalty to transgression, when an infinite one was equally within the power of the legislator, would be practically to declare that a greater was not the demerit of the offence. Therefore, that the obligation to obey the law was but finite; and is that it was the display of no more than finite perfections in its author; and consequently that his worthiness of the creature's love and obedience was but finite, and his right to demand it reached no further. In a word, a sanction to the law of God which should threaten less than infinite punishment to sin, would be infinitely unworthy of him, as betraying the glory of his nature, and giving up all claim to infinite perfection in it.

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But if a perfection in the sanction be necessary to proclaim the perfection of the law, it follows that adequate execution is no less requisite, to declare the perfect rectitude and fitness of the sanction.

Next to the display of the honor of the Sovereign, it may justly be affirmed that the end of God's moral government is the happiness of the system. The principles on which the foregoing argument was founded, we presume, will evince that this end cannot be promoted but by the order, the beauty, the harmony, and moral perfection of the whole dominion. But all this is defaced and broken by depravity of heart or practice among the subjects. It follows then, that the happiness of the system is best attained by securing the obedience of the creature; and he being a moral agent is to be retained in his duty by motive and law. Motives addressed to those passions which are the natural springs of human action, must set before his hope and fear such prospects of good and evil, as may stimulate him to shun the paths of transgression, and adhere to the road of virtue, with a tenacity which no allurement may suffice to break off. The greater good or evil then presented in the sanction of the law, the greater regard the Legislator manifests to the happiness of his subjects; and the greater is the tendency of his measures to secure it. Every reason which requires a small punishment to be threatened against sin, requires a great one. Nor is there a consideration that demands a temporary suffering in that case, which does not call for one that is eternal. Viewed in this light, the threatening drops the mask.--It no longer wears the torve aspect of severity and rigor. All the features of benevolence

and goodness, smile in its face. The menaces of justice are now smoothed away into friendly guards, planted by kindness and compassion, on the best interests of virtue and bliss. To have threatned disobedience with some small or transient mark of the divine displeasure, would have been an indication of some regard to the creature's happiness. It would however have given an evidence far short of the truth. A finite mark could never prove his displeasure to be infinite; and less than that would never testify infinite regard to that happiness which such disobedience means to destroy. Had a temporary punishment been threatned, one could never observe the sinner passing it in neglect, without regretting that the penalty had not been greater. Infinite wisdom well knew what was in man. It well knew that a temporary pain would never suffice to secure the subject against the present bait of temptation: when he could so easily reflect that, however severe such pain might be, an eternal post-existence, in a state of perfect happiness, would obliterate it all: And that, how long soever the punishment might last, the time would afterwards arrive when it would be no more to the duration of the bliss already enjoyed, than one atom to the whole mass of matter which the universe contains. Contemplating the conduct of mankind, we are struck with daily evidences that even the threatning of eternal punishment, with all the awful terrors in which it is clothed, and all the solemn majesty with which it is plainly delivered, fails of efficacy to secure their obedience to the law. We see the sinner, proof to all the horrors contained in the picture of everlasting misery, rushing desperately against the bosom of his Maker's buckler. Regardless of the
 wrath

wrath of God, unlaunted by the prospect of everlasting burnings, he runs headlong in the career of sin, though the thunders of Sinai are roaring in his ears, and the unquenchable fire already flashes in his face! And can we now, at the sight of this madness, forbear the explanation--hardened desperado! Canst thou brave the menace of eternal torments with contempt like this? Alas! what would it have availed then to have threatened only a temporary punishment? With what face can that man complain that eternal sanctions to the divine law are excessive and severe, whom all their weight cannot restrain from the indulgence of his lusts? Had it been possible to have enhanced the penalty still more, and threatened a punishment more than eternal, would it not have been an act of mercy and goodness, to have threatened it, that so there might have been sufficient weight put into the motives to obedience, to preponderate against the power of temptation in every case? But that was impossible.--Goodness, in this line, has gone as far as was consistent. Having barred up the sinners way, by the threatening of everlasting woe, it may honorably stop, and cry out what could have been done for the preservation of the subjects virtue and happiness, in the way of law-giving, which I have not done?

Argument 4. "Reason requires that eternal misery be threatened in the law of God, as the punishment of sin." Rational creatures under no al government, were not to be held to their allegiance to their Creator by mechanical force. External coercion leaves no room for virtue or vice. Impressed by such foreign energy, the moral agent is lost in the passive machine. 'Tis reason only that can command

command reason. The rational faculty must be swayed by rational influence. A creature possessing that faculty, and bent on his own happiness, must be persuaded to virtue, by reasons stronger than any that can be offered against it. These reasons must therefore promise him a good in this way, which he cannot obtain in any other: A good, sufficient to out-weigh all the goods that can be put into the scale of vice: And to compensate for all the evils to which he may be exposed by obstinate perseverance in the service of virtue. But all this implies the threatening of an evil, by way of penalty against sin, which shall be possessed of all these characters of weight and importance, in reverse.

The immortal nature of rational creatures requires that this good and evil be immortal too. The motives presented by them, could not otherwise be made suitable to the nature they were designed to influence. Nor could they give certainty that the promise and threatening might not, one day, be found to have shifted hands, and more good be found on the side of the latter, where only evil was pointed out: Since between a temporary evil and an everlasting good, it is impossible there can be any ballance. Hence we see that the good that endures for ever must, in the eye of reason, ever preponderate against all the temporary evils that lie in the way to it.

An hundred years of punishment might well be supposed sufficient for a sanction to any human law, at this age of the world; when nobody expects to survive that date, and few exceed half the space. But it would have been, by no means adequate to the greatest possible breach of such a law, in the antediluvian world, when men lived ordinarily eight or nine times

as long; and the time they might have to pass in indemnity and pleasure after the æra of their woes had expired, added to the charms of a present temptation, would entirely take off the edge of the threatening, and present the punishment as an evanescent terror. Thus it appears, that the moral government which, being over rational and immortal creatures, eager in pursuit of their own happiness, and placed in a state of trial, surrounded with temptations, yet threatens sin with nothing more than a temporary punishment, cannot be thought to wish to secure the obedience of its subjects; it has actually conspired with its enemies to strengthen their hands; by conniving at, if not promoting their rebellion against its own authority.

Nor may it be overlooked on this argument, that whatever rewards are promised by the Creator to the obedience of a mere creature, are promised by an act of grace, which is altogether a bounty. The whole obedience of every creature is due to his Maker. There can be no merit in the payment of a debt. Such payment does not turn the creditor into the debtor. Nor is any reward claimable, in justice, on such accounts. If therefore the gracious Sovereign has been pleased to encourage virtue by the promise of eternal life as its reward, though no reward was due, is it not reasonable that the righteous governor of the world should, with no less solemnity, threaten to transgression an eternal death, which ~~has~~ already been proved to be in the strictest justice due? Shall an eternal bliss be ensured where it is freely given? And shall not an eternal misery be as certainly entailed where it is indispensibly necessary? With these reflections in full view, where is the candid and

and impartial spectator, who will complain that the threatening of eternal punishment is unreasonable? May eternal life be promised from God's favorable regard to virtue, and may not eternal death be denounced as the evidence of his abhorrence of wickedness? Why should not the punishment of the one, bear some proportion to the reward of the other? Is the divine holiness enamoured with the former, more than it loaths the latter? Or is vice in itself less loathsome than virtue is lovely? Indeed, were there no such proportion observed in the sanctions of the divine law, an easy handle would be given to the Atheist to object, that although the greatness of the reward might bespeak a great regard for virtue, yet the smallness of the punishment afforded a shrewd suspicion that, in the heart of the Lawgiver, there was a secret partiality in favor of vice too. It is the eternity of the punishment threatened, that stops the mouths of all gain-sayers, when the Lord of all gives the public challenge, are not my ways equal? ^a What evil have ye found in me? ^b

Nor can the immortal subject now complain, that the motives offered in the law were unsuitable to his nature---or trifling in their kind--or so badly adjusted to the case, as to leave the balance in favor of vice. If then it was reasonable thus to proportion the reward and the punishment, was it not kind to set them before the subject's eyes in the same fairness with which they were settled? Without this we cannot

not conceive how they could secure his allegiance, or besfriend his bliss, or have the least influence on his conduct: Had the matter been thus determined by the irrevocable constitution of Heaven. and yet this constitution reserved as a secret in the sovereign's breast, what opening would thus be offered for complaints? And how ready would sinners be to take up the outcry, that they had cruelly been kept in the dark, by a law which wore a friendly countenance, but concealed a dagger under its cloak, til now it had betrayed them into a misery of which it gave no previous notice, and from which a word of fair warning would have induced them to escape! It was highly reasonable then that the rational creature, on his probation, should have the consequences of his conduct fairly set before him, that with open eyes he might take his choice; and should that choice be vice, vice persisted in to the last, persisted in notwithstanding all the pains taken to reclaim him; when he at length finds the natural consequence of sin to overtake him, and him self sunk by their weight into benedict's woe, he cannot but say, "all this was not left untold me.--It was truly set before mine eyes.--I wa fairly warned.--I had my choice.--And it is but reason, the highest reason that I should now abide the consequences; since, for all the torment they bring with them, I must thank myself." From all which it follows that, however agreeable it might have been to the carnal heart, it would have been a great discredit to the Bible, a great objection against the reasonableness and morality of the divine government, and a stronger impeachment of the moral character of the great Ruler of the world than any which his

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most inveterate foes, after all their malicious scrutines, have ever been able to invent, had not the eternal duration of the punishment of sin, been found so much as once hinted amongst all the threatnings against it which the sacred oracles contain. It is therefore to the honor of God, and greatly to the vindication of his government and law, that we are warranted to add it as our 5th Argument, "that the scriptures have plainly declared that the torments of the damned shall never end." The observations already made, might almost suffice to make out this position. Every thing offered to prove that regeneration, faith, repentance, holiness, or a particular application of Christ's redemption to any subject of it, must be obtained in this life, or can never be acquired afterwards, tended to lead to this conclusion; that, if these things are really indispensable to salvation, the sinner who is found destitute of them at death, must stand excluded from Heaven and happiness for ever. Viewed in this connexion, every text which has been cited, or which can be found on the face of the sacred pages, plainly proving the necessity of these things in order to eternal life, becomes a distinct proof of the eternal misery of the man who dies without them. What if the Origenists should rise and object, that all these qualifications shall be given to sinners after the dread sentence of the great assize begins to be thoroughly felt? We would wish to ask them from what kind hand may so great a favor be then expected? That it cannot be derived from the sinner himself, nor from the longest supposable durations of his pains, we think, has been fully proved above. That the action of material fire can have no effect in purging away the

filthiness

filthiness of spirits, which lies in the darkness or error of their understandings, the perverseness and enmity of their wills and affections, common sense will easily believe; as long as it can perceive any difference between the nature of body and that of spirit. Shall we then listen to the bold assertions of our opponents, while they confidently insist that the great salvation shall reach them in hell, and rescue them from thence? If we ask them when this goal-delivery is to come? While one party cries out at the day of judgment; another confesses that then it cannot be; but at what other period not one of them can tell. And should it be demanded by what authority they have ventured to open this new door of hope to sinners, after the great master of the house has risen up, and, with his own hand, shut the only door which was ever opened by his command? Or who gave them this authority? ^a The profound silence of all the sacred writers as to any such event, is instead of a thousand arguments against the supposition. We are sure when, in divine things, men affect to be wise above what is written, their wisdom is not near akin to that which cometh down from the father of lights. ^b Much more indeed does it favour of that mental endowment with which men, professing themselves to be wise, become fools; guided by which they are vainly puffed up in their fleshly minds, and judiciously left to become daily more and more vain in their imaginations. ^c Had this doctrine been a truth

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^a John 10. 1-5. Luke 13. 25. ^b James. 3. 15. 17.
^c Rom. 1. 22. Col. 2. 5.

it was one so nearly interesting to all religion that the code of revelation which secreted it, must be thought at once unfaithful and imperfect. If it is found in the divine volume, we demand where stands the record? The most learned advocates of this tenet acknowledge it is not founded on any declarations in scripture; nay, they frankly confess that the Bible holds up the doctrine of the eternity of hell torments; that Jesus Christ, the greatest lover of mankind, has taught it himself, and that in the plainest and most explicit manner; and that the prophets and apostles have done the same thing. *d* Whence then the authority for these men to add to the system of inspiration, a doctrine which they confess the Holy Ghost hath not taught there? • From what spirit have they derived the effrontery that bears them out in contradicting inspired apostles and prophets; yea, and that divine teacher too who is the master of them all? *f* But

If the silence of the scriptures respecting any period to the sufferings of the damned is alone sufficient for the confutation of that hypothesis, how must its authors be covered with confusion, if it be found that, on the contrary, the sacred oracles have, in fact, declared that there never will be any divine interposition for their rescue from torment, after the Judge shall have pronounced the sound DEPART! and that such is the view of the matter offered by scripture we shall endeavour now to shew.---It is truly difficult

d Burnet de Her. m. 290. e. Div. 3076. Rev. 22. 17. *f* Gal. 1. 8, 9.

out to imagine what crevice fancy would open
 to admit one ray of hope into that "dungeon
 horrible, on all sides, round;" which the word
 of God hath not taken special care to stop up.
 They have despised the great propitiation. Shall
 they be favoured with another? Nay, they are
 told, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin. ^l
 But may they not yet be renewed to repentance?
 No. They are now arrived at a state where
 that is impossible. ^m May not the same divine
 surety be crucified afresh to save them after all?
 No. His offering was but one; and that to be
 offered but once. ⁿ That is now done, and he
 dieth no more, but liveth and shall live for ever
 and ever. ^o Will there be no mean of grace
 indulged them in that unhappy case? No. The
 The spirit has now done striving forever. ^p No
 message can follow them thither from the gospel
 of Christ. ^q Shall not another day of grace be
 afforded to those wretched beings? No. They
 have already had their space to repent. ^r They
 have despised their accepted time, and now it
 is lost forever; ^b but may not some glimpse
 of hope be conceived in their breasts from the
 unknown depths of wisdom and mercy in Jeho-
 vah's? No. They must now look for nothing
 but the effects of the fiery indignation of that
 glorious being to devour his adversaries. ^c And
 is it not possible that this tremendous storm will
 spend

^l Heb. 10. 26. ^m Heb. 6. 4, 8. ⁿ Heb. 10, 10, 13.
^o Heb. 7. 25. ^p Gen. 6, 3. ^q Luke 19, 42.

