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HISTORY AND BIOGRAPHY.

AN ACCOUNT OF THE MASSACRE AT CALABAR, AND OF TWO AFRICAN PRINCES, WHO WERE ENSLAVED AND BROUGHT TO ENGLAND: WITH AN ORIGINAL LETTER FROM ONE OF THEM, TO THE REV. CHARLES WESLEY. BY MR. RUTT.

SIR, *Clapton, May 1, 1808.*
I APPREHEND that you have scarcely any readers, who have not been impressed, according to their different opportunities of information, by the wrongs which Africa has endured from the iniquity of European and especially of British commerce. Among those wrongs, which even humanity may incline us too soon to forget, none attracted more attention about 20 years ago, than that transaction, too justly called a *massacre*, which occurred in 1767, in the river of Calabar, a considerable station for the slave-trade, in Upper Guinea.

Mr. Clarkson in his "History of the Abolition," (i. 305,) mentions this massacre. He had the first account of it from a Moravian minister at Bristol, on his visit to that city, in 1787, when he undertook his benevolent mission, to explore "the secrets of the prison-house." Mr. C. also procured "authentic documents"

and depositions, from which he has formed an interesting relation of the atrocious deed, which well agrees with the following statement made to the House of Commons. I quote the "Abridgment of the minutes of the evidence taken before a committee of the whole house, to whom it was referred, to consider of the slave-trade," 1790. No. ii. P. 206.

"In Old Calabar river are two towns, Old Town and New Town. A rivalry in trade produced a jealousy between the towns; so that through fear of each other, for a considerable time, no canoe would leave their towns to go up the river for slaves; which happened in 1767. Seven ships [of Liverpool, Bristol and London,] lay off the point which separates the towns; six of the captains invited the people of both towns on board on a certain day, as if to reconcile them: at the same time agreed with the people of New Town to cut off the Old Town people, who should remain on board the next morning. The Old Town people persuaded of the sincerity of the captains' proposal, went on board in great numbers. Next morning, at 8 o'clock, one of the ships fired a gun as a signal to commence

hostilities. Some of the traders were secured on board, some were killed in resisting, and some got overboard and were fired upon. When the firing began, the New Town people who were in ambush behind the point, came forward and picked up the people of Old Town who were swimming and had escaped the firing. After the firing was over, the captains of five of the ships delivered their prisoners (persons of consequence,) to the New Town canoes, two of whom were beheaded along-side the ships; the inferior prisoners were carried to the West-Indies. One of the captains who had secured three of the king's brothers, delivered one of them to the chief man of New Town, who was one of the two beheaded alongside: the other brothers he kept on board, promising when the ship was slaved, to deliver them to the chief man of New Town. His ship was soon slaved from this promise, and the number of prisoners made that day; but he refused to deliver the king's two brothers, and carried them to the West Indies, and sold them. Thence they escaped to Virginia, and thence after three years to Bristol, where the captain who brought them, fearing he had done wrong, meditated carrying or sending them back to Virginia. Jones of Bristol, who had ships trading to Old Calabar, had them taken from the ship (where they were in irons) by an Habeas Corpus.—The king escaped from the ship he was in, by killing two of the crew who attempted to seize him: he then got into a one man canoe, and paddled to the shore; a six-pounder from one of the ships struck the canoe to pieces; he then swam on shore to the woods near the ship, and reached his own town though closely pursued; it was said, he received eleven wounds from musket shot."

It appears that this account of the massacre was given on the authority of the boatswain of one of the vessels engaged, and confirmed by a deposition taken at Bristol in 1773, from the mate of another vessel. It also agreed with the affidavits, made by the surviving brothers of the African king, a printed copy of which I once had in my possession.

The two brothers thus rescued from the slavery to which they were a second time devoted, had the happiness, on their liberation at Bristol, to come under the notice of the late Rev. Charles Wesley, who then presided over the methodist connexion in that city. Mr. W. appears to have paid great attention to their improvement, and especially; as might have been expected, to their religious instruction. I have some papers in the *hand-writing* of these Africans, as appears by Mr. Wesley's endorsement. These he communicated to his friend, my much respected father. On his decease, more than 30 years ago, they came into my possession and have never been published.

From these papers it appears that a ship was provided, probably by Jones the trader to Old Calabar mentioned in the evidence, to convey the brothers to their own country. They sailed from Bristol, in March, 1774. The vessel was wrecked on one of the Cape de Verd Islands, where they suffered great hardships. An American schooner conveyed them to Barbadoes, from whence they returned to Bristol, after an absence of three months. An account of the voyage and shipwreck they wrote in two letters to Mr. Wesley, dividing between them this arduous task of composition. *Ancona Robin Robin John* tells the story to their shipwreck on the Island, when *Little Ephraim Robin John* continues the account to their re-arrival at Bristol. The penmanship and orthography of these papers are like those of an European, who in late life acquires a very partial education. From this, which is

the only fair comparison, these African compositions need not shrink*.

