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**HISTORY AND BIOGRAPHY.**

*Memoir of the late Rev. W. Vidler.*

[Concluded from p. 136.]

**I**N 1798, Mr. N. Scarlett, who was a member of Mr. Vidler's congregation, published a new translation of the New Testament, with Notes, in which work Mr. Vidler took an active part. The chief peculiarity of this Version is its being accommodated to the universal hypothesis; the words *Aion* and *Æonian* being invariably used instead of *world*, *age* and *everlasting*, whenever the Greek words from which those terms are derived are found in the original. The work possessed all the recommendations which it could derive from its external form and embellishment, and met with favourable notice from the *Monthly* and *Critical Reviews*, but it will be scarcely numbered hereafter amongst improved versions.

This literary connection between Mr. Scarlett and Mr. Vidler led to a partnership in trade. Mr. Scarlett was then carrying on the bookselling business in the Strand. Mr. Vidler was tempted to join him by flattering prospects that were never realized. Some of his friends made considerable efforts in order to ensure his wishes; though others warned him from the beginning of the risk which he incurred. A little time convinced him that he had been careless in his estimates and sanguine in his expectations, and the partnership was dissolved, with great loss to Mr. Vidler, though on a ground which was highly honourable to him, namely, his refusing from scruples of conscience to join Mr. Scarlett in the publication which he had for some time been conducting of a collection of plays entitled "*The British Theatre*." Notwithstanding this separation and disappointment, Mr. Vidler never spoke of Mr. Scarlett but in terms of

respect and friendship. He continued to carry on business in the Strand by himself for a few years, till he was compelled by his total want of success to relinquish it. His failure, however, did not cure him of his self-confidence as a tradesman, for by a whimsical contradiction of character, whilst he entertained a very humble opinion of himself as a Christian teacher, he was accustomed to set a very high value upon his fitness for business. His last attempt as a tradesman was in Holborn, where he succeeded to the bookseller's shop which had been established, and in 1804 vacated, by Mr. Marsom. Here he was weighed down from the first by incumbrances which had been long growing, and after an ineffectual struggle for two years retreated from the cares of business with the loss of every thing except his conscious integrity and the sympathy and confidence of his friends, confessing at last that he knew less of mankind than he once thought.†

Kingswood school, under the patronage of Mr. John Wesley, and afterwards at Merchant Taylors' school. He was apprenticed to a shipwright, but leaving that employment he became an eminent accountant, and originated the "*Commercial Almanack*." Besides the Version of the New Testament, taken notice of above, he published, in 1801, a small volume in quarto, entitled "*A Scenic Arrangement of Isaiah's Prophecy relating to the Fall of Babylon*." At the time of his decease, which took place Nov. 18, 1802, he had written and methodically arranged a curious work called "*The Millennial Age*," intended to be published in twelve numbers, quarto, embellished with superb engravings by artists of the first eminence.

† The failure of Mr. Vidler's successive experiments in trade was not owing to any want of industry, much less of attention and civility: he was remarkably obliging

It has been already stated that there was a society within the congregation at Parliament Court known by the name of the Church. In this society a spirit of free inquiry was encouraged, and no one appeared more ready to abandon an error or embrace a truth than Mr. Vidler himself. He observed with peculiar pleasure the promise of talents in the younger members, and delighted in bringing them forward as speakers. The aspiring and ungovernable temper of one or two individuals, however, hindered the good effects of Christian fellowship, and occasioned distractions in the Church, which continued even after their own secession with the small party which they had contrived to raise. By these Mr. Vidler was much harrassed and impeded in his usefulness for years, till at length he and the congregation were compelled for self-preservation to resolve that there should be no other Church than the congregation, that the Lord's supper should be open to all, and that the New Testament, interpreted by every one for himself, should be the only rule of Christian communion.

For some time the congregation flourished in spite of the factions of the Church, and would in all probability have continued to flourish more and more, had not the enlargement of Mr. Vidler's mind and the proportionate diminution of his creed alarmed the greater part of the members, including some of his best friends, and raised even in this heretical society the cry of heresy against their minister. At first he held with the universal doctrine the tenets which are generally accounted evangelical, such as the Trinity, atonement, hereditary depravity and the special agency of the Holy Spirit: but he had already convicted

to customers, however casual or however inconsiderable their purchases. As a proof of this it may be mentioned that on one occasion Mr. Maurice, of the British Museum, passing Mr. Vidler's door in a coach, and observing stationery advertised, called to buy a sheet of paper to tie up some old books; when the readiness and evident pleasure with which Mr. Vidler served and assisted him, so impressed this gentleman that he became a good customer and presented the first volume of his *Indian Antiquities*, then just published, to Mr. Vidler's eldest son, and continued afterwards to send the remaining volumes as they appeared.

himself of too much error to hold these or any other principles by a blind, implicit faith. He had invited discussions in his own Magazine which urged his mind forward in the path of inquiry. He commenced in that work a controversy in which he maintained the Deity of Jesus Christ, but soon dropped it, apparently convinced that he had undertaken a task beyond his powers, and that this was a subject on which it behoved him rather to inquire than to decide. He gave up neither this nor any other article of his creed with rashness, for his maxim was never to surrender an opinion which he could possibly hold: but from the moment at least of his becoming an Universalist, he entertained a strong dislike of theological dogmatism and presumption, and an increasing disposition in favour of free inquiry and religious liberty. He accounted human creeds, his own as well as others, nothing, and held that every opinion and every system, however ancient or popular, or with whatever awe it was regarded, must be brought to the test of Scripture, and that Scripture can be interpreted only by the understanding of every individual Christian.

His views and habits in these respects are well described and illustrated to the writer's hand by Mr. Teulon, who was one of his earliest acquaintances in London, who for years went with him side by side in his religious progress, and who having for a short period, under a misconception, withdrawn his religious intimacy, is now anxious in the true spirit of Christian frankness and magnanimity to bear his testimony to the virtues of his deceased friend. "Truth," he says, "made no hasty impression on his mind, as far as I observed it was extremely gradual, but when it entered, it took full possession. I remember this on the subject of faith: in a discourse he publicly declared that it was the gift of God, and that a man who had not the true faith could no more convert another to the faith, than any other than a human being could be the parent of a human offspring. After this discourse, at supper on the Sunday evening, I referred him to his words, and asked him if it was not grace that was the gift of God and not faith, and if the apostle would have rejoiced at the gospel being proclaimed out of strife and contention, if he had not known that though pro-



claimed from the worst of motives, it was itself the means, and only means, of transforming man into the image of God. He fell into a study, then took his hat and walked out, and on the next Sunday morning published in his sermon his changed sentiment.

Whilst he believed in the doctrine of the Trinity, he brought me one step towards Unitarianism. We were conversing on the Trinity. He asked me for my strongest arguments in its favour: we discussed and he overturned several. I at last, as my only resort, brought forward the Hutchinsonian system of fire, light and air. 'Brother,' he replied, 'must you and I build our theology on human philosophy?' Many months after this we had at the Conference, Phil. ii. 6, 7, 'Who being in the form of God, &c.': several explained the passage in various ways, but chiefly on the Arian and Unitarian systems: he began to sum up and reply to the evidence with observing, that he might say with the Prophet, *I have nourished and brought up children and even they have rebelled against me*, and then went on replying to the arguments in the spirit of love, thanking God that he lived to see the day that so many speakers could deliver their sentiments without uttering an unkind word or reflection on each other.

No man ever did so much in a church or society to encourage freedom of thought and speech as he did at Parliament Court; and every liberal idea that the members of that church held was derived from him: their enlightened thoughts were his; their unfounded jealousies, their criminating language and their domineering tempers were derived from their own heads and the Corresponding Society. Not that he was at all times gentle; for if he saw any one, though his dearest friend, infringe his right of judgment, or if he did but suspect it, he towered over him in the majesty of insulted indignation, and poured upon him a thunder-storm.

In asserting Christian liberty, Mr. Vidler hazarded nothing with his flock, who had been obliged to learn this doctrine before they could become Universalists, and who were obliged to hold it up constantly in self-defence: but he felt that he had the painful duty to discharge of exercising his understanding on topics which had hitherto engaged only his affections,

and which the greater part of his religious associates considered highly dangerous. The exercises of his mind were now serious and trying. He examined and re-examined his faith, and in every stage of the process found that he had lost some of the arguments for the popular opinions on which he had most securely rested. Though not terrified, he was completely humbled. In his last illness he assured the writer that no language could describe the self-distrust which he felt when he perceived that his whole religious system was unscriptural. He seemed to himself to know nothing: preaching was an insupportable burden: he would have cheerfully embraced any situation, however low or laborious that he could have procured, which would both have furnished bread for his table and have allowed him to fill the place of a Christian learner. His post, however, was assigned him; he was obliged to appear before the public as a teacher; but as he could not dissemble his opinions or feelings his sermons consisted of doubts and inquiries; and his preaching, though unsatisfactory to many of his hearers and painful to himself, was at once the instrument and the record of his religious improvement. He had become an Unitarian before he had lost his aversion to Unitarians, whom he had always been taught and accustomed to regard as a mere philosophical sect, destitute of the simplicity, piety and zeal that characterize the true disciples of Christ. He knew none indeed of that denomination, and whilst his inquiries forced him into an acquaintance with their writings, he perused them with great caution and with a secret resolution that whatever conviction they might produce upon his understanding they should not alter his religious character, which he flattered himself was of a superior cast to that of these authors. As his familiarity with Unitarian books increased, he was surprised to find in them, contrary to the popular reproach and to his own expectation, a marked deference to the authority of Holy Scripture, and a system of biblical interpretation which was built upon a thorough and critical knowledge of the sacred volume, and which approved itself to all the maxims of common sense and all the principles of true learning. No less was his astonishment to perceive

that the authors of these decried books, whilst they preserved themselves from the theological jargon of the schools and the degrading folly of the times, set the highest value upon Christian wisdom, and recommended their scheme of truth as the means of more exalted piety and purer virtue. He was now ready to accuse his own prejudice which had so long blinded him to these treasures of Christian excellence. He saw that if some Unitarians had been philosophers, they had not been worse but better Christians on that account. His mind underwent, in short, a complete conversion; he began to breathe a different air, and to live a new spiritual life; nor had he any higher ambition than to follow Lardner, Priestley and Lindsey, in their imitation of the one common master, Jesus Christ.

To a mere student in the closet, such a change as this would have been of the highest importance: in his own case Mr. Vidler foresaw that it would be productive of fearful consequences. His heresy on one point of faith had raised against him a tumult which it required all his strength of mind and all his faith to become able to disregard; what might he not expect when he should abandon all the tenets on which the prejudices of the religious world are fastened and on which their passions feed and invigorate themselves! His congregation which had experienced some vicissitudes was now in a high state of prosperity, and the growing number and affection and ability of the members might justly embolden him to rely upon an increasing provision for the decline of life; but his avowal of what was called "Socinianism" would inevitably divide and perhaps disperse the society, and deprive him of all opportunity of acting in the character of a Christian teacher. The universal doctrine was likewise spreading throughout the kingdom, and he was looked up to as the head of the rising sect; but all his influence would be in a moment annihilated by his abandonment of reputed orthodoxy, on the reception of which in its more essential principles the Universalists, no less than others, placed the salvation of the soul. Some of his most devoted friends, too, on whose liberality he mainly relied in the present state of his worldly circumstances, were pecu-

larly zealous Trinitarians, and these he should estrange for ever by the profession of the Unitarian doctrine, without the possibility, at his time of life, of gaining other friends to take their places.

Such were Mr. Vidler's prospects on becoming an Unitarian. Had he been worldly-minded, or careless of religion, or hypocritical, they would have checked him in the course of inquiry and induced him to veil his doubts and to hide his convictions under a mysterious phraseology, which has in so many cases kept up the appearance of "orthodoxy" when the reality has long vanished. But his make of mind and heart would allow him neither to deceive nor to be deceived. He looked about carefully and patiently for the path of duty, and when he had found it, no consideration could turn him aside: converting his resolution into prayer, his language, familiar to the ears of his religious friends, was, *Take not the word of truth utterly out of my mouth; for I have hoped in thy judgments: so shall I have wherewith to answer him that reproacheth me, for I trust in thy word: so shall I keep thy law continually for ever and ever: And I will walk at liberty, for I seek thy precepts.*

The first sermon in which Mr. Vidler explicitly renounced the doctrine of the Trinity proved that his apprehensions of the consequences were too well-founded. Great alarm was instantly excited and many of his oldest and most opulent friends dissolved their connection with the congregation. Their secession weakened the bond of union, and the divisions which prevailed amongst the members who remained in communion at Parliament Court deadened the zeal of the society and it appeared fast sinking into decay. The salary which Mr. Vidler received during the last year that he preached the Trinitarian doctrine was not less than £250: his annual stipend dwindled soon after his change of opinions to £80, and at this low point it continued for many years. This alteration in his circumstances deprived him of many comforts and of the means of usefulness, and necessarily threw him into a state of irksome dependance upon his private friends; but he did not quench his thirst after truth, much less deny



his spirit of independence. He continued to inquire and to study and to communicate the result of his investigation to his people, often indeed doubtful of the result, but always relying upon Divine Providence, and determined never to relinquish his post while he could find the means of subsistence, and a sufficient number of hearers could be preserved to defray the expences of the chapel.

His total change of creed rendered his past pulpit studies in great measure useless; he had almost every thing to unlearn as well as to learn; his old phraseology adopted from the Calvinists clashed with his newly formed faith and with the Scriptures: his public duties were on these accounts more laborious, but his preparations for them at home were proportionably diligent, and thus happily his mind was relieved from the burden of thoughts, more anxious and less improving.

For a long time, Mr. Vidler felt himself a stranger in the new connection into which he had entered. At the period when he made the avowal of his Unitarianism, which was about the year 1802, there were few societies of persons professing that doctrine established for its promotion, and none which could call into action the services of a popular preacher and compensate by their support for the loss of other connections. To some Unitarians it was even matter of doubt whether their system could yet be laid before the people with any chance of success. An extempore preacher was scarcely known in the denomination and was not likely to be generally welcomed. The Presbyterian stiffness bound up the body and rendered it averse to all zealous exertion. Mr. Vidler had therefore exchanged systems rather than parties: he found that the party was still to arise with which he could co-operate. Some respectable and leading individuals amongst the Unitarians, it is true, gave him countenance and support, but he received patronage rather than fellowship, and the feeling upon his own mind which he strongly expressed a little before he died was that he was tolerated amongst his new friends, but not estimated according to his measure of public talents and his capacity of usefulness. The feeling in this case

arose, as the event shows, from no extravagant self-valuation or mortified ambition, but solely from his ardent wish to serve the cause of truth, and his anxiety to devote to it those powers which he had throughout the whole of an active life employed in the promotion of error.

About the time of his becoming an Unitarian, his church applied for admission into the Assembly of the General Baptists. The application was strenuously resisted by the more "orthodox" part of that denomination, on the ground of the church professing the universal doctrine. The case was referred to all the churches in connection, and the majority of votes was in favour of the admission. On this decision, the minority withdrew from the assembly and formed a distinct association. Mr. Vidler was then and probably continued to the close of his life a decided Baptist; though he evidently saw in the end that there were more difficulties than he had once been willing to acknowledge, attending the question of the perpetuity of baptism.

Desirous of making every effort for the promotion of his opinions, which had cost him so much, and were valuable to him in proportion to their cost, he instituted in the spring of the year 1804, a Thursday Evening Lecture, at the chapel in Leather Lane, Holborn, assisted by the subscriptions of a few friends who had formed themselves into an "Unitarian Evangelical Society." But the attempt was not sufficiently successful to justify its renewal.

In the year 1806, Mr. Vidler's parental feelings were severely tried by the loss of his second daughter, in the eighteenth year of her age, who was justly endeared to her parents and family by her virtues, and whose mental endowments gave a promise of much respectability and usefulness. Her father displayed on this, as on other similar occasions, the strength of his mind and that entire command of his feelings which was a peculiar feature of his character, by officiating at her interment in Bunhill Fields, and afterwards preaching a funeral sermon for her in his own pulpit.

The establishment of the Unitarian Fund in 1806 was an event most gladdening to Mr. Vidler's heart. He assisted in the institution of the society

and was mainly instrumental to its first successes. In promoting the object he was willing to be or to do whatever was proposed. He undertook many journeys as a missionary, and his services in this capacity will long be remembered with gratitude and delight. From the moment of the formation of the society he pronounced that a new era had arisen amongst the Unitarians, and he always confidently predicted that Divine Providence would smile upon it, and bless it and make it a blessing.

On quitting business in 1804, Mr. Vidler had retired to the rural village of West Ham, where he occupied apartments in the house of a widowed sister, whose affection and kindness contributed essentially to his comfort. In one of the rooms of this house he carried on for several winters an evening lecture which was well attended. He resided at West Ham until his last illness.

In the latter end of the year 1808 Mr. Vidler experienced a new and severe bereavement in the death of his wife, in the 56th year of her age, to whom he had been married twenty-eight years. This was the only death in his family that affected his feelings too much to allow him to perform the customary funeral rites. On this occasion he solicited the services of Mr. John Evans. When Mrs. Vidler was seized with her mortal illness, he was absent in Cambridgeshire on a missionary journey. Being summoned back by a letter, he set out from Wisbeach in a postchaise on his return, after dark, and was unhappily overturned down a steep bank: he received a severe shock in the fall, from which he never completely recovered.

After being for a long time in a languishing state, the congregation at Parliament Court revived: some that had left the chapel returned, several Unitarian families in the neighbourhood connected with other congregations contributed to the evening lectures, and many strangers were attracted to the place and led to settle in it as habitual worshippers by Mr. Vidler's able preaching. The last few years of his public life were the hap-

His Letters to the Secretary of the Unitarian Fund, written on these journeys, from Reading and other places, may hereafter see the light.

piest that he had known since he left Battle, and in one respect happier than any he had ever experienced, for his creed was not now at variance with his understanding or his feelings. He saw around him a society united in its views of truth and zealous for the cause which was near his heart. He could rely upon the co-operation of his neighbouring brethren in the ministry, between whom and himself there was a cordial sympathy. And he was supported in all his plans for the success of the congregation by several affectionate and liberal friends, who fulfilled his wishes from the joint motives of affection for him and regard to the interests of truth. If there be any thing to regret with regard to this period of Mr. Vidler's connection with the congregation, it is that the members generally were not sufficiently alive to the temporal interests of their minister, but allowed him to stand in need of the more private assistance of some individuals amongst them, which in addition to his salary would have proved inadequate to his wants in a state of declining health, if his wants had not been anticipated by a few members of his family, whose kindness was measured by their affection and not by their opulence. On this subject, Mr. Vidler himself uttered no complaint; but his patience and disinterestedness ought not to impose silence upon his biographer, who writes for the benefit of survivors.

Mr. Vidler's great and increasing corpulency had for a considerable period indicated disease. It caused him great personal inconvenience, and in the winter and spring seasons he suffered extremely under an asthma. To reduce his bulk he denied himself the sustenance which nature demanded, and took laborious exercise in working

† His constitution at different periods ran into opposite extremes. When he first settled in London he was of a lean and spare habit of body, and so weakly as to be constrained to prostrate sitting. He had the usual symptoms of consumption, of which, however, he was cured. Mr. Teyton says, by smoking tobacco, in order to promote expectoration, on the recommendation of a French minister who said that he himself and his predecessor in the ministry had both been cured of the same disorder by this practice. When Mr. Vidler had effected his cure, he laid aside the pipe, and substituted the snuff-box.



in his garden; but no means that he adopted, subdued his constitutional tendency, or prevented or even mitigated his habitual complaint. In the year 1815, public speaking became very painful to him, and before the end of that year he was obliged to desist from his ministerial labours. The sufferings of his early life had made him very apprehensive of pain, and his prayer, in submission to the Divine will, was that he might be taken away by sudden death. Such, however, was not the design of an all-wise but mysterious Providence. "Months of vanity and wearisome nights" were appointed to him. The history of his disease would be a detail of pains and agonies afflictive to the reader. He was sometimes, for several successive days without sleep. The nature of his complaint prevented his even reclining on his bed. There were occasionally favourable changes, in which he had intervals of comparative ease, and on two occasions of this sort he made a great effort and appeared amongst his congregation at Parliament Court, but his exertion at both these times occasioned a relapse and convinced him that his public life was at an end.

At West Ham he experienced all the attention that the kindness of an affectionate sister could devise and render; but a change of scene being recommended by his physician, he was removed early in the month of July, 1816, to the house of Mr. William Smith, his son-in-law, in Spencer Street, Northampton Square, where all his family united in mitigating his sufferings to the extent of their ability. It soon appeared however, both to himself and others that there was but one event from which rest could be expected. This he now looked forward to with pleasure, hailing every symptom of its approach: yet his illness was so tedious and his pains, so excruciating that his patience was, at times almost exhausted. His religious principles were the only support of his mind. On these he delighted to converse. He solaced himself in the fatherly character of God: he meditated on the example of Jesus Christ in suffering and death: he reviewed his own past life and appealed to Heaven to witness his integrity in the midst of his imperfections: and he

expatiated on the glorious change that awaited him when "this mortal shall have put on immortality." Thus enduring as seeing Him who is Invisible, he waited all the days of his appointed time, at seasons nearly overwhelmed by paroxysms of bodily distress, but in the intervals of relaxation from pain composed and serene, grateful to his attendants, affable and pleasant with his numerous visitors, exhibiting rational piety and Christian hope, until Friday the 23rd of August, when, without any perceptible failure of his intellectual powers, he gently breathed his last and fell asleep in Jesus.

So died in the 59th year of his age, William Vidler, one of the ablest and boldest champions in the pulpit of the Universal and Unitarian doctrine, who might have been reckoned upon according to the course of nature as the advocate of truth for years to come, with the growing authority of age, but who was so far favoured by Providence, as he expressed himself on the approach of death, that he did not outlive his usefulness. He had borne patiently opposition and reproach, and was rising by the strength of his mind and character above discouragements, when, as if his trial and purification were complete, it pleased his heavenly Father that he should rest from his labours and await in peace the summons to immortality.

Notwithstanding the imperfectness of his education, his knowledge was very extensive. He had read most of the standard books, in the English language, in the various departments of literature; and his clearness of conception and retentiveness of memory often enabled him to surprise his more intimate friends by the exhibition of his acquirements. He was quick in his perceptions, but at the same time patient in his inquiries and cool in his judgment. His conversation was formed after the model of the style which prevailed a century ago, and was occasionally quaint, frequently proverbial and generally sententious, but always intelligent and commonly unclouded with good humour. Instances have been already given of his presence of mind in sudden altercations and his smartness in repartee. Under offence, he assumed great severity of countenance, and administered rebukes.

in a tone and manner which compelled it to be felt: but he was habitually willing to be pleased, and into whatever family he entered his presence commonly diffused cheerfulness throughout the whole circle. He was fond of children, and on entering a room where they were immediately attracted them to his knee. His heart was soon affected by any tale of distress, and in an early period of his residence in London he was much imposed on by persons affecting an equal degree of distress and of religion; in such cases he sometimes gave away all the money that he possessed: \* yet if he suspected fraud no one expressed quicker or stronger indignation. His bodily make, tall and upright; his step, regular and firm; and his countenance, open and unvarying, indicated great courage. Mr. Teulon, whose communications we have before referred to, says of him that "he was a man to whom fear seemed unknown." In short, his was the old English character, mellowed and refined by the gospel.

As a preacher he excelled chiefly in strength of reasoning, simplicity and perspicuity of style and an open, manly elevation. His voice was clear and strong, his look penetrating, his attitude erect and self-possessed and his person dignified. He would sometimes indulge in the pulpit an ironical

\* A man of notorious bad character, whose name was Jewel, and who sometimes attended Parliament Court Chapel, being ill sent for Mr. Vidler, who was so affected with the sight of the distress of him and his family, that not having as he thought money enough to relieve them, he went for the first time in his life to a pawnbroker's shop, and raised upon his watch as much as he wanted for the supply of their necessities. The return which Jewel made for Mr. Vidler's extravagant charity was waylaying him, with intent to rob him, one dark night, as he was going across the fields to Bethnal Green: the ungrateful wretch was hindered in his purpose, as he afterwards confessed, by Mr. Vidler's stumbling as he crossed a plank over a ditch and striking the board with the brass end of his umbrella to save himself, which Jewel mistook for the knocking of a pistol-head against a style, and supposing himself discovered ran away. His crime brought this unhappy creature to an untimely end at Chelmsford many years ago.

turn of expression, which produced a striking effect. In prayer he was less happy than in preaching, and he was accustomed to acknowledge the difficulty which he found in discharging this part of his public duty to his own satisfaction. His devotional exercises as well as his sermons were framed in a great measure in the language of Scripture, and this often gave them an interesting appearance of solemnity. Of the merits of his pulpit services we must judge by their effects; and in this point of view a high rank must be allotted to him amongst popular divines, for there have been few preachers who have been able to make upon the minds of an auditory, so deep an impression, not of feeling merely but of knowledge and truth.

Mr. Vidler wrote and published little: besides editions of *Paul Siegvolk's Everlasting Gospel*, *Winchester's Dialogues*, with Notes, and the *Trial of the Witnesses*; a Preface to *Revelation Defended*, in Answer to Paine's *Age of Reason*; and the *Universalists' Miscellany*, in its various forms, the following publications are all that can be traced to him: viz.

1. The Designs of the Death of Christ; a Sermon, delivered in October, 1794, at Parliament Court Chapel, Artillery Lane, Bishopsgate-Street. 8vo. 1795.

2. A Letter to Mr. S. Bradburn and all the Methodist Preachers in England. (Sold at 4d.)

3. A Testimony of Respect to the Memory of Elhanan Winchester, Preacher of the Universal Restoration, who died at Hartford, in America, April 18, 1797, aged 46 years. Being the Substance of a Discourse delivered at Parliament Court Chapel, June 18, 1797. 8vo. (Sold at 1s.)

4. A Sketch of the Life of Elhanan Winchester, Preacher of the Universal Restoration, with a Review of his Writings. 8vo. pp. 128. 1797.

5. God's Love to his Creatures Asserted and Vindicated; being a Reply to the "Structures upon an Address to Candid and Serious Men." 8vo. 1799.

6. Letters to Mr. Fuller on the Universal Restoration, with a Statement of Facts attending that Controversy, and some Structures on Scriptator's Review. 8vo. pp. 180. 1803.



*Prison,*  
 March 20th, 1817.  
 DR. JOULAIN'S History of  
 the Dissenters ends at the death  
 of William III. perhaps some of your  
 readers may like to see a continuation.  
 I here send you a specimen of a Brief  
 History of the Dissenters from that  
 time: if you wish to insert it in the  
 Repository, I will send you the rest.  
 T. C. HOLLAND.