^r Rev. 2, 21. ^b Isa. 65. 2. John 9. 41. ^c Heb. 10. 27.

spend its fury so that in process of time it will be overblown? No. On the reverse, it will be the sting of all their torments, that each will bring with it an assurance that it is but a preface to one more severe; and after innumerable ages spent in this unpeakable anguish, the wrath which will be felt most dreadful is not yet past; it is that wrath that is still wrath yet to come. d And

Thus are all doors of hope shut on the unhappy prisoners. Nor is there a chink left for the pale gleam of a distant peradventure, or the cold comfort of a who can tell? To recite all the texts which, either directly, or by necessary consequence, prove the truth of this point, would be to transcribe great part of the whole sacred canon; nor is this labour necessary: The valuable works of the worthy advocates of the truth, both in former times and in the present day, having done enough to supercede it. A few of those which most emphatically speak the everlasting duration of hell-torments, shall here be thought sufficient. From which a very little reasoning will be enough to shew how invincibly they prove this doctrine; if we can first clear them of the abuses they have suffered from the enemies of it, and precisely ascertain their true meaning.

1. Very striking to this purpose are the words with which Abraham, in the parable, is represented by our Lord, as cutting off the impotency of the rich voluptuary, in flames. "Son remember that thou in thy life time receivest thy good things." • Cutting reflection! But sufficient

sient to put an end to the wretches expectation of receiving any more : The good things are spoken of indefinitely, it is true, without expressly prefixing the word ALL to them : But the scope of the verse is evidently to contrast the portions of Lazarus and this man in both worlds ; and to shew the propriety of the present difference in their lots. For this purpose, he presents the one as receiving his whole portion of good in that world, where the other had to bear the whole quantity of evil which he ever was to experience ; and vice versa. -- And, when it is considered, that this is assigned as the reason why so small a good as one drop of cold water, must not, cannot be granted him now, on his most earnest request ; the indefinite term then claims the force of an universal, as much as if the words had been, " ALL thy good things ;" for in no other sense can it be an argument to prove that no addition of so much as one good thing more can ever be made to the inventory. Our opponents here officiously step in, and warn us to remember that the passage we are considering is a parable. -- We are fully apprized of this, and therefore shall not attempt to treat it as if it were not. But, although every circumstance in parables must not be squeezed into an accommodation with some point in the reddition ; yet, is it not an acknowledged rule of interpreting them, that none of them be supposed to be spoken without designing to convey some instruction ? That the chief instruction intended is manifest from the scope of the parable ; and that so many parts of it as are wrought up in direct subseviency to that scope, are to be considered as meant to contribute influence on which we are not only

warranted, but bound to lay hold? And we may appeal to the candour of the gentlemen opposing us, whether the scope of this parable does not inform mankind of the final separation between the righteous and wicked in the world to come--of the reality of the happiness of the one and the other there--of the certainty that their portions are equally unmixed and unalterable in that state--and that it is no less impossible for any good to be ever put into the portion of the miserable, than it is for evil to be inserted into the inheritance of the blessed? And, if so, we have a right to use the sentence above cited in the plain and obvious sense already given it. And hence, it constrains us to believe that the state of the damned is such as finally separates them from every good, from the first moment of their entrance on it. And, if it is impossible, from the divine constitution of things, that so small a boon as a drop of water should ever afterwards be granted them, how much more impossible is it that so great a favour should reach the sufferers as to convert their night of doleful darkness into an eternal day of joys unspeakable, and even to turn the unutterable load of their torments into an exceeding great and eternal weight of glory? If, now, this passage teaches us what to think of the state of the damned; it suggests also what judgment we ought to pass on that doctrine of our opponents, which affirms that, how great and how many soever the good things have been which any of them have enjoyed on earth, they are not worthy to be compared to the good things that are in reversion for them to all eternity.

2. The solemn and awful warning, uttered by our Lord in the Gospel, concerning the person guilty of the sin against the Holy Ghost, is at once sufficient to prove the perpetuity of future punishment; and to baffle all the attempts of Origenists against that article. • “But whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in that to come.” They must surely consider our Saviour as a very trifling and impertinent teacher, who pretend that he is only speaking here of the sin of devils, as one which men never could commit. An inspired writer assures us, that this warning was given to the Pharisees, because they said, he hath an unclean spirit. • And the whole context, in this place, plainly instructs us that the speech rose out of the present occasion. He had wrought a notable miracle before their eyes. This carried evidence to the consciences of the spectators, of the truth of his doctrines and pretensions. These men felt the force of it. But, determined against the inference to which it necessarily led, they with malicious obstinacy fought against a victorious truth. Jesus knew their thoughts, and therefore delivered the solemn caveat that follows. Had this been intended, as one party at least of our opposers would have us believe, to assure them that all sins of men should be forgiven, but the sins of devils never; instead of a reproof of the impudent blasphemies of the hardened men, then before him, it must have carried in it the strongest encouragement for their persevering in the practice ;

practice ; and been in fact the greatest patronage that sin had ever received in the world.

But another party of Origenists insist, that we can prove nothing to our purpose from this text, if it be granted that our Saviour indeed spake of some sins of men ; for the word which we have translated **WORLD**, means only an age, and ought always to have been rendered by that word ; that the sense of this place is determined by the Apostles usage of the same phrase, when he tells us, that the world to come, is not put in subjection to the angels. And that the present world, means the times of the Jewish dispensation ; and the world to come, is to be understood largely of the times of the Messiah indiscriminately, or strictly of the times of his future kingdom. How far the criticism on the word is just, we shall have occasion afterwards to enquire. At present, we take it up as it is ; and, in their own exposition, we think they have retained their darling tenet. For, if this is a sin, for the forgiveness of which there is no foundation, either in the Jewish or the Christian dispensation ; then, tis one for whose removal nothing has been provided in all the works done by Moses, by the prophets, and by Christ. And for the hope of which, no encouragement has been given in the Old or New Testament, by any word spoken by either of these authorities. We think it therefore incumbent on these gentlemen, to produce some other system of divine revelation, to confront and confute these sacred teachers, before they demand our belief

belief of the forgiveness of this sin, while they confess that the dispensation, neither of Moses nor of Christ, has given any ground for it. And until they do, we wish themselves to be as careful to avoid that sin, as if they gave credit to our Lord's word in their natural and obvious meaning; and believe that there never will come a time, when the sinner thus guilty, shall receive absolution from God, the judge of all, neither before his death, nor after the judgment.

May we be permitted now to ask what must be the portion of the sinner here spoken of? shall he ever be admitted to the favor and enjoyment of God; whilst God continues to refuse to forgive his iniquity? Could he be received to heavenly bliss with all the weight of his sin upon him? Can any thing remove that weight but a pardon? Until that is given him must he not lie down under the just punishment of his sin? And if the word of Christ the Saviour and the Judge, is publicly pledged, that forgiveness shall never be extended to him, neither in this world, nor that which is to come, must not the wrath of God, and all the torment which it inflicts, remain upon him to all eternity?

3. The angel of God, charged with the important business of revealing to John, the nature of the heavenly state and world, emphatically informs him that, "there shall in no wise enter into it, any thing that defileth." • The double negatives which are used in the original of this verse, have carried the expression to as great a degree

degree of force, as language is capable of, and left no room for the play of the critical talents of our opponents here. The same subtlety, which has been employed to explain the first curse that ever was pronounced in the world into a promise, ^b was necessary to be set to work, to refine away the terms used by the angel, till they should be made to agree with the fable of Universal Salvation. One of its chief abettors has indeed tried his skill upon them. But finding no room to work on the form of the proposition, he has fallen foul of the matter of it. The gender of the subject he thinks happily favors his scheme. He gravely tells his hearers that sin itself, which is the only thing that defileth, is the only thing here said to be excluded the heavenly gates, and the text has nothing to do with persons at all. What sort of an ENS this gentleman has in his mind, when he thinks of what he expresses by the word SIN, it is difficult to determine. The common style of his performances, and of those of his deputies, seems to represent sin as a certain substantial being, having a separate existence of its own, apart from all other beings in which it might be supposed to reside. The language of the Catechism seems to handle it as if it were a bodily substance. Nor can several phrases, used about it in that performance, be reconciled to any other meaning. But whether they wish to be understood in a figurative as a literal sense, we presume not to decide. And therefore, whether this substance be a body or a spirit we cannot tell. We shall not how-

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ever scruple to predict that they will never be able to prove it to be either the one or the other. That sin is not a distinct being, but the fault of some being is evident to common sense. That this fault lies in the want of such qualities, as such being ought to possess in its temper, and to put forth into its acts, is too plain to need proof. To a man of common understanding, not blinded by bias to some favorite opinion, no jargon would appear more absurd and phrenical than to talk about sins being dealt with, judged, condemned, and punished while no sinner could be found that had any concern in the matter! There is no need of appealing to logic or metaphysics to demonstrate the inconsistency of supposing qualities to exist without some substance to support them; or to shew that there can never be an adjunct without a subject, or an act without an agent. The consent of all mankind would decide whether philosophy or physic is most needful to be used with one who would go about to have theft put in goal without the thief, or murder hanged, or burnt, or drowned, while the murderer goes free.

But we forbear-----The very next words in the text have settled the point before us. They explain the terms "nothing that defileth:" And they represent it to mean an agent, a moral agent, a depraved moral agent, for to such only the character can agree, that he is the worker of abominations, and the maker of lies. The entrance of one such is here barred from the unsuitableness of his nature to the purity of that place, to its holy inhabitants, and their refined enjoyments; as his residence there could not fail to pollute the place, and stain the company that should not instantly quit it.

Now,

Now, if this be the instruction to be gathered from this text, and if that be a truth which we trust has been already proved, that the man that dies impenitent dies in his sins--that after death nothing is done to deliver him from them--that as the tree falls so it lies--so he that dies filthy, continues filthy still; and, of consequence, is as really something that defileth for ever afterwards, as he was at death; it follows, that he must enter Heaven as such, if ever he enters it at all. If therefore, the time shall ever come when his entrance there shall be found actually to have taken place, then this description of the heavenly world, the clearest and fullest that is contained in the Bible, and with which an angel, from that world, is commissioned to close the sacred canon, has proved fallacious; and, with it, the credit of the whole book falls to the ground.

4. But that this can never happen, we are assured by the apostle's conclusion of his argument respecting the obstinacy of some sinners, and the consequences thereof. It is drawn in these expressive words, "so we see that they **COULD** not enter in because of unbelief." ^a It is readily granted that the argument is grounded on the story of that generation with whom God was not well-pleas'd, and whose carcases fell in the wilderness: and that the place, immediately respect'd, was the earthly Canaan, of which these men fell short. But then it must be remembered that Canaan was held forth, under that dispensation, not only as it-
self

self a desirable possession, but principally as a
 type of Heaven. We are aware that types are
 not to be compelled to run on all fours. Nor is
 there any type adequate in all things to its an-
 titype. But when we have the application of
 any of them made to our hands by the pen of
 an inspired writer, we need not be afraid to
 adopt such application, in all its parts. Who-
 ever divested of prejudice, will seriously set down
 and read over the chapter from which this text
 is taken, and that which follows it, will not
 be able to deny that it is the apostles express
 purpose to fix our belief of the analogy between
 the earthly and the heavenly Canaan, in this
 one particular; that, as unbelief made it im-
 possible for men to enter into the former, so
 would it forbid their admittance into the latter.
 For having repeated the threatening against this
 sin in the people of Israel, and taken notice of
 the awful manner in which it was fulfilled in
 the fact; he then addresses himself to shew how
 it should now be improved: Take heed, bre-
 thren, lest there be in any of you an evil
 heart of unbelief.---For we are made partakers
 of Christ. But it is, if we hold fast the begin-
 ning of our confidence, steadfast unto the end.
 Let us therefore fear, lest a promise being left
 us of entering into his rest, any of you should
 seem to come short of it. For unto us was the
 gospel preached, as well as unto them; and at
 the same risque too: We have a rest to enter as
 well as they: Their case was recorded for our
 example. That unbelief, which excluded them
 from theirs, will as surely exclude us from that
 heavenly rest, which the gospel sets before us.
 That there are many persons that believe not
 in Christ, and die in their unbelief, notwith-

standing all the calls and evidences afforded them in the gospel, who can doubt? It has already been proved, that faith never can be given in the other world. If unbelief therefore is sufficient to disable men from entering into God's rest at their death, it must disable them as long as it continues; and if it must remain forever, on all who die in subjection to it, it must be granted that Heaven will ever be a place into which they cannot enter.