Mr. Wesley, who was now in London, continued his attention to the instruction of the brothers by correspondence. Their gratitude for his kindness is expressed in the following letter, written by Ancona, which you may deem worthy of preservation, for the sake both of the scribe and the sentiments. These, among numerous instances, serve to shew that the poet "stoop'd to truth," who sang how

"Skins may differ, but affection
Glow in black and white the same."

Bristol, July 20, 1774.

Reverend Sir,

My last, in which came an account of the transactions that had happened to us since we left Bristol, I hope came safe to hand, since which as this favourable opportunity offers, I take the liberty to send you these few lines, to inform you of our well-doing here. It is with great pleasure that I can inform you of the advancement I have made, through your generous assistance when here, and by Mrs. Johnson, &c. in your absence, whom we should visit much oftener than we do for instruction, if not often prevented by bad weather, and the distance we are from her. The study of the holy scriptures, first generously taught us by you, has been our chiefest employment, and have reaped such benefits from it, that we hope in a short time to be useful members of society, and to our great satisfaction the more we are acquainted with it for the conduct of our future lives, and a lively hope of a future sal-

vation which will be always our chiefest care to attain, according to the principles learned us by you. We have not got any vessel yet for to carry us all home, and hope we shall have more time to make a further progress in our learning before we go, and will always be careful to remember the good and wholesome advice we have received from you.

Please to give our kind love to your worthy family, for whome with yourself we shall never forget offer up our most fervent prayers to the Almighty Being, beseeching him to reward you for all the good and care you have taken of

Reverend Sir,

Your most faithful humble servant,
ANCONA ROBIN ROBIN JOHN.

Ancona and his brother sailed again from Bristol, probably soon after the date of this letter. It is certain, that they at length reached their own country. The witness before the House of Commons, whose evidence I have quoted, and who quitted the slave-trade in 1776, says that he was "at Old Calabar when they arrived," and that he saw in their "possession their depositions taken at Bristol, and of William Floyd, who was mate of one of the ships when the transaction happened."

It cannot be recollected without regret, that these apparently hopeful brothers were so soon merged again in the population of Africa, especially of that part rendered peculiarly corrupt by the prevalence of the slave-trade†.

* [The journal of Little Ephraim Robin John, and Ancona Robin Robin John, has been kindly put into our possession by Mr. Rutt, and shall be given in the next number. Ed.]

† The trade carried on at this station, seems to have been attended with circumstances, remarkably disgraceful to the British name. In the debate on the Abolition, in 1792, Mr. Wilberforce mentioned in the House of Commons, the following instance which happened in 1791, "at the very time when the inquiry concerning this trade was going forward in parliament—Six British ships of Bristol and Liverpool, were anchored off the town of Calabar. The captains of these vessels, thinking that the natives asked too much for their slaves, held a consultation how they should proceed; and agreed to fire upon the town unless their own terms were complied with. On a certain evening they notified their

What became of them afterwards was probably never known to their friends in England. Yet Mr. Charles Wesley's attention to their improvement, was highly meritorious, and it is with no small satisfaction that I have recorded one of the many Chris-

tian charities of a man whom I was taught to esteem when I was very young, and for whose character I cannot fail to entertain an hereditary respect.

Your's

J. T. RUTT.

MISCELLANEOUS COMMUNICATIONS.

THE FALLACY OF THE CHURCHMAN'S ARGUMENTS, TO PROVE THAT UNITARIANS ARE NOT RATIONAL CHRISTIANS, EXPOSED.

To the Editor of the Monthly Repository.

SIR,

A gentleman, styling himself a churchman, has introduced a topic into your valuable publication, which, to be fairly discussed, ought to be fairly represented. He asserts, that Unitarians are not rational Christians: by which he evidently means, that Unitarian Christians are not rational Christians; and upon this point I am willing to enter with him upon the discussion. But first it will be necessary, that we should understand clearly, what is meant by the term Unitarian Christian: and, as I am one myself, and on this account left the church, to which this gentleman belongs, if he means by churchman, a member of the church of England, I shall in few words state, what I

and many others understand by the term Unitarian Christians. The term Christian does not require long explanation; by it is meant a believer in Christ: and, as the believers in Christ are divided into a variety of sects, the term Unitarian has been applied to one sect, which believes, that one only God exists in one person, in opposition to those Christians, who believe that one God exists, but in several persons. The Christians, who believe that the one God exists in several persons, attribute different names and qualities to these persons: the Unitarian Christian believes that person only is God, who is styled Jehovah in the Old Testament, and in the New Testament, the God and Father of Jesus Christ.

determination to the traders; and told them, that if they continued obstinate, they would put it into execution the next morning. In this they kept their word. They brought sixty-six guns to bear upon the town: and fired on it for three hours. Not a shot was returned. A canoe then went off, to offer terms of accommodation. The parties however not agreeing, the firing re-commenced; more damage was done, and the natives were forced into submission. There were no certain accounts of their loss. Report said that fifty were killed, but some were seen lying badly wounded, and others in the agonies of death, by those who went afterwards on shore."

Clarkson's Hist. of Abol. ii. 361.