THE beginning of the reign of Anne was distinguished by the punishment, enacted by an act passed in the last reign against those who denied the personal Deity of any of the persons of the Trinity, being inflicted in Ireland on a Dissenting minister of the name of Thomas Emlyn. He had been in England about the time of the Revolution, and the controversy between Sherlock and South relating to the nature of the Trinity had drawn his attention to that subject. He had examined it in connexion with Mr. Manning, a Dissenting minister in Suffolk, who became in consequence of this examination a believer in the simple humanity of Christ. Mr. Emlyn, after a considerable time and long examination, embraced the Arian creed, that Christ is not God, but that he is a created spirit, employed by God in the creation of the world and in the salvation of men. In 1692 he settled at Dublin, as co-pastor with Mr. Boyse. In this connexion he continued for eleven years. In his account of his own life he says, "I own I had been unsettled in my notions from the time I had read Dr. Sherlock's book on the Trinity, which sufficiently discovered how far many were gone back towards Polytheism. I long tried what I could do with some Sabellian terms, making out a Trinity of somewhats in one single mind. I found that by the tritheistic scheme of Dr. Sherlock I preserved a Trinity, but lost the Unity of God. By the Sabellian scheme of modes and substances and properties I best kept up the Divine Unity, but then I had lost a Trinity, so that I could never keep both in view at once." The result of this was, that he departed from the common way of thinking in regard to the Trinity, and only wanted a proper occasion to declare his sentiments, as in duty he thought himself bound to do. This occasion soon presented itself. Some of the congregation

suspecting him of heterodoxy, desired his co-pastor to inquire into his sentiments. Upon this Mr. Emlyn owned himself convinced that the God and Father of Jesus Christ is alone the Supreme Being, and superior in excellency and authority to his Son, who derives all from him. He declared that he had no design to cause strife, and offered to leave the congregation peaceably, that they might choose another, if they pleased, in his place. But the Dissenters in Ireland have a presbyterian form of church government among them, and Mr. Boyse thought it proper to bring the question before the presbytery, in which Dublin is included. This immediately prohibited Mr. Emlyn from preaching. In the following year, the 3d of Queen Anne's reign, finding a great odium raised against both himself and his opinions, he wrote "A Humble Inquiry into the Scripture Account of Jesus Christ," intending to go to England as soon as it was printed. Some of his enemies having notice of his design, procured a warrant against him before his book was published. He was prosecuted in the Court of King's Bench, and refusing to retract, sentence was passed on him, that he should suffer a year's imprisonment, pay £1000 fine, lie in prison till it was paid, and find security for his good behaviour during life. After two years' imprisonment, his fine was mitigated to £70, which, with £20 claimed by the Primate of Ireland, as the Queen's almoner, he paid. Upon his liberation he left his intolerant country, and came to London, where he gathered a small congregation on Arian principles. Application was made to Dr. Tennison, Archbishop of Canterbury, to put a stop to this, but the Archbishop nobly refused to be concerned in any persecuting measures. Mr. Emlyn was intimate with Whiston and Clarke, and probably very much contributed to form them to Arian opinions.

In the beginning of the reign of Queen Anne, Mr. St. John, afterwards famous under the name of Lord Bolingbroke, who was an unbeliever in Christianity, and was, during the latter part of this reign, the principal leader of a conspiracy to place the Pretender on the throne, on the death of Queen Anne, instead of the present Royal Family, proposed "a bill for the prevention of occasional conformity, by

which it was enacted, "that any person who held any office, who should attend any meeting of Dissenters, should be disabled from his employment, and pay a fine of £100, and £5 for every day that he continued to act in his office, after having been at a meeting. He was also rendered incapable of holding any other employment, till after one whole year's conformity, and upon a relapse the penalties were doubled." This act, after violent disputes, and after having been rejected several times, was at last passed in the 10th year of the Queen's reign; but after the accession of George I. it being well known that the bill had been supported by that party who wished to deprive him of the throne, in order that the Dissenters, who were the firmest friends to his succession, might not be able to defend his claims, it was speedily repealed.

In the 8th year of the Queen's reign, Dr. Sacheverel preached and published two sermons, which were considered as reflecting on the Revolution; and the Whig ministry under the influence of the Duke of Marlborough and Lord Godolphin, very imprudently and contrary to the principles of toleration and freedom which they professed, procured his impeachment. He was suspended for three years and his sermons burnt. The people however were violent in his favour, and the employment of a military force was necessary to guard the houses of those who had voted against him. During his suspension he made a kind of triumphal progress through the middle of the kingdom, and excited the people in various places to riot against the Dissenters. Many chapels and houses of the principal Dissenters were burnt by the mobs whom he raised. At Wolverhampton, however, the rioters were repulsed, and the chapel was preserved principally through the exertions of Mr. Elwall, who will come under our notice again in the account of the following reign. This is not the only event which has proved that even the high Churchmen of this country have no objection to exciting riots and using the utmost violence of the mob against their adversaries, and that they blame popular tumults only when directed against themselves; while the Dissenters and all true friends of civil and religious liberty feel sentiments of abhorrence too strong to be expressed in language

for all riotous effusions of popular violence against whomsoever that violence may be directed. During the whole of this reign the violent disputes in the convocation concerning the right of the Archbishop to prorogue the Lower House, continued. The Bishops who had been created during the preceding reign, were mostly men of tolerant and liberal principles, but the Lower House were very bigoted, and were mostly under the influence of Atterbury, who towards the conclusion of this reign was made Bishop of Rochester, and who was one of the principal leaders of that party who wished to have restored the Pretender and to have excluded the present Royal Family from the throne. In consequence of his attempts for this purpose, he was at the beginning of the following reign obliged to leave the kingdom.

In the 9th year of Anne's reign, Mr. Whiston was deprived of his professorship of mathematics, and expelled from the University of Cambridge, in consequence of his having declared and published Arian opinions. He had been desired to suppress them, though he believed them to be true, that the common opinion might go undisturbed; but such motives were of no weight with him, compared with the desire for the discovery and propagation of truth. In the following reign, George I. with whom he was a great favourite, desiring him to conceal his opinions on account of the odium under which they lay, and the disadvantage they were of to his worldly interests, he replied, "If Martin Luther had acted so, where would your Majesty have been now?" And upon another occasion, Lord Chief Justice King urging him to conform by saying that he might do more good in the Church, he asked, "Pray, my Lord, in the courts in which you preside would such excuses be admitted?" And the Chief Justice confessing that they would not, he said, "Well then, my Lord, supposing God Almighty to be as just in the next world as my Lord Chief Justice is in this, where are we then?" A question which every conformist to the Church who does not sincerely believe the whole of her Common Prayer Book creeds and articles to be agreeable to Scripture, ought to put to his own heart. The Lower House of convocation wished to have punished Whiston for the books in which he had published



his Arian sentiments, but the Bishops, and particularly Archbishop Tennyson, nobly refused to concur in any persecuting measures, though they agreed with the Lower House in censuring his works.

In the year 1712, Dr. Clarke, rector of St. James's, Westminster, and one of the Queen's chaplains, published a work in defence of Arianism, entitled, "The Scripture Doctrine of the Trinity Considered. In Three Parts. The First consisting of a Collection and Explanation of all the Texts in the New Testament relating to that Doctrine: the Second, his own Belief on the Subject, set forth at large: and the Third, the Principal Passages in the Liturgy of the Church of England relating to this Subject Considered." This book excited a violent clamour, particularly in the convocation, which censured it as containing assertions contrary to the Catholic faith, as received and declared by the Church of England concerning three persons of one substance, power and eternity in the unity of the Godhead, and passages tending to perplex the minds of men in the solemn acts of worship as directed by our established Liturgy. Disputes on other questions however prevented the convocation from proceeding any farther than to censure the book, and Dr. Clarke continued in the Church. He was a great favourite with George II. and his Queen Caroline. During the latter part of his life he drew up in manuscript a re-

formed copy of the Book of Common Prayer, striking out the Athanasian Creed and many other objectionable passages. This was shown to Queen Caroline and highly approved of by her. After the author's death it was published, and with some alterations it has been used in a few Dissenting congregations, particularly for some time in the congregation in Essex Street, formed on the open declaration of Unitarian sentiments by Mr. Lindsey. The plan however of introducing either this or any other Liturgy into Dissenting congregations has generally failed; and it appears indeed to be in some degree contrary to the main principle of dissent, that a minister ought to be left perfectly free and unbiassed in the formation and declaration of his sentiments. If he be required to use a Liturgy, he cannot form his opinions without some bias towards the opinions declared in that form: or if his religious inquiries lead him to sentiments different from those on which the Prayer Book which he uses is founded, he must find great difficulty in declaring them. For these reasons the prescription of a form of prayer either in or out of an Established Church, appears to have naturally a tendency to restrain the exercise of private judgment and free inquiry, and consequently to be in some degree a bar to the discovery and propagation of truth.

[*To be continued.*]

## ORIGINAL LETTERS.

*Letter from Rev. T. F. Palmer to Mr. Rutt.*

SIR, Clapton, March 16, 1817.

EVER since I read the account of Mr. T. F. Palmer, by his friend Mr. Christie, of Philadelphia, in your VIth Volume, I have designed to offer you some further particulars, from the conversation and correspondence of that interesting, and much injured man. I now fulfil a small part of my intention by sending you the copy of a letter, which was probably the last he wrote on board the Hulk, at Woolwich. It will serve to shew the ardour of his grate-

ful mind which disposed him very much to over-rate a few services which I had the pleasure to render him, and which I cannot recollect without acknowledging the zealous co-operation of my departed friends, Mr. Lindsey and Mr. Joyce, Dr. Hamilton and Dr. Disney, not to mention some who yet survive to serve their generation.

When I first visited Mr. Palmer and Mr. Muir, in the autumn of 1793, on board the Prison-Hulks, where they were separately detained, it was in company with a friend, who had known Mr. Palmer in Scotland, and with the

learned gentlemen mentioned at the close of his letter, and who were endeared to him by their kind attentions. The former of those gentlemen, Mr. Felix Vaughan, died in very early life, with the reputation of accomplishments which promised eminence in his profession. His rapidly declining health had allowed him few opportunities for exertion; but these were employed in the defence of his fellow-citizens who had become the objects of ministerial persecution in those *troubulous* times.

The name of the Sheriff's Officer, mentioned by Mr. Palmer, was Grant. He was convicted of forgery, in Scotland, where his sentence had been mitigated to transportation, and Mr. Palmer was obliged to have his company, for some time, on board the *Hulk*. I have no means of ascertaining the fact, but I am inclined to suspect that my friend had been misinformed as to the circumstance of Mr. Muir and his companions having been *hand-cuffed*. They had been confined in Newgate, for some time before the departure of the *Surprise*, and from thence were conveyed on board the vessel.

J. T. RUTT.

February 10, 1794.

MY DEAR SIR,

FRIEND I should say, for never did I receive more kind and decisive marks of friendship than from you. Thanks are cold. I do not give them. God grant I may only live to shew the impression made upon me.

Muir, Skirving and Margarott, and Sheriff's Officer, hand-cuffed, two and two, were put on board the *Surprise* last night. I go to morrow.

Farewell, dear Sir, your benevolence, I swear to you, shall be a lesson to me. The fellow-feeling you have shewn to me I will imitate, and my fellow-sufferers shall be equal partakers with myself.

We may be starved, and you may fall by the civil sword, but should we meet, it will be with a pleasure we can scarcely conceive. In this hope I live. If disappointed, the happiness I wish to be a partaker of myself, I have the satisfaction to trust will be the lot of millions, I mean the blessings of equal laws, equal rights.

I thank you much for your good offices to Messrs Vaughan and Gurney.

Tell the last I blush to leave my country without answering his last most kind letter. The confusion I am in must apologise.

I am, Dear Sir,

Your's while

T. F. PALMER.

Mr. Rutt, Thames Street.

*A Circular on Behalf of an Algerine Captive.*

Sandwich, April 27th, 1680.

BR. HAMAN,

AFTER all Christian salutation to you presented, these are to acquaint you that the bearer hearof, Vincent Burton, is a neighbour of ours, and an inhabitant of the same towne with us: who is a man of an honest reputation, holding company with such as come under the denomination of Nonconformist; whose dafter's husband, being fallen into the hands of those merciless men, the Turks, whose cruelty is great to all those that profess to own Christ: he was taken by them in July last, and his redemption out of that slavery will cost one hundred pounds, whose capparency is not sufficient to accomplish such a sum without the help of well-disposed people, who have bowels of compassion yerning and drawing them forth to commiserate the condition of such poor distressed souls, who are fit objects of pity to bestow their charity upon; hee therefore doth earnestly intreat you to present the deplorable condition of his son to the congregation (over which God hath made you an overseer), and for as much as God requires us to doe good unto all, wee doe likewise desire you, not only to endeavor the promotion of this charitable act in your own congregation as aforesaid, but also to encourage the same by a line or two from you given to the bearer hearof to other congregations therabout, that their charity may also abound towards him on his son's behalf, the which we hope they will not be wanting in. They being assured by you (from our testimony) that this thing is true; so in expectation of a letter from you according to your promise, when we see you at Bresson (and also now by your Uncle



Humanity to signify the time of your coming to us, and in the hand (whose forwardness doth greatly incourage) we comit both you and yours into the hands of God, for life, health and protection, subscribing ourselves your

brethren in the bonds of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ :

LUKE TROWARD.

WILLIAM COWELL.

HENRY BROWNE.

WIL. LAMBIN.

## MISCELLANEOUS COMMUNICATIONS.

*Christian Equality. A Discourse delivered before the First Society of Unitarian Christians in the City of Philadelphia, November 10th, 1816. By R. Eddowes, a Minister pro tem. of the said Society; occasioned by (among other things) the following Passages in the Pastoral Letter of the Synod of Philadelphia, dated September 20th, 1816.*

“ We know but of one Anti-Trinitarian synagogue in all our borders, and that there never may be another, we pray you brethren to declare the truth, that the only true God in existence is the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, the God who is in Christ Jesus, reconciling the world to himself.”

“ The synod would exhort particularly all the elders of the churches to beware of those who have made such pretended discoveries in Christian theology, as require an abandonment of ‘ the form of sound words’ contained in our excellent confession and the holy Scripture.”

“ We rejoice that the shafts of Satan should fall ineffectually from the shield of Jesus; and we desire all persons under our care to present this shield, by maintaining and diffusing assiduously the sentiments of the Word of God, in opposition to every damning error.”

ROM. xii. 3, 4, 5.

“ For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith. For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.”

JUST before our Lord Jesus Christ left the world to go unto the Father, he renewed to his apostles the assurance he had previously given them,

that he would still be present with them in those miraculous powers, with which, for the attestation of the truth of the gospel, they should be furnished themselves, and which they should be enabled to communicate to those who believed. The Acts of the Apostles, and the Epistles throughout, afford abundant evidence of the accomplishment of this promise; and we gather from the last-mentioned writings, several additional particulars as to the nature of those qualifications, so far beyond the ordinary scope of the human faculties. They not only differed in kind, and in the degrees of their intrinsic excellence (although all of the same divine origin), but on some of their possessors they had so little moral influence, that they were not sufficient to extinguish or prevent in their minds many of the most reprehensible dispositions, nor to purify their conduct of much that was irregular and unchristian.

It strikes one with astonishment that among such as had been partakers of the heavenly gift, there should have been occasion for those earnest remonstrances, those sharp rebukes and those solemn warnings which we find in the Epistles of Paul—that he should have to charge them with divisions, disorder, immorality and apostacy; and that there should have been such a propensity in some, so to exalt themselves above their brethren on account of the higher comparative value of their own spiritual endowments, as to render it necessary that the graces of love and charity, condescension and humility, should be represented as more excellent than them all. Pride, under all its forms and aspects, is odious and un-creditable; but religious, or spiritual pride, is a compound of things in their nature so utterly incompatible and contradictory, as to excite emotions of peculiar disgust and abhorrence. A vain-glorious Christian! Is it possible to conceive of a greater solecism?

How truly may it be said of every qualification, however distinguished—"Who maketh thee to differ from another? What hast thou that thou hast not received? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it?" Not only has every virtue, whether more or less eminent, one common derivation, but the disparity itself is a beauty in the economy of Providence to which no reflecting mind can be insensible. And the Apostle strikingly illustrates this in the two last verses of my text, and more at large in the 12th chapter of his first Epistle to the Corinthians, by an allegory taken from the different members of the human body, each of which, however diverse in form and dignity, contributes its part to the convenience, utility and harmony of the whole. Thus, whatever be the dissimilitude, or the higher or lower estimation of spiritual gifts, Christianity amalgamates them all into a system of perfect equalization; so that by *the church of Christ* we ought to understand the whole community of believers in him, just as by *the body* we understand all its component parts: nor does any distinctive name or office imply in one member a right to assume superiority over the rest, or to say to any of its fellows, "I have no need of thee," and thus to create a schism in the body. Whatever is the right of one should be the right of all, and whatever is the interest of one, the interest of all.

It was the infraction of this original and fundamental canon of equality that bred all the evils with which the church of Christ has been afflicted. The desire of vain glory was the fruitful parent of envy and mutual provocation. From hence sprang those contentions among the Corinthians, and that setting up the name of one teacher in opposition to another, against which Paul in the very beginning of his first Epistle so warmly protests:—"Whereas there are among you envying, and strife, and divisions, and one saith I am of Paul, and another, I of Apollos; are ye not carnal? Who then is Paul, and who Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man?" He thus forewarns the elders of Ephesus—"Also of your own selves shall men arise speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them." It plainly appears from his writings, and

those of Peter and John, that even in *their* early days there were false teachers, perversers of the truth, and bringers-in of heresies, and that there were many followers of their pernicious ways:—what wonder then, if when their personal presence and influence were withdrawn, these "profane and vain babblings" should "increase unto more ungodliness? And even that grievous wolves should enter in, not sparing the flock?" We know from the authentic records of history, that when "the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace" was once broken through, it was succeeded by the enlisting of partizans under the banners of a multitude of different leaders; and that the ancient and truly catholic names of *Christian*, and *disciple*, were laid aside for that of any one who could gain the most proselytes to his opinions by bold assertion, by sophistry, rhetoric or declamation. Such were those "oppositions of science, falsely so called," against which Paul cautions his son Timothy—that war of words between those who had equally erred concerning the faith, which led to the most disastrous consequences. It is easy to conceive that when a proud and bigoted polemic found himself pressed by argument, he would endeavour to intrench himself within the strong holds of inspiration and infallibility:—goaded by continued opposition, he would stigmatize his antagonist with opprobrious epithets; anathematize, excommunicate and devote him to everlasting perdition; and at length assail him with the more deadly weapons of carnal warfare. Blessed Jesus!—Was it for such as these thou didst offer up that affectionate prayer—"That they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me and I in thee, that they also may be one in us, that the world may believe that thou hast sent me?" Rather might it not have been supposed, that instead of the gospel of peace proclaimed, the demon of discord had been let loose, with a woe! woe! woe! to the inhabitants of the earth!

Nor was it long before they, who if they had possessed the spirit of him they called *Master*, and of his apostles, would have been examples of humility and moderation, began to lift up themselves over those to whom in effect they owed all their importance. Then arose an host of innovations upon the

pure and simple institutions of the gospel—the distinction between clergy and laity—the orders of the hierarchy—high-sounding titles—splendid garments—costly crowns—and a greedy appetite after large temporalities and princely establishments. In proportion as power became more extended and pre-eminence more secure, pride was the less disposed to brook that imputation of error which difference of opinion seemed to cast upon it; and hence the hopeful project of framing articles of faith to which all the world should subscribe. The assent of the weak was to be obtained by the fear of eternal torments, and the obstinacy of heretics to be overcome by the cogent arguments of racks and flames. Thus Nebuchadnezzar commanded all people and nations and languages to fall down and worship the golden image he had set up, under pain of the fiery furnace; and thus Louis the XIVth revoked the edict of Nantz, because it was his pleasure that there should be but one religion in his dominions, and *that* religion his own. But if ever there was a case in which it might be safely pronounced that the Almighty had interposed with his *veto* upon the projects of human pride and folly, it is this. When men began to build a tower whose top might reach unto heaven, he confounded their language and their speech. And so when the plain path of scriptural truth was forsaken, the very attempt to make them all pursue the same track by forcible methods, only made them the more ready, by a principle of re-action inherent in the human mind, to start off in numberless different directions. Truth is of that pure and unchangeable nature, that by its own operation it will ultimately obtain universal assent; but to make mankind generally and permanently unanimous in error, the God of truth has forbidden;—its very efforts to sustain itself do but accelerate its downfall.

Such was the state of things when the Reformation shook to its very base that colossal domination which exalted itself “above all that is called God or is worshipped,” and which prohibited the reading of the Scriptures to the people, lest the rottenness of its foundation should be discovered. But let it be once admitted, and well understood, that with respect to freedom of

inquiry every individual is upon a perfectly equal footing (and this is the very vital principle of the Reformation), and vain is the attempt to circumscribe it within this or that particular pale. Like the confluent waters, it will burst through every mound which the anxious but fruitless labour of bigotry and superstition raises before it; nor will any effort avail to resist its progress till it has found its natural level. And will you not, my friends, indulge with me the pleasing persuasion that our beloved country is marked out in the divine counsels as the favoured region where this blessed, evangelical equality shall first be seen in all its peace-giving and love-inspiring influences? Immortal be that constitution, immovable our adherence to it, which, occupied only in its proper sphere with the security of our civil rights on the basis of common liberty, leaves religion to the impulse of its own unbiassed, its inalienable independence—which, virtually disclaiming every idea of *toleration* as from itself, opens the way for the exercise of it, in its just and genuine acceptance, between one sect and another—which, regarding their various distinctions with a disinterested and indifferent eye, interferes no farther than to protect every individual in the peaceable exercise of his natural and indefeasible privilege. Can it be a doubt whether in such a genial soil, all the rich fruits of religious as well as of civil liberty will attain, in due season, their highest degree of perfection?

Several circumstances, however, concur to render it probable that a consummation so much to be desired, is not very nigh at hand, upon a few of which I shall now briefly touch.

It would seem as if the perfect independence of every religious denomination on our civil institutions, had the effect of setting at work a spirit of rivalry among themselves—“a strife among them which shall be accounted the greatest.” Hence the custom of making a periodical display of the number of their churches and the increase of their members; too little, it might be thought, in accordance with the principles of that kingdom which “cometh not with observation,” and which, as it “is not of this world,” does not seem sufficiently to harmonize with those expedients, too nearly akin



to the machinery of secular policy, which are necessary to keep together, under one form of government, many distinct and distant congregations. Is all this in reality the effect of a disinterested concern for the *welfare of Zion*, and the extension of the *Redeemer's reign*? Or is it something of a less catholic nature? If it should prove to be the same spirit of proselytism which has run to such excess in times past, who can say to what lengths it might not even yet, in similar circumstances, and under similar patronage, proceed? That the majority of those who now indulge it, are not aware of its mischievous and antichristian tendency, I am most willing to believe; but certain it is that its prototype is to be sought for only under the papal government, or in the propaganda of the prophet of Mecca.\* It is not *here* then that we are to look for an exemplification of the doctrines contained in my text; *they* refer to transactions of a much more humble and retired nature. It is in moderately numerous societies, perfectly independent within themselves, and whose affairs are managed by persons freely chosen among their own body, that the abuses which Paul so earnestly cautions against and labours to correct, may be most effectually avoided, and the virtues he so strongly recommends and inculcates, most advantageously cultivated and displayed. If this society should increase so as to render it inconvenient for all any longer to assemble in one place, I should think myself happy if I lived to see another branching from it, but governed by a constitution and laws of their own framing, and bound to us by no tie, whether federal or representative, associate or consociate, but that of brethren of the same family,

\* Although I willingly render every due tribute of approbation to that liberality which prompts to the general diffusion of the Scriptures "without note or comment," yet I would wish every member of a Bible society to ask himself impartially, whether it be consistent with the avowed motive, to give the same *unnoticed* publication, and the same implied authenticity to certain passages which are now well known not to be part of the genuine word of God, and even to perpetuate the fraud and place it almost beyond the possibility of correction, by suffering it to stand in *stereotype editions*?

actuated by the same ardour in the pursuit of truth, "standing fast in one spirit, striving together for the faith of the gospel."

Another circumstance, highly unfavourable to the prevalence of that humble, charitable and equalizing spirit which characterizes genuine Christianity, is the imprisonment of the truth in creeds and confessions, articles and catechisms. This is, in reality, but another feature of the same arbitrary, but absurd and impracticable plan, for procuring a perfect uniformity of opinion throughout the whole Christian world. This expedient, as I have already intimated, was very early put in practice; and the compassing of this end has been, whether avowedly or not, the real aim and purpose of every ecclesiastical council, from that of Nice in the reign of Constantine, down to the episcopal convocations and presbyterian assemblies of the seventeenth century. And be it remembered, that whenever any of these could obtain the aid of the civil power for enforcing conformity to their decrees, it was eagerly resorted to and rigorously applied. Without this, the threats of eternal perdition to recusants, however awfully fulminated, would have been found ineffectual. But it does so happen, thanks to the good providence of God, and the happy times and places we live in, that the latter are now the only weapons which the church-militant can wield; and if we disapprove of the intolerance, we can no less wonder at the impolicy and want of prudence of those who have recourse to them, rendered, as they frequently are, altogether disgusting by the coarse and indecorous language in which they are conveyed. When we see these elaborate compositions held up, with all the self-complacence of imagined infallibility, as a rule of faith which ought to take precedence of the Scriptures themselves; what difference can we discern between such a pretension, and that of the church which asserts, that without its interpretation as dictated by the *Holy Ghost*, those Scriptures are an insufficient guide, and cannot be trusted to point out the way of salvation? For promoting an adherence to these venerated products of ancient wisdom, advantage is sometimes taken of Paul's exhortation to Timothy (2d Ep. i. 13) to "hold fast the form

of sound words, which (says he) thou hast heard of me." It were much to be desired that we could know what this form was, that we might judge of the propriety of the application. Doubtless it was some proposition of primary importance, concisely expressed, frequently repeated and easily remembered; and if any such can be met with in the other writings of this Apostle, we may be allowed, for want of more precise evidence, to adopt it as the form to which he referred. Suppose then we were to fix upon that which we find in his first Epistle to Timothy, chap. ii. verse 5,—“To us there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.” Or that in 1 Cor. viii. 6, “To us there is one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him.” Or this, Eph. iv. 5, 6, “One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.” These, or something to the same purpose, it is highly probable that Timothy had often heard from Paul; but the like cannot be said of one of the most prominent articles in the formularies of faith upon which I am commenting, namely, that “in the unity of the Godhead there be three persons, of the same substance, power and eternity,” and so forth; as I do not find that Paul has any where laid down such an axiom, or preached such a doctrine, or that he paid divine worship to any other than the God and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Every expedient of a restrictive nature having been found unavailing for the security of unanimity and concord among Christians, it was thought worth while, in the formation of this society, to try whether gospel truth and love and peace might not be best promoted and preserved in connexion with perfect liberty of judgment. All therefore that is required, as a test of opinion, to qualify for membership, is an assent to these two propositions, namely, that there is but one God, and, which necessarily follows, that he alone is the proper object of religious adoration. Without these we could not consistently have assumed the title of a church; but so far are they from being exclusive, that it is evident a conscientious Unitarian might join in our religious services without offence

to his principles, as they are nothing more in terms than what he himself professes and constantly practises. At the same time it is true, and we have no wish to dissemble it, that a strict and invariable adherence to this, which we conceive to be the truly primitive and scriptural form of faith and devotional service, will have a direct tendency to lead the mind to the adoption of other sentiments which naturally flow from it; in other words, that when the spirit of truth has thus obtained possession of the understanding, it will be led into *all truth*. Not the least idea of dictation is, however, entertained. May the time never come when those who assemble in this house shall be authoritatively told what they are to believe, or referred to any other code than the Scriptures as the groundwork of their faith. Never may they fall into such a disgraceful state of indolence and supineness, as, in order to save themselves the trouble of thinking, to accept of a ready-prepared system of doctrine at the hands of any man or body of men whatever! Reason and understanding were given for far higher purposes; nor should that talent be laid up in a napkin to rust and canker, which ought to be kept bright and clear, and ready for employment according to the gracious design of him who bestowed it.