5. Accordingly, the father of the faithful, in his answer to the wretch spoken of in a former article of proof, has stated it, that a great gulf is fixed between the damned and the place of bliss; so that the former cannot pass out of their prison to the realms of light, any more than it is possible for a saint at God's right hand to be expelled the heavenly society, and detrudded into the regions of eternal woe. ^a

6. Nor is the difficulty of effecting the passage from hell to Heaven; the only ground on which the translations fancied by the Origenists may be pronounced impossible. For an inspired penman has recorded the oath of God, by which the wicked are eternally debarred. ^b How solemn! How dreadful! "So I swear, in my wrath, they shall not enter into my rest." To shew of whom the Lord then spake, the Apostle puts the question, "to whom swear he, that they should not enter into his rest?" And answers it in the same breath---to them that believed not. ^c And then rehearses the solemnity of the pledge laid down---"If they shall enter into
 way

^a Luke 16. 26. ^b Heb. 3. 12. ^c 13.

my rest." & If I--How awful the assertions with which the sentence there breaks off! The reader is left to imagine every horrible consequence he can conceive, as what must certainly follow.--If they shall--If any of them, who believe not, shall ever be found to have actually entered into that rest, then my oath is vain, and I am no longer to be considered as God--the living--or the true! How hardy then must be the man who goes about to build up a theory of his own, on the ruins of the divine faith and veracity, when thus solemnly pledged by an oath. And that such is the theory of the Originists will appear undeniably, if it be certain that the rest here, ultimately and principally kept in the Apostle's eye, is that of saints in Heaven. Of the subterfuges of the Gentlemen we oppose, on this head, we are not unapprised. Now, they tell us that the rest here spoken of, was the weekly sabbath. But against this evasion the Apostle has sufficiently guarded us; when he adds that many who enjoyed that, entered not into this. For that rest was easily to be obtained all along, since the works which it commemorates were actually finished from the foundation of the world. Then, they turn about, and insist, that no other rest was meant than that of the land of Canaan; upon the acquisition whereof the people of Israel had rest from their pilgrimages: But, although it has been granted, under a foregoing article, that Canaan was referred to; yet, it is to be remembered it was considered in that reference only

as

to a type of Heaven: We might then safely rest the issue of this question on the reasonings then offered. But such is the care of the Apostle to stop the mouth of this cavil, by the characteristics of this rest which he lays down in the context, that it would be, inexcusable, on this argument, to pass them unnoticed. First then, *he* declares that this is to be understood of a rest which Joshua (or Jesus, as the name of that ancient general of Israel is here translated) did not give--though he did introduce the Israelites to that of the promised land. *a* Therefore it is referred to the rest of another day. *b* Then he tells us that, though that of Canaan had for hundred years been actually possessed, this rest was not. It was a rest still in reversion--as one that remained yet unexperienced. *c* Nor did it remain for all men.--It was kept in store only for the people of God. *d* And, which therefore not all men, but some must be brought to enter. *e* For this, however, meer hearing of it is not sufficient. Though by the best preaching of the gospel, unless the word be mixed with faith in them that hear it. *f* Because, it is by faith alone men get possession of it. *g* A faith, however, which must begin here in the present life, and persevere to the end of it. *h* And, therefore, although it is daily preached to us, and conditionally promised in the gospel. *i* Yet, as that promise is only on the supposition of faith, professors have need to fear and labor, lest they

a Heb. 4. 8. *b* *ibid.* *c* v. 9. *d* *ibid.* *e* v. 6. *f* v. 2.
g v. 3. *h* Heb. 3. 7, 8, 13, 14, 15. *i* Heb. 4. 2, 11

they come short of it. And, finally, he warns us that the rest, of which he is treating, is one from which men are excluded by ignorance and errors rooted in the heart k---by obstinately hardening themselves against the evidence of divine truth l---by grieving the spirit of God m by unbelief n---by provoking the Most High, o and by departing from him, his truths, his religion and his ordinances. p We now leave it to our opponents to prove all this to be descriptive of the rest of the land of Canaan. And until that is done, we must judge ourselves warranted to appeal to every candid reader of the Bible, whether it must not be understood of that heavenly inheritance which is incorruptible, undefiled, and fadeth not away? And if it is, what shall we think of that awful oath of JEHOVAH, which debars from entrance into it, unbelievers, and all the woeful classes already mentioned; if the scheme of the Origenists be true?-- And what shall we think of the men who zealously labor to vindicate a scheme which cannot be true, until the time come, when this awful oath shall be found false.

7. The texts above reviewed cannot but avail with all who give credit to the Bible, to prove that the wicked who were condemned at the judgment, shall never get admittance into the celestial mansions.---And, if so, we shall not wonder to hear the faithful and true witness declare of one among them that "it had been good for that man that he never had been

B b 3

born."

† Heb. 3. 10. l ibid v. 8--11. m 10. n 19. o 15; 26. p 12. 1 Cor. 10, 9.

born." ¶ For surely non existence is preferable to an existence without comfort and without hope; an existence with which endless and perfect misery must be co-extensive. The miserable shifts in which the Origenists take refuge here, we cannot but consider as below contempt. The minds that are made easy by them, are proper objects of pity.--Ha! say they, Judas, of whom these words were spoken, has his Master's promise of a throne, as one of the twelve, at the right hand of the supreme Judge. Shall we ask them then, how can the text now under consideration be true? Was not all that elevation, better than a mere non-existence? They answer yes, infinitely better: But all that our Saviour meant was, that Judas might have died in the womb---and so gone to Heaven in a much easier way, escaping all the anguish of his remorse for betraying his Lord; and would this then have been good for Judas? How should he have come by the dignity of an apostolic throne, had he been but an untimely birth? It is needless to argue on this matter. The word of God has determined for us that, if Judas was saved, his birth, his death, and every thing else wrought together for his good. No change of circumstances would have been better for him: His anguish, remorse and pains, would not have failed to work out for him a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. *

Not

¶ Mat. 26. 24. Mark 14. 21. * Rom. 8. 28.

¶ 2 Cor. 4. 17.

Now is it possible, on that supposition, to reconcile the saying now considered as truth, by all the quibble and evasion which the original author of this scheme himself could devise. As to the promise they talk of, it is sufficient to remark that, while Jesus sojourned among mortals on earth, he conversed with them in their own language: To that language it was very usual to denominate the majority of any collective, by the common designation of the body: It is also familiar in common style to make use of round numbers, though not precisely exact, rather than go through a particular enumeration. Thus armies are generally stated at so many thousands: The slain in battle, are recounted in general terms by so many hundreds. Thus the tribes of Israel, are usually called twelve, and the Patriarchs twelve; though, if exactly numbered, it would be found that the number thirteen was truer of both. Besides, at the time in which this promise was made, Jesus actually had twelve Apostles: And we are assured in the Acts, that although this traitor had once been numbered with them, and it was the pleasure of their Lord to keep up the number of twelve, in apostolic commission and dignity in his church, yet this provision was no security to the traitor's bliss, for he fell from the apostleship, and went to his own place, and the decision of Heaven soon pointed to another who should take his bishopric, and occupy his throne. This other was numbered with the eleven. ⁶ And thus the
twelve

twelve apostolic thrones shall still be filled at the great day, and no Judas be among the happy men who fill them.

Shall our opponents still insist, that the promise was made to Judas in person? They cannot prove that he was present at the time. But if he was, we would wish to enquire what ground for their assertion, in the words themselves? Questions are usually answered in the same sense in which they are proposed. As the words of our Lord are an answer to a question then, we must refer to that for determining their meaning. In the preceding verse Peter says, "we have forsaken all and followed thee; what shall we have therefor?" If there was one present who never left his bag, his lust, or his avarice. If their company was stained by some lurking Haman, who never did heartily follow Jesus, but still followed his idols, his treason, and enmity against God and holiness: Nothing was asked for him. No reward was expected in such a case. It was only in behalf of those who had, indeed, left all and followed Christ, that Peter asked the question. And with express reference to that sense, his Master returns the answer, "Ye which have followed me in the regeneration, while I have been bringing my church into a new form, and as it were, a new life, ye, who have heartily followed me, during that regeneration, that is till this my great business is finished, shall have your thrones with me at last."

But what is this to Judas, who never forsook his all, whose heart never loved nor followed, but who on the contrary, sold him to death, for a little of that fordid pelf which he loved much better? On the whole, it is most apparent that,

for aught contained in this promise, Judas may still be in a state incomparably worse than non-existence. But that cannot be, if he is within reach of hope. For, if the day shall ever come, when he shall join the heavenly choir,---he will have a whole eternity to disprove the assertion we are now reasoning from. But, as the Lord of life himself has uttered it, we cannot think he himself, will ever give an everlasting evidence of its falshood: And if he do not, the torments of that traitor can never see a close.

8. This last conclusion is further confirmed, by the plain declaration of our Lord himself, that they who are committed, by justice, to the executioner, shall never escape the prison to which he must confine them; until, of their whole debt, they shall have paid off the very last mite. ^a That it was for the satisfaction of the demands of justice, they were conveyed to a place of punishment, we are fully shewn on the first and second arguments. And that they must needs remain there, until that satisfaction be made. Our adversaries themselves seem to concede the necessity of this sometimes, they cry out, "let them suffer till then, only let them be set at liberty when they have satisfied justice, and paid the last mite." ^b We cheerfully join issue. We do not believe their pains or imprisonment will continue one moment when that is done. But, if we have not totally failed in the arguments just alluded to, they have proved that this is a payment which they never will have compleated to all eternity. If, indeed,

^a Mat. 5. 25. Luke 12. 59. ^b Burnet de Stat. morte p. 304.

indeed, a finite payment were sufficient, then it would follow that a finite debt only was due. A finite price might therefore be adequate to the business of purchasing their redemption. And if so, the sacrifice of the Lord Christ, might well enough have been spared: The end might as well have been answered at less expence. And when we see this costly ransom paid down, we may cry out, in astonishment, to what purpose is all this waste? ^c Could the redemption of sinners have been effected consistently without an atonement, or could an atonement have been made by any other sacrifice, why should it please the Lord to bruise his beloved Son for man? ^d Why did he not spare him from suffering, when he heard him, in agonies, crying Father if it be possible let this cup pass from me? ^e But the necessity of this for the redemption of his people, is fully witnessed by himself. When first he offered himself to the task, he saw that other sacrifices would not answer the purpose. ^f When actually in the humbling trials of it, he confessed it behoved him to fulfil all righteousness. ^g And when the work was finished he avowed it indispensable: Ought not Christ to have suffered. ^h All this however, is quite unintelligible on the supposition that a finite price was all that was needed, and that the temporary suffering of the sinner himself, might avail to discharge all demands. If then justice required an infinite satisfaction; and that could not be made by any degree of sufferings, of a mere creature, in any given time; then it will require

^c Mat. 26. 8. ^d Isa. 53. 10. ^e Mat. 26. 39. ^f Phil. 40. 6. 8. ^g Mat. 3. 15. ^h Luke 24. 26.

require a whole eternity to pay the last mite. But the former has already been proved. Therefore the latter is true. And if they may not go from their prison and their woes, until the last mite be paid, as the text solemnly assures us; then must their abode continue there to an endless duration.

9. And this naturally leads us to see the reason, why the torment of the damned is so often represented by our Saviour, under the notion of their worm, "that dieth not, and the fire that is not quenched." That an important sense is contained in these words appears from the emphasis put upon them, and the earnestness with which the divine instructor repeats them, verbatim, three times successively, in the compass of a very few verses. It has employed all the art of the various enemies of our doctrine to evade their force. Both parties of the Origenists have attempted to smother the conviction with which this context strikes the rational mind. They have however taken very different ways, and therefore require very different treatments. The one says, this means only the distresses of conscience in this life, the word being in the present tense, shews only that this worm is not yet dead, nor this fire quenched as yet; but this does not hinder that both may expire before to-morrow. We answer that the very words of the context now in view, are a full confutation of this pury criticism; for, as if on purpose to cut up Origenism by the roots, they have twice in the same breath, pronounced

of this fire not only, that it is not quenched ; but that it never shall be quenched : Then they rack about, and aver that the whole is intended as descriptive of the punishment of devils, from which Christ has freed all men.

But to this it is sufficient reply to read the texts themselves ; there we find that the persons in danger of being delivered over to this punishment, are such as have lived wickedly in this world, by a course of offences against Christ and his little ones---persons who had lived in animated bodies, with eyes and hands and feet---but this is surely no description of devils. They also notify us that the worm that ever gnaws them is THEIR worm, not that of devils ; a punishment peculiar to their nature, and the degree of their guilt. Put the other party whose learning and abilities could not suffer them to join in cavils of this kind, have endeavoured to wink the object of these texts out of sight, by objections fetched from another source. They tell us that nothing more than a severe temporary punishment is here meant ; this, they say, is manifest from the bodily figures here used ; both of which imply that, though the instruments of this punishment may endure long ; yet their action upon bodies cannot long continue ; without the entire destruction of the body on which they act. That this is all, they think, is plain from the passage of scripture, to which our Lord here alludes ; which evidently refers to the fire in the valley of Hinnon.

Of this evasion so much use has been made, that it is necessary to examine it a little. That the phrenology of the text bears a plain analo-

gy to the words of the prophet Isaiah, we readily grant,—But we see no good reason to refer from this, that the bodily tortures inflicted at that particular place, are all the text intends : It is by no means certain that Isaiah had these tortures in view in the words referred to: Nor would it answer the objector's purpose if he had.

The valley adjoining to the east-gate of Jerusalem was, in the time of Joshua, possessed by one Hinnom. And there, in the times of Judah's idolatries, a high place was built for the idol Meloth; conformed to the paganism of the Ammonites, whose principal idol was called by that name; and probably it was designed to represent the sun. To this idol they offered even human sacrifices. Their own children, innocent babes in tenderest infancy were conveyed, thro' the flame, burning on the altar, into the belly of an hollow image of brass, of monstrous size; which was ever kept burning hot for that purpose ! There they were reduced to ashes; and these fell through a grate, in the lower part of the image, to the foot of the altar, by which it sat. A drum or tabret was, in the mean time, used to drown the cries of the expiring innocents; and prevent their reaching their parents ears; and this circumstance gave the name Tophet to the place, ^b

In this horrible zeal for the devil's honor, some of the kings of Judah were ambitious of leading the way; and Ahaz was the first of that

C c

class :

^a Isa. 65. 24, ^b from the Hebrew toph--Tympanum--the verb tophash--pulsavit.

class : But when Josiah was stirred up to promote a general reformation through his kingdom, he took special care to mark this valley with lasting tokens of his abhorrence. He destroyed the whole apparatus of idolatrous cruelty, and turned the place into a dunghill, where all the offal and filth of the city should be carried--malefactors interred---dead carcases thrown, and the bones of those whose fleshy parts had been fully destroyed by putrefaction, worms, or other carnivorous animals, were gathered in heaps and burnt.--For which last purpose fires were continually kept there. • Further to manifest the divine anger against the practices carried on at the place, it was so ordered in providence, that when the city was taken by the Chaldeans, this was the principal scene of slaughter, and filled with heaps of corpses through its whole extent ; many of which were left a prey to ravenous beasts and birds. Hence, in after ages, whatever became an anathema among the Jews, was delivered to Gehenna, i. e. the ground of Hinnom, as the worst imprecation which could be devised.

Hence, too, the pains of tophet became a periphrasis to signify the several bodily torments ; and the cries, the flames, and tortures there, began to be considered as typical of the future misery of the damned ; for this reason the word 'Gehenna' is used in the New Testament, even by our Lord himself, to signify hell. •

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• 2 King 23. 10. Jer. 7. 31. 32, 33---and 19. 4. 6.

• Mat. 5. 22. Gal.