By a Unitarian Christian, I mean then a believer in Christ, who believes one person only to be God: if there is any thing irrational in this belief, it becomes your correspondent, the churchman, to point it out: but he appears to me to have brought various subjects forward, which may be matters of opinion among Unitarian or other Christians, but which have nothing to do with the present argument. Let us examine his six important points, on which he endeavours to rest his argument.

1st. The scriptures are fully equal to complete instruction in religion, though not inspired.

Unitarians, in common with many other Christians, believe the scriptures to be fully equal to complete instruction. The question of the inspiration of the scriptures is held differently, by different Christians: and upon this head I may entertain my own opinions, which have nothing to do with my sentiments, as an Unitarian Christian. I object therefore to the introduction of the terms, "though not inspired;" and the churchman is to prove, that we Unitarians are irrational, because we believe, that the scriptures are fully equal to complete instruction in religion. On this ground I am willing to meet him: nay I will go farther; for I assert, that no other writings but the scriptures are fully equal to complete instruction in religion. Under this head I find, that the churchman has introduced the names of Dr. Priestley and Mr. Belsham, with a view, I presume, to fasten upon Unitarians some particular tenets of these gentle-

men. Once for all then I am to observe, that I became an Unitarian, before I knew either of these gentlemen; and that the only thing I recollect of the former gentleman, previous to the change of my religious opinions, is, that, when I was an undergraduate in the University of Cambridge, I composed a thesis in opposition to Dr. Priestley's book on Matter and Spirit, and maintained a disputation in the public schools, against the opinions of the celebrated doctor. It was not till I had quitted the church, that I became a reader of Dr. Priestley's religious works: and afterwards I had the pleasure of considerable intercourse with him, which I shall always recollect with increasing satisfaction. Whatever religious knowledge I may have derived from other writers, besides those of the scriptures, must be attributed chiefly to the bishops Law and Watson, the doctors Jebb and Paley, and my very excellent friends Mr. Lindsey and Mr. Tyrwhitt.

2. The second point, insisted upon by the churchman, to prove that Unitarian Christians are not rational Christians is, that human actions are all under the law of necessity, and yet subject men hereafter to punishment.

On this I shall observe only, that the doctrine of necessity is differently understood and explained by various Christians, whether Unitarians or not; and that, whether the necessarian or libertarian be right, the Unitarian Christian has, as an Unitarian, nothing at all to do with it. For my part, I cannot allow it to be a question, in which Christians in-

general are more concerned than Heathens, Mahometans or Jews.

3. The third point introduced by the Churchman, is, that, although every thing proceeds under the strict law of necessity, miracles have been performed.

To this I observe, that the words, "although every thing proceeds under the strict law of necessity," have nothing to do with the question. I believe, in common with Unitarian and other Christians, that miracles have been performed; and, if this subjects us to the disgrace of being irrational, the churchman must bring us some arguments, before we accede to the opinion.

4. The fourth point, laid down by the churchman is, that, notwithstanding the present state of the world, it was the object of the mission of Jesus Christ to reform the world.

I shall observe here only, that the reformation of the world was assuredly an object of the mission of Jesus Christ, but not the sole object: and the present state of the world is no more an argument that this object will not be accomplished, than that a building will not be raised, because only the foundations are seen. That much remains to be done, I will, without any difficulty, allow; but, from the mere view of mankind from the days of Christ to the present, I perceive a very great amelioration in their state; and I cannot deny, that his church is far superior to the temples, in which the most degrading worship was paid to a variety of idols, and the filthiest rites were paid to obscene deities.

5. The fifth argument, brought by the churchman is, that man, although purely material, shall be raised from the dead.

Here I must object to the introduction of the terms, "although purely material," as being irrelevant to the question. The Unitarian believes that man, whether material or not, shall be raised from the dead; and the churchman is to shew the absurdity of this opinion, before he can prove us to be irrational. As to all the metaphysics of the churchman, I reject them altogether. I believe that we shall rise from the dead, because Jesus rose from the dead and commissioned his messengers to proclaim the doctrine of the resurrection to the world.

6. The sixth point brought forward by the churchman, is, that, the phenomena of nature may be reconciled with the system of optimism.

Whether this may or may not be the case, I leave the optimist to consider. The Unitarian Christian has nothing to do with it.

And now, Sir, give me leave through you to call upon your correspondent the churchman, to come forward boldly and candidly. If he means to attack Unitarians, let him attack them as such: but I am very much inclined to believe, that this churchman does not so much wish to discredit the opinions of the Unitarians, as through them to subvert the foundations of our common Christianity.

I remain, Sir,

Your constant reader,
A UNITARIAN CHRISTIAN.

THEOLOGICAL ERRORS IN NICHOLSON'S "NEW BRITISH
ENCYCLOPEDIA."

To the Editor of the Monthly Repository.