[To be concluded in the next Number.]

SIR,

Jan. 28, 1817.

THERE was published in 1745, a book with the following title—“The Conformity between Modern and Ancient Ceremonies, wherein is proved, by incontestable Authorities, that the Ceremonies of the Church of Rome are entirely derived from the Heathen.” This is a translation from the French original, which was published in 1667, and I now refer to it for the sake of two passages in “the Translator’s Preface,” p. xx. Having mentioned the “retaining old customs when the reason of them is forgot or not attended to,” he adds, “In many of the midland parts of England at this day, [1745] it is usual for the poor, upon *All-Souls Day*, to go from one village to another, a begging *Soul-Cakes*, which are freely dispersed by many good Protestants, who believe neither purgatory nor the efficacy of masses for the dead; as

well as by many others who know little of either, but only do it in compliance with popular practice." To this passage is annexed the following note:

"Perhaps another instance of this nature subsisted not long ago, in the metropolis itself; where it was usual to bring up a fat buck to the altar of St. Paul's with hunters' horns blowing, &c. in the middle of divine service. For on this very spot, or near it, there formerly stood a temple of Diana."

Have any of your readers witnessed this custom respecting *Soul-Cakes*? But the procession with a stag to St. Paul's is the most surprising, especially to have been mentioned in 1745, as practised "not long ago." As to the period when this custom was observed there must surely be some mistake, for it could scarcely have survived the Reformation.

OTIOSUS.

SIR, Feb. 2, 1817.

I WAS lately surprised to find that Calvin had been deemed heretical on the subject of the Trinity. This appears from "An Answer to the Marquis of Worcester's Paper to the King," Charles I. by Hamon L'Estrange, 1651. The Marquis was a Roman Catholic, and in his endeavours to convert the King had been disparaging *Luther* with other reformers. My author replies, "What if he or *Calvin* erred concerning the Trinity, did not *Liberius* subscribe to the Arian Heresy? What if *Calvin* held with *Nestorius* two persons in Christ, did not *Pope Honorius* hold but one will in him?"

What say your readers who are conversant with the theological works of *Calvin*. Was the orthodox zealot who burnt *Servetus* to do God service, at last himself no better than a Heretic?

BREVIS.

Vicinity of Stourbridge,

March 16, 1817.

SIR,

YOU will have the goodness to allow me a small space in your next Number of the Theological Repository, to correct an error (either accidental or designed) into which Mr. Carpenter's biographer has fallen, in his account of that gentleman's second settlement with the congrega-

tion at Stourbridge. In your publication for January, p. 5, it is thus stated: "In 1807 (the Rev. Benjamin Carpenter) resumed his ministerial office at Stourbridge, and continued to the close of his life to officiate at that place, and at Cradley alternately in connexion with the Rev. James Scott." Now, Sir, as it is a circumstance too notorious in this neighbourhood to be forgotten or misunderstood, that the Rev. Benjamin Carpenter resumed his ministerial office at Stourbridge, (or in other words officiated as the minister of the congregation there) from the exact period of his predecessor's resignation (re-entering the pulpit on the sabbath after it was vacated by him), and as it is important that information of this sort should be conveyed to you with all possible correctness, I beg to state as above that Mr. Carpenter's ministry at Stourbridge re-commenced in October, 1806.

It is possible he might not take upon himself what is sometimes called the pastoral charge till 1807; but if words have any meaning, surely the expression "his resuming his ministerial office at Stourbridge," must imply his officiating as minister there, which he continued to do from the time here specified until his death on the 23rd of November, 1816.

Omnia patefacienda."

X. Y. Z.

On Vitality.

SIR,

March 8th, 1817.

HAD there been a continuation of some Letters on the Resurrection, published in Vol. VIII. of the Repository in 1813, perhaps I should not have had occasion to intrude myself on your notice, as the writings of those gentlemen might possibly have so elucidated the subject as to have prevented the necessity for stating my reasons for considering life to be completely distinct in its nature from the corporeal form it animates, and that owing to this, it is capable of existing, and also of animating a new form after the death and total dissolution of this body.

Whatever this may be, which we call life, whether animating vegetation, the animal nature, or man, he must be a superficial observer of creation who should conclude it to be



solely the effect of the organizing of matter. There are distinctions between life and organization which will for ever separate them. Organization *alone* has not ever assimilated matter in contact with itself so as to repair any injuries it may have sustained: neither, *alone*, has it ever been capable of propagating its species; nor by rest, or sleep, has it ever restored its wasted energies to vigour. The faculties may have been imitated by organization, but never have such imitations been capable of hearing, seeing, smelling, feeling or tasting, much less has organization been ever capable of thought or reason. Every animal can do some of these, if not all, and on strong grounds it may be queried if living vegetation is not capable of some conscious enjoyments. But, organization *alone* is a mere machine wholly void of all sensation.

Organic causes *alone* never having produced life, but life being through the whole creation united with organic matter by a two-fold agency, it is but doing philosophic justice to the subject to state, that body and life being *ab origine* the union of two completely distinct principles, however closely united they may be, and however intimately blended so as to be apparently one, yet they are actually two, and therefore when decomposed must necessarily again become two. Whether life is not material as well as the organized body, is not the present inquiry, but the inquiry is whether life, be it what it may, is not wholly distinct from the body it animates.

Notwithstanding the maxim of Linnæus has been combated, it does not appear to me to have been overturned, but that the very arguments brought against it have established the truth of "*Omne vivum ex ovo*," and therefore in reasoning upon this subject, it is of no importance whether our premises are taken from the animal or vegetable kingdom. My first evidence to prove the principle I have laid down, that life and organic body was *ab origine* distinct, is the observation of De Graaf, the future plant formed in the seed prior to its having been touched by the pollen. Spalanzani likewise discovered in the broken pod the seed twenty days before the flower was in full blossom: at that time the powder of the anthers

was visible, but glewed fast to their summits; the seeds were of a gelatinous substance and continued so for ten days after the blóssom had fallen off: on the eleventh day the seed became heart-shaped and attached by the basis to the pod, having at the apex a white point whose hollow contained a drop of liquor in the cavity; this cavity on the twenty-fifth day was enlarged but still quite full of liquor, and a small semi-transparent yellowish body fixed by two ends to the sides of the cavity; in a month the seed was enlarged and changed from a heart to a kidney shape, and this small body increased, gelatinous and less transparent, but without organization. On the fortieth day the cavity grown larger was filled with the body, and covered with a thin membrane, which when taken off was a bright green divided into two lobes, and the small plantule which attached it to the lower part was visible. These facts prove the seeds to be formed prior to fecundation, and that the effects of the action of the pollen is to penetrate, dissolve and stimulate every part, and to give form and animation to the future plant.

The organic matter animated, and the animating principle which takes full possession of it, so as to adapt the organic formation to be its residence, are two distinct substances; and that all nature acts by a similar process, and is attended with similar results, is evident from the pollen of the pink causing the polyanthus seed to produce on the polyanthus stalk a cluster of beautiful pinks. It is by acting upon this secret of nature that our gardeners deck our *parterre* with *lulus naturæ* of flowers; by it the songs of the mules of the goldfinch and canary bird enliven our rooms; whilst by it our farmers furnish our colonies with mules adapted to the purposes for which they are wanted, sometimes with the vigour of the horse in the diminutive size of the ass, or at others fit him in the size of the horse to labour with the patience of the ass. It is by attentively studying this principle that our breeders increase the flesh and diminish the bone of the cattle intended for our markets, and the time may come, in the progressiveness of the human mind, when beauty of mind and body come to be preferred to fortune,

that the same science may be successfully studied to the improvement of the capabilities of the human race both for beauty and for wisdom.

Having shewed that life is not organization but that which acts upon organization, I now proceed to notice that it appears from nature, that there may be a suspension of the actions of life for months and years without life being destroyed: that this is the case in mosses, the ears of blighted corn, the seta equina, the wheel polype, and in several species of snails, as we learn from the *Philosophical Transactions*, &c. They are proved to be capable of being kept as dried preparations, and after a total suspension of irritability and contractility for many years, they have by a proper application of water been restored to life and all its functions, from which we are entitled to conclude that death does not set free the animating principle, and that it cannot be separated therefrom but by decomposition, organization being the instrument of which life is the controller and director.

It does not appear that life is destroyed with the decomposition of the body, but on the contrary, by the decomposition of body the principle of life is fitted for rising in the order of existence. We know not any thing in nature which has life but what supports that life by death. If there is any thing, it is the small and minute seed of the lowest order of vegetation which spring upon the naked rock and become by repeated death the *pabulum* to a higher species of vegetable life. Why this general order of Providence? May we not conjecture that the intention of Providence is by successive transformation eventually to swallow up mortality in life?

The farmer who for a series of years sows beans, wheat, oats, or any other crop, if he does not manure his land will soon find a cessation of his crops, however productive they were at first. If the seed grows, the produce will be haum, or straw, the bean, the corn will be absent. Yet the dissolution of water is the alone support of the plant; its oxygene, hydrogene and carbon produce the whole plant. Is not the cause of this loss of the seed, the absence of the proper living principle adapted to the

nature of the plant? It was in the former crops consumed, for want of this nature labours in vain; the plant pines after the end of its existence, and tells by the misery and emptiness of its growth that it disdains a useless creation.

Life, then, appears to have a growth and an increase. How it is developed in the vegetable creation we are necessarily ignorant of, but we know that a sufficiency of energy is in it for the exertion of the organic matter of the plant, for its present good and future progeny. Plants smile at the consciousness of human benefits, and droop under the ill-usage of man: transported to foreign parts, they adapt their habits to the climate, and if they survive its influence, their manners conform to their novel situation. Every living animal according to its powers of motion and knowledge has higher degrees of consciousness, and manifests the passions of love, hatred and revenge, hope, doubt, fear and hesitation: their mental passions manifest the selfish principle. Some even enter into the social order, and by their strength through union manifest, that in what concerns the public welfare they are worthy of legislating even for man. Man is in some things inferior to all, but by his speech he is able to combine the past with the present and determine for the future; his knowledge is his power, and by it, on earth, to all the animals, he is the representative of God. In him is on earth the highest perfection of life; still transitory is his state; like all former states of vitality, waiting to be new clothed "with a spiritual mansion," adapted to a higher and more perfect state of creation.

This life at its first existence must have been a point, a stimulus, an energy; had it been two points, or stimulus's capable of division, it would be capable of producing two conscious identities. This point, stimulus, or energy has never lost through life its identity, but is from birth to death always the same conscious vital point, for we always feel personal identity from infancy to old age. Not so the body. This was at one time almost imperceptibly minute: whether it increases or decreases, whether it preserves all its members or is mutilated of them all, the rational principle is not injured but in many instances

strengthened by the loss of limbs, all proving the complete distinction between body and mind. If this vital principle can lay dormant for years, and as in blighted corn perhaps for ages without injury; if it is but a point which exerts its energy from its centre of action through the whole frame; if it is, as it may easily be proved to be always, by the cerebral and sympathetic nerves, at war with destruction, and by its energy through our temporal existence preserving the organized matter it is clothed with from that destruction to which all inert matter tends; if in addition to this it is seen annually to forsake the last year's bark that it may inhabit the new formed bark, and the same in the new formed bud; and if we find it equally active in the animal creation; have we not a right by deductions from nature, to conclude that the point called life, the only seat of personal identity, is capable of existing and animating a new form after the death and dissolution of the body?

N.

TO S. T. COLERIDGE, Esq.

On the Attack on the Unitarians contained in his Second Lay Sermon.

LETTER I.

"Thou com'st in such a questionable shape

That I will speak to thee."

HAMLET.

SIR, Temple, April 3, 1817.

THE Unitarians are happy that you have, at length, afforded them an opportunity of meeting you on even ground. The nature of the attack with which you honoured them in "*the Statesman's Manual*" precluded all intelligible reply. They felt that it was impossible to fight with sun beams or to contend against a cloud. But you have now thought fit to lay aside some part of the mystery with which your former charges were surrounded, and to bring forward something like a definite accusation against them. They think, at least, they can discern amidst the profusion of your imagery, the grounds on which you found your reprobation—grounds which they are most anxious to examine.

At the commencement of your

attack you favour us with an ingenious piece of verbal criticism on the term Unitarian as used by the sect you are opposing. "This is a word," you observe, "which in its proper sense can belong only to their antagonists: for unity or union and indistinguished *unity* or oneness are incompatible terms; while in the exclusive sense in which they mean the term to be understood, it is a presumptuous boast, and an uncharitable calumny."\* I have no objection to admit that, recurring to the original meaning of terms, *unity* implies rather the perfect combination of two or more substances than the oneness of an individual quality. And, in this sense, the term might be used by the believers in the existence of three persons in the Divine nature in opposition to those who maintained an absolute plurality of Deities. But it could have no meaning as opposed to the faith of those who assert the perfect *oneness* of Jehovah. It may imply the combination of several things in opposition to their existence in a state of separation from each other; but it presents no antithesis of sense to the idea of an original and unmingled essence. At the present day the term *Unitarian* is perfectly understood to describe a believer in one God in one person, and that of *Trinitarian* to designate one who maintains that there are three persons in the Divine Unity. In this view, the assumption of the term, though not etymologically correct, is neither "*a presumptuous boast*" nor "*an uncharitable calumny*." Your objection is evidently a mere cavil on a word. For it is impossible you can imagine that those who call themselves by the name, have assumed it in the sense that you say it properly bears—since that would be to claim a belief in all which they most strenuously deny—and assert in their very name, the great principle which they regard as the foundation of religious error. The term Anti-Trinitarian might, indeed, be less invidious; but that which you suggest of *Psilantrophists* would be utterly improper. For if it was understood to assert the *mere* humanity of Christ, it would exclude all those who while they reverence the Father alone as



God, regard his first begotten son as something more than mortal. And, if it simply implied the humanity of the Messiah, our orthodox brethren would maintain their right to the term; and contend that while they worshiped him as Divine, they still delighted to feel with him as human.

We come now to matters of more importance. You proceed, "It is the interest of these men to speak of the Christian religion as comprised in a few plain doctrines, and containing nothing not intelligible at the first hearing to the narrowest capacities." And you then proceed after some further observations on the scantiness of our faith, to inveigh against the supposition of the plainness and simplicity of the gospel. St. Paul, you observe, though he teaches us,\* "that in the religion of Christ there is milk for babes; yet informs us at the same time, that there is meat for strong men! and, to the like purpose, one of the Fathers has observed, that in the New Testament there are shallows where the lamb may ford, and depths where the elephant must swim." You eloquently dilate on the great treasures of knowledge and of wisdom which the Scriptures contain—on mighty truths which are to fill and dilate the understanding—on the riches of Christ which no research can exhaust. Still it is exceedingly difficult to comprehend any definite object to which you refer, and still less to discern the path by which we are to climb to the sublimities you dimly unfold. "We understand a *grandeur* in the words but not the words." It seems that you mean to assert that there are truths in the Scriptures which the unlearned cannot discover—secluded springs of more holy inspiration which the philosopher alone can visit. Supposing this theory to have any truth—or rather this rhapsody to have any meaning—how can it possibly affect the truth or falsehood of the Unitarian creed? Those doctrines which the opposer of the Trinity rejects, supposing them to be true, are neither hid from the vulgar nor understood by the learned. A child, who is versed in his catechism, knows as much respecting the Trinity as the most laborious divine. To receive as

mere matters of faith all the doctrines of the Church of England no enlarged understanding is requisite. The humblest of the orthodox who believes in the union of two natures in the Saviour's person—in the vicarious efficacy of his death—and in the supernatural influences of his spirit—because he thinks the word of God asserts them, has just the same portion of knowledge with yourself respecting these mysteries. Those who have hitherto defended them have asserted that they were matters which, in this world, at least could not be understood by mortals. They gloried that the ignorant and the wise were, in respect of these things, nearly in the same relative condition. They have rather spoken of them with a solemn reverence as subjects which the most powerful mind could not grasp nor the acutest understanding explain. They have even been accustomed to regard the understanding as too cold and earthly a power to appreciate them, and have appealed rather for their testimony immediately to the heart and the affections. For the evidences of these doctrines they have sometimes condescended to apply to the reason; but for their height and depth and measure—for all beyond a simple belief in them as revealed—they have rather checked than impelled inquiry. In point of *fact*, there is nothing in orthodoxy to *understand* which the Unitarian does not believe. All that we reject consists of objects which, to those who receive them, are materials not of knowledge but of faith and hope, excitements to the believer not to penetrate into the hidden things of God, but, at distance, to love and adore him.

If I rightly understand your accusation against Unitarianism, it is, that it excludes those doctrines of our religion which the most profound understandings alone can comprehend, or in the figurative language you prefer, "the depths where the elephant must swim." And the plain answer I make is that there is not one of the doctrines it denies of which the highest intellect can understand any thing; that in respect to the depths you allude to, the elephant and the lamb are precisely in the same condition; and that consequently there is no food for the rational powers

in the most orthodox creed which our calumniated faith is not equally capable of affording.

You seem, Sir, to be very indignant at the sentiment that "religion requires but the application of a common sense which every man possesses to a subject in which every man is concerned."\* You even hint that to constitute the complete Christian some kind of genius is requisite; and are quite astonished that while musicians, orators, painters and mechanics require peculiar gifts, a mere common understanding should suffice for the comprehension of the religion of Jesus! It is true you concede that a highly cultivated intellect is not indispensable to salvation. I am happy your charity extends thus far, or some of the apostles themselves might be excluded from your select assembly of the just. Still I must suppose you to mean that the richest treasures of the gospel are accessible only to men possessed of certain intellectual properties. Surely you cannot be serious. A talent for religion! A genius for the gospel! I can find no intimation of these gifts in holy writ. The "good tidings of great joy" which our Saviour came to promulgate were peculiarly intended for the poor. They were designed as the "balm of their hurt minds," the guides of their path, the solace of their afflictions. They were given as a portion to those who had no inheritance on earth, a rich consolation to the lowly when heart and flesh should fail them. They were scorned by the learned of the schools, and propagated by the fishermen of Galilee. Through their ministry the "*poor of this world*" became "*rich in faith and inheritors of the kingdom of heaven.*" Nor were the sacred principles which they embraced hung about them as an amulet or a charm; they were approved to their understandings and received into their hearts; in their light they delighted to walk, and in defence of them they were ready to die. It is a libel on the Almighty to suppose that he has given a religion for the benefit of all mankind, and yet has bestowed the capability of enjoying it only on a few. It would be as though he had created the sun to enlighten all men and had endowed

only a small number with the organ of vision. Happy indeed is it that of such a fancy there is not the smallest trace in the word of God. I speak the language not of the Unitarian in particular, but of almost every intelligent Christian when I affirm that the great principles of our faith are written so plainly that "he who runs may read." They are inscribed in living and immortal characters which all the mysticism of Germany cannot obscure. True it is that in their divine relations, in so far as they refer to things that are unseen, they can never be comprehended on earth. But are not the wisest and the most ignorant, in this case, nearly on a level? The poor cottager who "knows and only knows her Bible true," believes on its authority, in an immortality of joy; and can you, with all your philosophy, do more? She knows, indeed, nothing of the nature of that blessedness which is treasured up for her in heaven; and has it "entered into your heart to conceive" it? She believes in the Father of mercies as her protector in life and her guide through the valley of the shadow of death; and what can you add to the hope and the comfort which this assurance breathes? Can you add to this feeling one ray of delight when you have taken Plato to expound St. John? She is contented to rest on an Almighty arm, without inquiring into the modes of its operation or existence; and "*Canst thou by searching find out God; canst thou find out the Almighty to perfection?*"

Far be it from me to undervalue metaphysical discussion or to deprecate the freest inquiry. They are among the noblest employments which heaven-born minds can delight in. If they bring us no accessions of actual knowledge, they discover to us our own internal resources and afford us a glorious proof of the aspiring tendencies of our nature. They are the beatings of the soul against the bars of its earthly tabernacle, striving before its time to expatiate in its native regions—which, though for the most part vain in their immediate object, prove the spirit of immortality to be strong within us. It is good to be sometimes rendered dizzy by the elevation of our own thoughts, to be posed with the casuistry of high reasonings, to be lost in the subtleties

of speculation too ethereal and divine. This is a preparatory exercise of the soul for employments which it may pursue for ever. It abstracts us from the vanities and selfishness of life, from low passions and ignoble aims, and feeds it for a while with the food of angels. It enables us to look with a comprehensive and, therefore, with a gentle eye on the frailties of man, and fills us with glowing hopes for his elevated progress. And if we should dwell too long in the abstractions of a genial philosophy—if we should have gazed on the “lovely scenes at distance” till we fancied ourselves and the world already near them—if we should throw some of the brilliant colouring of our own hopes on the places where we actually move—if we should look at man through a medium by which his errors are softened down and his virtues rendered fairer—if we should shape out gorgeous visions of liberty and peace and joy which the present age cannot realize—the error will be goodly as it will be sweet! It will be but the overleaping of a little period, but a union in spirit with future years, with the good hereafter to be born, and with prophets who have long been silent.

But these noble speculations and delicious dreams of the intellect form no essential part of the religion of Jesus. The sweet light of love and of hope which it sheds on the dreary scenes of life is common to all, however contracted the powers of their mortal vision. It often throws its holiest tints over the cottage. In the paths of pleasantness and of peace to which the finger of celestial wisdom directs us, wayfaring men though “of the narrowest capacities” cannot err. O no, Sir! the consolations and the joys of the gospel are no matter of science. They spring up, like the most fragrant flowers beneath our feet, and all who will stoop may gather them. The pure river of the water of life is not like the streams of Castaly, accessible to few. “The elephant and the lamb” may alike taste of it, and alike stand in need of its freshness. How often, indeed, do the bright anticipations of heaven bless those who have no earthly joy. How often while the learned dispute on the truths of Christianity, till they lose them, do the ignorant in

this world’s wisdom, “feel after them and find them!” How frequently do we discover the fairest virtues clustering amidst the shades which conceal and shelter the lower walks of existence! In those scenes there are living examples before which the new aristocratical order you would establish in religion must fade away, and which prove beyond all powers of mortal expression, that the highest treasures of divine wisdom are not alone accessible to genius. Methinks I see such a testimony in the image of a venerable and sainted female—surrounded by her little and revering descendants—still eagerly fixing her dim eye on the page where through life she has found support—and then turning to borrow aid from the lisping tongue of a child. Time has neither shaken her hopes nor chilled her affections. She turns back her view on the earlier days of her life with grateful joy, and prays only that the children may walk in the steps through which she has trodden. While she fondly embraces and blesses them, she seems already to speak in the language of heaven. She trembles, but it is with anticipated joy; she totters on the verge of paradise. What more exalted happiness can you hope to enjoy, though you “understand all mysteries and all knowledge,” and “speak with the tongues both of men and of angels?”

S. N. D.

P. S. In my next letter I shall examine your statement of the Unitarian creed and the remaining charges which you bring forward against it.

SIR, *London, March 19, 1817.*

**I**N your Number for February (p. 123), I observe an article relating to a Sermon I published at Cork, in July last, extracted from a Cork newspaper, and headed with the title of “Orthodox Alarm in Ireland.” Had you been aware of the true nature of this contemptible ebullition of personal malice, you would not I am persuaded, have given it by your republication of it an importance which it so little deserves. Less its appearance in your pages, and the very inappropriate title which you have prefixed to it, should mislead any of your readers, I beg leave to state that it was (as far as I could learn) generally despised by all religious



parties in Cork, and that the respectable editor of the paper in which it appeared afterwards called upon me to express his regret at its having been inserted, and to say that it had been done without his knowledge. From the sentiments it avows having been little known or discussed in Ireland, my sermon naturally excited a considerable sensation, and attracted much more attention than any thing it contains could in other circumstances have procured it. I may perhaps feel disposed to complain that my numerous opponents have betrayed great ignorance of what has before been written *on both sides* in the Unitarian controversy, but they have not in general shewn bitterness of spirit; and I recollect no instance, except the trifling one to which you have given increased publicity and importance, in which any of them have indulged in virulent abuse or malignant misrepresentation.

WILLIAM HINCKS.

SIR,

Dec. 17, 1816.

I HAVE been much edified and somewhat amused, by the account given in your Repository for November, [XI. 634], of the remarkable deliverance of C. Crellius, with his children and attendants from the peril of robbers and men-slayers in the wilderness. I receive *serio* what is there related as to the kind assistance of Providence, in the laudable use of means, in his escape from the murderous pit, and the man of Belial whom he met on the margin of the wood; but confess I cannot tell what to make of the little gentleman in the "grey coat, with a stick in his hand." He appears to me, in one view, so like unto the imps and fairies of old time, only perhaps, somewhat of a more reasonable size, and in another view so much in the similitude of flesh and blood, that I am at a loss under what class of beings to rank him, and am therefore induced humbly to crave some elucidation of this part of the occurrence either from the learned Editor (which indeed I expected at the close of the story), or his reviewer, or some of his ingenious correspondents. I trembled when I found the good confessor and his waggon in "the slough of despond;" but how was I rejoiced to

find that he had met with a way-faring man in the dreary region, who, though he did not indeed promise much at first sight, proved in the result a perfect Hercules. How delightful must it have been to witness the silent operations of his *magical wand*, when by only "gently placing it under each wheel, and appearing to lift them," with the help of a little manuduction, and an euphonious sound transmitted from his lips, which, I think, the narrator much depreciates, by the vulgar phrase "calling to the horses," the cumbersome load was instantly disengaged "without any apparent difficulty," and once more fixed upon solid ground! After some kind directions by the stranger, we find that as the grateful traveller was preparing, as well he might, to offer him some solid remuneration, Heigh! pass!—the little man had vanished in an instant! and, though it was only in the dusk of the evening, could nowhere be found! To be sure a wood is an admirable place for a person to conceal himself in, who desires a game at *bo-peep*, or, in a way of charity, does not wish to "let his left hand know what his right hand doeth;" yet still, I verily think, he must have heard the traveller cry out lustily, and in common civility, which should always accompany acts of charity, should have turned back to receive his acknowledgments. However, as he is gone, we cannot help it; but I should certainly wish, if possible, (I mean in an *historical* way, for I suppose unless he were a being of another world he hath long passed away to receive his reward,) to become better acquainted with this truly respectable personage, his lineage and ancestry. Most assuredly, if we are to take this narration in the lump, we can entertain no serious doubt of the singular occurrence related of Col. Gardiner, by his pious biographer, as justly entitled to the character of *a vision*, and not a dream; and shall perhaps be suitably prepared for a partial, if not a full "assent and consent" to the truth of some of the supposed heathen miracles, or popish legends: or, are all such relations, when predicated of the orthodox, always false or suspicious, and only true when reported of the rationalists and reformers?