It is very probable that the words of this text may allude to tophet as a type of hell; there can be no doubt that they are figures drawn from the two principal ways of destroying dead bodies, burning and burying; of the last of which being devoured by worms, is a natural consequence. But as neither can give any trouble to dead bodies, the idea of the destruction meant, is transferred from them to living ones; upon which the action of these two instruments, gives an excruciating pain, which no other torture can exceed. It is, however, very evident that all is designed to point out the anguish of souls in a future state: In any other view, there can be nothing pertinent in the use here made of them. There was no danger of the fire of Hinnom literally, at that time, to destroy the living; nor could all its fury against the dead, be more than cutting off a right hand or foot, or plucking out a right eye; and far less could it be supposed a more dreadful punishment than that in which a mill-stone should be hanged about the neck, and the man thus cast into the sea. But, in the sense we plead for, there is a peculiar fitness in the type to represent the thing signified. The worms, bred in, and by the bodies themselves, very aptly pointing out the inward stings of a conscience ever accusing but never appeased; and of passions ever craving, yet never satisfied; whereas the fire is applied by external force; and thus may properly signify the positive pains inflicted by the indignation of God. Nor will any rule of interpretation warrant the forcing the antitype into conformity with the type, further than in the circumstances which the scope of the whole requires and admits. It is therefore doing as great

great violence to the established laws of exposition, as to the nature of the thing, to affirm that, because fire will soon destroy its fuel, therefore, the punishment of hell shall soon burn itself down; especially when it is considered that the Author of the text himself has expressly declared, several times over, that this fire never shall be quenched. Will these Gentlemen insist that this fire must needs consume its fuel, in time? We answer that then, it must be quenched.--And, if it is, the whole context is found a false witness. Do they urge that annihilation must be the effect of these torments long continued? We ask them why? Is not the hand, which at first gave being to creatures, able to support that being, as long as he will? Or can his one hand lay on what all the power of his other hand cannot sustain a creature under? We know the Socinean abettors of Origenism plead that the wicked shall have no resurrection, nor existence after death. But we have not yet heard our present opponents say so: This is not kind enough for their tender hearts. No. They will not be satisfied with putting the wicked beyond the reach of government. They must have them placed on the thrones of bliss eternal. And it must be confessed their scheme is the more eligible of the two; since it has the face of much more benevolence; and there is as good reason for it as the other. It is obvious enough, however, that if they cannot hold the ground they have taken, they had rather insist under the banner of Socinus than embrace the Bible doctrine? It is very usual with them to cry out, why not rather take away their beings, than keep sinners eternally in misery? We answer,

because

because that would not be just; it, as it would inflict but one and the same degree of punishment on sinners of all sizes; for there can be no degrees in annihilation; and 2dly. because this in fact would be so far from punishing every man according to his works, that it would be conspiring against the public, opening the back door of the prison, and effectually helping the criminal to escape from the hands of justice. This would give the atheist all his wishes. Let the time of the commission of his sin be ever so short, it would take still less time to suffer for it. Verily, it would make it impossible for God to punish them at all. Justice therefore cannot suffer the criminal to slip away out of being, until every one of his transgressions has had all the punishment it deserves. The officer who lets the prisoner go out of his hands, before the debt is satisfied, must change places with him. He instantly becomes the debtor himself, and is held responsible for all the demands against him.

Let not atheism deceive us. Though men may live like brutes, they cannot die like them. An hereafter awaits them; and must await them while the divine government continues to be morally just.---But we still hear men mutter that annihilation is the highest right the Creator can hold over creatures. Is non-existence then the very worst of curses? Have we not heard it from his her authority, that some may come to find themselves in a state far worse than non entity? A state in which it may be said, it had been good for them if they never had been born? A state in which they shall seek death, and it shall flee from them? Indeed, this assertion must be as false, as it is blasphemous, unless

Can it be true that the gift of being, was greater than that of happy being; yea, greater than all the other gifts which have ever been bestowed, or ever can? For surely the act which deprives of the greatest benefit must contain the greatest punishment.--How ver, it is needless to enumerate the absurdities of this position. The text declares the fire of the damned never shall be quenched: But if annihilation comes, 'tis all quenched at once.

Nor can the words kill, perish, destruction; &c. frequently used by sacred writers, on the subject of future punishment, be ever brought to give support to this notion. All these evidently speak a destruction of the happiness, and of the hopes of the damned; but they have no relation to mere existence, which is not taken away by any modes of perishing, of death, or destruction known in nature. The wood exists, tho' in ashes.--The building is in ruins, but the matter of it remains. Besides the destruction threatened to the wicked hereafter, is expressly called eternal destruction: Intimating that it is one which it will take up an eternity to inflict, and which the sufferer must eternally feel. Nor will the cause be helped by the second death. In this many Origenists have placed their last hopes; that if the punishment may not be taken off before, this kind officer shall step in some time, and with a coup de main, finish their torment by taking away their lives. Divine revelation assures us, that the second death shall hurt those it strikes. ^b But annihilation would

would help, not hurt them, who are in hopeless misery. They would esteem it a friend, not an enemy; an unspeakable blessing, rather than such a curse as is the wages of sin. The second death is a figurative speech, used in scripture, to signify a living torment which shall never end, while immortal spirits can endure. It takes this name, because it begins after the death of the body; and to signify that as this is the highest punishment which can be inflicted on the one, so that is the highest which can be laid on the other part of us. It is therefore expressly declared to consist, not in annihilation, but in being cast into the lake of fire and brimstone. ^c This is an expression in which a manifest allusion is had to the instruments by which the Lord was pleased to execute his righteous judgment on Sodom and Gomorah. A storm of fire and brimstone sent down from the Heavens, on those guilty cities, left them a perpetual monument of most dreadful and desolating vengeance; whilst the earthquake attending it turned the places where they stood, into a noisome, stinking, and sulphurous lake, which is, to this day, called the dead sea.

This most dreadful catastrophe is evidently used in scripture as an emblem of hell torment. As it effected a desolation total and remediless, unmixed with the least token of mercy or compassion

^c Rev. 19. 20, and 20. 10, 14, 15, and 21. 8. On this point the learned reader is requested to consult the Chald. paraphr., Deut. 33. 6. Targum of Onkelos. Targum of Jerusalem. Isa. 24. 14 and 65. 6. ibid.

affliction to the sufferers ; as it produced a direful distress that would be of perpetual duration ; and especially as the sinful human creatures overthrown in it, were thereby plung'd into the eternal fire of hell. Hence we see the words of the apostle Jude, which, the Origenists have wrested into a sneer, against the eternity of hell-torments, afford no materials for such workmanship, as the apostle evidently sets forth the fire which destroyed these cities, to be the only type, the example of the eternal fire, into which the sinners therein were hurled by its means.

What is the nature of the fire of hell ? Whether it be altogether a figure, designed to represent the extremity of soul-torment, by the pain excited by the action of fire on our bodies ? Or, whether a material fire is to be employed, at least as one part, of the portion of the damned after the judgment : And if so, of what particular kind that fire must be ; these, all are questions foreign to the business of this Essay. But whatever answers might properly be given them ; one thing is certain, that he will be disappointed who expects it to purge away the defilements of sin, or cure the corruptions of the souls which suffer it. Nor is he mis taken, who trusts that its force will suffice to annihilate its subject. To the one it is sufficient to hint that this fire is not disciplinary, but judicial ; and to refute the other it is needless only to reflect, that the being it acts on is immortal, and that the wrath of God, shall never be exhausted, in punishing the Malefice.

Thus

Thus the prophet has taught us, that Tophet is ordained of old, that it is made deep and large, that the pile thereof is fire and much fuel, and the breath of the Lord, like a stream of brimstone, doth kinde it. 5

These observations will serve to supply us with a natural and easy key to the many figurative expressions of this, or of similar import used in scripture; to furnish us with some ideas of the greatness of the unutterable torments to be endured in hell; as smoke, darkness, burnings and the like.

But our chief concern is to find out how far any epithets are annexed to these terms, which may serve to determine the duration of that misery which they denote.

10. The rage of Origenism, has raised so much dust to prevent the words ever, everlasting, eternal, and their kindred terms, from being seen in their true light, that we have thought it proper to avoid the consideration of them, until we had tried whether the doctrine in hand might not be fully proved, without them. And we now request the candid reader to review, and calmly examine the arguments hitherto offered. And when the request has been complied with, we shall then appeal to him, whether the doctrine of the eternity of hell-torments has not been found authenticated by evidences that would support it, if none of these words were in the Bible.

It would however be indecent, on this topic, to overlook the confirmations which these words bring

bring in to our aid. Although the labors of others, and indeed the foregoing remarks make it quite unnecessary to dwell on them

Let it then be observed, that almost whenever future misery is described by fire it is expressly called everlasting fire : *a* Is it set forth by burnings? Those are ever stated as everlasting burnings. *b* The state of damnation to which it consigns sinners, is called eternal damnation. *c* The destruction with which they are punished, there is an everlasting destruction. *d* And this is expressly declared to be not a punishment of which the smart is soon over; though it leaves an effect never remedied: But an everlasting punishment, *e* which necessarily requires the constant efficacy of the punisher, and the constant sufferings of the punished. The contempt poured on those unhappy wretches, is styled everlasting contempt. *f* The outer darkness where nothing better is found, than weeping wailing and gnashing of teeth, is exhibited as darkness, the blackness of which, endures for ever. *g* And the unutterable torments there, are declared to act on the tormented, without cessation, day and night, for ever and ever. *h* And to add no more, we have the seal of infallibility set on this down, in the awful prediction following. "They shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out, without mixture, into the cup of his indignation. And they shall be tormented

a Mat. 18. 8. and 25. 45: *b* Mark 3. 29. *c* 2 Tess. 1. 9. *d* Mat. 25. ult. *e* Dan. 12. 2. *f* Psal. 2. 17. Jude 6, 13. *g* Rev. 20. 10.

tormented with fire and brimstone, in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb ; and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up FOR EVER AND EVER. :

Here let us pause-----and consider what is the amount of the evidence of the passages above cited. Is there among them all the least hint of a period to the sufferings of which they speak ; Do they not plainly declare them to be strictly eternal "a parte post ?" If not, we demand what words would be strong enough to amount to such a declaration ? To say that none could, is just as good sense as to affirm, that the word eternal cannot signify as much as the word eternal. And if it be granted that there are some words which might suffice to express this idea, we beg the favor of the Gentlemen opposing us, to direct us to them. Is it within the compass of language to express, a never ending duration ; if the words endless, everlasting, eternal, enduring for ever, yea, for ever and ever, be not able to do it ? Is there any other word conveying this meaning more strongly ? We must therefore confess ourselves utterly at a loss how to reconcile the doctrine of the Origenists with the belief of the truth of the Bible. To us it is perfectly inconceivable how any man of reason can read these passages, and then the eternity of hell-torments ; without professing the design of contradicting Christ and his apostles. No words can more positively give the lie to others, than this doctrine does to all these : And
 should

Should any abetter of it pretend, that Christ has given him authority to do so, he must own those disciples to be extremely compliant, who never scruple his word. The most zealous Origenists have confessed the absolute eternity of hell torments to be taught in the plainest and most express terms in the sacred scriptures; and their chief apology for contradicting the author of that book to his face, formerly, was, because their own reason, their ideas of the nature of God, and things exclaim against it; and urge them on to interpret the sacred words more temperately and commodiously; and because their minds shrink and abhor, to think of eternal misery. * Whether this apology favors of over much modesty, or reverence for the veracity of the great founder of the christian religion, the impartial reader may decide.---And whether it will justify themselves at the great tribunal, it becomes the makers of it now to consider.

To avert the odium of being thought avowed correctors of the spirit of God, they have had recourse to another pretext as a shelter for their doctrine: The original words used in both testaments to express the duration of future punishments, they pretend, ought not to be translated by words so strong as those which have been above recited; as they properly signify only a long indefinite time, or a definite limited duration, such as an age, and so they bring forth a number of texts in which these words are applied to subjects, whose duration is confessedly infinite, as Isaac's kingdom--the passover--mountains--

* Burnet de flat mass, p. 290, 291.

mountains--hills, &c. and then they loudly re-
monstrate the absurdity of supposing a strict eter-
nity to be meant by them in such places? and
hence infer that it can as little be meant by
them any where else. The English reader has
of late been sufficiently dosed with roots import-
ed from Hebrew and Greek climes, to provoke
him to deprecate any repetitions of that pre-
scription: It is with regret that we are now
constrained to offer violence to his feelings, by
urging him to submit to the necessity of the
case, and take a second portion as an antidote
against the deleterious tendency of the first.

Whether the Hebrew word which, for sake of
the deficiency of the press, the writers on this
subject among us, have given us in Roman or
Italic letters, ought to be written GNOLAM,
or whether it ought not to be supposed with
Scultens, Robertson, and others of the best He-
brewcians of the present day, that the letter hajih
instead of being a nasal letter, is the strongest gu-
tural in the alphabet, and to be expressed with the
roughest aspiration possible, and so whether the
word should not rather be written hgholam, we
list not now to dispute.

But he must be unacquainted with the He-
brew code, who needs to be informed, that it is
the strongest term used through that whole vo-
lume, to signify an interminable duration, com-
ing from the verb hgholam, which means to lie hid.
It is to be understood to express a duration which
never was defined or measured, and which by
its very nature is incapable of being so. A space
whose beginning, end, and mode of succession
cannot be investigated by the highest created in-
tellect. Hence it appears, to point out ETER-
NITY, as its primary sense. And thus it is ap-

plied to the perpetuity of God's being, attributes, honors, government, &c. ^a to the unchangeable stability of the covenant of grace, ^b to the endless duration of the life to come, and to the happiness of saints there. ^c It is indeed the most emphatical, if not the only word in the Hebrew language, to express eternity. And, if it fails to do it, it remains an inexcusable blot on a language, in which the eternal God chose to speak his mind to men about himself, and all the eternal things pertaining to him, and deeply concerning them, that it had no terms in all its copious treasure of words, capable of expressing an everlasting existence.

Of the other four words, employed in that language, to signify durations greatly protracted, there is sufficient reason to affirm that, not one comes up to the significancy of this: And all of them appear, on the various occasions in which they are used, to point out either a duration which flows on like the waters of a river, without any stops or interruptions, till it comes to its end; or a continuance which is long and indefinite: Though they are sometimes translated by the words always, sometimes by ever, sometimes by of old. Whereas this word is used more than 400 times in the Bible: And it cannot be denied, even by our adversaries themselves, that in more than 120 of these places, it is impossible to understand by it, any thing short of absolute eternity in the strictest and most proper sense.

That

^a Gen. 21. 33. Deut. 33. 27. Psal. 9. 7, and 10, 16, and 29, 10, and 146, 10. ^b Isa. 55. 3. ^c Eccl. 12. 9. Dan. 12. 8.