SIR, London, May 10, 1808. Amidst the encroachments of pseudo-orthodoxy on every side, it is pleasant to perceive that the republic of letters is as yet tolerably free from its irruptions. This is a perpetual topic of lamentation to the orthodox, one* of whom has proclaimed the majority of those who, in this country, pursue literature as a profession to be unbelievers,—that is, unbelievers in John Calvin's *peculiarities*; and another † has gone about to explain (admitting the fact) *why* "Evangelical Religion" (Calvinism) is disagreeable to 'men of taste.' The fact and the outcry upon it are honourable to literature. The study of letters paved the way for the Reformation — the general diffusion of knowledge promises to accomplish, though gradually and silently, further theological improvements. Scarcely a year passes but learning and science pay some tribute to rational religion. The literati and men of science are seldom found in the ranks of high churchmen or methodists. It is a rare spectacle for one that cultivates the *Belles Lettres*, for instance, to be found studying at the tabernacle.‡

But I wish to advert particularly to the circumstance of our periodical works, such as maga-

zines, reviews and encyclopedias, being chiefly under the direction of gentlemen of liberal theological principles. The latter works have, I am proud to observe, abounded of late, so as to rank amongst our most popular literary productions; and all these repositories of general knowledge that have come under my notice, are extremely rational in their morals and theology. The religious articles in Dr. Rees's *Cyclopedia*, are among the best parts of that excellent work. I would refer the reader especially, to some masterly general observations on biblical criticism, under the word *Accommodation*. Dr. Gregory's *Dictionary*, of which I speak only from conjecture, cannot contain any thing unworthy of a friend of Wakefield's. From Mr. Good's *Pantologia*, we may expect the same manly sense and liberal sacred erudition that is displayed in the life of Geddes. Even Mr. Brewster's work, which professes, no doubt, *ad captandum vulgus*, rigid orthodoxy in religion and politics, is said to be in good hands. And Mr. Nicholson's breathes throughout a philosophical spirit.

While I pay this compliment to Mr. Nicholson's "New British Encyclopedia," I wish to point out two errors which have come in my

* See Hall's sermon on modern infidelity. † See Essays by John Foster.

‡ Some readers will understand my allusion. It is truly pleasant to see "Saul among the prophets,"—to hear a quondam minister of Jacobinism (as it was then called) eulogizing the *best of Kings* at a *Royal Institution* — a once zealous teacher of rational religion, sighing amongst the disciples of George Whitfield.

way in looking over the religious articles; not for the sake of depreciating its nature, but of calling the attention of the conductor to a department of the work, which, though filled up on a liberal plan, seems to have been executed hitherto hastily, if not incompetently.

Under the head *Arians*, the principal writers of that denomination are specified. The article thus concludes: "Dr. Price *has been* [is] one of the last writers in behalf of this doctrine: in his sermons 'On the Christian Doctrine,' will be found an able defence of low Arianism. See also a tract published in 1805, by Basanistes."

Few readers would be able to find out the tract thus loosely referred to — no title, no publisher: and all would suppose that it contained a defence, or exposition, at least, of the Arian hypothesis. No such thing. The pamphlet does not at all relate to Arianism: it is an ironical attempt to prove the divinity of Moses, and the quaternity of the Godhead. It is certainly ingenious, but irony on so serious a subject may be thought misplaced, and irony through nearly two hundred pages cannot fail of becoming wearisome. As a *jeu d'esprit*, this *argumentum ad absurdum* tells very well in the "Table of Evidences of the Divinity of Moses," appended to "Gregory Blunt's Six More Letters to Granville Sharp;" but this wire-drawing of the joke is as dull as the second volume of the "Miseries of Human life." The public are, if one may conclude so from their silence, of this opinion. The tract however is curious. It was written I believe by an Uni-

tarian Clergyman. The title is, "ΛΙΠΕΣΕΩΝ ΑΝΑΣΤΑΣΙΣ, or, A New Way of Deciding Old Controversies. By Basanistes. Johnson, 1805."

Whether I have given a true character of this pamphlet or not, the reference to it in Mr. Nicholson's *Encyclopaedia* is a proof either of great ignorance or of culpable haste; and the error should be acknowledged in the next part of the work.

The account of the *Baptists* is drawn up in a truly Catholic temper. A well deserved compliment is paid to the late Mr. Robinson of Cambridge, to which is subjoined a glowing anticipation, which would have done honour even to Robinson's pen, of "that happy day, when no man shall be excluded from the right hand of fellowship, because he cannot believe in dogmas of self-created censors, and who cannot join in the ceremonies, for which there is no direct sanction in the New Testament." But the conclusion of the article contains a striking misrepresentation. "The Baptists in England," it is said, "form one of the three denominations of Protestant Dissenters, and are divided into particular and general; the former are Calvinistical and Trinitarians; the latter are Arminians, and some very few Arians, but the greater part are Unitarians with regard to the person of Christ, considering him as a man, the son of Joseph and Mary." The General Baptists will consider themselves wronged by this statement. They are, it is true, Arminians, but one half at least of them are Trinitarians; and more than one half of the remainder are Arians; and of the

Unitarians amongst them some believe in the miraculous conception of Jesus by the Virgin Mary. This latter point indeed is quite distinct from Unitarianism. Dr. Lardner received the popular doctrine, and yet no one will deny that he was an Unitarian.