Perusing this account, a *fourth* time, I read that it was related by "the pious driver, Paul Sagosky, when he was far advanced in age!" Perhaps this may be a sufficient clue with some of your readers: if any of them can furnish me with a better, I shall be much obliged to them.

CUI BONO?

*Fleet Street, February 11, 1817.*

SIR,

LOOKING the other day into a small publication, entitled "The Annual Monitor and Memorandum Book, for the Year 1816," published by a Quaker in the North of England, and evidently intended for the use of the society, I met with a passage which appears to me to justify the assertion so often made, that in general if Quakers would explain themselves, they would be found not far from Unitarianism. The Editor observes, p. 124:

"The following explanation of the Divine Being was found in manuscript, a few years ago, bearing the marks of not being a very modern production, but without any clue to discover the author. Its coincidence with the sentiments of the Editor, induced him to request a copy of the individual among whose papers it was found; and he trusts it will not be less pleasing to many of his readers.

"The words, *in the general*, are placed in brackets, being an addition which he has ventured to insert; as he does not conceive, by the tenour of the whole piece, that the author intended so unqualified a restriction of the several appellations, as his words may otherwise possibly imply.

"On the Unity of the Godhead, under the different Appellations of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

"The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, are not three distinct persons or essences, but essentially and identically one and the same, each signifying the one true God; and not collectively implying a composition or aggregate in the essentiality of the Divinity. For he is a pure, simple, perfect Being, independently supreme, without parts and without mixture, incapable of addition or diminution, having in himself inherently and

incomprehensibly all possible perfection.

"The different appellations of *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Spirit*, are nevertheless not to be used indifferently or indiscriminately one for another, because (in the general) they are properly and consistently used only as this one supreme self-existing Essence is considered in different points of view. For when considered as the *Great First Cause* of all things, from whence the whole universe of animate and inanimate creation solely derives its origin and existence, he is very expressively and significantly called the *Father*.

"When he is considered as acting in, and actuating his creatures, and administering to them such suitable help as their situation in the scale of existence requires, more especially in this spiritual and substantial dispensation, he is then with equal propriety termed the *Son*.

"Again, as he measurably acts in the hearts of men individually, in reproving and correcting them for every impurity of action and intention, in manifesting in them with convincing self-evident and undeniable clearness, the path that leads to eternal blessedness with himself, and in enabling them by the influence of mercy, love and strength, to walk and persevere steadily therein during this scene of mutability and change, he is justly denominated the *Spirit*, with the emphatical epithet *Holy*."

Such is the explanation given, as I have above stated, in a publication designed for the use of *the Friends*. I have only to ask, whether the original composer or the approving Editor can be considered as Trinitarians?

P. Q.

SIR,

*Feb. 17, 1817.*

IN Lord Herbert's *Life and Reign of King Henry the Eighth*, I find an extraordinary imputation upon *Wolsey*, as an encourager of the *Lutheran* heresy. It forms one of the forty-four articles of accusation brought against the Cardinal, December 1, 1529, by a Council of Nobles which Henry appointed to sit for that purpose, in the Star Chamber—*More*, as Chancellor, being President. The 43d article is as follows:

"Also, whereas in the Parliament Chamber, and in open Parliament,

communications and devices were had and moved, wherein mention was, by an incident, made of matters touching heresies and erroneous sects. It was spoken and reported by one bishop there being present, and confirmed by a good number of the same bishops, in presence of all the lords spiritual and temporal then assembled, that two of the said bishops were minded and desired to repair unto the University of Cambridge, for examination, reformation and correction of such errors as then seemed, and were reported to reign among the students and scholars of the same, as well touching the *Lutheran* sect and opinions, as otherwise: the Lord Cardinal informed of the good minds and intents of the said two bishops in that behalf, expressly inhibited and commanded them in no wise so to do. By means whereof the same error (as they affirmed) crept more abroad, and took greater place: saying farthermore, that it was not in their defaults that the said heresies were not punished, but in the said Lord Cardinal; and that it was no reason any blame or lack should be arrested [*imputed*] unto them for this offence. Whereby it evidently appeareth, that the said Lord Cardinal, besides all his other heinous offences, hath been the impeacher and disturber of due and direct correction of heresies; being highly to the danger and peril of the whole body and good Christian people of this your realm." Herbert. 1740: p. 228.

I find nothing of this in *Burnett*, nor have I met with it elsewhere. Unfortunately, the time is not mentioned when the Cardinal was supposed thus to shelter from punishment these *Cambridge* heretics. "There was one John Taverner, organist of Cardinal College, Oxford, at its first erection in 1525, who being suspected of heresy, for hiding *Lutheran* books in his music school, was excused by Cardinal Wolsey." I quote this from Dr. Ward's *Lives of the Gresham Professors*, p. 216, where he appears to take the account from a MS. of Dr. Pepusch.

#### HISTORICUS.

Mr. Bennett's Reply to Criticisms, inserted in the *Evangelical Magazine* for January, 1817.

March 2d, 1817.

ענה כסיל כאחורו פן ידור חכם בעיניו.

"Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own conceit."

Prov. xxvi. 5.

HAD my much learned antagonist been candid in his criticisms on my pamphlet, the "*Discourse on Sacrifices*;" had he given his name and title to the same, which, as a man of learning, he ought to have done; it would then be my duty in answering, to treat him in return with due respect. But, having witholden his name from the public, and advanced his criticisms anonymously, and supported his arguments with scurrilities, I do not find myself bound to speak with any peculiar degree of moderation: and if it will not much affect my obscure antagonist, it may at least be of some advantage to the Editor of the sacred *Evangelical Magazine*.

In the above-mentioned Magazine (page 23) is a Review of "*A Discourse on Sacrifices. By Solomon Bennett,*" &c. "The design of this Discourse (it is said) is to refute the doctrine of atonement for sin by the sacrifice and death of the Messiah. With this view the writer, who describes himself as one of the House of Israel, undertakes to prove, *first*, that the patriarchal sacrifices were not expiatory, or offered with any reference to atonement of sins; *secondly*, that the shedding of animal blood was not necessary to the remission of transgressions under the law; *thirdly*, that the commands relating to sacrifices were merely ceremonial, local and temporary. The conclusion he wishes to establish from these premises, is, that the doctrine of atonement for sin by the sacrifice and death of the Messiah, is not countenanced by any part of the Old Testament. But of all the attempts that have been made to impugn this doctrine, we remember no one more feeble than the present."

It is impossible for me consistent with the design of your publication to quote the whole of my "*Discourse*;" yet I shall repeat the drift of it with announcing the authorities from Scripture which my ambiguous antagonist



passed by (either from motives of ignorance or prejudice) in silence.

With regard to the *first* position, I must observe that in my "Discourse" I have shewn plainly that Moses was not the first author of sacrifices; that sacrifices were practised by the patriarchs previous to Moses, as far back as the creation; that their sacrifices were not absolutely by the shedding of animal blood, but they were various, viz. of *vegetables*, *libations* and of *animals*; that their offerings were not by any particular divine command, but merely voluntary donations; that their offerings had not in any shape references to atonement for sin, but were gifts of mere gratitude and acknowledgments of submission to that great Being — the Universal Benefactor. Every one who is versed in Scripture may examine himself the texts relative to the patriarchal offerings, and he will find them to have been congenial to the principles described. But observe the insolence of my ambiguous antagonist. Passing by in silence all the authorities I have brought from Scripture regarding the patriarchal sacrifices, he flatly makes this assertion: "In support of the *first* position, Mr. B. offers nothing but his own confident assertion, which he seems to think will be kindly admitted as irrefragable proof." Who will not observe the malicious principle of this critic? Being unable to turn the text to his favourite hypothesis, he thought proper to pass by those authorities in silence, depending on the ignorance of his adherents for their submission to him.

In the *second* position, I have plainly shewn in my "Discourse," from Leviticus, that the regulations of sacrifices it contains were also various, viz. of *vegetables*, *animals* and *libations*; that they were regulated also according to the circumstances of the different classes of the people, a regulation equally observed in all kinds of offerings, in particular in those of sin and trespass offerings of the poor class, in which a quantity of flour was appointed and accepted for their salvation. (See Lev. v. 11—14.) From the diversity of sacrifices contained in Leviticus, we behold the *simple* and *incontestable* conclusion, viz. that the shedding of animal blood was inessential and not absolute in the system of sacrifices, either in voluntary or sin offerings, public or individual

sacrifices; that *libations* and *pancakes* were also acceptable. But let us see the acuteness and ingenuity of my opponent, who made a show of his learning by establishing his favourite hypothesis on an unaccountable principle. Thus he expresses himself: "We know no instance which more strongly exemplifies the maxim, *exceptio firmat regulam*, the exception confirms the rule. Every attentive reader of the Pentateuch must perceive it to have been a general and radical principle of legal economy, *that without the shedding of animal blood there could be no remission*; for that it was the blood which made atonement for the soul." Let us now examine his hypothesis. We know of no code either of divine authority, or civil and political regulations, and reason itself dictates, that a man is not bound to that law which it is impossible for him to fulfil, and therefore no law is enacted for such a one as to make him free from it, and no laws are enacted for *minutiae*. But our learned critic strangely tells his readers that the poor class of the people (though they form a great part in any nation) are a mere *exception*, and accordingly establishes his hypothesis, "*exceptio firmat regulam*." A strange doctrine indeed! I could with more propriety conclude the reverse, viz. that *vegetables* and *libations* were the chief objects in the system of sacrifices, but these of *animal* sacrifices are the exception, and adapted only for rich people, who form the minor part of any community, as an additional punishment for their conduct. However I shall not decide with preference to either of them which is the absolute object: the laws regarding the diversity of offerings were *equally* legal; we have no need therefore to be too sanguine on this account.

Another inference he makes thus: "Nor could it with any plausibility be pretended that even in this case of *partial exception*, the remission of the offence was wholly irrespective of animal sacrifice; while the sacrifices appointed for the day of annual expiation were expressly declared 'to make an atonement for the children of Israel for all their sins once a year'." (Lev. xvi. 34.) Here lies the deficiency of a competent study of the Hebrew liturgy among the Christian doctors, who possess only a mere superficial and a scanty

knowledge of the original Scripture, and who never deliberated on the particulars of the diversity of the laws contained in the Mosaic code. They respect the Old Testament only so far as they can grasp in it something in behalf of their system of religion. But different was the case with the Rabbis, as the guardians of that code and the oral laws; and in the point in question they instructed us, taking into consideration the variety of sacrifices appointed on all sins and trespasses, either of the public at large or those of individuals. What then were these appointed for the atonement day? They gave the explanation that as all the sin offerings are *זבחים* for trespasses *known* and confessed by the aggressors, so these of the annual atonement day were for the generality at large, on account of *זבחים שאין להם ידע בנסף* transgressions committed *inadvertently*, or things which individuals of a community may be ignorant of. Such aggressions are frequently committed in the career of human life, either ignorantly or innocently. The sacrifices appointed for the annual atonement day being for the community at large, they were then brought from the public treasure, and had no particulars in view but to expiate transgressions *inadvertently* done; nor had they any particular class in view, whether poor or rich, though my learned critic would establish a new object unknown to the then existing Israelites—why? because it suits his bloody system.

"As to the *third* position (my antagonist continues), to affirm that commands about sacrifices were ceremonial, is little otherwise than equivalent to saying that commands about ceremonies are ceremonial commands; which of course will not be disputed. But how this *sage* observation contributes any support to the conclusion which Mr. B. would establish, he has not shewn. To regard them as mere ceremonies destitute of all spiritual significance, is truly degrading to a religion of heavenly origin." Now observe reader! In my "Discourse on Sacrifices" I have quoted many passages out of the Prophetical Books and the Psalms: all speak in one plain language, and in unison with that of Jeremiah's saying, "For I spake not unto your fathers, nor did I command them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt, concerning

burnt offerings and sacrifices: but this I commanded them, saying, obey my voice, and I will be your God, &c." (Jer. vii. 22, 23.) Or this of Micah's saying, "Wherewith shall I appear before God, and bow myself before the Eternal One? Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old? &c. He hath instructed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth God require of thee, but to do justice, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" (Micah vi. 6—8.) The Bible is open to every reader, and my "Discourse" to every inquirer; in which the candid and inquisitive will meet with plain authorities deduced from Scripture, that the whole system regarding sacrifices ordained in the Mosaic code, was *neither essential* for human salvation, *nor absolute* commandments, but merely *ceremonial* and *local*; otherwise how could all the Prophets be in unison in exclaiming against absolute laws, and which are essential to human salvation, so as to declare them *null*? One of those missions must then absolutely have been false. Notwithstanding, my much learned antagonist did not endeavour to advance any thing to reconcile those scriptural contradictions, but passes by all the authorities in an entire silence; and conceitedly tells his Evangelical readers, "but how this sage observation contributes any support to the conclusion which Mr. B. would establish, he has not shewn."

Notwithstanding the omission of the scriptural authorities which I brought to prove the invalidity of sacrifices, my learned antagonist did not forget to bring to recollection that abstruse 53d chapter of Isaiah, as a proof of his Trinitarian hypothesis, saying, "How much more worthy of the Divine Legislator do they appear, when considered as *typical* of him who, according to the predictions of Isaiah, was to bear the sin of many, and to make his soul an offering for sin," &c. as well this of the 110th Psalm, which he continued, "The priesthood of Aaron has been superseded by him who was predicted by David, as a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek." On the false translations and the hypothesis deduced from these texts, as the limits of your publication do not admit their insertion, I shall refer the reader to my work, entitled "The Constancy of Israel," Part I. in which he will

meet with the simple translation and elucidation of these chapters.

Returning to the point in question: I think that I have shewn authorities from Scripture sufficient enough to prove that the shedding of animal blood was inessential for the remission of sin, according to the Mosaic code itself; and according to the Prophetical Books we obtain the knowledge that the order of sacrifices in general was inessential to religion, not absolute for salvation, and accordingly they were but *ceremonial, local and temporary*.

What I have proved from Scripture, I have corroborated also in my "Discourse," from our rabbinical writings. For, those who are acquainted with the ancient history of Judaism know well, that during the whole great period (500 years) of the second temple, in which sacrifices were practised by the inhabitants of the mother country (Palestine) in its full length; yet the innumerable synagogues and colleges of the Hebrews then established at their great dispersion, like those of Babylon, Persia, Assyria, Egypt, &c. all were independent of the pontifical orders of Jerusalem, and had nothing to do with sacrifices; nor did the Doctors of the temple of Jerusalem accept any sacrifices when brought from without Palestine; instances of which I have quoted in the "Discourse," out of the Mishnah. In short, I have there stated matters of fact, and incontradictory historical truths. But, observe my learned and much pious critic tells his readers, "Mr. B. also misrepresented the doctrine of the Mishnah, as well as of the Pentateuch," without shewing the propriety of that assertion, in what manner or instance it was misrepresented.

But let us bring to the test the last and strongest argument, which my pious and devout antagonist advanced to the public notice. Thus he argues: "We have no doubt of the writer's Jewish descent; but we are ready to ask, is he a member of the synagogue? Does he statedly attend its services? Does he unite in those liturgical forms which he represents as of such high antiquity, &c.?" He then concludes his arguments: "What then must we think of Mr. B.'s sincerity in the synagogue, or his consistency out of it?" My pious

critic continues his scurrilous and abusive arguments in the same style, which for brevity sake *only* I think unnecessary to quote.

Whether this last is a fair argument on the point in question, I leave to the judgment of impartial readers to decide. But how came *he* to the knowledge of those particulars respecting Mr. B.? It will be undoubtedly questioned, who were the informers respecting his character? for surely those Christians who attend to hear the frequent concerts at the great synagogue, have no knowledge whatever of Mr. B. I am fully convinced that liberal-minded men will think with me, viz. that such vilifying arguments deserve no notice; in particular, as I (thanks to the Omnipotent) do not depend on clerical or rabbinical support, nor am I in any shape whatever interested in my literary pursuits. Hard labour, strict honesty and sobriety are the chief principles of my religion. What I do or what I write is with conscience and disinterestedness. *Can Rabbis or Reverends say the same?* The opinions of others affect me little whilst I give no cause of complaint against me: one cannot please the world at large; sycophants are in our time prevailing and more prosperous. To apologize therefore to hypocrisy or ignorance may be equally pusillanimous.

Yet, as our Rabbis (of old) instructed us from the reply of Hannah to Eli, saying, "No my Lord, I am a woman of a sorrowful spirit, but I have not drunk either wine or any strong drink, &c." (1 Sam. i. 15.) "המזל על דבר ואין בו צורך לדאוג" "He, who is falsely suspected of any thing, is bound to clear himself of it." Therefore, with regard to the above-mentioned charges, I shall inform my sagacious critic, that I was always and am still a member of the synagogue in my country (Poland), though not of this of Duke's Place; that I was always and am still "חכם רבן ומקור" "a cordial admirer and honourer of literary men of all classes." I shall also tell him, that I have seen (in London in particular) hundreds of Jews who belong to the synagogue and attend its services, and yet are a disgrace to the name of Israel; thousands of Christians who belong to and attend the churches,



and yet are a disgrace to Christianity ; and I shall take a step farther, viz. that I have seen divines who are even a disgrace to the human race at large ; and, if such examples are the standards, and the absolute proofs of religion and piety, I do not wish to be counted among them.

SOLOMON BENNETT.

SIR, *Sandon, March 31, 1817.*

**I**N the Obituary of Mr. John Fordham, of Kelshall, in the Repository for December, 1816, [XI. 733], it is said of him, that he was "a man remarkable for his frank, straightforward integrity." Obituaries in general, are, I think, dictated more by the spirit of affection, than by the spirit of truth. But the above-mentioned piece of encomium was without doubt eminently due to the character of the dead. The writer however of the obituary proceeds to say, that "he seldom made his own creed the subject of conversation, and appeared to have no desire to make converts to his own opinions." Yet, it is a little after asserted, that the deceased "was accustomed to remark, that controversy was necessary to a more correct knowledge of the Scriptures, the best antidote against bigotry, and no bad remedy to the errors of education ;" and that "among his particular friends he was fond of promoting religious discussions." I shall not stop to reconcile these apparent contradictions, but shall proceed to remark, that to feel no desire to make converts to our own opinions, abstractedly considered, is I think no matter of praise. It either implies that our opinions are worth nothing, or that we are very indifferent to the progress of truth. Now if our opinions are Christian opinions, we are bound as Christians to make as many converts to them as lies within our power ; and if our opinions are not Christian, then we ought not to possess them ourselves. If my opinions are true and beneficial to myself, they must be equally beneficial to others, because they are founded in Scripture ; at least I believe so, and I ought to act consistently with my own belief. If my opinions are worthless, I may safely enough put them under the bushel ; but if they are Christian's

principles, I ought to set them on a table, that like a candle they may give light to all around them. Was Jesus or his apostles indifferent about making converts to their opinions ? On the contrary, they came into the world, and spent their time about nothing else but making converts, and they were certainly not afraid of "controversial preaching," but "disputed daily in the temple, and in the open air" with all manner of people, and frequently among themselves. This is the proof of a good cause. Jesus and Paul, unlike our modern scribes and pharisees, no where "deprecatd controversial preaching." Jesus said to Pilate, "I have ever spoke openly to the world ; I ever taught in the synagogues and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort, and *in secret* have I said nothing." We cannot open a page of the Life of Jesus Christ, but we find him involved in public disputations. Without controversy the human mind would stand still : truth would make no progress : darkness and superstition would perpetually reign in the world. This is the case with Spain and Italy, and this will continue to be the case wherever controversy is deprecated.

G. F.

*Bath, March 20th, 1817.*

SIR,

**T**HE death of your very valuable friend, Mr. Mackmurdo, [p. 58], grieved me very much. I most sincerely sympathize with his good family for their great loss. He was a truly good man, and an uniform inquirer after truth, and professed it openly in the view of all the world. If we had many such in different parts of the country, we should soon be able to witness a great reformation.

To the entertaining article of Mrs. Milner's death, [p. 117], may be added an anecdote relating to Dr. Goldsmith. The Doctor who was master of the school, was particularly noted for detecting impostors. On one day, when Goldsmith had taken a walk, one whom the Doctor had in conversation with him was discovered as he thought to be an impostor : as soon as he was gone, the Doctor sent after Goldsmith, having just paid him an half year's salary, to guard him

against so vile a cheat, and when he came in, hoped he said, that he had not met with the enemy. But Goldsmith had met with him, and being examined by the Doctor, found to his confusion that Goldsmith had given him all he had.

Above two months ago, died at Boston, Mr. Kirk Root, born at Derby, who had resided there above thirty years, and by his industry had acquired a handsome fortune. He was a generous Englishman, and attentive to the wants of his fellow creatures, particularly to those who were strangers in distress. Many such he found, and cheerfully relieved them, and at the same time discovered that his circumstances were constantly meliorating in proportion to his liberality. May there be many such, many who will become truly wise and happy for ever.

I long to hear of the progress and the speedy publication of Mr. Well-beloved's Bible, and hope that it will be a great improvement of our present translation. The word *hell* in our present copies of the Old Testament, in the original means the *grave*, and I hope will be so rendered by this ingenious translator. Another thing to be considered is, whether the curses in many places of the Psalms and of the Prophets, should not be placed in the future tense instead of the imperative mood; as when it is said, may such or such curses come upon him, will not the original bear to have it rendered, such particular curses will come upon him? Thus the Old and New Testament will perfectly agree. I need not mention the text, *thought it not robbery*, &c. besides many others which must occur to the reader.

The letter which you have transcribed from a Cork paper, [p. 123], must have been written by \* \* \* \*. He who rendered *reconciliation* *atonement*, now proceeds farther and denominates Unitarians Deists. His attempt may impose upon ignorant moderns, but in the end will prove an antidote against imposition. When men learn righteousness they will become lovers of truth, for every truth leads to righteousness, which is the case with all the truths of the blessed gospel.

W. H.

SIR,

April 9th, 1817.

A LADY has communicated to me some remarks on the letter which you did me the favour of inserting in your interesting Miscellany [p. 153], on the rites of the Romish church as they are celebrated in the grand seat of Christian idolatry. But before I give them to you, I must take the liberty of correcting one or two typographical errors, which arose probably from the incorrectness of my handwriting. In line 35 of page 154, wafer is printed instead of water. In the 5th line from the bottom of the same column, is Transted instead of Transtib, a word meaning beyond the Tiber. The lady above-mentioned, observes that I have omitted the blessing of the horses on the 17th of January, and the blessing of two lambs on the 21st, with whose wool the cloaks sent by the Pope to the Archbishops are trimmed. The *volto santo* is explained by her in the following manner. According to the Papistical faith, as Christ was ascending Mount Calvary, Saint Veronica gave him her handkerchief to wipe his face, and the impression of the features remained on it. This handkerchief if you can believe it, is now in existence, and has been sacredly preserved since that time. In line 17 of page 155, the images of the Virgin Mary, should have been the resemblances of the Virgin Mary, and in line 19 read in representation of the eternal feast. To the exposition on the 29th of December, is to be added that of the finger of the Apostle Thomas.

Since writing my last letter to you, I have become possessor of a most invaluable relic, namely, a piece of the bone, what bone I do not know, of the holy Apostle St. Thomas. It is so small that it might almost escape heretical eyes, but I shall have great pleasure in shewing it to you and to some of your readers. If either you or they have any doubts upon the subject, I will do all that I can to remove them, by shewing you the testimonial of a venerable bishop who has signed it with his seal of office, and if you think it worthy of a place in your Miscellany, I will send you a copy of it, with a translation.

CHRISTIANUS.

No. CCXCVIII.

*Mussulman Pilgrimage.*

Mount Arafat is the principal object of the pilgrimage of the Mussulmen; and several Doctors assert, that if the house of God ceased to exist, the pilgrimage to the former would be completely meritorious, and would produce the same degree of satisfaction. *This is my opinion likewise.*

It is here that the grand spectacle of the pilgrimage of the Mussulmen must be seen, an innumerable crowd of men from all nations and of all colours, coming from the extremities of the earth, through a thousand dangers, and encountering fatigues of every description, to adore together the same God, the God of nature. The native of Circassia presents his hand in a friendly manner to the Ethiopian, or the Negro of Guinea; the Indian and the Persian embrace the inhabitant of Barbary and Morocco; all looking upon each other as brothers, or individuals of the same family united by the bands of religion; and the greater part speaking or understanding more or less the same language, the language of Arabia. No, there is not any religion that presents to the senses a spectacle more simple, affecting and majestic! Philosophers of the earth! permit me, Ali Bey, to defend my religion, as you defend spiritual things from those which are material, the plenum against a vacuum, and the necessary existence of the creation.

Here, as I remarked in the narrative of my voyage to Morocco, is no intermediary between man and the divinity; all individuals are equal before their Creator; all are intimately persuaded that their works alone reconcile them to, or separate them from the Supreme Being, without any foreign hand being able to change the order of immutable justice! What a curb to sin! What an encouragement to virtue! But what a misfortune that, with so many advantages, we should not be better than the Calvinists!

*Travels of Ali Bey, II. 66.*

No. CCXCIX.

*Perfect Allusion.*

An allusion pleases, by presenting a new and beautiful image to the mind. The analogy or the resemblance between this image and the principal subject is agreeable of itself, and is indeed necessary, to furnish an apology for the transition which the writer makes; but the pleasure is wonderfully heightened, when the new image thus presented is a beautiful one. The following allusion in one of Mr. Home's tragedies, appears to me to unite almost every excellence:

— "Hope and fear, alternate, sway'd  
his breast;  
"Like light and shade upon a waving  
field,  
"Coursing each other, when the flying  
clouds  
"Now hide, and now reveal, the sun."

Here the analogy is remarkably perfect; not only between light and hope and between darkness and fear; but between the rapid succession of light and shade and the momentary influences of these opposite emotions; and, at the same time, the new image which is presented to us, is one of the most beautiful and striking in nature.

*Dugald Stewart's Elements, I. 316;  
317.*

No. CCC.

*Maxim of Ecclesiastics.*

St. Austin has well expressed the maxim of all sound Churchmen in the Orthodox or Catholic, that is, the more powerful, Church. The saint having laid down the gospel according to his own liking, (*At Marcellian*) adds, very significantly, *His qui contradicit, aut a Christi fide alienum est, aut est Hæreticus*; that is in plain English, "He that contradicts me is a Heathen or a Heretic."

No. CCCI.

*Frugality of Nature.*

Nature (says Fontenelle) is a great housewife, she always makes use of what costs least, let the difference be ever so inconsiderable: and yet that frugality is accompanied with an extraordinary magnificence, which shines through all her works; that is, she is magnificent in the design but frugal in the execution.



## REVIEW.

"Still pleased to praise, yet not afraid to blame."—POPE.

ART. I.—*Ethical Questions; or Speculations on the Principal Subjects of Controversy in Moral Philosophy.* By T. Cogan, M.D. Author of a Philosophical Treatise on the Passions, &c. 8vo. pp. 448. Cadell and Davies. 1817.