That every learned Jew, after the captivity, understood it in this sense, appears by the terms which the Septuagint have used to give the force of it in the Greek language; and by the unanimous approbation of their translation, and the very general practice of reading it in their Synagogues, instead of the original, in many countries to which they were dispersed: And especially from the Scribes and Pharisees entering no objections against Christ and his apostles for drawing their quotations of scripture from it. Now, in the whole of that work, there are not more than half a score of places in which these fathers ever chose to render the word HGHOLAM by any other Greek term than AIOON, and its derivative AIOONOS. And to prove that these Greek words, still continued to be understood as synonymous with that Hebrew; it is worthy of remark that when the New Testament was translated into the Syriac language, the translators constantly render aion by hgholam.

The etymology of this Greek word clearly shews that it signifies an existence permanent and unchangeable, without beginning or end, and to which past and future are alike unknown. The best authorities assure us it is compounded of two words which signify always existing. And hence, a proper eternity must be supposed to be its primary signification. The writings of Plato, Aristotle, Plutarch, and other standard, classical authors in the Greek language abound with instances in which it is used in that sense; and

^d Aristot. de celo l. 2. and Philo de mundo derive it from

And the most learned Origenist *may be challenged to produce any other word in that tongue, more properly and with greater force importing an everlasting duration: Boethius says it signifies the total perfect possession of an indeterminable life at once. And we know of no other Greek word of equal significancy; and thus it appears that the original words *hgholam* and *aioon*, are exactly of the same meaning; and that eternity is the proper signification of both, and therefore that our translators were fully warranted to render them by words of that import on the subject before us.

A slight acquaintance with the Masoretic and other Rabbinical writings, referred to in the chapter on Deism, or with the *Meir Netib*, or even with the late work of their younger *Buxtoff*, printed at Basil, 1632, * will enable one to shew, in one glance, how often the word *hgholam* is to be found in the Bible, and in what places; and a moment's inspection into a Greek concordance, especially that of *Erasmus Schmidius*, will suffice to inform us as much concerning the words *aioon* and *aionios*: It is needless then for us to trouble the reader with a recital of them here, as the English enquirer must have no other evidence than our bare word; and the learned would not fail to consult the authorities himself. Let it suffice then, to observe that there are but two places in the New Testament, where the words eternal, everlasting, &c. in our translation, have any other
for

* Vide also *Kircher's concordance to the 70*, or that of *Trommist*.

for their original than the adjective above mentioned; that that adjective is rendered by the word eternal near sixty times in that book;--- and that it is above forty times joined to the word life in that sense.

To this remark it may be added that, among all the rules of good writing, none is more generally received as just and reasonable than this, that diversity of subjects or designs requires diversity of style; and hence, as the same thought may be conveyed with different degrees of force by the different language used as its vehicle; so words may lose much of their original energy, and even change their sense for its contrary, by being drawn from the subjects to which they naturally belong, and applied figuratively to others, whose nature will not admit their being understood in their primary signification. The truth of this observation has perhaps never been more fully experienced in any words, in any language, than in these we are now considering. We have seen their proper and first meaning to point out a strict eternity. **ETERNITY**, however, is in strict propriety, peculiar to the existence of God alone. An existence necessary, unchanging, and possessed all at once. This word is used to signify that existence in its whole compass of duration; that is, as long as duration itself is possible. And from this idea it came to have a general, but figurative signification; importing the whole compass and extent of existence in general; and this opened the way for applying it to a great variety of subjects whose very nature is such as unavoidably obtrudes on us the idea of a limited duration. Whenever it is so applied, it is intended to denote the whole existence of its subject; or all

the duration which is possible for it. This possibility is limited by the nature of the thing. And hence, every existence considered in this view, seems to have an eternity of its own.--- The whole of that duration of which it is capable, is its eternity. Hence, in this figurative sense, we find it used by the sacred writers, to signify sometimes a longer and sometimes a shorter period; sometimes a definite, and sometimes an indefinite one; sometimes it means no more than an age; sometimes the whole duration of the Jewish, and sometimes of the christian dispensation; sometimes the whole time from the beginning of the world until now; sometimes the space from this time to the end of the world. But, in all cases, it is manifestly used to signify the longest duration possible for the nature of the thing of which it speaks; thus the passover is said to be an everlasting or eternal ordinance; because it endured as long as the economy on which it was founded; the typical kingdom of Israel and David is called everlasting, because it continued until Shiloh the antetype thereof, did come; and it was not possible for a type to continue longer. Hills and mountains are stiled eternal, because they endure as long as the earth on which they stand, and longer was impossible: So the bliss and woe of the future state is called eternal, because it must last as long as possible; that is, as long as the immortal souls can exist which possess it; and that future world can remain where it is to be possessed. And thus even in this their figurative sense, these words, when applied to future punishment, will be found to

spak

Speak a duration as long as that which in their literal construction, they denote, that is a true and proper eternity to come.

This remark easily explains that difficulty which may have started at finding these original words construed by many of the most eminent critics in the languages to which they belong, with so much uncertainty, and in so many different senses, seemingly inconsistent with each other. For, in this view, there is nothing absurd in finding the learned Buxtorf render the word *hgholam* by the latin words *seculum, tempus homini absconditum, tam infinitum et eternum, quam finitum*. Nor any inconsistency in Rivetus asserting that it does not necessarily mean eternity, unless when joined to *hghad*, before or after it. *

And with this interpretation is perfectly reconcilable, the Hebrew criticism of four of the greatest authorities, in that language, that have come to our view, without the weight of divine inspiration, who all assert that it is a word of the greatest ambiguity, having significations as different as the subjects it speaks of, sometimes signifying only a long duration simply, as in 2 Sam. 11. 10. Sometimes a long time to end in some signal alteration of the things, as in 1 Sam. 12. 13. Sometimes a whole eternity to come, as in Dan. 12. 1, 2. Sometimes an eternity absolute, both past and to come, as when it is used concerning God. *

Hence

* Rivet. in Exod. 72, and 15, 17.

* More Nebochim part. 2. c. 28. Spantem. Subi. evangelic. par. 2. dub 47. Galat. de uscan. cathol. veritate lib. 28. 2. 5. and Rabba. Mose Ben Maimon.

Hence we see also, how to understand the matter, when we find Homer, Herodotus, and Xenophon, employ the word *aion* and *aionios*, to signify sometimes the date of a man's life, sometimes an age, and sometimes an everlasting duration. When we see the learned Scapula render the former, by *aeuum* and *eternitas*; and the latter by adjectives, no less differing in their meaning. And two other great critics concurring to instruct us that it signifies a year, or 100 years, a life time, an age, the world, worldly men, or eternity. ^b And the ingenious Pafor calls it *eternum*, and when it is *eis aionas*, *aicoroon*, he says, though it be rendered for ages of ages, it is an Hebraism signifying, to all eternity, or an infinite duration. ^c

From all this, we think ourselves fully warranted to put on a little confidence in our turn, and appeal to every candid judge; whether there be weight, in that poor Hebrew and Greek criticism of our opponents, sufficient to make it prudent for these Gentlemen to venture their salvation upon it, as the grand proof, that the hell-torments shall be but temporary. And especially since the same words are used to signify the duration of God himself, and of Christ his co-eternal son. We ask would it be tolerated, in the republic of letters, if any commentator upon some ancient classic, in either of these languages finding the words eternal life, and eternal punishment in the same sentence designedly contracted

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^b *Waldus in loc. commun. and Cameron. Myr.* in Hebr. 1. 2. and Tom 3 *praesertim* in epist. ad Hebr. c Pafor. Lexic. in Nov Test. page 62.

ted with each other; should go about to teach us that his author, by the former, meant a happiness that shall never end; but by the latter he was to be understood to speak only of a temporary pain, which should expire after a while; and that although the words were the very same in both clauses; though they were used on very solemn occasions, again and again, with the greatest deliberation, in the same breath, with relation to the same future state, and concerning the same kind of subject, both being alike immortal, and possessing endless existence; and though the author, thus using them, has not once given the least hint of his design to be understood to mean a different duration in the latter, from that which he had spoken of in the former clause? Would a classical scholar have any patience with an expositor who should dare to treat Hoëne, or Xenophon, Horace or Virgil, in this manner? But men can venture to bolder freedoms with the word of God, in these days, than they durst use with the writings of a Pagan poet!

It must, however, be owned that the Origenists have been stunn'd with the argument for the absolute future eternity of hell-torments, which is drawn from the same words being used in scripture, to express their duration that are there commonly employed to signify the duration of JEHOVAH; and the continuance of the saint's bliss.--And memorable are the shifts to which it has put them; sometimes they say these words can't prove either the one or the other: These things are known otherwise to be everlasting, but not by these words: And sometimes they affirm that the eternal future existence of the saint's bliss, is itself not

to be believed.--Wonderful as it may seem, it is true as has formerly been noticed, that Origen himself supposed that the heavenly inhabitants would be falling off one after another, sinking into sin, and sent down to earth, until purged by new torments, they should be fit to ascend to their celestial mansions again, and that in constant rotation they should continue rising and falling forever : And Whiston, who has appeared as one of the ablest Origenists in these latter ages, rather than not get rid of this argument, did not stick to maintain the horrible blasphemy that all the saints, yea, and Christ himself, their head, should at length be annihilated.

Argument VI. "When eternal punishments are absolutely threatened in scripture, to the finally impenitent, the moral character of God is at stake for the full execution thereof." That they are so threatened, we trust the candid reader will grant has now been fully proved.--But the adversaries of this doctrine contend, that there is no arguing from the threatening to the certainty of the execution : Since no body will suffer by the failure, they pretend, that there is nothing to hinder God to be better than his word, though he cannot be worse.--And hence we find destruction threatened against Ninevah, and yet that city saved from it. To this it is easy to return a sufficient answer. When threatenings are suspended on certain conditions, there is but a conditional necessity for their being executed ; but when they are delivered absolutely, it becomes absolutely necessary that the execution be perfectly a'equate to them : That all the divine manners of judgment relating to the present life, are conditional, may be concluded,
from

from its being in its nature a changeable state; and the conclusion is confirmed by the positive declarations of scripture, that all such threats are uttered to excite the threatened sinners to repent; and therefore that they all leave room for repentance. This is often expressed in the form of the threatening itself; but that, whenever it is not expressed, it is always implied, we are particularly assured by the words of the Lord himself, when designedly explaining his own threatenings of this kind, "at what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it; if that nation against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them: Now therefore go to, speak to the men of Judah, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, saying, thus saith the Lord; Behold, I frame evil against you, and devise a device against you: Return ye now, every one, from his evil way, &c." And that the threatening against Ninevah was of this sort, appears, not only from the eventual escape of that city, but also from the undeniable evidence given by the people in their humiliations that they understood it so; and especially from the remarkable conduct of the prophet on that occasion, so fully manifesting that this was the sense it bore in his own mind. There was no necessity then for the execution of the threatening, unless in case of the continuing

continuing obstinacy and impenitence of that people--for except in such case there was nothing threatred.

But all the threatnings respecting a future life are absolute.--For that state is fixed, and unalterable.--And therefore its inhabitants continue ever as fit objects of its punishments as they were the first moment; no room being left for repentance after death. There is then an absolute necessity of their being executed to the full. That this is certain will appear to any who consider that the threatning of eternal torment is the threatning of that God who made the law upon which that sentence is grounded. And that it contains a prediction of an event to be brought about by the power of his own government; that it has been uttered in the plainest terms, often repeated, sealed by the death of Christ, which at once ratified this and every other part of divine revelation, and finally, that it has been confirmed by the oath of Jehovah himself. Now, if we consider it merely as a threatning annexed, as a sanction to his law, is not the character of the lawgiver at stake to see it executed? Execution is the life of every law. The Ruler who relaxes the penalty, takes that life away.--He that destroys the sanction annuls the law.--And, if the legislator himself should do this, he openly renounces the authority he claimed when he made it. But how inconsistent would this be with the whole character of the most High? Where then is his justice, if he has made a law which it would be wrong to execute; or if he declines to execute a law that is right? If eternal punishment is due to the sinner, that punishment is a debt of justice; when it is threat-
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ned that debt is publicly acknowledged, divine justice then remains debtor to the sinner until it be fully paid.---Besides, how dishonourable to the wisdom of God, to make a law which it is wise to abrogate? Or to denounce a threatening by way of sanction to it, which he could not execute? And even to give the subjects of his government reason to believe that it could not, and never would be executed? Would not this be to render the threatening itself the vainest and most contemptible thing imaginable?

On the other hand, if we view this threat in the light of a prediction, is it not greatly derogatory to the divine veracity, to suppose that it can ever fail one jot or tittle of its full accomplishment? Whether we believe him or not, yet he abideth faithful---he cannot deny himself. *b* God is not a man that he should lie, neither the son of man that he should repent. Hath he said, and shall he not do it? Or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good? *c* Nay, himself has declared the certainty of the thing---I the Lord have spoken it; it shall come to pass, and I will do it. I will not go back, neither will I spare, neither will I repent, according to thy way shall they judge thee. *d* Let God be true, and every man a liar. *e* Heaven and earth shall pass away before one jot of his word pass unfulfilled. *f*

Can that man affirm that God is intent on maintaining the honor of his own truth, who would have the world believe that he has positively

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tively

b 2 Tim. 2. 13. *c* Num. 23. 19. *d* Psal. 24. 14.
Rom. 3. 4. *f* Mat. 5. 18.

tively threatened, eternal punishments, in the Bible; and yet that, in the same Bible, he has given obvious hints, that the threatening is false? And has really thereby let his enemies into the secret, that by confounding the threats they may be able more effectually to undermine the government which they are intended to support? How can the abettors of the objection now considered, save the divine moral character from the most injurious impeachments on their plan? If the threatened punishment is never to be executed, that must have been in the divine mind, when the threatening was uttered, or it must not.---If not, what is become of the omniscience of that God, of whom it is said, that known unto him were all his works from the foundation of the world? Or where is the immutability of him who said, I am the Lord, and change not? But if it was, where is the veracity of the God of truth? Will not the threatening then put on all the characteristics of a wilful imposition on his rational creatures? The supposition is horrible! It destroys the credit of all the prophets and apostles; yea, and that of Christ himself, at one blow! If there is no truth in the threat and prediction now in question, what ground have we to believe any other prediction or menace in the Bible? Are they not all confirmed by the same proofs? Do they not all stand supported by the same authority? If that cannot support the credibility of one, how can it maintain that of all the rest? If God was not bound in justice, to threaten this punishment to sin, because it deserved it; nor in truth to execute it when he had threatened it---then there was no necessity for the appearance of such a saviour as Christ---

Christ--nor for laying on him the whole punishment due to them he redeemed: And if not, the whole, no reason can be assigned why it should be asserted that any part was necessary; indeed this doctrine will be found eventually to reduce all the threatenings in the Bible to the rank of mere scare-crows--without any subsistence in all their sound! Nor will the threatenings fall alone. The promises too must share the same fate.--For divine truth is under no greater obligation to fulfill these than those. Some things that have already been said will shew that in this view the eternity of the bliss of Heaven, would be less certain than that of the punishments of hell. The one is originally necessary from the nature of things; the other is free. A kindness may be done: But justice must.--And, to conclude, the present argument, it necessarily follows, from what has now been observed, that the supposition that God is not obliged to execute this threatening, though plainly denounced, if it shall ever be proved to be true, and well founded, will effectually over-
 set the credit of the whole Bible.--For we have no assurance of the truth of any part of that divine book, but what is founded merely on God's having revealed it. But he has plainly revealed these threatenings as any other part. If these, then, be not true, we can have no certainty that ~~the~~ the rest is not utterly false.