The mistake may have arisen from a sermon preached before the General Baptists at their Annual Assembly a year ago, by Mr. A. Bennett, in which, after Mr. Stone, he endeavours to prove that Jesus was the son of Joseph.

This discourse was published, and the occasion of its publication refutes the above statement, for it appeared in print in consequence of having given great offence at the time of delivery.

I point out these errors, Sir, not as belonging to any party, but from a love of truth and correctness, and from a wish to see an excellent work (which I believe Mr. Nicholson's to be) freed from these little blemishes.

I am,
A GENERAL READER.

DR. TOULMIN, ON THE "LIFE OF SOCINUS."

To the Editor of the Monthly Repository.

Birmingham,
SIR, 5th April, 1808.

You will give me leave, through the channel of your interesting Miscellany, to inform your correspondent S. P. in the last Number, p. 142, 143, that "The Life of Socinus," which is in his possession, is a translation of the identical biographical memoirs by *the Polish Knight*, PRZIERCOWIUS, which first suggested to me the design of writing the memoirs of that singular man. The translator was Mr. JOHN BIDDLE, the father of the English Unitarians. The initials of his names, J. B. are, S. P. will find on inspection, subjoined to the Preface. I have a copy of it bound up with Mr. Biddle's Catechisms and his other Tracts. Among these is a translation of a Tract by Joachim Stegman, a German Unitarian, afterwards principal of the University at Racow; entitled "BREVIS DIS-

CUSSIO:" or a Brief Inquiry touching a better way, that is commonly made use of to refute PAPISTS and reduce PROTESTANTS to a certainty and unity in RELIGION." This piece was also printed for *Richard Moon*. At the end of it is a "Catalogue of Books sold by RICHARD MOON, at the Seven Stars, in St. Paul's Church Yard." This circumstance, I conceive, is a strong presumption, if not a direct proof, that there was such a person as Mr. Moon, a bookseller. To this be it added, the minute description of his residence, as near the great North-door of St. Paul's Church. He was also the publisher of several other Tracts that came from Mr. Biddle's pen. It appears, however, as S. P. remarks, that the friends of free inquiry in those times, were under a necessity of adopting "expedients to preserve themselves from the animadversions of

their illiberal and persecuting neighbours." No publisher's or printer's name appears in the title-page of some of Mr. Biddle's earliest Tracts. And I observe that, in looking into the volumes of a collection of pieces, called "The Unitarian Tracts," that appeared at the end of the 17th and beginning of the 18th century, from about the year 1691 to 1707, no printer or publisher is notified. Under such circumstances, it is no wonder if truth makes a very slow progress in the world. And we learn to reflect with pleasure and with gratitude to Providence, that we have fallen into times more propitious to the investigation, profession and spread of it.

I am Sir, your's, &c.

JOSHUA TOULMIN.

AN ACCOUNT OF THE STATE OF RATIONAL RELIGION IN AMERICA; BY AN UNITARIAN MINISTER, WHO TRAVELLED IN THAT COUNTRY.

To the Editor of the Monthly Repository.

SIR,

Upon the authority of Mr. Christie, in your account of Unitarianism in America*, you make Mr. Freeman's ordination at Boston to have happened *about fifty years ago*. This is an egregious mistake. For we have not yet seen quite twenty years since that event took place. But, before I proceed farther, you will suffer me to relate some previous circumstances. Mr. Freeman was a young man, when he was chosen by his church to be what they then called *their reader*. As he cherished a generous love of truth, and was courteous, sociable, and friendly, and always open to conviction, he became a member of the Bostonian Association of Ministers, who regularly assembled every Monday and freely conversed upon all subjects, every one declaring his sentiments without offending or being offended. Doctors Chauncey, Mather and Lathrop, and Messrs. Clarke, Everett, Eliot, and Smith, formed the

principal part of that venerable band of brothers, who were true whigs of the old stamp, and who, whilst they displayed the most amiable manners in their mutual intercourse, were firmly united in Christian fellowship. They individually agreed to differ, and maintained this moral and truly religious principle, that *every man should be fully persuaded in his own mind*. Some of them, therefore, studied the writings of Priestley, whilst others of them to whom these writings were not so familiar, expressed no sort of enmity when they incidentally heard what were the leading doctrines which he taught. Such was the state of things at Boston, in the year 1783. In that year, Mr. Freeman's congregation, who had been trained up in all the tenets of high-churchism, were solicitous to have him receive episcopal ordination. But, he would not subscribe the 39 Articles, nor could he submit his conscience to the domination and capricious

dictates of a bishop. The bishop therefore refused to engage in the service, to which Mr. Freeman, upon his own terms, would have gladly acceded. This conduct of the overseer led Mr. Freeman to think more deeply upon the subject than he had usually done. The affair became the topic of general conversation. Most of the Bostonians were advocates for Mr. Freeman. But, Mr. Parker, a high priest belonging to the first episcopal Church, exerted himself to the utmost against him, though with little success, as there was no establishment there, nor any Doctors' Commons, to punish him according to their arbitrary decisions, from a merciful regard to his soul, and a pious discharge of that supreme homage which is ever, *per fas et nefas*, due to the friends of the Church.