THE mutual dealing of mankind is so similar, that it might lead us to infer, that there is not much difference in their opinion of human nature; yet it is certain there is no subject upon which men, plain as well as speculative, think more differently. While some see in it only what is corrupt and base and proper to be exterminated as soon as it is created, others find in it capacity of every virtue and predominant dispositions, generally to goodness, and often to great moral excellence. It is a little remarkable, that the sceptical philosopher and the Calvinistic theologian, though at variance in most of their opinions, have laboured together in the degradation of our common nature; for while one declares that man has no moral worth, the other maintains that his intellectual faculty is wholly inadequate to the discovery of truth. Thus virtue and knowledge are both beyond the reach of his nature; and from the hands of these spoilers man comes, not surely as he comes from the hand of his Maker, without a trace either of the intellectual or moral image of the Creator.

The author of the present volume is well known to most of our readers as an advocate of human nature; and having formerly defended it ably against the charge of innate and hereditary depravity, he has in the work under review entered his plea against the degradation of our intellectual nature, by asserting its sufficiency to explore truth. In both he appears the zealous, enlightened, and, we think, victorious advocate, in a cause which is not bad, though it has been accidentally and industriously perplexed. We learn from the Doctor's preface that the present volume, with the exception of the *Strictures on Dr. Beattie's Essay on Truth*, is an off-shoot from the *Analysis of the Passions*. The first Enquiry, On the Sources of Rational Conviction,

is a natural and useful introduction to the ensuing speculations. It, must be read with pleasure by every man who respects human nature and values truth, and with profit by those especially who are entering on the study of moral and mental philosophy. The arrangement is clear, the expression luminous, the reasoning sound, and it is altogether a powerful antidote to universal scepticism; and on this account it deserves the attention of those who, finding that they have much to unlearn, are half inclined to excuse themselves from the labour of enquiry, by rashly concluding that nothing can be known by man.

"There must be," says our author, "such a thing as truth. This assertion will be acknowledged by every man, excepting a most determined sceptic; and it is impossible for him to confute it. He who would persuade us that truth does not exist, is still attempting to establish the truth of his own position."—P. 4.

"Truth is, and must be, *beneficial* in its nature; error must be *pernicious*. The one is a sure guide; the foundation upon which we must build to be secure. We must know *that* things are, *what* they are, *how* they are, and *what powers* they possess, before we can act in a manner correspondent with their natures. Error must be pernicious, as it cannot be acted upon; it always deceives and disappoints.

"Truth is important, because it respects existences and relations which may have an influence upon our *well-being*; and without which well-being can never be obtained."—P. 5.

On the attempt to discredit the evidence of the senses it is acutely remarked:

"In a word, the strange hypothesis confutes itself. It is supported by an argument which destroys the objection. How can the objector know that our senses deceive us at any time? It can alone be by the accurate discoveries of these very senses. Thus is he compelled to place his confidence in a testimony which he professedly rejects."—P. 9.

The same reasoning is applied to the evidence of testimony:

"We cannot know that falsehood and error exist, but by the discovery of a truth. Every one who believes that falsehoods are

detected, must believe in the facts which have led to the detection. We must therefore believe in the existence of a truth, though we may in many cases be ignorant where it is to be found."—P. 18.

In the same manner it is argued respecting knowledge, regained through the medium of memory :

"Here we may also urge, that there can be no method of detecting a delusion in some cases, but by being convinced of realities in others. We could not form an idea of a deception, if we were always deceived. It is a *deviation* from the usual tenor, which convinces us of a *possibility* in some cases, and an *impossibility* in all."—P. 31.

On self-evidence our author asks :

"Strictly speaking, can any thing be said to be self-evident, exclusive of sensible objects? A man can advance no arguments to prove that he sees, hears, smells, and feels, stronger than the report of his senses; but whatever is not an immediate object of sense, requires a certain degree of thought. It requires a process, to which self-evidence cannot be applied, in its literal sense, though it is by courtesy as expressive of extremely quick perception. Should the truth of this observation be doubted, we may still assert, without the fear of confutation, that numerous axioms which are currently received as first principles, and as it were *prior* to all reasoning, have originally gone through a process which has escaped the memory."—Pp. 53, 54.

It would be gratifying to ourselves had we space to present our readers with an analysis of this disquisition on Rational Conviction, with which the volume opens, and of that with which it concludes, On Moral Obligation, as they form together a masterly view of the nature of man in his double capacity of a creature formed both for contemplation and action.

The second Speculation is, On Disinterested Benevolence, and we agree with the author that "what seems to decide this question is the fact, that, in no one instance, is the *pleasure* derived from the excitement of a passion a *motive* for the indulgence of that passion; or the *pain* which it occasions, the *sole* motive to liberate ourselves from it."

"Can there be more propriety in the assertion, that when we feel distress at the distress of another, we relieve him merely to get rid of our own sufferings, than in the position, that when we fear and fly from

danger it is not to escape the danger, but to be released from the fear? or when we rejoice, it is not on account of the good in contemplation, but because of the pleasant effects of the joy itself?"—P. 95.

"The *object* of the passion suggests the motive for action, and not the *desire* to indulge, or to be exempt from, the *sensation* peculiar to the passion. If this be the case in every instance which concerns ourselves, a parity of reasoning requires us to expect the same law of human agency respecting others; particularly as this mode of reasoning so perfectly coincides with the consciousness of every benevolent mind, which the other system so strangely opposes."—P. 97.

The third Enquiry respects the Existence of a Moral Sense, to which it is objected that "if a moral sense existed, of the nature, and for the purposes supposed by its advocates, a dispute concerning its existence could not have arisen. The mental sense would have been as obvious as any of the corporeal senses. The man whose olfactory nerves are in such a healthy state that he can distinguish odours, never calls their existence into question. Every one *knows* that he has optics to see and distinguish objects, and an ear to distinguish sounds. The reluctance with which the doctrine of a sixth sense is received by one party, and the incapacity of the other to demonstrate its existence, fully prove that the cases are not perfectly parallel, and lead us to suspect that there may be an essential discrepancy." On this objection it seems just to remark, that the advocates of the moral sense never could intend to use the word in precisely the same meaning, as when it is applied to the faculty of perceiving external objects through the corporeal organs. They applied it analogically to the mental power of distinguishing between moral good and evil, and analogies do not require that the cases be perfectly parallel. We extract the following passage, because it presents briefly and at once the Doctor's theory of moral sentiments.

"We have attempted to prove that the grand characteristic of virtue consists in its being an energy of mind, designedly exerted by a voluntary agent, productive of personal or social advantages, according to certain invariable principles; and that vice, notwithstanding its personal gratifications and temporary advantages, is in its own nature inimical to permanent

happiness. We have also shewn that our love of good, and our hatred of whatever appears to be an evil, enstamps a value upon every thing which contributes to good; and we approve of the intentional agent: whereas we hate whatever we deem injurious in its tendency, and severely censure a designing agent. We have shewn, moreover, that the degrees of our approbation or censure, are always proportionate to the perception of degrees in the merit or demerit of an action, connected with the extent of good or of evil produced. These pleasant or unpleasant sensations may rise to very strong emotions; from simple approbation, which seems to be the decision of the judgment, connected with a certain sentiment of feeling of the heart, they may swell to enthusiastic applause; and from the mildest censure they may become indignation and horror. Thus we commend prudence and discretion; we applaud incorruptible integrity; and we admire with raptures the extraordinary exertions or sacrifices of benevolence. We disapprove of imprudence, condemn injustice, and hold acts of cruelty in detestation. There are, in like manner, the nicest gradations observable in our complacential affections. A certain degree of worth attracts our esteem; we say the character is *estimable*. The characters of others call forth respect and veneration; and of others our warmest admiration. On the contrary, displacency, at some actions, if they be more strongly marked with folly than with vice, will produce the not unpleasant, but the satirical and corrective emotion of irrision; while others create disrespect, contempt, disdain, &c. according to our perceptions of meanness, or peculiar baseness of character and conduct. We have remarked that in these affections a bad opinion of the agent is inspired by the love of virtue, united with an inward consciousness that we are superior to these vices."—Pp. 123—125.

The fourth Speculation is on the long contested Doctrine of Philosophical Necessity. What especially demands notice in this Essay is the author's opinion, that the opposite hypotheses might be in some sort reconciled, if their advocates would agree in the rejection of certain terms, such as 'must,' and 'necessary,' and in the substitution of others less liable to be mistaken.

"It (the word Necessity) has a tendency to confound two things which differ essentially. It places mechanical or physical agency, over which the will may not have any power, upon the same line

with *moral* agency, where the agent *feels* that he has a *will* in the action; and it leads the opponent, or the libertine, into conclusions which are erroneous or immoral.

"The phrase which is sometimes used to distinguish the necessity for which it is contended, from the others, is in itself an acknowledgment that there is a difference; but it does not state in what the difference specifically consists. It is termed *philosophical* necessity. If *philosophical* were thought to be the same as *physical* necessity, the epithet would not have been prefixed. But this phrase is not explicit or peculiarly appropriate. Strictly speaking, *physical* necessity is as *philosophical* as the other; although the *moral* philosopher claims an exclusive right to it, without informing us on what this claim is founded. Should he allege that *moral conduct* is of a superior character to *physical impulse*, and deserves an honourable distinction, the answer is, that this superiority consists in the possession of a will, and a power to act according to this will. It is this prerogative which characterizes human agency; constitutes the excellency, dignity, and importance of moral conduct, and ought to place it at a due distance from a word which insinuates the reverse, every time it is uttered."—Pp. 164, 165.

"If the necessarian will not be so very tenacious of the words *must*, *cannot* act otherways, &c. &c. when he speaks of any particular or specific act of the will, the advocate for free agency will be disposed to admit the grand principle, that no man has ever acted without a motive; that the strongest inducement became the motive; that it became the strongest at the time, by appearing to be most adapted to his purpose; that this purpose consisted in the possession of some good. He will acknowledge that no man can desire greater freedom, than that of following his own inclinations."—Pp. 165, 166.

"Nor are the designs of the necessarian so well answered by the pertinacious and partial use of the favourite expression. It is the professed object to enforce the doctrine of an extensive and invariable concatenation. But as the human will forms so important a link in the chain, it ought to be perpetually noticed and respected; and its powers of choice should be carefully distinguished from every species of physical agency."—P. 166.

If the two hypotheses differed but in words; or if a change of terms could change the nature of the facts, or prove that the difference has been only in words, we should rejoice to see a con-



controversy hitherto so perplexing laid asleep for ever: but it seems to us that this method of reconciliation is to evade, and not confront the difficulties of the question. The objection of the libertarian is this, that according to the hypothesis of his opponent, the state of the mind which immediately precedes, and indeed produces the physical or corporeal action, that state to which we give the name volition, is itself produced by causes, whether within or without the mind, over which the agent has no control, and for which therefore, though he may be made accountable in fact, he cannot be responsible in equity. And it is no sufficient answer to his objection, "that according to these laws of concatenation, not an event can arrive, nor can an action be performed, which is not to be ascribed to a series of preceding causes and effects; yet we are to recollect that the *will of man* is not only one of the links, but it is a link of *peculiar energy and importance*; and it often takes the lead, in a manner which is more than an equivalent for the apparent disgrace of *submission*. If it be the *effect* of preceding circumstances, it is, in its turn, a *cause* of numberless other effects. It introduces and conducts the most important events. It erects, establishes and destroys empires. If it be the parent of vice, it is also the parent of virtue. It is this which subdues vice, arrests its pernicious consequences, directs to right conduct, and fosters all the principles of religion and morality. It is the will of man which turns a wilderness into a garden, and renders deserts fruitful. It cultivates all the sciences, and introduces every useful art. It is incessantly working its way through difficulties innumerable, and perfecting itself in its progress." It is admitted that "the act being performed, the whole process of volition is terminated, and all power respecting it terminates also. The deed *must* now work its own way, to the production of good or evil. From absolute masters, as we thought ourselves before the commission, we now feel that we are *compelled to be passive subjects*, to the whole train of consequences induced by it:" and the reason is, that the action proceeds through all its consequences according to the unalterable laws of nature, over which the agent has no control: but is not this also true of the state of the mind,

or the volition, which immediately preceded the outward action, as well as of all the consequences which follow? And how does it appear to be more just and reasonable, that I should be made responsible for the volition which is one link in the chain of fixed concatenation, than for any other link, since of neither of them am I absolute master, or master at all unless subjection to laws and control of laws are the same thing. If every link in the chain is what, and where it is, in the order of nature, and by the operation of its laws, to make me accountable for any link, and volition as much as the rest, is to make me responsible that nature is what it is, and to regard the subject of natural laws as if he were the author of them. Thus reasons the libertarian; and it is evident that nothing can satisfy his notion of just responsibility, but the admission of a power in man, which is indeed derived from God, but which, being derived, has a sphere of uncontrolled and independent operation, and is the proper and ultimate author of its own acts.

In the two succeeding Essays we are upon controversial ground. In both our author attacks literary names of high reputation; and in the latter he questions opinions, some of which have not commonly been opposed with such a firm aspect of open hostility. In his preface Dr. C. informs us, that in consequence of long residence in foreign parts, his refutation of Beattie's Essay on Truth was written before Priestley's examination of it had fallen into his hands. The question is well argued, and the doctrine ably exploded. If any of our readers have either any doubts upon the subject, or any desire to become acquainted at very little expense of time and labour with the merits of a question, which was agitated for a short time with much warmth on both sides, though with little parity of reasoning, we can recommend this Essay to his perusal, as at once concise and satisfactory. Some of the opponents of the doctrine of common sense have unwarily and inconsistently admitted the existence of self-evident truths; but Dr. C. was too well acquainted with his ground to concede what is merely assumed, and what, if proved, would have made his victory a task of much greater difficulty.

"I think (he says) that I have proved, that the proposition which is most clearly

perceived, cannot be termed *self-evident*, according to the meaning which is eagerly annexed to the term; that there must have been an intellectual process, however rapid; that if an axiom be clear to the mathematician or metaphysician, it is not to an uncultivated mind. When philosophers commence their abstruse researches, it is always at a mature age. They enter their studies with the immense advantage of a previous education. They have imperceptibly been gathering up principles in their infancy, childhood, and youth, by which alone they become qualified to philosophize, and to which they have been so long habituated, that, as it plainly appears, they have totally forgotten the origin of their philosophical knowledge. If this be the case, and I defy the disciples of our theorist to disprove it, the term intuitive is intrusive and absurd. He takes for granted what he is bound to prove, that intuitive principles exist, and then to point out what they are. Will he send us away with the assertion, that I know by intuition the existence of intuitive principles? Is positiveness an attribute of intuition? Can he expect to satisfy us, though he may himself, with the syllogism, whenever I am positive a thing exists, or a principle is true, it is by intuition; and therefore every time I am positive, I have an intuitive knowledge independent of all proof?"—Pp. 216, 217.

The sixth Speculation is an attack upon Mr. Hume's Sceptical Questions, and it will be, as it ought to be, examined the more rigorously, because the attack upon Mr. Hume's opinions is coupled with a censure of the man, in which the admirers of that very acute metaphysician will not readily acquiesce.

"Perhaps (says our author) there never was a writer, whose principles are more unsatisfactory, but whom it is more difficult to oppose with success, than this philosopher. His erudition and unaffected eloquence demand our admiration; and the embarrassments he has thrown in the way of the most revered opinions, are supported with so much ingenuity, subtilty, and address, that those who are dissatisfied with his sentiments are compelled to respect his talents. Whoever attends closely to his mode of writing, will, however, perceive that he has the art of combining the greatest contrarieties in one assemblage. He is sometimes profound, sometimes superficial, sometimes extremely sceptical, sometimes extremely positive. He obviously delights to exert all the powers of his intellects,

in order to discover the weakness of the intellectual faculties; and he conducts us through various propositions, which he professes to consider as truths, in order gradually and imperceptibly to undermine them. He takes the liberty of uniting two opposite systems in his current language,—that which he attempts to subvert, and the one he wishes to establish; he talks of *us, we, men, the experience of mankind*, as if he were assured that other beings exist as well as himself; yet his grand attempt is to weaken all the arguments which support this belief. He seems to acknowledge the doctrine of cause and effect, at the moment he combats every principle most intimately connected with it. He frequently retires behind ambiguous phraseology, and undefined expressions; and not unfrequently claims a right to fix ideas to words, totally different from the general acceptance. Hence it is as difficult to contend with such an adversary, as it is for regular troops to contend with the *bush-fighters* of America, who are at one moment in one position, and the next in another; whose professed discipline consists in *concealing* themselves behind brambles and thorns and other interposing bodies, that they may take aim in greater security, at forces which disdain to shelter themselves, and yet find it difficult to return the salute, in consequence of the obscure situation of the foe. To follow this philosopher through all the turns and windings, is impracticable. It will suffice, if we shew that his leading principles are erroneous, and that the most specious arguments adduced for their support, are destitute of solidity."—Pp. 245—247.

Again:

"Had he (Mr. Hume) made a proper use of his distinguished talents, he might have shone like a superior luminary, and have thrown masses of light upon the greatest obscurities in science; but he has preferred rendering his mental powers subservient to the office of a midnight taper, just glimmering to shew mankind the surrounding darkness. The only proposition which his most attentive disciples can discover is, that the whole human race is deplorably and invincibly ignorant. He labours assiduously to prove by abstruse reasoning, that the human mind is not in the least adapted to abstruse subjects; a solecism which can only be rivalled by that of his antagonist, who attempts to prove by reasoning that reason is not to be trusted."—Pp. 251, 252.

It is well known that Mr. Hume divides all the perceptions of the human mind into two classes, or species, which

he calls impressions and ideas, and which he supposes to differ from each other only in force or vivacity. "By the term impression (he says) I mean all our more lively perceptions when we hear, or see, or feel, or love, or hate, or desire, or will: and impressions are distinguished from ideas, which are the less lively perceptions of which we are conscious, when we reflect on any of these sensations or movements above-mentioned." As it is impossible to speak at all on the powers and operations of the mind without using terms which are not strictly proper, being derived from names which at first represented sensible objects, the writer on such subjects claims indulgence, and more than any other has a right to complain of injury, if his commentator insists upon the literal meaning of terms, which he has admitted less from choice than from necessity. For this reason it has appeared to us that Mr. Locke has not been well used by several of the Scotch metaphysicians in their strictures upon his doctrine of ideas: and if, as we think, Mr. Hume has not been fortunate in his application of the term impression, which ill agrees with what is supposed to be his own doctrine of the origin of ideas, we should not be disposed to insist upon a 'literal meaning, or contest his use of the term as long as having defined it, he keeps within his definition.' Having divided all our perceptions into two classes, Mr. Hume found it necessary to devise a name for that class which as he says wanted one in our language. The less lively perceptions had always been called *thoughts*, and, since Mr. Locke wrote, *ideas* pretty generally; but the more lively perceptions, of which he considered the weaker as a copy, had no name which could describe the whole class: they were sensations, feelings, sentiments, passions. Mr. Hume has called them all impressions, and not very philosophically perhaps, since they are acknowledged to be perceptions, and the liveliest of which the mind is conscious. In the name however we see nothing to confirm the opinion; "that Mr. Hume has manifestly advanced his doctrine of impressions in order to account for the origin of our ideas independent of a material world:" as far as his selection of the term goes we should rather suppose the contrary. But it is more material to enquire whether our

ideas are or are not said truly to resemble the stronger perceptions, so as to differ from them only in force or vivacity. Dr. Cogan maintains, that they bear no marks of being copies of those impressions, or perceptions (as Mr. Hume calls them) of the external and internal senses; and when he tries the question not by the impressions of sight, but by those of some of the other senses, he brings facts, which it must be acknowledged are rather stubborn, against Mr. Hume's opinion.

"After a disciple of Mr. Hume has heard a noise in the street, is he conscious of an echo every time he remembers it? Should a *bon vivant* have regaled himself with copious draughts of Burgundy, when in France,—will he every time he recollects his good fortune, rejoice that he has brought home with him a delicate flavour in his mouth? When we reflect upon a musical performance which gave us peculiar pleasure, do we enjoy a lesser degree of satisfaction at the remembrance, by putting into fainter movements those undulations of air, which vibrated upon our acoustic nerves during the concert? Or should any one be most painfully scorched by being too near a conflagration, will this vivid impression hereafter subside into moderate warmth, and make him comfortable during the remainder of his days, by the easy expedient of recollecting the event?"—Pp. 260, 261.

Is it not however a well-known fact that an air in music has been noted down, at some distance of time after it was first heard, so correctly, as to enable one, who never heard it, to repeat it as well as if he had heard it; that is, the ideas of him who noted it down so well resemble the sensations, or impressions, that a third person shall reproduce the sensations in him, from the notes which were suggested, not by the impressions, but the recollected perceptions or the ideas. With respect to the ideas of things visible, our author remarks:

"We are charmed with a romantic or luxuriant prospect; but we cannot recollect, with that accuracy which this system demands, the precise objects with which the scenery was enriched. When I read the name of a city which I have not seen; Vienna, Moscow, Peking in China, for example; the imagination builds a city after its own manner, totally unlike the original. It uses those very materials which this philosopher considers as exact resemblances of other cities. It must be confessed that these fainter materials have



been wonderfully decomposed in the mind, since they are ready for the building of a new imaginary town with them in an instant. Here then are two phenomena, which demand an explanation. How come I to build a city in thought, the moment I read the words Vienna, Moscow, Pekin, inscribed upon paper? I ought to expect nothing more than a miniature word, and a fainter ink. The sight of a word ought not to build a town: and when I borrow materials from former impressions, what provision does Mr. Hume's system make for their decomposition, since the fainter copy is to remain entire, every time we recollect the impression?"—Pp. 259, 260.

Again:

"Every new perception gives us clear ideas of the thing perceived. Information is thus conveyed to the mind that things exist, possessing certain characters and properties. But this information is as remote from resemblance, as the tidings of a murder having been committed, are from the sight of a mangled corpse; or as the telegraphic news of the capture of a man-of-war, is from the vessel, the crew, the guns, thunder, flames and smoke, and confusion of the engagement. The primary impressions can only be considered as notifications of existent objects, diversified according to the diversities in the objects. Thoughts thus suggested by things external, become the occasions of other thoughts also, to an infinite extent; but in what manner such wonderful effects are produced; how this wonderful process is carried on, who can explain? Every attempt hitherto made, degenerates into an unsatisfactory metaphor, having a very imperfect, and a very trivial relation to the subject; and when extended beyond its limits, lays itself open to complete confutation."—P. 264.

Mr. Hume, being well aware of this, has introduced his use of the word impression with the notice, "that he employs the word in a sense somewhat different from the usual;" and in the explanation of what he means by them, which immediately follows, he has been very careful to avoid as much as possible every metaphorical expression. He does indeed afterwards call ideas copies of the original impressions; and this he does in a passage in which he proposes "to express himself in philosophical language." Still it appears plain from other passages, that when he describes ideas as the copies of impressions, he means only simple or elementary ideas, and not the groups

in which they may be combined with our limits; for in the Essay on the Origin of Ideas, Mr. Hume is so far from denying a single percipient, or a mind endowed with various faculties, that he assumes it throughout. We shall quote one passage in proof. "Nor is any thing beyond the power of thought except what implies an absolute contradiction. But though our thought seems to possess this unbounded liberty, we shall find upon a nearer examination that it is really confined within very narrow limits, and that all this creative power of the mind amounts to no more than the faculty of compounding, transposing, augmenting or diminishing the materials afforded us by the senses, and experience." Grant this faculty, which Mr. Hume always supposes, and with it the simple ideas which Mr. Locke says are gained only from sensation, and reflection, and which Mr. Hume calls copies of the impressions of our external and internal senses, and we shall be furnished with a tolerable answer to our author's question, "How come I to build a city in thought, the moment I read the words Vienna, Moscow, Pekin, inscribed upon paper?" The mind is, and we apprehend it is affirmed by Mr. H. to be, the builder; and the materials are its own recollected perceptions, which, if they resemble any thing, might seem to resemble most the primitive perceptions of which they are the recollection. We would ask, how is it that very exact likenesses are thrown upon paper in the absence of the living original? The artist painted from his ideas, or recollections only, and if they are not a copy of the impression on the sense of sight, how comes it that his picture is so good a copy of it?

We proceed to the Doctor's examination of Mr. Hume's Sceptical Doubts concerning the Operations of the Human Understanding. The object of that celebrated Section is to establish the proposition, that causes and effects are discoverable not by reason but by experience. "It is confessed (he says) that the utmost effort of human reason is to reduce the principles productive of natural phenomena to a greater simplicity, and to resolve the many particular effects into a few general causes by means of reasoning from analogy, experience and observation; but as to the causes of these general

causes we should in vain attempt their discovery, nor shall we ever be able to satisfy ourselves by any particular explication of them. These ultimate springs and principles are totally shut out from human curiosity and enquiry." Hence he maintains, "that in our conclusion from past to future experience, there is a certain step taken, a process of thought, and an inference which wants to be explained; there is required a medium which may enable us to draw such an inference, if indeed it be drawn by reasoning and argument. What that medium is I must confess passes my comprehension, and it is incumbent on those to produce it who assert that it really exists, and is the origin of all our conclusion concerning matters of fact." Here it should be remarked that Mr. Hume no where insinuates that the inference is false: on the contrary he admits that it is verified in fact: he only demands the process, or medium of deduction, the middle term, by which it is drawn. To this challenge our author replies:

"I therefore maintain, in opposition to the bold assertion of our philosopher, that the *discovery of powers and properties*, inherent in different substances, and invariably connected with different circumstances, is the *discovery of a medium*, which renders the experience of the past of the utmost importance to the future; a medium, which is infallible, whenever our knowledge is sufficiently extensive and accurate. If one substance possess exactly the same properties as another, and if it be placed in a situation in all respects similar, a similar effect *must* be produced. If one mode of acting be productive of a particular event, and this mode be imitated subsequently, every circumstance connected with it being exactly the same, in its nature and strength of operation, the result must have a perfect correspondence. To suppose the contrary, is to suppose that these properties are endowed with a principle of caprice, merely to tease and disappoint us; or that the same bodies and the same circumstances combat against themselves! It is to suppose, that they are precisely the same, and yet that they act in a manner which demonstrates that they are *not* the same. When the result is different from what we had expected, it does not shake the immutable laws of nature; it simply indicates our ignorance; it teaches us to inquire more accurately into the state of things, and to be less presumptuous in the future."—Pp. 282, 283.

In a writer of less acumen than Dr. C. we should suspect that this answer was built upon a mistake of Mr. Hume's meaning. He also admits the facts. He no where denies that the effects are uniformly conjoined with the cause, or that there exist causes in nature which are discoverable in their effects. All that he maintains is, "that we never can by our utmost scrutiny discover any thing but one event following another without being able to comprehend any force or power by which the cause operates, or any connection between it and its supposed effect:" and consequently "that there is not in any single particular instance of cause and effect, any thing which can suggest the idea of power, or necessary connexion." To this Dr. C. does however well reply in his remarks on the Section, On the Idea of Necessary Connexion:

"Mr. H. maintains, with infinitely more boldness than facts will admit, that there is not, in any particular instance of cause and effect, any thing which can suggest the idea of power or necessity. Whence comes it, then, that the idea is actually suggested to every thinking mind in the universe, excepting his own? If he means *ought not* to suggest these ideas, formidable should be the proofs that cause and effect are incessantly acting in opposition to their own natures; for they are doing it perpetually. Our philosopher absurdly expects, that powers, and influence, and connexion, should assume some corporeal form. Their essence must be seen, smelt, tasted, or heard, in order to produce the indubitable impression. But this is not their province, it does not belong to their nature. Their office consists in producing effects, and these *effects* are to make impressions, these are to be perceived by the mind, according to their specific characters."—Pp. 310, 311.