Argument VII. Wherever any traditions were conveyed, which were originally drawn from divine revelation, there a notion of the eternity of the future punishments of the wicked ever prevailed. That this was the case among the Jews, is apparent from the language of the prophets. These ever taught that people to confi-
 der

der the devouring fire in which the wicked should hereafter lie down as one whose burning would be everlasting, *a* and its flame never to be quenched. *b* They bid the wicked, at the resurrection, to expect shame and everlasting contempt. *c* And hence we find this opinion remained generally received among that people all along: For even after the christian religion began to prevail, one of their best writers describes the future punishments of the wicked, by the figure of being obliged to live for ever dying, or to be ever in pains, griefs and calamities which never can cease, *d* And another, whose knowledge in their matters cannot be disputed, affirms it to have been the fixed judgment of the Pharisees, that the souls of the wicked after this life, were to be punished with perpetual and never ending torments; and that a perpetual prison was provided and appointed for their residence for ever, for that purpose. •

In the chapter on Deism, we have seen that there were not wanting opportunities of circulating the sacred tradition among the Pagan nations; and that an idea of eternal future punishments for the wicked prevailed among them, the reader will not doubt if he but take the trouble of looking into the writings of their authors, or even consulting those referred to in the margin: *f* So deeply rooted was this tenet among

among

a Isa. 33. 14. *b* Isa. 65. 24. *c* Dan. 12. 2. *d* Paillo
Fut. Vol. 2. p. 419, 420. *e* Josephus in bell. Jud. l. 2. c. 8.
sect. 14. p. 1065. Joseph. antiq. Jud. l. 18. sect. 2. p. 793.
f Plato in Phæd. p. 84, and in Gorgia. p. 357. Lucret. l.
1. v. 112. Diogen. Laert. in Pythagor. Celsus apud Origen.
l. 8. Seneca in Hercule.

among them, that all the labours of Epicurus to extirpate it, proved in vain: And the Alcoran every where is so full on this point, as to leave no room for dispute, whether this was one of the opinions which made a principal figure in the religion of Mahomet.

That the eternity of hell-torments was openly taught by Jesus Christ, and his apostles, we have proved.--And notwithstanding the pretences of the Origenists to the contrary, it will not be difficult to shew that this was the doctrine of those eminent writers in the primitive, and other early days of christianity who have been commonly known by the title of fathers in the church: Here we beg leave to refer the reader to some remarks made in the history of Origenism, relating to certain loose expressions used on this subject, by many writers of those times, over whose minds the credit of Origen HAD too great an influence. These scattered sentences, however, do not appear to have been by any means agreeable to the fixed sentiments of the authors themselves; and there is not even the shadow of evidence that they spoke the doctrine generally received in the christian church in their days. Nor did the writers themselves, seem to have any suspicion that they ever would be drawn into the list of the defenders of Universal Salvation, by the detached hints which a few Origenists have wrested from their natural and obvious intent, to plead that cause.

The Testimonies in favour of the doctrine of the eternity of hell-torments which might be collected from Clement, who was minister of

Rome, as early as the year 93, * from Ignatius who succeeded Evodius in the church of Antioch in the year 70, and whose works, so far as any remains of them, have been handed down to our times, had been greatly corrupted by transcribers, until Vossius and Usher, have endeavoured to restore them to their original purity, and therefore little credit is due to any citations brought from any editions of them before the days of these great men, from Polycarp, who was set over the church at Smyrna even in the days of his tutor John the evangelist, and suffered martyrdom anno 168. and whose elegant epistle to the Philipians, will ever remain a precious monument of the doctrine of early antiquity, and from the rest of the ancient fathers in the church, would swell this volume too far to admit the recital of them.

Nor should we detain the reader with quotations from any of the rest, had it not been so artfully insinuated by the Origenists, that they patronized the doctrine we now oppose; it is for this reason that we deem it but a piece of justice to the truth and to the character of these ancient worthies, to rehearse so much of their doctrine, from their own mouths, as may suffice to confute the aspersion. And here we shall endeavour to confine ourselves to those fathers whose names have been pressed by the Origenists into the service of their favourite principle.

Justin Martyr, whom the malice of one Crescens (a Cynic, whom he had worsted and convicted

* Vide Clem. Rom. Epist. 2. Sect. 8. After leaving this world, we shall never be able to repeat in the others

vices of ignorance in a public dispute,) had caused to be beheld at Rome, by order of Rutilius, the governor of that city, in the year 166, amongst many other things finely, spoken to the same purpose, says, "that the souls of the wicked shall continue to be punished as long as they shall exist. ^a And in a work presented to the Senate of Rome, expressly on purpose to explain and defend the doctrines and practices of Christianity; and when on this argument he uses this strong assertion, "if the wicked are not punished with everlasting punishments, then it will follow, either that there is no God, or if there is, that he takes no care of the world. ^b And again, Christ shall punish the wicked with eternal punishment, and not merely for 1000 years, as Plato taught." ^{bb}

Irenæus, had been educated in the Christian school first by Polycarp, and then by Papias who succeeded Pothinus in the ministry in the church at Lyons, and after twenty four years of faithful labors there, bravely suffered martyrdom, anno. 203, at a time when the Emperor Severus made the streets of that city run with christian blood for several days together, he left behind him many voluminous writings, only a few fragments of which remain until now: but among them we find several express declarations, of his sentiments on this point; in one of which he says, "to whomsoever the Lord shall say, "depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, these persons shall remain damned for ever, even as to whomsoever he shall say, "come

^a Dial. cum Typh. p. 223. ^b Apolog. ad Senat. Rom.
^{bb} Apol. 1. Scilicet. 8.

* come ye blessed of my father, &c. these shall
 " for ever enjoy the kingdom and improve
 " therein." *c* And in another, he affirms, that
 the torment " of the wicked in hell, will follow
 " on their deprivation of all good, and because
 " the good things proceeding from God are
 " eternal and without end, this privation will be
 " an eternal and endless punishment." *d*

TERTULLIAN, a native of Carthage, flourished as one of the most eminent divines of his time, in the reigns of Severus and Caracalla and continued in universal esteem as a minister, until about the year 216, when the envious and outrageous treatment he met with from the Roman clergy, turned him over to join the sect of Montanists; he still however continued an able promoter of the christian doctrine, and an eminent example of christian practice. No body wrote more or better books on almost every subject in religion. And no body bears more express testimonies against the doctrine we are now opposing. At one time we find him thus speaking on the subject, " We affirm thee, O Soul, to remain after the dissolution of this life---and to wait a day of judgment---and according to thy deeds, to be then destined to torment or happiness, both of which are everlasting." *e* And again, " God will judge thee more perfectly, because the more extremely; even by a sentence that is eternal, whether of bliss or punishment." *f* At another time says he speaking of the great day, " the Judge at that period

c Tertull. l. 4. c. 47. *d* Iren. l. 5. c. 7. *e* Tertull. de
 resurr. carnis. *f* Ibid. c. 32.

“ period, will a judge his worshippers to the re-
 “ ward of eternal bliss, and the profane to a
 “ fire equally durable.”^g And again, “ that
 “ which proves the perpetuity of the punish-
 “ ment of the wicked is that although they
 “ are devoured, they are never ended.”^b

PETER, called also Chrysologus, an eminent
 minister at Alexandria, who was beheaded for the
 faith, by the command of the Emperor Maxentius,
 in the ninth year of Dioclesian's persecution,
 Anno Dom. 311, in what of his works came
 down to posterity, testify fully in favour of the
 doctrine for which we now contend, “ there is
 “ says he, neither an end of the good, nor of
 “ the evil that follows the resurrection.”

JEROME of Palestine, who was justly looked
 on as one of the most useful ministers of the fourth
 century, we have already shewn was the grand
 detector and persecutor of the Origenists in
 his day. His works which yet remain, contain
 many assertions fully maintaining the doctrine
 of the eternity of hell-torments. Even in the
 passages adduced by modern Origenists in favor
 of their own cause, there are to be found plain
 testimonies against them, in the one he posi-
 tively declares “ we believe the torments of all
 “ infidels, (or unbelievers) who have said in their
 “ heart, there is no God to be eternal.”^a In
 the other he represents the punishment of the
 wicked to be “ such as the human mind is too
 weak to form any judgment of its greatness and
 measurement,

^g Apolog. cap. 18. ^b de penitentia cap. 12.

^a Jerom. comment. in Amos Cap. 4.

measurement. *b* and points out those men who imagined that punishment should ever come to an end, as quite different from himself, and vain to conceal their own doctrine, as being confessedly dangerous to mankind. *c*

Germanus, Patriarch of Constantinople, has purposely labored this point, against the Origenists, and largely shewn from the words of Christ, the apostles, the prophets, and the fathers, "that the punishments of the wicked are as endless as the joys of the saints in heaven." *d*

Andreas of Crete, expounds the doctrine of the church on the punishment of fire, and says, that "its smoke is said to ascend for ever and ever, that we may learn that the future punishment of sinners never shall have an end; just as the delight of the just, is everlasting." *e* And again, speaking on the second death, he adds, "thus we have two deaths, one of the flesh which is temporary, and the other inflicted as the punishment of sin in the future life, which is everlasting; and is that of the fire of hell."

We shall close these quotations with the remarkable words of Gregory, who being the disciple of Basil, and having been sometime the principal minister in the church at Constantinople, and an eminent defender of the Christian doctrines under the Emperor Theodosius, died at Ninzianzan his native place, Anno. 359. He was doubtless the most elegant and instructive writer in his day; and therefore his name has been handed down to posterity with great veneration.

The

b Ibid. Com. in Isa. 24. *c* Ibid. in Isa. cap. 66. *d* Phostus, Col. 223. *e* Andreas &c. in loc.

The Origenists have tried to shelter their doctrine under the sanction of it---but with what justice the reader will see; when he considers that father's own words, "The old tempter, says he, in his members, that is in the hearts of the wicked, seeks to terminate the future punishments of men, at a certain period, in order that he may prolong their lusts; and that they may take so much the more care not to finish the course of their sins here, by how much they are confident to affirm that the punishment of them must have an end there: Even now there are many who neglect to put an end to their sins, for that very reason, because they suppose the future judgments against them shall sometime have an end: But to these we answer, briefly, that if ever the punishments of the wicked are to be finished--- the joys of the blessed shall end at the same time; for truth itself declares these shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal. And therefore that is not true which he has threatened, neither is that true which he has promised." f

These testimonies are produced as a sample of a multitude that might be brought forth from the greatest names of antiquity. Not indeed with a design to cover our doctrine under the sanction of the names of persons unspiced: Nor that the faith of our readers, in this point, should stand in the wisdom of men; but partly to shew that however various were the degrees of light, enjoyed from the circulations of the sacred tradition

dition among the nations of the earth at different times; and from the possession of the written word, it has still been found that the least degree was sufficient to convince men of the truth of the doctrine we are now defending; and the greatest filled them who enjoyed it with the greatest assurance of it; and chiefly to confront our antagonists with forces of that very kind, with which they threaten to extirpate our doctrine---and to leave the public a fair opportunity to judge how far the gentlemen we oppose have good ground to boast of the most eminent fathers in the church in the purer centuries of the christian dispensation, as warm advocates for the whim of Universal Salvation---and zealous enemies to the doctrine of the eternity of hell-torments.

S E C T I O N IV.

Consequences of Origenism.

SOME of the reasons of our judgment respecting the eternity of hell-torments are now before the reader. The fidelity of some writers on the other side, has constrained us to bestow much more ink and paper on this part of our testimony

testimony than was at first intended. Yet the subject is far from being exhausted. Abundant room is left for additional arguments. Nor is there wanting ground and matter for as many more as have been offered. We trust, however, that enough has been said to shew that our doctrine stands firm on a footing, which all the efforts of Origenists will never be able to overthrow. In this confidence we feel no necessity of deviating from the plan of this work, by arranging the objections of our opposers, and giving a separate answer to each of them: Some of the most material of their cavils, have been designedly fore closed in the preceding section. And the rest are nervously answered in several publications with which America has very lately been favoured, in reply to the extracts considered above. The chief design of such of these worthy advocates for the truth, as we have seen, has been rather to defend it against the attacks made in that pamphlet, than to dig, for and lay the foundation on which it stands. This design has been executed by these writers, in a manner which we believe their antagonists will not be able to undo: But as their plan has not interfered with the scope of this essay, so we shall not trouble the reader with any particulars here, respecting the objections which he will find sufficiently removed there.

Had the error we oppose been only a harmless speculation, however vain and groundless, the duties of our station at this day, would have found us more pleading and more important work, than conflicting with it. But, according to the view we have of it, the case is utterly the reverse. No principle can be more nearly affecting to practice; as it immediately ad-

addresses those hopes and fears which are acknowledged to be the most powerful springs of action to mankind. As a practical principle, it can have no pretensions to general utility; since, on its own hypothesis, its opponent is just as safe as its friend; but, on ours, the danger of adopting it cannot be small.---No doctrine has ever been advanced under colour of a christian name, that more directly strikes at the root of all virtue and religion. It stops not at restoring us to the arms of popery, in one of its grand fundamental articles, viz. that of Purgatory; it rushes headlong down the precipice of Deism--dashes its blindfold votary on the rocks of Manicheism and Stoicism in his fall; and, as with a mill-stone tied about his neck, it plunges him into the deep of infidelity and Atheism in the end.