About this particular crisis, a gentleman from this country, who had suffered much for his attachment to the American cause, and who had his share of that evil report, which the orthodox usually circulate amongst their brethren against Unitarians, embarked for America with his family, which his friends humorously told him was his land of promise. After spending some months in the southern States, he arrived at Boston the 15th of May, 1784: and having a letter to Mr. Eliot, who received him with great kindness, he was introduced on that very day to the Association. The venerable Chauncey, at whose house it happened to be held, entered into a familiar conversation with him, and shewed him every possible respect, as he learned that he had been acquainted with Dr. Price. Without knowing at the

time any thing of the occasion which led to it, ordination happened to be the general subject of discourse. After the different gentlemen had severally delivered their opinions, the stranger was requested to declare his sentiments; who unhesitatingly replied, that the people, or the congregation, who chose any man to be their minister, were his proper ordainers. Mr. Freeman, upon hearing this, jumped from his seat in a kind of transport, saying, "I wish you could prove that, Sir." The gentleman, whom I shall in future call Bereanus, answered that few things could admit of an easier proof: and from that moment a thorough intimacy commenced between him and Mr. Freeman. Soon after, the Boston prints being under no *imprimatur*, he published several letters in supporting the cause of Mr. Freeman. At the solicitation of Mr. Freeman, he also published a scriptural confutation of the 39 Articles. Notice being circulated that this publication would appear on a particular day, the printer, apprized of this circumstance, threw off above a hundred papers beyond his usual number, and had not one paper remaining upon his hands at noon. This publication, in its consequences, converted Mr. Freeman's congregation into an Unitarian Church, which, as Mr. Freeman repeatedly acknowledged, could never have been done without the labours of Bereanus. A committee was appointed to reform the book of Common Prayer, and to strike out all those passages which savoured of Trinitarian worship. This object being pursued with great deliberation, the ordination

of Mr. Freeman by his congregation, did not take place before the end of the year 1788, and this congregation is now as flourishing since it has learned to say sumpsimus, as it had formerly been under its old mumpsimus. Thus, then, 700 or 800 people, who had been accustomed to worship three gods, and to believe one of these, as consisting of two persons, to be in reality two gods, are now become so enlightened as to worship only the One God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

But, to say something more of B., he passed the preceding year in Pennsylvania, and Maryland. In his way from New York, he preached, at their request, to the House of Commons belonging to New Jersey. He next preached Unitarianism with acceptance, at Philadelphia, to some orthodox churches, and might have done so to this day, had not some cunning ones and busy bodies circulated the report that the worship of the great goddess Diana was in danger. He afterwards repeatedly preached to a numerous congregation at New London, where no exceptions were made to his doctrines, but handsome compliments paid to him by his principal auditors. At the particular recommendation of his truly catholic and hospitable friend Dr. Ewing, he preached also at Carlisle, where there was then a vacancy, and an expectancy of 400 guineas a-year to the preacher who should be chosen to fill it up. But, the zealous Dr. Duffield of Philadelphia, had taken care to send off his character before him as an heretic, with such additional suggestions of his own as orthodoxy usually supplies. He therefore

appeared before a prejudging audience. But, after he had preached twice, the endeavours of Dr. Duffield not being deemed sufficiently efficacious, General Armstrong applied to a Mr. Lynn in the neighbourhood, to appear there the following Sunday, and to take a part of the services of the day. Lynn was punctually obedient to the commands of his master. He ascended the pulpit with rancour in his countenance. He bitterly declaimed against all heresy, and warned a thousand people who stood before him to be armed against the greatest danger which then threatened them, a greater danger than all the evils of the late war, the introduction of heresy by foreigners. Such was his modesty, forbearance, and charity, and such his rude treatment of a stranger, who, to his own hurt, had released some hundreds of his countrymen from a loathsome prison, and from famine. But, notwithstanding the indefatigable exertions of Lynn, B. might have remained at Carlisle, if he would have subscribed the confession of faith, *as far as it was agreeable to the word of God*. To this suggestion he replied, that he came there a free man, that he would continue such as long as he lived, that he would give way to nothing which had the most distant resemblance to trimming, and that he would not even subscribe those things which he most firmly believed, lest he might throw a stumbling block in his brother's way. He therefore took his leave of his friends at Carlisle, rather too hastily, it was afterwards said, as Dr. Ewing was informed, that, if he had remained

there a fortnight longer, he would have been accepted upon his own terms, and been appointed a Principal of the College. Such is frequently the course of human affairs.

B. afterwards travelled into Maryland, where he preached in a *quondam* Episcopalian Church, using his own prayers, and declaring to a numerous audience what he believed to be the doctrines of the New Testament. He might probably have settled there, had not some difficulties arisen concerning an Unitarian liturgy, and had he not been seized with a violent fever, which brought him to the brink of the grave. During his illness, he received the most Christian treatment, and the most generous and affectionate hospitality at the house of a Mr. Earl, for whom and his son-in-law, an excellent physician, he has ever since retained the most grateful and heart-felt remembrance.