Mr. Hume has said, "that it is allowed, on all hands, that there is *no known* connexion between the sensible qualities of bread, and the secret powers of nutrition; and consequently, the mind is not led to form a conclusion, concerning the constant and regular conjunction between eating bread, and being nourished by it, by any thing which is known of their nature." And our author replies, that "it is not allowed, on all hands, that there is *no known* connexion between the sensible qualities of bread and its nutritious

powers; on the contrary, it is known, on all hands, that there is a connexion, an intimate, inseparable connexion, between the one and the other. Bread would no longer be bread, should it cease to be nutritious to the race of beings who have been nourished by it; or their natures must be totally changed, not to be nourished by it any longer. But the *laws* by which these secret powers of nutrition, that *inward* nature by which they are so wonderfully adapted to the human constitution, may never be known. Thus has our sophist, with more dexterity than ingenuous argumentation will permit, inferred that our ignorance of the *arcana* of nature destroys our knowledge of existing properties." But Mr. Hume appears to mean by the word *connection* not conjunction merely, but *that* which conjoins, that which makes the conjunction necessary, that in short which could not be known without a knowledge of that inward nature in bodies, to which the two events owe the relation of cause and effect. This distinction, we must however acknowledge, is made not very consistently by a writer, who has laboured to shew that there is nothing without us or within us that seems capable of suggesting the notion of power or necessary connexion. Because we are ignorant, not that there are properties, for this Mr. H. appears to allow, at the same time that he maintains we have no idea of power at all; but because we are ignorant what makes them to be properties, or why certain events have uniformly hitherto followed certain other events, he ventures to maintain, "that there is a step," a medium of proof, wanted in our inference from the past to the future; since to assert and re-assert the acknowledged conjunction of events, is not to produce the medium of our reasoning. To these refinements of scepticism, our author has given a sound practical reply:

"Why should past experience be extended to future times, and other objects, which, for *aught we know*, may be only in appearance? My first answer is, by the question, Why should we *not* continue our confidence in one who, for aught we know, may continue our friend? who is not prone to deceive, and from whom we have received so many benefits? My second answer is, If these similar appearances should be, in every point, the same, we are sure of suc-

cess. If we do not succeed, nature has not deceived us, we have suffered ourselves to be deceived by *appearances*. Nature has not changed her laws, and her manner of acting, but *we* were not sufficiently acquainted with them. Our mistake should make us more cautious, and quicken our researches, that we may not act upon presumptions where we can avoid it. By reiterated experiments we shall be more successful. The disappointments we have suffered, during our ignorance, will augment our knowledge; and they may finally conduct us, through this ignorance, into a more extensive acquaintance with facts, and the laws by which the different parts of nature are governed. As our knowledge increases will our failures decrease, until the past shall become an infallible rule for the future."—Pp. 291, 292.

We shall conclude our review of the animadversions on Mr. Hume's metaphysics, by laying before our readers Dr. Cogan's reply to his objection to miracles. According to Mr. H. though a revelation, and therefore a miracle may be possible (for he does not appear to deny this possibility), yet it is wholly impossible that such an event should be made credible to me. "A miracle (he says) is a *violation* of the laws of nature; and as a firm and unalterable experience has established these laws, the proof against a miracle, from the very nature of the fact, is as entire as any argument from experience can possibly be imagined." Our author replies: "As every man has an equal right to propose his definition, I beg leave to substitute the following, to which all believers in miracles will give a ready assent, and which unbelievers cannot confute, until they shall have annihilated all the powers above them. *Whoever admits of the existence of a miracle, admits that some phenomenon, contrary to our usual experience of the course of nature, has suddenly and unexpectedly taken place, and been made obvious to the senses of individuals, by the immediate agency of an intelligent power, superior to man.* I shall leave it to others to distinguish between the marvellous and miraculous—between the deceptions of impostors, or the extravagances of superstitious credulity, and real miracles. Our subject is confined to the *possibility* of a miracle, which is so dogmatically denied by this doubting philosopher. If the above definition be admitted, (and by what arguments will it be opposed?) the *possibility* of a



miracle, cannot be denied, until *we shall have experienced* that no superior agent exists; or that he is destitute of the requisite power; or that in every state of the moral world a miracle is totally useless; or that the intrinsic nature of a miracle renders it unworthy of a Deity to perform one." But, as we apprehend, the thing to be proved was, not that a miracle is possible, for a genuine sceptical philosopher could have no opinion on such a subject; but that it is not from the *nature* of the fact incapable of being proved as other facts are proved, by unquestionable testimony: the following reply therefore seems to meet the objection more fairly:

"It (experience) never has been, nor can be, applied to our belief in the truth of a *narrative*. Experience is confined to our own personal knowledge of facts derived from the sense of seeing, hearing, feeling, &c."—Pp. 320, 321.

"When an individual *has experienced* a fact, he is fully convinced of its truth. Another person, or multitudes of others, *not having experienced* the same, is no evidence against the fact alleged. Their negatives cannot destroy his positive. They do not maintain that they have *experienced* the contrary; they confess that they have had *no* experience of a similar nature. Will the inhabitants of a salubrious climate claim a right to deny the possible existence of an epidemic disease, because they have had uninterrupted health? It is, therefore, as ridiculous to talk of a preponderancy of experience, in such cases, as it is seriously to expect that the emptiness and levity of one scale, should counterbalance all the weights of another."—Pp. 321, 322.

Again:

"I must suspect that the strong mind of Mr. Hume knew, that, in the manner of his statement, he was gravely asserting an absurdity. You might as well place contrary *demonstrations* in opposition to each other, in a geometrical problem, as *entire proofs* against *entire proofs* in moral reasoning!"—P. 325.

Men, who presume to question what the multitude of the unlearned, and learned believe, or profess to believe, will never want enemies and enemies so personal, as to carry their attack beyond the author to the man. Prejudice, pride, interest, superstition and honest principle all will be in arms against them. For this reason inquisitors and philosophic men ought to

regard it as a duty which they owe to truth and humanity, if they cannot mitigate the clamour, at least not to increase it by their voice. At the same time it is not necessary to applaud because bigotry condemns, or to give to Mr. Hume more than his due because others may have given less. We are persuaded that no man is less likely to join in popular invective than our author, and that he exercises his own unbiassed judgment when he refuses, to Mr. Hume the praise of honest intention: and it must indeed be confessed that for an enquirer after truth, gifted too pre-eminently for *that* enquiry, Mr. Hume was singularly unfortunate in the issue of it. The fact seems to be, that it was become the habit of his mind to detect and magnify whatever subtilty could object, without contemplating steadily the arguments of truth. Our author's censure goes a little farther than this:

"No man (he says) admires the talents of Mr. Hume more than the writer of these remarks; and no man more sincerely laments his abuse of them. His conduct and his motives appear to be inexplicable. His capacity to reason justly is indubitable; his disposition to perplex is equally indubitable. It is highly probable that he began in jest, simply with an intention to perplex that class of dogmatists, who were perpetually boasting of their demonstrations, upon subjects where they did not always enjoy a preponderancy of evidence. No part of his other writings indicate such vain boastings, open contradictions, and contrarieties, as are manifest in every part of this celebrated Essay; at a detection of which he would probably have smiled; and he must have felt a surprise equal to his triumph, when his artifices remained undiscovered. Mr. Hume was too wise a man not to know that, under his system, no philosopher can breathe a moment."—Pp. 330, 331.

"Our great admiration of Mr. Hume's intellectual powers, induces us to lament, that they were so ill employed; that his ambition to acquire literary fame, should be founded on the subversion of the best principles that can actuate mankind. Nor ought the insidious and treacherous manner in which this attempt has been frequently made, to escape the severest reprehension."—P. 335.

In the last Enquiry, which respects Moral Obligation, the author has found its sources in principles which are inseparable from our nature, universally

and powerfully operative, and perpetual as the desire of well-being;—in the mutual action, and control of self-love and social affection. His doctrine is alike removed from the mystical and occult on the one hand, and the cold maxims of a selfish expediency on the other. The enlightened moralist and benevolent Christian here speak the same language, and point to the same path of wisdom, uniting authority with counsel, and proving together that man is under a moral government, and that the great moral Ruler has in the Christian revelation expounded and enforced the same law of morality, which was always inscribed in his nature.

From our review of the present volume, which, though somewhat extended, is too brief for the survey, it will be seen that the range of enquiry is very extensive, and the subjects of great and universal interest; and without lavishing commendation we may venture to say, that few even of the thinking class can peruse the *Ethical Questions* carefully, without gaining something new as well as useful, both for speculation and for practice.

ART. II.—*Dr. Laurence's Remarks upon Griesbach's Classification, &c.*

[Continued from p. 172.]

THIS author speaks of Griesbach (16) as "correcting the received text upon the decisions of his own judgment." But, if Bengel and Semler are acknowledged to have been his predecessors "in the same path," we have here an observation contradicting another of Dr. L.'s statements. It is an observation which, in its effect, whatever be its design, cannot injure Griesbach's memory. Nothing can be less arbitrary, nothing, in this department of literature, less precarious, than the Professor's correction of the text of the New Testament. Far from relying on "the decisions of his own judgment," he has never lost sight of "the critical principles" of former authors of high reputation: and his merit consists in his diligent and skilful application of those principles, in the patience of his labours, and, especially, in that habit of discerning the age, and estimating the relative value, of manuscripts which is only to be acquired by

experience combined with sagacity and knowledge.\* A few years previously to the appearance of Griesbach's edition, in 1775, our learned countryman and printer *Bonnyer* had published the *Greek Testament*, and admitted into its text those readings which *Wetstein* had merely marked as being preferable to what were generally received.† Consequently, no candid and intelligent person will, either openly or covertly, accuse Griesbach of an attachment to *adventurous critics*, or of lightly departing, and encouraging others to depart, from "the beaten track of preconceived opinion."

After stating that Griesbach "confines himself solely to the triple division of an Alexandrine, a Western, and a Byzantine, text," (20) Dr. Laurence asks,

"May we not hence conclude that, feeling the task of accurately fixing the true number of classes greater than he expected, he satisfied himself with what he deemed an approximation to the truth, and was contented to finish, as he began, with only three? But does this approximation afford a sufficiently solid basis for a durable superstructure? Can it furnish any thing like complete satisfaction?"

From these questions we "conclude" that the Remarker is but imperfectly acquainted with the nature and the principles, the history and the state, of *Biblical Criticism*. Reasonable satisfaction is what true scholars will look for from its researches and decisions; since it does not present to the mind that complete evidence which characterises mathematical demonstrations. The highest certainty of which it admits, is moral certainty: nor can greater be attained in regard to most of the subjects on which men are called to exercise their judgments. It was never imagined by Griesbach or his admirers that nothing is left to be done by succeeding editors. Michaelis considered "the age of manhood"‡ of the criticism of the text of the New Testament as beginning with *Mill's* edition. Since that period, it has

\* See, in *Symbol. Critic.* Vol. I. p. 121, his own description of the qualifications of an able Editor of the New Testament.

† *New Test. Griesb.* 1796. Pref.

‡ *Introducto to the N. T.* Vol. II. p. 434.

gained an increasing vigour, which fully rivals, or even surpasses, the progress of the philology exercised on manuscripts and editions of the classical authors of Greece and Rome.

Griesbach's *approximation*, as his Censor styles it, "to the truth," affords, we think, "a sufficiently solid basis for a durable superstructure"—durable, as it regards his fame and the interests of Sacred Literature. To the strength, and perhaps to the splendour, of the edifice future labourers, it is possible, may make additions: but there is a very faint probability of its being overthrown, to prepare the ground for any other. Before we finish this article, our readers, we persuade ourselves, will see that even the most forcible and best-directed attacks of Dr. Laurence cannot destroy the fabric of Griesbach's critical system: should we grant that some parts of it are unsound, the main building, is, nevertheless, invulnerable.

Can the Remarker with reason doubt whether some of the most ancient manuscripts of the books of the New Testament are the basis of Griesbach's system? Does he seriously believe that any of an earlier date exist, or are likely to be discovered? He cannot be so credulous and sanguine. Still, Griesbach was naturally and laudably desirous of procuring access to a larger number of written copies; though his mind had long since attained a just degree of satisfaction in respect of the *quality* of those with which he had made himself acquainted. There is no pretence for intimating that his materials could not enable him to decide on the several claims of the Alexandrine, the Western and the Byzantine text: in the present advanced stage of Biblical Criticism the superiority of the two former has been admitted by the most competent judges;\* nor let Dr. Laurence hope that it will be triumphantly contested.

"Perplexed and intricate," he says, "as the *true way* may prove, it seems necessary to trace and pursue it, if we are desirous of arriving at certainty in our speculations." 22.

\* *Ib.* p. 175, 178. and Marsh's Lectures, &c. Pt. II. p. 42. Consult also Symbol. Critic. Vol. I. pp. 118, 119.

What, nevertheless, if *absolute certainty* is unattainable! What, if an *approximation*—a considerable approximation—to the *true way* is all for which we can hope? It is not that Griesbach was solicitous to save himself the toil of investigation, but that frequently he had not the manuscripts which he wished to examine. He never deviated from the *true way* except where his path was so impeded, that he could not pursue it: this was the reason of his declaring, *aliam quærere invitum sæpe cogere*. Our proper inquiry, we repeat, is, what use has been made by Griesbach of the critical apparatus of which he was actually in possession?

To prove that the proximate relation of a manuscript to one text out of three (23, 24) cannot be correctly represented as its real affinity, Dr. L. argues in the following manner:

"Griesbach asserts that the Alexandrine and Western texts have many readings in common. On the supposition therefore that a manuscript had one hundred readings common to both texts, besides fifty more peculiar to the Alexandrine, he would immediately pronounce it to be of the Alexandrine class. But put the case, that the hundred readings, which the Alexandrine text possessed in common with the Western *were lost*, (and greater losses it is presumed have taken place,) what would then prove his conclusion? He must upon his own principles assign it to the Western class; because it would now be distinguished by one hundred peculiar readings of this class, and by only fifty of the other; and being thus arranged, it would side with the Western, even in direct opposition to the Alexandrine text, to which it really belonged. If such a result accrue from a deficiency in our knowledge of a part of the text, less surely cannot be attributable to a deficiency in our knowledge of a whole one; and not of one only, but of two or even three."

The Remarker, no doubt, flatters himself that the above reasoning is fatal to the system of the learned Professor: but the meditated blow does not reach its object.

It would have become Dr. Laurence to refer specifically to Griesbach's writings. This editor, he tells us, "asserts that the Alexandrine and Western texts have many readings in common." All the texts have



a number of readings in common: the observation holds good on a comparison of the best with the most corrupted texts; and the fact is rather taken for granted than formally asserted by Griesbach. What Griesbach particularly and distinctly wishes his readers to bear in mind, is that certain manuscripts are especially remarkable for exhibiting readings *characteristic* of different texts, and that the business of the true critic is to discover, if possible, the class under which such manuscripts should really be arranged. The Remarker seems to conceive that Griesbach decided a point of this nature exclusively or chiefly by numerical computation. This however was not the accomplished editor's principle or practice. We know it to have been his favourite maxim, *Ponderandi, non numerandi, testes*: and he applied it to the readings of single manuscripts as well as to classes and families of manuscripts. He speaks not so much of the mass of readings as of those which, by their nature, mark the age and country of the transcriber. The scholar of a practised eye and judgment, the man who has a *tact* for these studies, discerns the quality and the date of a *Codex manuscriptus*, and consequently knows under what head it should be ranked, from peculiarities which perhaps are not numerous, and which, assuredly, would not seize the notice of the ordinary reader.\*

While the argument of Dr. L. rests on an unwarrantable assumption, it involves a case which is scarcely within the limits of probability. Our Remarker supposes that Griesbach is already persuaded of the imaginary MS. in question *really belonging* to the Alexandrine text. But whence was this conclusion deduced? Not so much, it may be, from any numerical excess of Alexandrine readings as from the characteristic genius and aspect of the document. Granting, further, that this loss had taken place, could not the cause of it be ascertained? In all events, possi-

\* Symbol. Critic. Vol. I. 26. "in lectionibus notabilioribus et characteristicis, &c." Ib. 27, "in lectione aliqua notabiliori." Ib. 28, "cujus sit codex quisque, ex universo textu habito et tempore judicandum est."

bilities cannot be legitimately opposed to facts. Griesbach, like other men, could only reason from what he knew. And since he was decidedly of opinion that both the Alexandrine and the Western texts are of the first antiquity, the solution of Dr. Laurence's problem is practically unimportant. The three leading texts under which the MSS. of the N. T. may be arranged, have, we think, been discovered: other texts may exist; but it is probable that they possess a near affinity to those which are enumerated by Griesbach.

His English Censor, less envious and illiberal indeed than *Matthai*,† and still less conversant with Biblical criticism, is fond of making suppositions: to another which he proposes, 22, 23, we shall give an answer similar to the foregoing,

"Were we to suppose the publication of six different editions of the same work, all from incidental causes frequently varying with each other, and that a copy had been taken from one of them; but from which of them we are ignorant, should we, in ascertaining to which edition the copy belonged, think our investigation perfect or satisfactory, if we simply compared it with only one half of the number, neglecting altogether a comparison with the other half? And would not the difficulty be considerably increased, if we found, that the copy to be compared (as is supposed to be the case in the particular instance under contemplation) was not taken from one of the six editions immediately, but mediately, through the channel of other copies, which had for a long period been successively transcribed from each other, and had strangely confused together the readings of one edition with those of another?"

Such an investigation, we should say, might be in a high degree *satisfactory*, although it were not *perfect*. With what justice, however, or what candour, does Dr. L. virtually accuse Griesbach of *neglect*? The accusation is unfounded. Though Griesbach believed that five or six editions might exist, still he could not glass the MSS. to which he had access under more than three. But if there be no reasonable doubt concerning the antiquity of these texts, [revisions], surely they afford materials for that

† Symbol. Crit. Vol. I. Pref. sub fin.

approximation to absolute truth which will satisfy the Biblical Critic. Griesbach's real mode of judging of the age and the family of manuscripts, is lost sight of by the Remarker.

If the editions, to which Dr. L. refers, in the above quotation, consist of *written* copies (and we conclude, from the fact of his using the word *transcribed*, that he speaks of such), he has merely *varied* his statement, and not *illustrated* it. On the other hand, if he have in view *printed* "editions of the same work," the two cases are not quite parallel; the different readings of successive impressions of a volume neither equalling in number those of ancient manuscripts nor being imputable to exactly the same causes. Under what edition we should rank a copy of a printed book—what date we should assign to it—may be determined sometimes negatively and sometimes positively. We shall give an example of each method, taken from English translations of the Bible. Archbishop Laud is said to have fined the company of Stationers, in the court of Star-chamber, for their inadvertent omission of the word *not* in one of the ten commandments. Here a *single* and curious circumstance enables us to ascertain whether or not copies of *that* impression of the Scriptures circulate among us? Another old edition presents a *peculiarity* in the version of a clause in the third chapter of Genesis; which peculiarity *characterises* that specific impression, and has even bestowed on it a name. Ancient manuscripts of the Greek text so far resemble such printed editions as these that we can in some measure distinguish them by important *internal* marks, which obviate the difficulty of judging whether "a copy" has been transcribed "from one of them." A *previous discrimination* of texts that have various *shades* of difference, would seem to be impracticable in the extent which Dr. Laurence has contemplated.

We now arrive at his third chapter, of which the contents are, *Griesbach's mode of classification. No standard text. Principles of classification fallacious. Inaccuracy of his calculations. Corrected statement.*

"The various readings of a manuscript," observes the Remarker, "as in its departure from the received text, might

afford the surest basis for a classification, were the received to be considered as *the standard text*, with which all manuscripts generally accorded, but from which they occasionally, and only occasionally, deviated." 29, 30.

In other words, were it's correctness—it's title to be the *received* and *standard* text—assumed; a *postulatum* which, we might have thought, a Biblical Critic of the nineteenth century would hardly ask us to admit!

"Upon this supposition," adds Dr. L. "the character of such occasional deviations would seem to form the sole object of investigation."

*The sole object* of Griesbach's labours was the discovery of the ancient text—the formation of one more accurate than any which preceding critical editors had given to the world. To have made the received text his standard, would have been incongruous with his design; for he would thus have bestowed on that text a distinction to which, in the judgment of the best scholars, it cannot substantiate it's claim.

"But Griesbach," continues the Remarker, "allows the existence of no standard text, and argues that the received, as principally conformable with the Byzantine, is the worst of the three. When therefore *he stepped out of the path trodden by preceding critics*, and annihilated the credit of the received text as a common standard, even asserting it's inferiority to every other, ought he not likewise to have departed from their accustomed mode of solely contemplating in manuscripts their variations from this; because the object of his research simply appears to have been, not *the character of particular deviations from any individual text*, but *the general coincidences of a manuscript with one text above another*?" 1b.

Griesbach's "*object of research*," was A TEXT FORMED OF THE BEST READINGS OF THE BEST MANUSCRIPTS: and it were difficult to shew how he could have executed his design more conveniently, impartially and effectually than by taking the received text as his basis, and noticing only the more memorable of the deviations from it. This, we presume, is the course almost invariably pursued by respectable philological editors of the Greek and Latin classics. Of the inferiority of

the received text Griesbach was convinced not so much by the agreement of its *characteristic* readings with those of the Byzantine manuscripts as by the history of its formation, which he has sketched, with great fidelity and care, in the first section of his *Prolegomena*. Nor, in the adjustment of his text, has he “stepped out of the path trodden by preceding critics.” Bowyer, we have already perceived, went before him in the same road. So, in part, did Harwood: and it has been trodden by Matthäi and by Alter.\*

Dr. L. maintains, 31, that had Griesbach “limited his observations to the various readings of another text, instead of the Byzantine, the result would have been very different. Let us try,” says he, “the experiment with the Alexandrine, which being in his [Griesbach’s] judgment the most ancient and valuable, we might have presumed would have been originally selected for this purpose.”

Now Griesbach affirms of the Alexandrine and of the Western edition, *Symbol. Crit.* Vol. I. 119,

“— neutrius recensiois codex ullus ad nos pervenit, quin plurimis locis interpolatus sit.” He, accordingly, declares, in the next sentence,

“Nulli enim codici tantum deferimus honoris, ut lectiones ejus quascunque probemus.”

So judicious and upright was this incomparable editor! He knew that a pure text could not be formed merely from a single class of manuscripts. Let us attend however to his Oxford Censor:

“The manuscript marked A [the Alexandrine] he [Griesbach] represents as belonging to the Alexandrine class in the Epistles of St. Paul, because out of one hundred and seventy deviations from the received text, it agrees one hundred and ten times with Origen, and differs from him only sixty. Now let us turn the scale, and substitute a comparison founded upon its variations, not from the received text, but from the Alexandrine, or the quotations of Origen. Griesbach states that the manuscript A differs both from Origen and from the received text *sixty times*. He also informs us, that it differs from Origen alone, when it agrees with the received text, *ninety-six times*. Adding therefore these numbers together, we perceive that the deviations of A from Origen, or the

Alexandrine text, amount to *one hundred and fifty-six* in all. But is it not evident, that out of these it agrees with the received or Byzantine text, when it differs from Origen, *ninety-six times*, and dissents from it only *sixty*? The conclusion therefore is unavoidable, and we seem compelled upon this calculation to class the manuscript under the Byzantine text, as we were upon the other calculation under the Alexandrine; so that a diametrically opposite result takes place.” 31, 32, 33.

As the same cause produces the same effect, Dr. Laurence’s argument is, here again, the result of his misapprehension. He erroneously imagines that Griesbach was determined solely by numerical calculations in assigning the MS. A to “the Alexandrine class in the Epistles of St. Paul.” But Griesbach uniformly kept in view the internal quality of the readings: \* and his judgment of the MS. before us was formed on a deliberate comparison of its structure and genius with those of manuscripts and versions of the same or a higher age. The true question therefore is, Does the *Codex A* agree or not with the Byzantine edition in the most important passages? In a vast number, and even in the majority, of instances, a conformity may subsist between them; while such, nevertheless, may be the dissonance in the more memorable readings as to shew uncontestedly that the editions are not one and the same. Of this clear distinction the Remarker has been unmindful. Nor is it merely from the agreement of a MS. with Origen, that Griesbach ranks it under the Alexandrine text.†

These remarks apply with equal or greater force to Dr. L.’s observations on the learned editor’s arrangement of the Ephrem manuscript. 34. The principle of classification “can” then “only lead to a fallacious conclusion” when we forget that Griesbach weighed his readings, and considered their excellence rather than their number.

His own language in *Symbol. Crit.* Vol. II. 135, far from shewing that he was “not perfectly satisfied” with his manner of computation, illustrates his

\* See, in particular, *Symbol. Crit.* Vol. II. 621—where the rule is perspicuously stated and fully exemplified.

† *Symbol. Crit.* I. 26. Thus, too, in 135. Griesbach says, “*laudantur lectiones, &c.*”; a proof that he was not governed by simply numerical computations.

\* Nov. Test, Griesb. Pref. sub init.



steady adherence to the soundest rules of Biblical Criticism. Nor does he there hint "that it would perhaps be proper to subjoin the differences of a manuscript, when it reads *with* the received text against the Alexandrine, to its differences when it reads against both." His words are, "Atqui [not *atque*, as in Dr. L's *Remarks*, &c. p. 35,] *si posterioribus vel maxime addas lectiones cum vulgari textu contra Alexandrinos consentientes, nihilo tamen minus Alexandrinarum lectionarum multo major est, quam dissentium ab Alexandrinis, numerus.*" To us the expression *vel maxime* is declaratory of Griesbach's firm persuasion that the classification of manuscripts depends on a higher principle than attention to numerical excesses and defects.

But the "accuracy of his calculations" is disputed. 37:—

"A circumstance upon which he seems to lay considerable stress, printing his account of it in italics, is the union of the manuscripts A. C. with Origen in seventy-five out of eighty places; but here he is indisputably inaccurate. His words are these: '*Inter lectiones illas 88 codicibus A et C communes, sunt 75, quibus suffragatur Origenes, et 13 tantum a quibus abhorret.*' The thirteen differences alluded to he gives in detail; but besides these, seventeen more at least appear to have escaped his eye, which I have subjoined in a note: so that instead of only *thirteen* instances of discordance he should have given *thirty*!"

Having examined "the seventeen readings" said to be omitted by him, we are satisfied that something might be alleged in abatement of the charge. Griesbach, after all, neither was nor claimed to be exempted from "inaccuracy." Error is more or less unavoidable in these investigations. Such is Dr. L's opinion: and he avows a persuasion that Griesbach's error has not been intentional! 48. In a note however to p. 42, the Remarker unhandsonely accuses him of not having collated a MS. with which he professes to have been acquainted. \* We employ the epithet *unhandsonely*, because the truth of the case might easily have been known from the

\* G. Prolegomena to New Test. Griesb. p. 35. See further, Syn. Crit. p. 64—86 and Introduction to the New Test. p. 11, 12.

publications to which we have made a reference in the margin.