That this heavy charge is no slander, may easily be seen by, considering the consequences of the doctrine of which we now speak. We have no design to accuse the gentlemen, who support it with being cordially the disciples of any or of all the parties we have here enumerated. Nor would we wish to take undue advantage of an adversary, by charging him with consequences which he frankly disowns. But, as it is impossible for any two truths to contradict each other, it is of importance to mankind, when any new doctrine is offered to them, seriously to consider whether it militates with any one truth already known. And if any man has received for truth a proposition which overthrows some other principles, of which he is equally tenacious, it behoves him, either to shew a full consistency between

tween them, or to renounce the one or the other side; or finally to submit to be thought unfit to be reasoned with.

In an enumeration of the consequences of the doctrine of the Origenist, we should be obliged to traverse a wide field of absurdities indeed, did we follow the authors of the catechism, through all the windings of their labyrinth. The time would fail us to do justice to the multitude of sacred texts which they have dressed up in a fool's-coat, and set in the pillory, recommended to the salutations of deists and infidels, as fit objects for all their raillery and satire. It would be a painful task for the serious reader to review, the low cunning with which they abuse the plainest declarations of scripture. To hear them tell, that the many that were called, means the fallen angels--and the few chosen, the whole human race; * that the Jews, to whom Christ was preaching when he told his hearers, they were not of his sheep, were not men, but fallen angels; † that the men given to Christ were the whole human race, and the world out of which they are said to be given, was the world of devils. ‡ That the election spoken of by the apostle, is all mankind; and the rest who were blinded were only devils. § That, to make our election sure, is only to make proof that, we are human creatures. ¶ That sins and heresies are persons acting as moral agents now, and punished as the criminals in the world to come; and spending all

* Mat. 20. 16. † John 10. 26, and 8. 47. ‡ John 17. 6. § Rom. 11. 7. ¶ 2 Pet. 1. 10.

all the time of future existence in weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth. *f* But we forbear *f*---The bear rehearsal is an affront to common sense.

Let us turn to the other party, and see whether the Origenism which they teach, offers us consequences more tolerable :

1. Here then, we cannot avoid one obvious remark, which presents itself to our view, in front of the conclusions which we think must necessarily be drawn from the doctrine, that future punishment is but temporary, and all mankind shall finally be saved : And that is, that, if this doctrine is true, then it follows, that sin is left unpunished, with that punishment which it has merited, and which the law of God has threatened : And then the scripture cannot be true, which declares, that every transgression and disobedience, shall receive a just recompence of reward. *g* But that, on the contrary, the debtor to divine justice, though arrested and cast into the prison of hell, shall escape millions of ages before he has paid the last mite---notwithstanding that our Lord himself had declared the contrary, with all the solemnity of an asseveration. *b*

2. If ever this is done, then it cannot be denied, that God has abandoned his law, and set it aside, as a rule which it was not wise to enact ; yes, that he has actually repealed it, by stripping it of all the authority it had with men : This authority it derived from a sanction which

f ~~-----~~ *g* Heb. 2. 2. *b* Mat. 5. 25. Luke 2. 159.

which, by the repeal, it seems, it would be unjust to execute.---For it is evident that the law has lost its binding force, when mutilated of its sanction.--And the sanction has lost its life, when it is never to be executed. But whenever this is found to be the manner in which the divine law is treated by its author, what shall then have become of the wisdom and righteousness which first enacted it? And what shall be thought of our Lords assertion, that though Heaven and earth should pass away, one jot or tittle shall in no wise pass from that law, till it all be fulfilled? i

3. By this means, indeed, it would be certain that the great ruler of the moral world has abdicated his throne. His whole government was supported by the law. The moment then, when that law is vacated, the constitution of the empire is subverted, and the connexion thereby formed between the sovereign and the subjects, is that moment, actually dissolved; and thus the core of Stoicism lies at the heart of the error we are now reviewing.

4. The doctrine here opposed, would reduce the whole intellectual system into a chaotic state.---It destroys all final distinction of characters; all difference in the final issue of things, between the holiest prophets and the veriest sons of Belial; between the faithful martyr and his persecuting murderer; between the seraph and the fiend. It places the vilest wretch, who lived as a monster, and died as impenitent as a devil, on the same seats of celestial bliss, with the most eminent apostles that followed the Lamb.

5. The whole order of things, established by the divine constitution, is hereby sunk into the most horrible derangement. Great numbers are carried into the purest place--and fixed as everlasting members of the holiest and happiest society, in all the dominions of Jehovah, without any holiness in their natures; but with all their lusts in full strength; and so, all the holy beings there, must either accept of communion with their defilements; and degenerate into conformity with their corruptions; or instantly quit the place, and suffer an eternal but voluntary banishment to some other regions. All this must become fact, if all men are saved. Since it is not denied that many die in an unholy state; and it has been proved that the holiness they have neglected through this life, can never be acquired in another. And if ever this happens, the apostles will never be able to prove their assertions, that without holiness, no man shall see the Lord. And that no unclean thing shall ever enter the gates of the heavenly mansions.

6. If this doctrine be true, all the means appointed in the Bible, for leading men in the way to bliss, shrink up into mere scenery and empty parade. For, notwithstanding all that is said in that sacred book to the contrary, the fact comes to this, that there is no need at all of mens striving to enter into the gates of eternal life, nor to walk in the road that leads to it. Since it is impossible to miss the one, and all mankind, with all their lusts and all the diversity

of

of their perils, are constantly and necessarily travelling in the other. Wide is the gate that leads out of destruction; and broad the road that brings all men to heaven.^a For prayer for the forgiveness of our debts on this plan, there is not the least room. The Deity cannot but forgive them. Nor is there any occasion for preaching the gospel to men any more than to devils; unless it be to comfort them in their sins, and harden their hearts in enmity against God, and in opposition to religion and virtue; by solemn assurances, that all these things bring them into no sort of danger of being finally excluded from an eternity of bliss, and thus all the apostles elegant reasoning fails to the ground. *b*

7. This principle oversets the whole fabric of vital and experimental godliness. If this be true, all the special comforts of christians are delusory imaginations. All heart-work in religion is a mere dream. The whole work of the spirit of God on the hearts of men, in their conviction, illumination, conversion, edification and growth in grace, is to be considered only as the grand chimæra of enthusiasm; and what is worse, every witness which the Holy Ghost gives in the whole process of this work, is only an attestation to a falsehood. In all their convictions, humiliations, &c. he is testifying the absolute necessity of such a work, in order to salvation. But, on this plan, he is deceiving souls, all the while. For there is really no need at all of repentance, faith, holiness, nor any application
of

^a Luke 13. 24. Mat. 7. 13, 14. ^b Rom. 10. 13. 12.

of Christ, in this life. in order to eternal salvation in the other. * The vilest debauchee, the most prophane blasphemer is as really on his way to eternal happiness as the purest and most pious of Gods saints on the earth. †

g. By the plan of our opponents, Christ is set aside, as much as the law. These men who are so unfortunate as to slip into hell, will, in process of time, save themselves by the mere dint of their own sufferings. For such as these there's nothing for Christ to do. They are Christs unto themselves. They have borne all the burden that was needful, and paid all the debt they owed. They are therefore their own saviours, they are justified, if not by the works, yet at least by the sufferings of the law: And have none but themselves to thank for their deliverance. And hence, there must be a separate Heaven provided for the everlasting solace of these self-exalted beings: Or there must be wars and fightings, strifes and contentions, and so every evil work, in the Heaven allotted for the mansion of saints. For these men surely could never dwell in the same company, nor live on the same joys, nor join in the same works with those who ascribe their salvation altogether, to the blood of the Lamb. ‡

But this is not all; one sinner being found sufficient to pay his own score, and satisfy justice for himself, clearly proves that every sinner might do the same. For all the difference in the degrees of the guilt of sinners, may easily be balanced by a correspondent difference in the duration of their punishments. And since that which lasts longest, will come to an end at length

length, there will still be a whole eternity before than all. And the only difference then to all eternity, will be in favor of him, who suffered most by the way. As that circumstance will give a keener relish to all his enjoyments, and leave more scope to compliment his own stability, courage, and perseverance, if not patience too. On the whole, it follows then, that no sinner needed ever to have been indebted to Christ for his salvation. A finite punishment was all that could be inflicted. There was no need then of an infinite Redeemer, to atone for the sin and bear the penalty away : And hence there was no need of Christ's coming at all. And if God was not bound to be faithful to his threatening, there was no need of his suffering any thing when he did come. God might easily have spared him ; and so been only so much better than his word. Indeed as this scheme makes the whole of Christ's work a vain thing, so it boldly teaches sinners to neglect him in it all, and to treat him with contempt to the end. Since none can treat him and his sacrifices with greater scorn, than that being himself, who carries to Heaven, all that live and die, slighting them both.

9. The doctrine of the Origenists, infers the highest impeachment of the divine veracity : As it boldly affirms, that wherever eternal punishments were pointed out in scripture, nothing more than temporary sufferings were meant. God well knew of a way in which he would terminate them : Yet not a word is spoken about it, in all the sermons, or in all the writings of the sacred teachers, sent to instruct mankind in this affair ! Was there not great treachery, both to the truth itself, and to the

souls of men in such a discharge of their important function as this? Not to give one hint of the true state of the case? But on the contrary, to speak and write on this subject, just as we should suppose imposters would have done? To terrify men with an eternal damnation in which they never could be in any danger? But not to say a word of the rest? This is a method that does not agree with common honesty, not to say inspiration! Indeed we must have very hard thoughts of these sacred writers, if we believe the present doctrine! Would it not greatly disparage their credit, to suppose that there were such secret reserves in all the threatenings, such scenes to be opened in opposition to them in due time, and that they, though knowing the whole matter and sent to reveal the truth to mankind, gave the world no sort of notice thereof, but always spake in the same style, which we should use, if we believed there was no such thing? Indeed the charge does not rest on mere men. The character of apostles and prophets, is not the only character that suffers in the case. The impeachment rises higher. It terminates on the God of truth himself. It supposes him to have deliberately resolved from eternity, to speak of temporal punishments, in words which he always knew, and which when used, all men knew, must and would be understood of eternal torments. And this not once or twice only, but always, whenever he should speak on that subject! And all without the least hint of their being otherwise meant, or any key to open the door of their true import! And that this was done, when he could very easily have explained his meaning! Or even have made use of proper terms, which, in their literal sense

sense, would have inculcated this doctrine, and so would have needed no explanations; nor left any place for mistake or deception! does not this doctrine thus oblige us to consider him, (with horror be it spoken of the holy one) as a being, who has been employed ever since the beginning of the world, in designedly imposing upon mankind, falsehood for truth.

10. If this doctrine is true, then it follows, that all the threatenings of eternal punishment in the Bible, are false! And what is blasphemy, if possible, still more nefarious.

11. That the oath of God, that some sinners shall never enter into his rest, is broken. †

12. That there is no security that the future blessedness of the Saints shall endure forever. Since the same words, by which that is promised, are used to reveal this; and if the author of both is found to violate the one, we can have no safe confidence in the other.

13. That therefore the whole Bible is cunningly devised fable, all parts of it resting on the same authority, these failing, the rest can no longer stand. And thus we see, what reason there was, for enumerating Deism, as one of the consequences charged to the account of this doctrine: And prefixing to the confutation of this, the arguments which support us against that.

14. The tendency of this doctrine is to strip the glorious Jehovah of every perfection of his moral character. It makes him, in the issue, as
much

Vid. Swain, examen de la theologie de Mr. Jurieu. selon
Vid. Parebasiana. p. 306. 3010

much a friend to vice as virtue ! All the circumstantial difference in the respective lots of the righteous and the wicked, expire so soon, that they are only to be considered as different portions of physics, administered for the cure of their different respective diseases, but no wise affecting their final portion ; nor the love and tenderness which bestows it.

In fact, that Being is hereby divested of every thing belonging to a God, save the empty name, no attribute is left him, except that passive simplicity, or natural complaisance which the Manichees ascribe to their good deity Oromazes. This goodness they tell us cannot bear the sight of creatures in misery ; and will rather break over all law, order, truth, and justice, than let them continue so forever. That mercifolness of animal nature which, by sympathy, takes so large a share in the sufferings of others, that it cannot bear to be a spectator of them ; but would wish to rescue criminals from justice ; is but fond weakness and childish folly ; who would wish for a judge of that make, to occupy the bench, when the case is to be decided, whether the community shall be infested or a banditti of lawless pirates meet their deserts ? And if that temper would not deserve the name of goodness, in a civil magistrate, shall we dare to impute it to that being, who is the supreme magistrate of the universe ?

Whenever any supreme ruler indulges to such proferities, he ceases to be the guardian of the public welfare : Turning conspirator with the worst enemies of society, he supports the individuals whom it is his business to crush--and virtually proclaims hostilities against the whole body of the community, which he is bound to

protect. Yet this is the feminine sort of goodness, which Origenism fancies for its deity! Which constrains him, for his own happiness, to keep all sinners from pain. And we must return and care for the offender, whether he cease his rebellion or not! A goodness as incompatible with wisdom and rectitude, as it is inconsistent with the just punishment of sinners. Were this the real character of God, it would be no less impossible for him to inflict diseases and afflictions in this life, than to hold the creature in eternal torment, in the next. If the infinity of goodness, be a sufficient argument against the eternity of hell-torments; it is as really, though not as strongly, opposed to the idea of a punishment of 1000 years: yes, of 100---of 10---or of one minute. It is a maxim that different degrees of any thing, do not change its specific nature. If goodness is inconsistent with great severity, it is with every degree thereof. What God can be for one minute, he can be for an hour, a day, a year, an age, and for eternity! As heat does absolutely exclude all degrees of cold, it is as inconsistent with one degree as with one thousand; and so heat can never become cold, by abating one degree of its quantity after another; so no gradation can turn the idea of punishment from that of severity to that of goodness, by cutting off one century after another, from its duration. If punishment be, in itself, inconsistent with goodness, one moments pain is as really so, as a whole eternity: And, thus the unknown ages of unutterable anguish, which the Origenists threaten to some sinners, under the government of a being of this sort of goodness, is reduced to a mere bug-bear. On a new inspection, it becomes less than a

mathematical point! There can be no possibility left for inflicting pain on any creature, on this scheme, for a single moment; unless it should be pleaded that God could not bring men to perfect happiness, otherwise than by the medium of some temporary pain. This plea, however, is justly thought to be a compliment to his goodness, at the expence of his power.--Praises of this sort are blasphemous in themselves. They undecify their object; while they pretend to adore it. And as this is all the God which the doctrine of Origenism can own; it may safely be charged with leading its votaries in Atheism and infidelity; in as much as it leads to the worship of a chimerical creature of their own imagination---which by nature is no God, and openly denies the existence of any other.