In the succeeding winter, he preached a series of sermons on the evidences for the truth of Christianity, at the Common Hall of the University of Philadelphia, which, to the honour of America, is open to all preachers, to whatever sect they belong. At first the place was well filled. But afterwards, through the artifices of those who never attended, the audience was greatly diminished, though Dr. Ewing from his pulpit had strenuously recommended the lecture to his hearers. Dr. Carson, a medical gentleman, was anxious to have the sermons published, and offered to this purpose to procure 500 subscribers. But B. with grateful acknowledgments declined the proposal, as his compliance would have detained him

longer at Philadelphia than he then wished to continue there. Before he left the place, however, he published Dr. Priestley's Appeal, &c. to which he prefixed three short addresses of his own. It was purposely contrived that this piece should be ready for sale on the first day of the meeting of the Synod. Some alarmists accordingly, having heard the awful tidings, introduced the subject into their venerable body, which was considered of such high importance, that it occupied their whole attention during two days of their sitting. At last, Dr. Sprout made a motion, to address a printed circular letter to their respective flocks, to introduce into the letter extracts of all the heresies contained in the book, and solemnly to guard their hearers against the reading of it. The Dr. was seconded by a learned auctioneer belonging to his Church. But Mr. Lynn, already noticed, and the father probably of Dr. Lynn, Dr. Priestley's feeble antagonist, seeing farther into the consequences of such a measure than Dr. Sprout, opposed the motion, shrewdly observing, that such a letter would awaken a general curiosity, and instead of suppressing the heresy would spread it far and near, and be the occasion of driving those very persons into heresy whom they intended to guard against it. But, though Mr. Lynn carried his point, his arguments did not seem conclusive to all his brethren. For, one clergyman, who lived 150 miles from Philadelphia, returned home so full of the subject, that he preached the whole of the following Sunday against the heresy, and earnestly

cautioned his hearers never to look into so poisonous a book. This proceeding so whetted their curiosity, that the very week after they had 57 copies of it imported into their township. So well founded was the remark of Mr. Lynn. In short, the labours of B. laid the foundation of Unitarianism in that country, he having left behind him some warm friends to the cause wherever he went. At Philadelphia, he was much attached to the Vaughan family, to Dr. Fwing, professor Mr. James Davidson, Dr. Carson, Mr. Justice Bush, Mr. Tenche Coxe, General Irvine, Mr. Porter, &c. who treated him with brotherly affection. There was only one man there of whom he complained, who, upon his first introduction to him, paid him some fulsome flattery, and expressed his anxious wish that they could have many such men in that country. This was the celebrated Dr. Rush, who afterwards told him that he was satisfied with the religion of his ancestors, and abused Dr. Ewing for the friendly regards he had shewn him.

Bereanus afterwards proceeded to Boston, as we have already seen. He preached repeatedly there the Thursday's Lecture, and to many congregations in that city. He also preached at Dorchester, Jamaica Plain, Weymouth, Marshfield, Scituate, Providence, Salem, Halawell, &c. At Old Hingham, where the venerable Mr. Gay was the pastor, he preached above forty times, and the noble-minded general Lincoln was one of his 1200 hearers. This congregation was founded 1635. They, with their minister, fled from the persecu-

tion of the detestable house of Stuart, and settled in this place which was then a wilderness. What is very remarkable is, that from that period until the year 1786, the space of 151 years, this congregation had only three ministers, the last of them, Mr. Gay, having been their pastor above 70 years. The friendly and enlightened Mr. Shute was the minister of New Hingham, and Dr. Barnes the minister of one of the Marshfield Churches, who was also a liberal man. Many other Churches might be mentioned, from which the Calvinistic gloom is gradually dispersing. But, I must particularly notice Salem. There was there one thoroughdox congregation, which was not in a very flourishing state. There were also three large congregations, where Unitarian ministers were generally heard with acceptance. One of these, indeed, became wholly Unitarian in a little time, through the fearless and indefatigable labours of Mr. Bentley, a very learned man, and an unbiassed and strenuous advocate for what appeared to him to be the good word of truth according to the gospel. The two others were mostly Arians. Mr. Barnard, an hospitable, open-hearted man, who readily entered into the circumstances of a stranger, was the minister of the second of these churches, and had so well instructed his flock, that nothing was offensive to them which appeared to flow from an honest mind. Mr. Darby, a rich merchant, rendered the third respectable by his courteous and bountiful disposition. B. often preached to these congregations, and was treated with

civility by them all. Besides Unitarianism becoming now the subject of much conversation far and near, he found many friends in almost all places, though the majority were not in his favour. Near Portland, in his way to Kennebec, he was sought out by Mr. Thatcher, an enlightened member of Congress, who preferred truth to all the world. Being requested by him to lend him a sermon of which he had heard, and to give him leave to publish it, he readily acquiesced. The sermon, which was on the Mystery of Godliness, was immediately printed, and 400 copies of it sold in one week. People in this country cannot well conceive, what a rapid progress truth may make where there are no establishments, nor any temporal emoluments to fetter the mind against it. A little seed sown may be so productive in three or four years, as to furnish a supply to the greatest part of a whole country. The appeal published at Philadelphia was found at Kennebec the year following, and, there is every reason to expect, that in thirty or forty years more the whole of Massachusetts will be Unitarian.