That Griesbach deserves the thanks of every Biblical Critic for his quotations from Origen, is undoubted. At the same time, these extracts are neither so complete nor so accurate as to supersede further investigation. Dr. Laurence has shewn this to be the fact, 41—49, and *Appendix*. Perhaps he makes an excessive estimate of the honour of his triumph: perhaps greater modesty would have become him; and his own reputation might not have suffered had he suppressed the exclamation, 44,

"Now could a writer of Griesbach's talent and diligence blunder so egregiously!"

Sure we are that Griesbach's censor, whose *Remarks*, &c. begin, proceed and conclude on the false supposition that the number rather than the quality of readings should govern our classification of manuscripts ought not to have hazarded this sentence. Hitherto he has not destroyed, or injured, the critical system of the Professor. It is with reluctance that we must now divert our attention from his attacks. Other engagements demand our time and thoughts: and we hope to continue and finish this article of Review in the Monthly Repository for May.

ART. III.—*Sermons by the late John Simpson.* Printed, by Combe, at Leicester. Published, in London, by Hunter. 1816. 8vo. pp. 460.

THE subjects of the discourses contained in this volume, are the following: Contentment (Heb. xiii. 5), Hazeel's ambition (2 Kings viii. 13), Forgiveness of injuries (Matt. vi. 14, 15), Brotherly love (Heb. xiii. 1), The house of mourning and of feasting (Eccles. vii. 2), The government of the heart (Prov. iv. 23), Fortitude (1 Cor. xvi. 13), Haman's pride (Esther v. 13), The loss of the soul not compensated by the gain of the world (Matt. xvi. 26), Redeeming the time (Coloss. iv. 5), Against following the multitude to do evil (Exod. xxiii. 2), Zeal explained and recommended (Rev. iii. 19), Parable of the talents (Matt. xxv. 14, 15, 16), Whatever a man soweth that shall he also reap (Gal. vi. 7),

*Youth warned of a future judgment* (Eccles. xi. 9), *Repentance* (Matt. iv. 17), *The fear of God* (Ps. xxxiii. 8), *Prayer* (Philipp. iv. 6), *Public worship* (Ps. lxxxiv. 1), *The ways of virtue ways of pleasantness* (Prov. iii. 17), *False signs of a good and a bad character, and the true test of both* (Matt. vii. 20), *Rich and Poor mutually related: their reciprocal duties* (Prov. xxii. 2), *The year crowned with God's goodness* (Ps. lxxv. 11), *Whatsoever things are true, &c.* (Philipp. iv. 8).

It thus appears that these Sermons treat of topics which, as the editor observes, are *miscellaneous*, and “entirely of a practical tendency:” we further agree with him that “perspicuity” marks the preacher’s illustrations; and we consider it as highly honourable to Mr. Simpson’s memory that he inculcated from the pulpit, in a plain and serious manner, the great duties of religion—while, from the press, he favoured the world with his admirable *Essays on the language of the Scriptures*.

An extract from the discourse on *brotherly love*, which was preached, in 1804, for the benefit of some charity schools, will be a good specimen of the writer’s style of address, and will shew the state of his judgment on those institutions which maintain as well as instruct the offspring of the poor:

“In the institution which you have

established, by giving children some present accommodations of food, habitation, and raiment, good instruction is rendered more impressive and effectual. The bounty that is felt by the immediate relief which it affords to bodily wants, attaches sensible minds to their benefactors, and disposes them to regard their counsel and advice. Being taught the arts of reading, writing, arithmetic, and needle-work, they are early inured to habits of industry, and are better enabled to provide for their future permanent support and comfort in the world. This will eminently contribute to preserve their morals, and to secure that constant application to their proper business and duties, which is necessary to preserve habitual tranquillity, contentment, and cheerfulness in their own minds, and to render them respectable and useful members of society; for in order to prevent, as well as to cure, evil habits, persons must be accustomed to regular employment, and the outward condition must be rendered comfortable.” 76, 77.

The “inaccuracies” which occur in this volume, are evidently owing to the difficulty of decyphering the author’s short-hand “with correctness.” But the pious attention of the editor to his father’s memory, claims our respect: and to those who had the happiness of witnessing the “meekness of wisdom” which characterised the late Mr. Simpson these posthumous Sermons will be particularly acceptable.

## POETRY.

*Lines occasioned by reading “Dr. Smith on the Divine Government.”*

Brightly dawn’d the Christian morning,  
Passing reason’s purest ray,  
Revelation’s sun adorning  
Ages dark, and all was day!

But scarcely were his beams diverging  
O’er the world in splendid light,  
Ere bigotry’s dark cloud emerging,  
Wrapp’d again those rays in night.

Then men enchain’d in superstition,  
Evil passions unconfin’d,  
Drew their God without commission,  
From their warp’d and sickly mind.

Yes—children of the same great God,  
From the mercy seat were driv’n;  
And the few who seiz’d the rod,  
Proudly arrogated heav’n.

But hope again is dawning bright,  
’Tis thine to chase those clouds away,  
’Tis thine once more with reason’s light,  
To harbinger the sun of day.

Before thy nervous pen they fall,  
Before thy breath the phantoms fly,  
The branch of peace thou bear’st to all,  
Thy great credentials from on high.

For in that sacred book ’tis found  
That none believing disobey,  
Tho’ zealots would that text confound,  
And bend it to their own dark way.

Were for thy pen a sunbeam giv'n,  
 Drawn from his own refulgent glory;  
 Hadst thou the azure field of heav'n,  
 On which to trace the blissful story—  
 Yet would some envious wretch be found,  
 In bigotry's dark mantle brooding,  
 To wrap his vest more closely round,  
 The golden scroll of life excluding.  
 Tho' from his shroud false light'nings  
     dart,  
 And envy's serpents hiss around thee;  
 Vain is each insidious art,  
 That seeks to baffle or confound thee.  
 For thou—propp'd on th' eternal arm,  
 With mercy's wings about thee hov'ring,  
 Shalt every latent foe disarm—  
 Meekness and truth thy shield and  
     cov'ring.

VERSES,

*Occasioned by reading Southey's Carmen Triumphale.*

BY THE LATE EDWARD RUSHTON.

[From the Liverpool Mercury.]

When man's great curse, despotic sway,  
 Sweeps myriads from the realms of day;  
 When wide o'er all the Christian world  
 Destruction's banners are unfurl'd;  
 When Europe with exhaustion reels,  
 Yet nor remorse nor pity feels;  
 At this dread period SOUTHEY stands,  
 The wild harp trembling in his hands;—  
 And whilst fanatic furor fires his  
     mind,  
 "Glory to God," he cries, "deliv'rance  
     for mankind!"

Ah, Southey, if thy boyish brood  
 Were prone to shed each other's blood,  
 Thou couldst not with unruffled mien  
 Behold the agonizing scene:  
 Why then suppose the Sire of All  
 Is pleased to see his creatures fall;  
 Why then, if carnage strew the ground,  
 And groans, and shrieks, and yells  
     abound;  
 Why then, if ruthless havock lord it  
     wide,  
 Should bigot rage exult, and God be  
     glorified?

I grieve when earth is drench'd with  
     gore,  
 And realms with woe are cover'd o'er;  
 I grieve, and reprobate the plan  
 Of thanking God for slaughter'd man:  
 Nor can I hope that lawless sway,  
 Fierce as a tiger o'er his prey,  
 Will ever uncompell'd resign  
 That power the priest proclaims divine:  
 No, Southey, no! oppressors ne'er  
     unbind;  
 Till man—high-minded man must liberate  
     mankind.

Appall'd by superstitious cares,  
 Despots of yore have crown'd their heirs,  
 But when, Oh, Southey! tell me when  
 Have despots raised their slaves to men?  
 Vot'ries of power, to this they bend,  
 For this eternally contend;  
 Whilst man, let despots rise or fall,  
 Poor abject man submits to all;  
 And should his wrongs beyond endu-  
     rance swell,  
 Here glares the state's red arm, and there  
     an endless hell.

Whether of home or foreign growth,  
 All despots from my soul I loath;  
 And as to rights—I should as soon  
 Expect a message from the moon,  
 As hope to see a courtly train  
 Combin'd to cherish freedom's reign—  
 Combin'd to humanise the heart,  
 And bid the nurse's dreams depart:  
 No, Southey, no! those scourges, when  
     combin'd,  
 May desolate a world, but never free man-  
     kind.

If proof be wanting, France may shew,  
 In man's great cause how monarchs  
     glow:  
 Thou know'st, when one immortal  
     stroke  
 Her lacerating shackles broke;  
 Thou know'st how Europe's savage  
     swarms  
 Flew, like infuriate fiends, to arms;  
 And how the vaunting legions came,  
 To quench a never-dying flame;  
 And well thou know'st how France  
     sublimely rose,  
 Bared her resistless arm, and crush'd  
     th' aggressing foes.

If proof be wanting, turn thine eyes  
 Where poor partition'd Poland lies;  
 By many a barb'rous band assail'd,  
 In freedom's cause she fought, she fail'd;  
 She saw her children bite the dust,  
 O'erwhelm'd by rapine, murder, lust;  
 She saw her cities blaze, and all  
 That 'scaped the flames by ruffians fall;  
 Transfix'd by groves of pikes, she heard  
     them groan,  
 Then back into the flames saw writhing  
     thousands thrown.

Poor prostrate Poland! here we find  
 How despots liberate mankind;  
 And here, unblushing bard, we see  
 The savage hordes extoll'd by thee:  
 But whether minstrels change with  
     times,  
 And scatter flow'rs o'er courtly crimes;  
 Or truth's firm sons imprison'd lie,  
 Or priests the reasoning pow'rs decry;  
 Soon, like those brutes that shun the  
     nightly fire  
 From freedom's holy flame shall man's  
     fierce foes retire.



RELIGIOUS.

*April 14th, 1817.*

The first information was then read, relative to a meeting for worship being held in the Long Room, on Tuesday 1st April.

The second information was then read, which made a similar charge for Sunday the 6th April.

The third information was then read, which made a similar charge for Tuesday the 8th April.

In answer to some questions from the bench, and Mr. Statham, town-clerk, as to the nature of the prayers, &c. *Reece Davies* stated that they were similar to those usually made in other chapels.

more than fifty years, he had never knowingly violated any of the laws of his country. He had reason to believe that the room in which his meetings were held was duly registered, as it had been used for worship about twenty years. And indeed, he conceived, that if the place were not registered, yet, as he had always been informed that it was, he could not be supposed to have offended against the statute, as its penalties were directed against those who *knowingly* hold meetings for worship in places not registered. He then produced some written evidence, from a most respectable quarter, stating at what time, and by whom, and for whom, the place had been certified to the Bishop's Registrar at Chester. There had not been sufficient time allowed to procure a certificate from Chester, but he doubted not he could do so in a few days. The bench then agreed to adjourn the business to that day week, when the official evidence was to be produced.

The penalty incurred in this case would be, not exceeding £20 on each information, nor less than 20s.—one half to the informer.

The business on which Mr. Wright was summoned being now, for the present, concluded, Mr. W. was about to depart, when Mr. Statham rose and informed him he had now to bring forward a charge of a more serious nature.

**Mr. Wright.**—I was summoned for a particular purpose, which I have attended to, and am not bound to attend to any other business.

**Mr. Statham.**—Sir, this is an information upon which you will now be taken into custody. You are charged with blasphemy.

He then read an information on the evidence of James Scott (the identical person Mr. Wright had just stated his intention to prosecute for disorderly conduct)—which, being duly sworn to, charged Mr. Wright with having expressed and conveyed to his hearers the idea, “that a belief in the doctrine of the holy Trinity was absurd and ridiculous—that it was folly to believe in what was called the atonement of the death of Jesus Christ, as it was impious to suppose that a good being would take an innocent victim to atone for the sins of the wicked—that as the idea of the soul surviving the body was an absurd and ridiculous mental delusion, that the idea of a future state was equally so.” Mr. Statham then informed Mr. Wright that his proceedings had been watched; that the mayor had sent persons for the purpose to the Long Room, every evening, since he had advertised his meetings in the *Liverpool Mercury* of the 28th March; and that it was at the mayor’s instance that the informer on this charge (Scott) had now attended to give evidence.

**Mr. Wright.**—Why, Sir, the sentiments I delivered I had a legal right to deliver by act of parliament, and the last charge is an entire falsehood, and contrary to all my sentiments.

**Mr. Statham.**—That you must shew in another place. You must give bail for your appearance at the next Assizes, at Lancaster; yourself in £200, and two sureties in £100 each. (Mr. Wright was then placed in custody of the constables, and put to the bar as a prisoner.)

**Mr. Wright.**—But, Sir, I must know under what law I am charged with this?

**Mr. Statham.**—Under no particular act, but under the law of the land.

**Mr. Wright.**—Under what law of the land?

**Mr. Statham.**—Under the common law.

**Mr. Wright.**—Under what common law?—Have you never seen the act of parliament, lately passed, which tolerates the exercise of religious opinions,

which were before not permitted?—To this no answer was given.

**Mr. Wright.**—But if I be arrested, and held to bail, contrary to the provisions of an act of parliament, can I not claim indemnity?

**Mr. Statham.**—You can adopt what steps you think proper.

Two respectable friends of Mr. W. who happened then to be in the court merely as spectators, offered themselves as the required bail.—One of them (Mr. F. B. Wright), in describing his residence, stated, that it was near Anne’s Church. The mayor and Mr. Statham instantly asked was it not Saint Anne’s Church? Mr. F. B. W. said he had spoken of it in the usual way, and had casually omitted the word saint. He did not know of such a saint in Scripture, nor did he believe such an omission was criminal. Mr. Statham said, “Sir, I suspect you purposely omitted the word.” Mr. F. B. W. here claimed the protection of the court.

**Mr. Wright.**—I have now, Mr. Mayor, offered my bail, and of course claim my liberation.

**Mr. Statham.**—You must give twenty-four hours notice of your bail, and inquiries must be made into its sufficiency. Bail is not a matter of course. You may be kept in custody a week, Sir, for aught you know.

**Mr. Wright.**—I am certain, Sir, that if a short time were allowed, so that this business could be made known out of doors, I should have bail offered which the mayor *must know* would be sufficient.

Here another friend of Mr. Wright stepped forward and said, “Mr. Mayor, if only a few minutes be allowed before you leave the Hall, I am sure I can produce for Mr. Wright the most respectable bail to any amount.”

Time was allowed. Mr. Wright was removed in custody to the jury room, having objected to be sent down amongst persons charged with crime; and, in about fifteen minutes, Mr. Wright’s friend returned with two gentlemen, whose surety was not a moment objected to. Mr. Statham asked them if they were acquainted with the nature of the charges against Mr. Wright; He then read the information. One of the gentlemen remarked, that with Mr. Wright’s religious creed he was not acquainted, but on his integrity he would venture his

property. The other observed, that he agreed in the sentiments imputed to Mr. Wright, with the exception of the last, which he did not believe Mr. W. ever espoused.

Mr. Wright was then liberated, and his departure from the Hall was only impeded by a number of other friends, eagerly pressing in to offer themselves as his bail.

#### Remarks.

On the above extraordinary case, which is already familiar to the public, we have little to say, at present; it will we understand be brought before the higher tribunals.

The case divides itself into two parts; the first relating to *unlicensed worship*, the second to *blasphemy*.

In the account given above, it is stated that the first complaint was adjourned a week, in order to allow Mr. Wright time to procure a copy of the certificate of register of the place of meeting. The cause came before the magistrates on the 19th instant. The point was now established by a living witness, that the place was duly registered in the Bishop's Court at Chester about twenty years ago. But *no books are kept in the Court*; documents are simply put upon a file, and take their chance of preservation: in the present instance nothing remained and therefore no copy could be had. On the testimony of the witness referred to, however, the magistrates seemed disposed to allow the legality of the meeting and to dismiss the complaint, when the *town-clerk* (who has earned for himself a lasting name) put in an exception and demanded that the defendant should be convicted on one of the three informations, on the following extraordinary ground, viz. that the Act of the King, commonly called *The New Toleration Act*, requires a Protestant Dissenting Place of Worship to be registered anew every time it is occupied by a new congregation! If the town-clerk be right, *the majority of our congregations are unprotected by the law*. But we are persuaded that the construction of the Liverpool lawyer will be set aside the moment it is stated to a higher court. It behoves the DEPUTIES and the PROTESTANT SOCIETY to look after this matter; for right or wrong the magistrates at Liverpool were ruled by their legal advisers and convicted Mr. Wright in the penalty of twenty shillings and

five shillings costs. Mr. Wright immediately gave notice of Appeal against this conviction at the Quarter Sessions, which will have been held before this meets the reader's eye. The result will be hereafter announced.

The prosecution for *blasphemy* is still more serious, and intimately concerns the Unitarians as a body. This stands over to the Lancaster Assizes. Here too the town-clerk of Liverpool (who discovers in every thing the same originality) takes new ground. He rests the charge of *blasphemy* on the *common law*. It remains to be seen what his legal opinion is worth: but if he be right, the TRINITY BILL, in which Unitarians have so much rejoiced, is no protection to them: it only exempts them from the operation of certain statutes, but leaves them exposed to the common law, if that be, as the town-clerk advises, against them. What authorities this luminary of the law relies on we know not. Lord Ellenborough has indeed said, after Blackstone, that "Christianity is the law of the land," and if we were to ask his Lordship what Christianity is, he would undoubtedly refer us to the Common Prayer Book, containing the Thirty Nine Articles and the Athanasian Creed: but we much question whether his Lordship would abide in any particular instance by his own *dictum*. Still there is enough in the case to arouse the attention of the Unitarians, and we have the pleasure of informing the public that the Committee of the UNITARIAN FUND are not inattentive to it.

The charge against Mr. Wright of denying a future state is plainly a mistake, arising probably from the ignorance of the informer, who has confounded a *separate, intermediate*, with a *future state*. To shew this, Mr. Wright has published the Sermon, with attestations to its being a true copy; it is in fact a Sermon of his brother's, Mr. Richard Wright, the Unitarian Fund Missionary, and was published in 1811, as No. 14 of Mr. R. Wright's "Evangelical Discourses." In delivering it, Mr. John Wright made some additions, which are marked in the copy now printed by crotchets. There is an explanatory "Preface" and some excellent "Preliminary Remarks" to the publication, which may be had, Price One Shilling, of D. Eaton, High Holborn, and which we recommend to all who feel an in-



terest in the affair. — The Printer, is Mr. F. B. Wright, of Liverpool, another brother of Mr. Richard Wright's, the Missionary: he is the person who so grievously offended the town-clerk by his want of piety towards *Saint Anne*.

Lord Holland has brought this matter into the House of Lords, in a conversation on Lord Sidmouth's Circular, to which his Lordship attributes the proceedings at Liverpool. As might have been expected from the nephew of Mr. Fox, Lord Holland has expressed strong surprise at the affair. The Bishop of Chester is reported to have apologized for the magistrates and town-clerk, by saying that Mr. Wright was charged on the testimony of "a respectable Liverpool merchant," with denying a future state. His Lordship has been doubtless misinformed, *if not* with regard to the informer, yet certainly with regard to the ground of his information: and it is not a little curious that Dr. Law, Bishop of Chester, son of Dr. Edmund Law, Bishop of Carlisle, should have been the person to repeat the charge of blasphemy against a Dissenting Teacher, on the ground of his having taught the doctrine of the total mortality of man and of his sole dependence on a resurrection for immortality; a doctrine which *the Bishop of Chester's Father was distinguished for maintaining*, which he asserted not as a loose conjecture, but as the result of long and learned investigations, and which he continued to defend in the successive editions of his admirable work, *Considerations on the Theory of Religion*, the last edition of which, published not long before the venerable author's death, is completely Unitarian.

On the whole, there is nothing in this affair to terrify the Unitarians, the Dissenters and the friends of religious liberty generally; but much to set them to think upon the spirit of the times and the tendency of the late measures of his Majesty's ministers. Their will is obvious; their power has limits. Let the friends of freedom, the Dissenters and especially the Unitarians be cautious and temperate, and await the issue. The interval may be trying, but it will be purifying: and if any lesson may be learned from history, we may rest assured that the end will be satisfactory: England has always triumphed over bad laws and evil counsellors.

*Services at Parliament Court on Mr. Fox's entering on the Ministerial Office.*

On Wednesday, April the 2nd, Mr. W. J. Fox, late of Chichester, entered on the pastoral office of the congregation in Parliament Court, Artillery-Lane, Bishopsgate-Street. A religious service was held on the occasion to recognize and improve an event so promising to the future prosperity of the society and the interests of pure Christianity.

Our readers are already sufficiently acquainted with the loss recently sustained by this congregation in the lamented death of Mr. W. Vidler; and it gives us great pleasure to have so soon to record its re-settlement with such a valuable successor as they have in their present minister. It was the wish of the parties concerned on this occasion to avoid every thing which under the usual name of ordination, conveys an idea of some spiritual authority in religious teachers, to impart a distinct character, with ecclesiastical powers, to their brethren:—a notion at complete variance with the religious equality established by Christ amongst his disciples, and which has in all ages been the fruitful source of priestly domination, and innumerable impositions on the credulity and consciences of mankind. The ministers engaged on this occasion were Mr. T. Rees, T. Madge, of Norwich, J. Gilchrist, Dr. Lindsay, R. Aspland, and Dr. Rees. After suitable devotional exercises, Dr. Lindsay delivered an interesting discourse on the origin of Christian assemblies for worship, their primitive constitution, and the character of their teachers. In his usual style of manly eloquence, the preacher shewed the difference between a priesthood created by superstition and pledged to the support of unintelligible creeds or unmeaning ceremonies; and the pastor of a primitive church or congregation, their instructor but not their master, their friend, their counsellor, and their guide; the object of their free choice, having no dominion over their faith, but being a helper of their joy. He asserted the perfect independency of all Christian congregations originally, and their right to choose their own officers, and transact without control, all their social concerns; and con-

calculated the church and their new pastor on this auspicious union.

A member of the society (Mr. Adderton) then briefly mentioned the steps by which they were led to invite Mr. Fox to reside among them, and undertake the pastoral office. Mr. Fox in a short but animated address signified his acceptance of the invitation, declining to make any confession of faith excepting that he was a Christian, and desired to be extensively useful as a Christian minister: which desire was the great motive to his removal from his late situation, to so public and important a station in the metropolis. Unfettered and unlimited freedom of inquiry he claimed for himself and would cheerfully concede to all his brethren.

Mr. Aspland delivered an able and judicious discourse from Matt. xviii. 15—20, in which sound criticism and an impartial appeal to parallel Scriptures, were employed to shew that the passage rightly understood yields no support to narrow, illiberal, and tyrannous systems of ecclesiastical polity; conveys no power to churches or churchmen to institute odious inquisitions after supposed heresy, or to enforce any kind of religious uniformity: but that the whole, like every other part of the injunctions of Christ Jesus, breathes the spirit of Christian liberty and love. It was earnestly wished by many who were present that this and Dr. Lindsay's discourse should be published, both appearing to them eminently calculated for great usefulness.

The venerable Dr. Rees (father of the Dissenting body in London), concluded the public services of the day, with some very affectionate expressions of his good will to the cause at Parliament Court—his high regard for the memory of their late pastor—and the pleasure he experienced in anticipating the success and usefulness of their present respectable minister: commending them to the blessing of Almighty God in fervent prayer.

It was with high gratification that we heard Dr. Rees express his attachment to the great doctrine of the proper unity of God, in which, though differing from many of its advocates as to the pre-existence of Christ, he declared himself to have been a firm believer for fifty years; and his

decided agreement with the late Mr. Vidler on the final restoration of the wicked to business and happiness.

The congregation was very numerous, and every part of the engagements appeared to excite deep and general attention.

In the afternoon, the ministers and a party of Mr. Fox's friends, with some visitors from other congregations, in all about ninety persons, dined together at the King's Head Tavern, in the Poultry. Several appropriate toasts were given, and some excellent speeches on the cause of religious freedom, and the progress of just and rational sentiments in religion, delivered. A warm eulogium on Sir Samuel Romilly, the enlightened advocate of civil and religious liberty, the friend of the miserable captive, and the enemy of sanguinary laws, was received with loud and distinguished applause. And the whole company seemed to enter fully into the spirit of one of the earliest sentiments proposed to the meeting, a sentiment which should be warmly cherished by every Dissenter, **THE CAUSE OF CIVIL AND RELIGIOUS LIBERTY ALL OVER THE WORLD!**

E.

#### *Southern Unitarian Fund Society.*

THE Southern Unitarian Fund Society held its Second Annual Meeting on Wednesday the 9th instant, at the Unitarian Chapel, in the High Street, Portsmouth. Though we had lately sustained an irreparable loss, in the removal to Parliament Court of the gentleman, in whose well-directed zeal and activity for the diffusion of Evangelical truth, the society originated, yet the day was, in every respect, consoling. Though we had also to lament our loss, by the removal to distant situations, of those gentlemen who had been able contributors in forming and in promoting the views of the society; and though, as the preacher pathetically observed, we had hung our harps upon the willows, yet those who remained had no cause for despair, for the attendance on the morning service was very respectable, and in the evening numerous. Mr. Hughes advocated the cause of the society in his usual perspicuous and energetic manner, and in a most appropriate discourse, from 1 John iv. 19, *Beloved,*

believe not every spirit, but try the spirits, &c." The society was only prevented, by the low state of its finances, from urging a request for its being printed. The society's expenses for the last year had unavoidably intrenched on its former donations, by considerably exceeding its receipts. The society has been and is desirous of extending its sphere of usefulness, and of diffusing the pure light of divine truth, to the neighbouring villages; but the paucity of its means will necessarily confine its operations for the present to Portsea, Gosport and Fareham.

The company at dinner was nearly as numerous as on the first anniversary, only two short of the number, notwithstanding several removals; and next year we hope to exceed it. After dinner the health of our late Secretary and Founder was drank with enthusiastic applause. A handsome subscription was paid from a small penny-a-week society of Newport, in the Isle of Wight. Four new members from the High-Street congregation were added to our list.

The utility of this institution has been so fully exemplified, in various ways, since its establishment, as to entitle it to the encouragement and support of the friends of Scripture truth, and to the imitation of those who are desirous of ameliorating the condition of the poor, by enlightening their minds, by infusing into them a spirit of pure devotion, by training them to a love of God as well as of Christ, and, by religious instruction and moral precept, to improve their habits and reform their lives.

Portsmouth, April 11th, 1817.

#### Manchester Quarterly Meeting.

THE Quarterly Meeting of Presbyterian Ministers in the District of Manchester, was held at Bury, at the Chapel of the Rev. Mr. Allard, on the 4th inst. The Rev. A. Dean introduced the service, and the Rev. Wm. Leyons preached from John xix. 30,—“It is finished.” The next meeting will be at Hyde:—Preacher, the Rev. W. Hawkes; Supporter, the Rev. S. Barker.