15. If the natural consequences, of the doctrine of Origenism be such as we have been recounting, it cannot be wondered at, that it stands charged as an enemy to all religion and to all virtue at once; no less dangerous to the state than the church. The manner in which it plays on the hopes and fears of mankind, takes off the last restraint of human passions, and gives the last rein to every lust. The publishers of the extracts themselves, have frankly owned this to be the natural consequence of the doctrine, as it is taught by those concerned in the catechism. Having told us that, "according to them, an an may go to Heaven, notwithstanding all the sins he has been guilty of in the course of his life." They then exclaim against it in the following strains.--"such a doctrine looks very like an encouragement to the like trifling, and tells in with the relaxers of the law."

too many in this degenerate age ; who, under pretence of promoting religion, undermine it at the very root. It is certainly fitted to this end, and has already had the effect upon many, especially of our younger people ; who, by means of it, have lost all sense of religion and given themselves up to the most criminal excesses. If this kind of preaching is encouraged, it may prove as hurtful to civil society as to religion." So-
 lem n caution ! And most justly founded ! The fact is notorious.--It grows more so every day. He must be a stranger in our Jerusalem, who knoweth not these things ; and is this the natural tendency of a doctrine which affirms " a man may go to Heaven notwithstanding all the sins he has been guilty of in the course of his life ? May we not here apply the ancient question ; of whom speaketh the prophet this ? Of himself--or of some other man ? Is this the tenet of that stranger only ? Is it not the avowed doctrine of the extractor also ? Out of thine own mouth will God judge thee ! Seest thou these effects already produced from that principle ? And wilt thou still persist in thine attempts to poison the souls of men with it ? Be it known unto thee, whoever thou art, that tho' thy profelytes shall perish in their iniquities, if they venture to final impenitence on the encouragement thou hast given them, yet their blood will God, the Judge of all, require at thine hand !

S E C T I O N V.

Warning against it.

THAT the doctrine of Universal Salvation, is perfectly agreeable to the corruption of the human heart, has been considered as a collateral proof of its falshood. If so, then it is certainly a strong argument for the necessity of the most earnest warnings against it. Reviewing the reasonings of the third section, and especially considering the consequences charged against this tenet in the fourth,---it will hardly be expected, that the chapter should conclude without a plain and faithful declaration, of the danger in which we consider the soul that holds it. The gentlemen on the other side, seem to believe, that all remonstrances against it are the offspring of malevolence and an evil eye, which looks grudging on the happiness of any body but itself. And hence they affect to be the only men of benevolent and enlarged hearts, the only friends to mankind! Insinuations of this kind are the wonted lure of sly deceivers in every age: Against them therefore, the apostle has entered a solemn Caveat, which should never be forgotten; they zealously affect you, says he, but not well; yea, they would exclude you, that

that ye might affect them. ^a Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences, contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches, deceive the hearts of the simple. ^b And, from the sad experience of the instability of many professors to whom, even he himself, had opened up and enforced the truths of God, he exclaims, I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him who called you into the grace of Christ, unto another gospel, which is not another, but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from Heaven, preach any other gospel unto you, than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. ^c Our blessed Lord considered false doctrine as leaven. ^d It spreads itself unseen. Little and seemingly harmless at first, it extends its contagion imperceptibly, until the infection has poisoned the whole lump. ^e And hence the benignant apostle warns us, if there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, viz. the doctrine of the Bible, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed; for he that bid-deth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds. ^f Another sacred writer delivers it as a special reason for christians, to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the Saints, because

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^a Gal. 4. 17. ^b Rom. 16. 17, 18. ^c Gal. 3. 6, 9.
^d Matt. 13. 6. ^e 1 Cor. 5. 6. ^f 2 John 10. 21.

there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation. Ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ; their mouth speaking great swelling words, having men's persons in admiration because of advantage. Nor are we to think this a judgment peculiar to the days of the apostles, we are expressly taught to expect it now. Knowing this first, that there shall come, in the last days, scoffers walking after their own lusts, and saying, where is the promise of his coming: *b* Who privily shall bring in damnable heresies even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways, by reason of whom, the way of truth shall be evil spoken of; and through covetousness shall they, with feigned words, make merchandize of you; whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not, for by the promises of liberty, and much wantonness, they allure many that were clean escaped from them that live in error, and make the latter end of such, worse than the beginning. And they would indeed deceive the very elect, if that were possible. On the contemplation of these, and other predictions of a similar complexion, found in the sacred records, the rise and progress of the error now impugned, and others that rage among us, at the present day, will cease to surprize. Instead of proving stumbling-blocks, that obstruct the

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the credit of divine revelation, they turn out to be confirmations of its truth. But, while the event enforces our belief of the oracle that foretold it, the prediction must regulate our judgment concerning the nature of such error whenever it shall appear. And if we draw our conclusion from that rule, the foregoing texts, compared with the nature of this error, oblige us to declare the doctrine of Origenism, in this part of it, to be **FATAL TO THE SOUL THAT EMBRACES IT, AND FORMS ITS TEMPER AND CONDUCT AGREEABLE TO IT, TO THE END.** If the picture of it, already given, be a just one, we may thereon venture to say, if this be not a damnable heresy, there never was, nor ever can be one of that kind, and if it be not found in the issue, to bring upon the souls that receive, and abet its swift destruction, the apostles awful denunciations aforesaid, must pass words of vanity.

This declaration will, we trust, equally justify us in the labors by which we have attempted to disprove it, and in the sentence by which we judge ourselves, as a judicatory in the church of Christ, called by its great head, in a judicial manner, to **CONDEMN**, like as we hereby do, in his name, solemnly and unanimously **CONDEMN**, the said doctrine, which denies the eternity of hell-torments, and asserts the Universal Salvation of all mankind, as a tenet directly contradicting the word of God, destructive of all religion, natural and revealed, utterly subversive of all virtue and morality, and eternally ruinous to the souls of men. It is however by no means improbable, that this judgment will be held up to view, by the friends of this doctrine, as the effect of illiberal bigotry and narrowness.

of mind. Of all that can be offered on that score we are aware. We have counted the cost, and trust we shall not shrink at bearing the expence that may accrue to us, in that defence of the gospel, for which we are set, and of which we daily expect our Master's summons to give an account. To them who reflect that the judgment of God is at hand, it may well seem a small thing to be judged of man. So long however, as reason belongs to human nature, we need not fear appealing even to the impartial world, whether it is a proof of greater benevolence, to cry peace, peace to men, where God has spoken no peace ; and, for fear of giving them present uneasiness, to toll them asleep in their lusts, and toll them down to everlasting burnings ; or to cry aloud and spare not, to lift up our voice like a trumpet, and be a continual goad, in the sides of sinners, to urge them, to flee from the wrath to come ?

Did we believe that sinners would escape that danger most effectually by winking it out of sight, our silence on this subject would be that of the grave. We are not conscious of any ill-will to the persons who, by troubling the waters of the sanctuary among us, have given the occasion of our present pains. We wish their best interests--their eternal felicity, as sincerely as our own. But, in the cause of Christ, there must be no respect of persons. We must call no man father on the earth, nor know any man after the flesh. Whoever be the abettors of the tenet we have been discussing, how-
ever

ever respectable some of them may be in other respects, we testify unto them that they are in this matter, enemies to the cross of Christ; and doing towards the souls of men that very work of the devil, which the great Redeemer came into the world to destroy. Of our having any peculiar call to pronounce this sentence beyond the other ministers of the gospel, who at this day have their lots cast where this delusion is zealously spreading, we make no pretensions. Nor ought it to be of any weight to determine the reader which doctrine to embrace, ours or the Origenists; if we did, men must be very scarce of proofs when they are reduced to the necessity of putting the merits of their doctrine to the test, which seems to have decided the matter with some in favour of Universal Salvation: Forsooth, because God Almighty did not strike Mr. White dead, or delirious, or by some miraculous sign from Heaven, interrupt him in his undertaking, and break off his purpose; although that very pious and very excellent man tells, he fell prostrate and begged such an interposition of Heaven in the case, with all his might. Whether this be the best way of proving doctrines to the conviction of rational enquirers, whether it be an evidence of great humility and true devotion, or whether it be not rather an impious and audacious adventure to tempt God, we need not take upon us to decide. But one thing is undeniable, that there was just as good proof of truth or error, of innocence or guilt in the trials, "by ordeal," established as the grand touch-stone thereof, in the church of Rome. And at least, as convincing an evidence that the scriptures were all a fallacy, and deny the only cause of God, because

because the father of that scheme in England, Lord Herbert of Cherbury, endeavours to fix the stamp of divine authority upon it, by the following narrative of his own experience in the case: After shewing his manuscript to Grotius, and others of his learned friends, he remained hesitating 'whether it ought to be published or not:' And then, says he, "being thus doubtful in my chamber, one fair day in the summer, my casement being open towards the south, the sun shining clear, and no wind stirring, I took my book de Veritate, in my hands, and bending on my knees, devoutly said these words.--O thou eternal God, author of this light which now shines upon me, and giver of all inward illuminations---I do beseech thee, of thine infinite goodness, to pardon a greater request than a sinner ought to make. I am not satisfied enough, whether I shall publish this book; if it be for thy glory, I beseech thee, give me some sign from Heaven, if not I shall suppress it. I had no soon'r spoken these words, but a loud, tho' yet gentle noise, came forth from the Heavens (for it was like nothing on earth) which did so cheer and comfort me, that I took my petition as granted, and that I had the sign I demanded, whereupon also I resolved to print my book." Let the Originists of this period compare this story with Mr. White's, and say, whether the Deist has not at least matched the Originist in signs from above: Concerning both of them we find ourselves obliged to pass this judgment, that these men, on both

both these occasions, took the very step which Satan urged the blessed Jesus to take to obtain celestial attestations of his divine mission;--- when the holy Redeemer replied, "it is written thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." ^b If this scripture was to the Saviour, a sufficient bar against asking such signs, we need not be surprized to find the practice of seeking after them, branded by him as the characteristic of an evil and an adulterous generation. • And if the sign be given when demanded, instead of its being sufficient to ransy the doctrine ushered in by it; the very giving it, is a signification that God has pronounced the sentence of death against the man who received it; if the doctrine he brings is contrary to the doctrine of God. ^d

Having thus warned the propogators of Origenism, of the risque at which they take another step to spread that doctrine: We conclude this chapter of our Testimony by a solemn caution to their hearers---to take heed what they hear---to lay aside their prejudices---to examine with candor the arguments which have been offered in support of the truths, which Origenists deny---to search the scriptures daily, and see if these things be so---and to give themselves to prayer, that God, in mercy to their souls, may deliver them from the snare of the devil, in o which they are fallen: It surely can be as little their interest to be deceived in this matter, as it is ours to deceive them: Their souls are at stake, and will, undoubtedly be lost forever, if they live and die leaning on this delusion. If they
do,

do, we trust by the present warning, we shall have delivered our souls; their blood will be on themselves; but they would now do well to consider what it will profit them to gain the whole world at this price? We wish them to weigh the argument here offered them in the balance of the sanctuary; try them by the touch-stone of the law and the testimony. We believed, therefore we have spoken. So far as this address is agreeable to the Oracles of God; they must either receive it, or expect to find it a swift witness against them in the day of the Lord. But if in any thing here said, counsel be darkened by words without knowledge: If our trumpet has given an uncertain sound, or the voice of this Testimony be not consonant to that, of that of the doctrine of the apostles and prophets; in all such things the work is our own; we ask no credit to any thing we have advanced, where it is not supported, by a thus saith the Lord; begging that he may deign to own and bless whatever in this Testimony is his own voice to the sons of men? for whatever is ours, the only wish we offer is, that God may pardon, and that men may reckon the performance to be, **VOX ET PRE-TEREA NIHIL.**

Signed in the name and presence of the
first Presbetry of the Eastward.

per Order,

WILLIAM DAVIDSON, Moderator.
SIMON WILLIAMS, Pro's Clerk.

END of the FIRST VOLUME.

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E R R A T A.

The distance of the Committee from the Press, occasioned various errors in the orthography, &c. which the candid reader is requested to excuse, but the following should be carefully corrected, counting the lines from the top of the page.

PAGE 2 line 25 read Laodicean p. 3 l. 57 r. Origenism p. 4 l. 14 r. puts p. 4 l. 16 r. Origenism p. 8 l. 34 r. slothful p. 11 l. 26 r. spirituous p. 19 l. 1 r. left p. 20 l. 3 r. may p. 21 l. 24 r. erected p. 34 l. 5 r. frequently started p. 35 l. 16 dele : p. 35 l. 3 insert and p. 37 l. 19 r. generation p. 46 l. 28 r. 1739 p. 52 l. 33 dele : p. 54 l. 2 r. was p. 54 l. 12 r. worldly p. 55 l. 1 r. pox p. 55 l. 2 r. shook p. 57 l. 20 d. : p. 57 l. 25 r. swimm'd p. 63 l. 4 d. . p. 65 l. 14 r. the true and insert : p. 66 l. 5 r. for the p. 67 l. 22 r. unregenerate p. 73 l. 12 r. shadow p. 73 l. 32 r. this great ent p. 79 l. 4 r. employed p. 81 l. 18 d. and p. 85 l. 16 r. rased p. 91 l. 2 r. Arias p. 96 l. 35 r. as p. 97 l. 7 r. obnoxious p. 97 l. 8 r. is in p. 98 l. 27 r. Hayburton's p. 99 l. 9 r. christian p. 101 l. 2 r. century p. 103 l. 18 r. rase p. 110 l. 13 r. their p. 112 l. 5 r. to promote p. 114 l. 23 r. defect p. 115 l. 5 r. deficiency p. 116 l. 2 r. deprived p. 116 l. 13 r. rectified p. 116 l. 20 r. Penelope's p. 117 l. 11 r. then p. 117 l. 16 r. thought p. 118 l. 36 r. towards p. 119 l. 10 d. : p. 119 l. 23 r. rased p. 121 l. 33 r. wit left p. 122 l. 21 d. been p. 122 l. 25 r. their p. 125 l. 7 d. then p. 125 l. 11 r. its p. 125 l. 21 r. polytheism p. 128 l. 9 insert that p. 129 l. 16 r. lame [p. 134 l. 25 r. than p. 125

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The Second Volume on the same conditions with the First, will be put to the press as soon as sufficient encouragement is found.