In the course of the afternoon, the Manchester Unitarian Fellowship, lately established, became the topic of conversation and some discussion. It

is impossible that the same object should be viewed by different persons under the same aspect:—hence, as well as through other causes, inevitably arises difference of opinion. But while the merit or demerit of different measures is discussed with candour and dispassionateness, the result must be beneficial. For a short account of the Fellowship, I must refer your readers to your Number for January of this year. The success which it has experienced in so short a time is very considerable. The number of its members at this time amounts to nearly seventy. If the Unitarian Fellowship should successfully co-operate with the Quarterly Meeting, with the Book and Tract Society, with Mr. Grundy's Lectures, and with the increasing zeal with which this district has been animated, while it will be an object of pride and satisfaction to its friends and supporters, it will be viewed with pleasure by every liberal mind.

W. J.

Manchester, April 12, 1817.

#### Manchester College, York.

THE following sums have been received on account of this Institution:

Hanover-Square Chapel, Newcastle on Tyne, per Rev. W. Turner. Collection.....	12	0	8
Mr. Edmund Grundy, Ratcliffe, near Manchester. Benefaction.....	5	0	0

#### New Annual Subscriptions.

Rev. Wm. Turner, Jun. Manchester College, York.....	2	2	0
Mr. Stratton, late of Manchester College, York.....	2	0	0
Mr. George Stansfeld, Bradford, Yorkshire.....	1	1	0
Mr. Josias Stansfeld, Leeds...	1	1	0
Mr. James Stansfeld, Halifax.	1	1	0
Mr. John Bruce, Newcastle on Tyne.....	1	1	0
	25	6	0

#### Rev. Wm. Lamport's Prize.

York, April 2, 1817.

The period allowed for sending in Essays for this Prize is extended to May 1, 1818. The adjudication of the Prize will take place at the Annual Examination in June, 1818.

G. W. WOOD, Treasurer.

Manchester, April 17, 1817.



*Establishment of a Fellowship Fund in the New Meeting, Birmingham.*

AT a Meeting of Persons friendly to the Establishment of a Fellowship Fund, held in the Vestry Room of the New Meeting, on Sunday Morning, January 11, 1817, *Abraham Solomon*, M. D. in the Chair;

The following Resolutions were adopted:

1. That a society be formed, called the *Christian Fellowship Fund*.
2. That its objects shall be to present occasional contributions to Unitarian Chapels, about to be erected or repaired, and to Unitarian Academies; and to promote, generally, the diffusion of Unitarian truth.
3. That the Fund be supplied by subscriptions of one shilling per quarter, to be paid in advance.
4. That an annual general meeting shall be held on the first Sunday in July of each year, at which time a president, treasurer, committee and collectors shall be chosen.
5. That the committee shall consist of the president and treasurer for the time being, and fourteen other persons, to be chosen by each subscriber present at the annual meeting giving in a list of names; from which lists a majority shall be then ascertained.
6. That the committee shall meet on the first Sunday of every month, at half-past nine in the morning, in the vestry room, and that their meetings shall be open to every subscriber, but that the right of voting be confined to the committee.
7. That in cases of emergency, the secretary shall be empowered to call a special meeting of the committee.
8. That the Rev. J. Kentish be invited to accept the office of president.
9. That Mr. Peyton be requested to accept the office of treasurer.
10. That the following subscribers be requested to act as a committee till the next annual meeting; viz. Messrs. J. Armstrong, J. Belcher, E. Corn, T. Clark, jun. J. Gillins, T. L. Hawkes, S. Hutton, F. Luckcock, W. H. Smith, E. Thompson, T. Walton, W. Wills, jun. and Dr. A. Solomon.
11. That these resolutions be printed and circulated in such manner as the committee shall direct.

Signed,

ABRAHAM SOLOMON, *Chairman*.

Notices of subscriptions may be given to any of the members of the committee: and subscriptions will be solicited by gentlemen to be deputed for that purpose.

The "Fellowship Fund" is instituted chiefly on the suggestion of Dr. Thomson, of Halifax, in a late number of *The Monthly Repository*,\* and in a general agreement with the rules which he has there recommended. While it furnishes (as its laws will shew) an easy, convenient, and economical method of aiding the diffusion of Unitarian principles and worship, it can scarcely fail of answering ends of great importance in regard to the several congregations among whom it is established. The concurrence of the members of our religious societies, in active and benevolent exertions, advances the grand objects for which those societies are formed: and every scheme which mutually cements the individuals composing our congregations, every scheme which increases their united watchfulness and zeal, is favourable to their permanence and prosperity as a body, and must therefore be deserving of support.

For these reasons, the persons who have already enrolled themselves as subscribers to this "Fellowship Fund," affectionately and earnestly invite the respective members of the society of the New Meeting House, to follow their example. On their younger brethren they would especially enforce its claims, as an institution eminently fitted to create, to cherish, and to gratify an enlightened interest in the cause of religious truth, charity and virtue.

*Establishment of a Fellowship Fund, Swansea.*

SIR, *Swansea, April 21, 1817.*

IT must be gratifying to you and your readers to find the useful suggestions appearing from time to time in the *Repository*, attended to and acted upon. And I have great pleasure in making it known, (by means of your useful Work, if you will allow me), that the small congregation of Unitarian Christians in this place have manifested a disposition to second some measures for pro-

\* For October, 1816, pp. 578—580.

moving the good cause, which have been proposed by some of your correspondents. On the first day of this year, we began by subscriptions of a penny a week, to form a fund, to be kept distinct from the other funds of the society, and applied as occasions may arise, to the service of the general interests of Unitarianism. The usual number of attendants at our chapel does not much exceed a hundred: and we have already about seventy subscribers to our Penny Fund. We should rejoice greatly to see our example followed with equal zeal and unanimity, by all the Unitarian congregations in the kingdom; as, by this easy and simple method, an annual sum might be raised, which, together with the Unitarian Fund already formed, and occasional donations from able and willing friends to the cause, would be fully adequate to our increasing wants.

Believing the Unitarian doctrine to be the truth, and that in proportion to its spread, the world will enjoy more of the blessings of genuine Christianity, all true Unitarians must be pleased with the late frequent calls upon their liberality, for the erection of new chapels and other assistances to newly formed Unitarian societies. But as for the most part, the applications upon these occasions, are made to the opulent alone, and as many others, to whom the donation of a large sum at once might be inconvenient, would probably be glad to contribute their mite, the subscription of a penny a week seems to be an easy and practicable method of giving to all an opportunity of shewing their interest in the cause, and assisting with considerable efficacy in its support. If this scheme could only effect one half of what is stated as possible by your Correspondent, Dr. Thomson, in Vol. XI. p. 579, that is, if only fifty thousand subscribers could be obtained, raising upwards of ten thousand pounds per annum, how much substantial service to the cause might be effected by this, in a manner the most easy, and by an exertion of each individual almost imperceptible?

It is the intention of the society at Swansea, to apply what they raise by this scheme, in the first place, to the promotion of Unitarianism in our own immediate neighbourhood, by the distribution of tracts, and by

other means: but always to keep a reserve in hand, to be ready to answer any calls for the assistance of others. And we would recommend to the attention of Unitarians in general, if this scheme should be generally adopted, that some farther plan should likewise be devised for concentrating its force and uniting the whole body in its application. Might it not be practicable to have a register somewhere kept of all the Unitarian congregations, and the number of subscribers they severally furnish? In this case, when assistance is wanted, application should be made to the keeper of the register, who might easily calculate the proportion which each congregation should contribute towards raising the sum required. He would ascertain, for instance, that supposing the sum wanted to be £1000, and the number of subscribers fifty thousand, the share to be demanded from a congregation having a hundred subscribers would be £2. The gentlemen who manage the Unitarian Fund might perhaps be induced to undertake the care of the register; and the communications might be made, to save trouble and expence, through the medium of the *Monthly Repository*.

Thus a machine might be erected, of very simple construction, of very moderate cost, and of vast and increasing power: and would the whole body of Unitarians co-operate to set it in motion, we might in a short time see wonderful effects produced.

R. AWBREY.

*Removals amongst Unitarian Ministers.*

Mr. ABRAM BENNETT, who has been many years pastor of the General Baptist congregation at *Ditchling*, Sussex, and some years evening lecturer at the Unitarian Chapel, *Brighton*, has been unanimously chosen minister of the numerous and respectable congregation at *Poole*, Dorsetshire. He has accepted the invitation, and removes to Poole at Midsummer. By his removal there will be two vacancies, and it is to be hoped that both *Ditchling* and *Brighton* will be supplied each with a minister: the latter place affords a fine opening for any gentleman whose circumstances will allow of his making an experiment as to raising a congregation competent to the support of a minister, and who may be attracted by the situation.

## LITERARY.

Clapton, April 21st, 1817.

SIR.—Those of your readers who have encouraged the proposed publication of Dr. Priestley's Theological Works by their subscriptions, have been led to expect a list of the subscribers in this month's Repository. They will, I trust, excuse the delay, from my not having yet been able to ascertain the address of some of the subscribers, and my being convinced on recollection that I had not afforded sufficient time, after the circulation of the last Repository, to those who were yet disposed to become subscribers. From the present appearance I hope very soon to report the number of subscriptions as 200, and that the work is proceeding to the press with all the expedition in my power.

J. T. RUTT.

## FOREIGN.

## RELIGIOUS.

*The Pope's Bull against Bible Societies.*

POPE PIUS VII. (To the Archbishop of Gnezn, Primate of Poland.)

VENERABLE BROTHER,

Health and apostolic benediction.

IN our last letter to you we promised, very soon, to return an answer to yours; in which you have appealed to this Holy See, in the name also of the other Bishops of Poland, respecting what are called *Bible Societies*, and have earnestly inquired of us what you ought to do in this affair. We long since, indeed, wished to comply with your request; but an incredible variety of accumulating concerns have so pressed upon us on every side, that, till this day, we could not yield to your solicitation.

WE HAVE BEEN TRULY SHOCKED AT THIS MOST CRAFTY DEVICE, BY WHICH THE VERY FOUNDATIONS OF RELIGION ARE UNDERMINED; and, having, because of the great importance of the subject, convened for consultation our venerable brethren, the Cardinals of the Holy Roman Church, we have, with the utmost care and attention, deliberated upon the measures proper to be adopted by our Pontifical authority, IN ORDER TO REMEDY AND ABOLISH THIS PESTILENCE AS FAR AS POSSIBLE. In the mean time, we heartily congratulate you, venerable brother;

and we commend you again and again in the Lord, as it is fit we should, upon the singular zeal you have displayed under circumstances so hazardous to Christianity, in having denounced to the Apostolic See, THIS DEFILEMENT OF THE FAITH, MOST IMMINENTLY DANGEROUS TO SOULS. And although we perceive that it is not at all necessary to excite him to activity who is making haste, since of your own accord you have already shown an ardent desire to detect and OPPOSE THE IMPIOUS MACHINATIONS OF THESE INNOVATORS; YET, IN CONFORMITY WITH OUR OFFICE, WE AGAIN AND AGAIN EXHORT YOU, THAT WHATEVER YOU CAN ACHIEVE BY POWER, PROVIDE FOR BY COUNSEL, OR EFFECT BY AUTHORITY, YOU WILL DAILY EXECUTE WITH THE UTMOST EARNESTNESS, placing yourself as a wall for the House of Israel.

For this end we issue the present letter, viz. that we may convey to you A SIGNAL TESTIMONY OF OUR APPROBATION OF YOUR LAUDABLE EXERTIONS, and also may endeavour therein still more and more to excite your pastoral solicitude and vigilance. For the general good imperiously requires us to combine all our means and energies to FRUSTRATE THE PLANS, WHICH ARE PREPARED BY ITS ENEMIES FOR THE DESTRUCTION OF OUR MOST HOLY RELIGION: whence it becomes an Episcopal duty, THAT YOU FIRST OF ALL EXPOSE THE WICKEDNESS OF THIS NEFARIOUS SCHEME, as you already are doing so admirably, to the view of the faithful, and openly publish the same, according to the rules prescribed by the Church, with all that erudition and wisdom in which you excel; namely, "THAT BIBLES PRINTED BY HERETICS ARE NUMBERED AMONG PROHIBITED BOOKS, BY THE RULES OF THE INDEX, (No. II. and III.) FOR IT IS EVIDENT FROM EXPERIENCE, THAT THE HOLY SCRIPTURES, WHEN CIRCULATED, IN THE VULGAR TONGUE, HAVE, THROUGH THE TEMERITY OF MEN, PRODUCED MORE HARM THAN BENEFIT:" (Rule IV.) And this is the more to be dreaded in times so depraved, when our holy religion is assailed from every quarter with great cunning and effort, and the most grievous wounds are inflicted on the

*"To the poor is the Gospel preached" says our divine master.*



**Church.** It is, therefore, NECESSARY TO ADHERE TO THE SALUTARY DECREE OF THE CONGREGATION OF THE INDEX (June 13th, 1757), THAT NO VERSIONS OF THE BIBLE IN THE VULGAR TONGUE BE PERMITTED, EXCEPT SUCH AS ARE APPROVED BY THE APOSTOLIC SEE, OR PUBLISHED WITH ANNOTATIONS EXTRACTED FROM THE WRITINGS OF THE HOLY FATHERS OF THE CHURCH.

We confidently hope that, even in these turbulent circumstances, the Poles will afford the clearest proofs of their attachment to the religion of their ancestors; and this especially by your care, as well as that of the other Prelates of this kingdom, *whom, on account of the stand they are so wonderfully making for the faith committed to them, we congratulate in the Lord,* trusting that they all will very abundantly justify the opinion which we have entertained of them.

It is moreover necessary that you should transmit to us, as soon as possible, the Bible which JACOB WUIEK published in the Polish language with a commentary, as well as a copy of the edition of it lately put forth without those annotations, taken from the writings of the holy fathers of our Church, or other learned Catholics, with your opinion upon it; that thus, from collating them together, it may be ascertained, after mature investigation, what errors may lie insidiously concealed therein, and that we may pronounce our judgment on this affair for the preservation of the true faith.

PROCEED, THEREFORE, VENERABLE BROTHER, TO PURSUE THE TRULY PIOUS COURSE UPON WHICH YOU HAVE ENTERED; VIZ. DILIGENTLY TO FIGHT THE BATTLES OF THE LORD IN SOUND DOCTRINE, AND WARN THE PEOPLE INTRUSTED TO YOUR CARE, THAT THEY FALL NOT INTO THE SNARES WHICH ARE PREPARED FOR THEM, TO THEIR EVERLASTING RUIN.\* The Church waits for this from you, as well as from the other Bishops, WHOM OUR EPISTLE EQUALLY CONCERNS; and we most anxiously expect it, that the deep sorrow we feel on account of THIS NEW SPECIES OF TARES WHICH AN ENEMY IS SOWING SO ABUN-

DANTLY, may, by this cheering hope, be somewhat alleviated: and, we heartily invoke upon you and your fellow Bishops, for the good of the Lord's flock, ever increasing spiritual gifts, through our Apostolic benediction, which we impart to yourself and to them.

Given at Rome, at St. Mary the Greater, June 29, 1816, the 17th year of our Pontificate.

POPE PIUS VII.

## NOTICES.

### UNITARIAN FUND.

THE Annual Meeting of the Unitarian Fund will be held on Wednesday the 28th May, when a Sermon will be preached on behalf of the Society by the Rev. W. J. Fox. [*For Particulars, see the Wrapper.*]

After the Meeting of the Unitarian Fund will be held the Meeting of the Subscribers to the UNITARIAN ACADEMY. [*For Particulars, see Wrapper also.*]

THE Annual Meeting of the Protestant Society for the Protection of Religious Liberty, will be held at half-past 10 o'clock precisely, on Saturday May 17th, at the New London Tavern, Cheapside.

### LITERARY NOTICES.

In a few days will be published, a New Edition, much enlarged, of Four Letters on the English Constitution, by G. Dyer.

A considerable time since Mr. Bagster announced his intention of printing a Polyglott Bible, in one quarto volume. From that period he has been proceeding with the care so important a work required, and he hopes the expectation excited by its announcement will not be disappointed. It is a handsome book, printed with a full margin on good paper for the purpose of MS. observations, and the first part containing the Pentateuch is ready for delivery. It had been considered a desideratum in literature, for the student to have a Polyglott Bible, containing the original texts and the versions used by the ancient churches, in a portable form and at a moderate price; and the

*"Snare of Everlasting Ruin" in reading & understanding the word of God contain the true way to eternal life!*

present London Minor Polyglott Bible it is expected will fully answer these wishes. Another class of readers will be gratified by the above work being printed in four small pocket volumes, each language a complete volume, possessing this peculiar excellence, that, by the pages of each volume agreeing with every other, either two languages may be interleaved together, and thus united in one volume, will not exceed the thickness of the common pocket Bibles. A fuller display of the whole work is exhibited in a prospectus of thirty-two pages which is delivered gratis, and which also details the nature of a supplementary volume, intitled Scripture Harmony, being

a concordance of parallel passages, agreeing page with page with the pocket volumes.

THE *Fifth Edition* is ready for publication of "The Genuine Epistles of the Apostolical Fathers, St. Barnabas, St. Ignatius, St. Clement, St. Polycarp, Shepherd of Hermas, and Martyrdoms of St. Ignatius and St. Polycarp, written by those who were present at their suffering: being together with the Holy Scriptures of the New Testament, a complete Collection of the most Primitive Antiquity for about 150 years after Christ." Translated and published with a preliminary Discourse, by the Most Reverend Father in God, William, late Lord Archbishop of Canterbury.

## MONTHLY RETROSPECT of PUBLIC AFFAIRS;

OR,

### *The Christian's Survey of the Political World.*

A FACT has occurred of great importance to the people of this country in general, but more particularly to those for whom this retrospect is intended. Mr. John Wright, the brother of our worthy missionary, has been summoned before the Mayor of Liverpool, for preaching in an unlicensed place. This is a civil offence, and to this crime a specific penalty is assigned. The penalty was levied not long ago in Kent, on a gentleman of great respectability and property, and also a member of the Church of England, for having prayers in his house read by a clergyman of that church in his family of a Sunday evening, to an audience consisting of more than twenty persons. To the charge Mr. Wright replied, that he had reason to believe that the room was registered, as it had been used for worship about twenty years; and the court delayed its judgment on the case for a week, till information could be procured from Chester on the registration.

During the examination, Mr. Wright alluded to some disorderly conduct in the room, and the rioter had refused to give his name and address. The informer on the preceding charge confirmed the suspicion that the name was Scott, and a person of this name came forward avowing it, and giving his full address, James Scott, of Liverpool, Merchant, No. 11, Clayton Square. He was informed that he would be prosecuted under the 12th clause of an act 52 Geo. III. for disorderly conduct during worship.

As Mr. Wright was going away he was stopped, and taken into custody upon

a new charge laid by this same Mr. Scott (we copy from the papers in the following words), that he, Mr. Wright, had expressed and conveyed to his hearers the idea, "that a belief in the doctrine of the Holy Trinity was absurd and ridiculous; that it was folly to believe in what was called the atonement of the death of Jesus Christ, as it was impious to suppose that a good being would take an innocent victim to atone for the sins of the wicked—that the idea of the soul surviving the body was an absurd and ridiculous mental delusion, that the idea of a future state was equally so." Bail was immediately offered, but Mr. Statham (the town-clerk) interposed, and made use, as stated in the papers, of these memorable words: "You must give twenty-four hours notice of your bail, and inquiries must be made into its sufficiency. Bail is not a matter of course. You may be kept in custody a week, Sir, for aught you know." In a short time a friend of Mr. Wright's brought in two persons as bail, who were allowed to be competent by the Court, and Mr. Wright was discharged out of custody.

The doctrine of Mr. Statham seems to be founded on that maintained by Lord Sidmouth in his circular letter, to which a demur has been made by the magistrates of Middlesex and Monmouth, and notice has been given of an inquiry into the foundation of it by Earl Grey in the House of Lords. This is a question of great import to every Englishman, who ought to know the situation in which he stands, by the novelties introduced within these few months. If it is true that a

man may be kept in custody a week on a mere charge of blasphemy, it behoves all that the crime should be strictly defined, as a traveller may in an unguarded moment utter an expression offensive to his neighbour, which will put the former entirely at the mercy of the latter, and in a short time England may be converted into a similar state with that of Spain on the formation of the Inquisition. Let it be recollected, that within a year from the formation of this horrible tribunal, about twenty thousand persons were taken up and subjected to various penalties of fine, imprisonment and death itself. There was no want of spies and informers. By degrees the higher classes enrolled themselves as familiars of the Inquisition, and the best security a man had for his own personal liberty was to turn informer against his neighbour. It is in vain to say that the manners of the English are alien to such a practice. It is true our ancestors held such practices in the utmost horror, and the name of spy and informer was most disgraceful: but that high spirit has been greatly weakened within the last twenty-five years, and a very small thing may turn the scale. If popular odium can be excited against certain opinions, as we know from the pages of history, it has frequently been the case, the disgrace of espionage is lost, and the spy becomes a meritorious character. Our master was called seditious and blasphemer: the apostles were saluted with the same epithets: the early Christians were committed to prison, suffered the loss of goods, and even death upon the same charges. All that had been done by Pagans against Christians, has been acted over and over again by Christians against each other. The time is perhaps approaching for a trial of the same kind, and it is our duty and our wisdom to be prepared.

The case of Mr. Wright was of such a nature, that it was not likely to be passed over without notice. It was alluded to by Lord Holland in the House of Lords, when the Bishop of Chester stated in his place, that Mr. Wright was not obliged to give bail for avowing Unitarian opinions, but for contradicting the doctrine of a future state; and one of the public papers has stated, that a person holding such an opinion ought not to be tolerated. Now we cannot believe for a moment that Mr. Wright professed the opinion laid to his charge; but on this point we shall not at present enter into any discussion, as the case will be properly tried in a court of law. But we must demur to the doctrine of intolerance respecting the deniers of a future state, being fully persuaded that we have nothing to fear from their arguments, and that the only

way to give them any success is to prevent them from shewing their cause in the most favourable colours.

Another case wholly civil has excited general ground of suspicion. A society of very long standing thought it necessary under the new acts to apply for a licence. The application was made to a Court of Magistrates, consisting of the Lord Mayor and three Aldermen. The society was declared to be founded for the investigation and discussion of philosophical, literary, historical and political subjects. The Lord Mayor and one Alderman saw no objection to granting the licence, but the two other Aldermen dissented, and one of them declared that the intention of the late act was to put down all political debate whatever. In consequence of this difference of opinion the licence could not be granted, and the applicants retired, and what course they will take time must shew. The English have been so long accustomed to make political subjects the theme of their discussions, that it will not be easy to bring them to an acquiescence with these new restraints, and perhaps it is not for the advantage of any government, that the subject should be debarred of this advantage: for assuredly a government is much more secure when the people speak their sentiments freely, than when they are obliged to conceal them, and each man looks upon his neighbour as a dangerous censor: and indeed one great advantage of England over other nations has arisen from this freedom. When it is removed, there is a danger that the energy so remarkable in the English character will be destroyed.

The descendants of Englishmen in another part of the world are in a very different situation; and the speech of the President of the United States, on taking possession of his new dignity, will be read with no small degree of abhorrence by the favourers of the new system. It was natural in him to praise the constitution of his country, and the questions he asks deserve to be recorded. Speaking of the situation of individuals under their government he uses these words: "On whom has oppression fallen in any quarter of our union? Who has been deprived of any right of person or of property? Who restrained from offering his vows in the mode which he prefers to the Divine Author of his being? It is well known that all these blessings have been enjoyed in their fullest extent; and I add with particular satisfaction, that there has been no example of a capital punishment being inflicted on any one for high treason." In another place he says, "Such is the happy government under which we live—a government adequate to every purpose for which the social com-



pact is formed—a government elective in all its branches, under which every citizen may by his merit obtain the highest trust recognized by the constitution—which contains within it no cause of discord, none to put at variance one part of the community with another—a government which protects every citizen in the full enjoyment of his rights, and is able to protect the nation against injustice from foreign powers.” These are doubtless great blessings, and if the people are virtuous, they will be preserved. With great propriety is pointed out to the nation the mode in which they may all be lost. “While the constituent body retains its present sound and healthful state, every thing will be safe. They will choose competent and faithful representatives for every department. *It is only when the people become ignorant and corrupt, when they degenerate into a populace, that they are incapable of exercising sovereignty.* Usurpation is then an easy attainment, and an usurper will be found. The people themselves become the willing instruments of their own debasement and ruin. Let us then look to the great cause, and endeavour to preserve it in full force. *Let us by all wise and constitutional measures promote intelligence among the people, as the best means of preserving our liberties.*” The remarks of the speaker on the internal government of the country are no less judicious, and Europe may derive lessons of wisdom from our Transatlantic brethren: and whatever may be the fate of our own and the neighbouring countries, we may still be thankful to Divine Providence that there remains a hope, that if the wickedness of the Eastern world should drive liberty from its regions, it will find a refuge in another quarter, and produce that happiness and prosperity, which can only arise from the moral habits and virtue of the people.

In Germany there is evidently a considerable attempt at improvement. The promises of the King of Prussia appear not to have been nugatory. A council is formed of the principal officers of state and delegates from different parts of the country, and there is a probability that a representative government will be established. At any rate the power of the noblesse will be curtailed, and the military will be brought in subjection to the civil power. The Landgrave of Hesse Cassel has acceded to the Christian Alliance, which employs the pens of the writers in Germany. Time only can prove how far Christianity will have an influence in this measure, for mankind have been so often deceived by specious promises, that even the words of princes will not remove the suspicion that the garb of holiness may be a cloak only

for greater malignity. Great liberties are also taken with the English character, on account of the supposed conduct of our government towards Bonaparte: and Lord Bathurst's speech is criticised with no small degree of severity. Even the Austrian papers have published it, and it is evident that foreign nations are not inattentive to the fate of him, who once possessed so great an influence in the affairs of Europe.

Sweden appears to be in an unquiet state. A conspiracy is said to have been formed against the French prince, who is to succeed to the crown; but the contents of the green bag on this occasion have not been as yet laid open to the public. A decree has been issued on the subject of commerce, prohibiting various articles with a view of encouraging manufactures at home. Thus man is in many places acting against the evident designs of Providence, which, by diffusing its blessings in various degrees over different countries, leads them to supply the deficiencies of each by mutual interchange. The Swedes are yet to learn that the best way to employ the superfluities of their subsoil, the great wealth of their country, is in the purchase of what they may call luxuries: for by means of them a greater degree of industry is promoted in their own nation, as well as in those countries with which they trade. But why should we be surprised at this failure in political economy in Sweden, when even our own is not sensible of its own interest? It is not unusual to see encouragements held out for the domestic use of our own manufactures, not considering that if all nations follow our example, we shall be the sufferers: for the machinery of this country will soon fail, if it is employed solely upon our own wants.

All the accounts of the Spanish colonies contribute to keep up the hope of the speedy downfall of the government of the mother country; but at the same time they present such a picture of the manners of the people, as render it very problematical, whether they will for a long time be able to establish themselves in a well-regulated system. Buenos Ayres seems most likely to be soonest fixed. The emigrants from Europe to the new world, which are now numerous, and perhaps beyond example in any former period, direct their course to the United States. The distresses of Switzerland tend very much to increase their amount; but America will profit not a little by the manufacturers which leave this country. It cannot be too much impressed on all minds, that trade and manufactures are the cause of our prosperity; and when they decline, agriculture will fail with them.