Such were the labours of B. in America, during a residence of four years. He saw the doctrines of the Bible taking root, and acquiring every day a more exten-

sive spread. He therefore would have gladly remained in that country, to carry on the cause in which he had long laboured. But after laying a foundation on which a spacious superstructure has ever since been growing up, he finding his finances exhausted, was compelled to return to this country, where some, even of his *quondam* Unitarian friends, whilst they congratulated him upon his successful transatlantic services, gave him but a cool reception.

Our fashion is to expend large sums of money in training up young men for the ministry, and to desert those who have spent their best days in our service, or to suffer them to sink unpitied under the burden of age and infirmities, whilst we follow our pleasures, or act only upon the spur of caprice. I devoutly wish for the spread of Unitarianism. But I wish also to see Unitarians maintain a consistent character as the followers of their blessed Master, and to make their light to shine. I am sorry, when any of them disgrace their profession, by generally absenting themselves from the public worship, or by turning their backs upon a little flock, and attending the idol temple in those places where all the rich and the fashionable resort to it.

AN OLD UNITARIAN.

THE NAPOLEON DECREE FOR A FRENCH UNIVERSITY.

To the Editor of the Monthly Repository.

SIR,
I read with much concern, but without much astonishment,

being not much accustomed to consider the French emperor as the patron of liberty, either civil

or religious, the Napoleon-decree, for the constitution of an Imperial university, as it appears in the Athenæum of this month.—The fundamental principle of this decree is, “that public instruction, throughout the empire, is confided *exclusively* to the university; that *no school or establishment for instruction of any kind*, can be formed apart from it, or without the authorization of its HEAD; that no one can open a school, or teach publicly, without being a member and graduate of it.” This even goes down so low, as “the little primary schools, in which children are taught to read, write, and cast accounts.”—The basis of instruction, in *all* these schools, (with two exceptions as to the first articles) are, “*the precepts of the Catholic religion; fidelity to the Emperor*, and THE NAPOLEON DYNASTY; obedience to the statutes relative to teaching the object of which is *uniformity of instruction*, tending to form *for the state*, citizens attached to their religion, their prince, their country, and their family.”—The primary regulation of the university is, that “the provisors and censors of the lyceums, the principals and regents of colleges, as well as the under-masters in these schools, shall be RESTRICTED TO CELIBACY, and to living in common. No WOMAN can be lodged or received in the interior of lyceums or colleges.”—“Nothing shall be printed regarding the studies, discipline, and conditions of schools, without the inspection and approbation of the rectors and council of academies; WHO MAY SHUT UP those institutions in which principles con-

trary to those professed by the university shall prevail.”—Lastly, “*We reserve to OURSELVES the power of REFORMING*, by means of decrees adopted in our council, *every decision, statute, or act*, emanating from the council of the university.”

On reading the above, the first idea that came into my mind was, that your friend the Christian Philanthropist would immediately, with a virtuous indignation, give up his hero, as the patron of Christian liberty. But how much, Mr. Editor, was I surprised to find from his pen a laboured apology for this very decree. He acknowledges indeed, that the business of education is almost entirely entrusted to the Catholic clergy; but says he, “he allows of Protestant universities.” This is a mistake, there is but *one* university; *under which* there is a *faculty of theology* in *every* (near 90) metropolitan churches, and there is *one* at Strasburgh, and *one* at Geneva, (as near the borders as possible,) for the reformed religion, that is, for the presbyterian Calvinist church; in other words, for the secondary establishment under the concordat.—He goes on to observe, (for all his arguments are in the way of comparison with abuses in other countries,) that “there is no test established in France, for admission into civil offices.” True; but if nobody is to be educated but as the emperor directs, he has no subsequent occasion for a test act.—He professes to see no difference between ordering a uniformity of books, &c. through all the schools; and the university of Oxford appointing what books are to be read. Now I am

not disposed to defend the university of Oxford; but it is obvious that there is this great difference in the present case, that the English seminary (as I suppose do all others, established or not) directs what books are to be read in the course of education pursued within its walls; but it does not interfere with other places of education. In the charity schools supported by members of the established church, the church-catechism is used; but there is no interference with the catechisms, or other books used in other charity-schools. The Philanthropist here treats his reader with some very just reflections on the mistakes of well-meaning persons in the education of their children; but they only serve to lead the reader astray from the main question, which is, the enormous infringement on the rights of parents, which has dictated the whole of the French decree.—

He is very ready to celebrate his hero for abolishing receptacles of celibacy in Portugal, at the very moment that he is establishing them all over France.

These enormities, Mr. Editor, grievously affect every man “who feels that religious is far superior to civil liberty;” and who sees and laments that, contrary to his former hopes, both are not only cramped, but absolutely annihilated by “the beast” whom the Christian Philanthropist appears “to worship.”

Will you permit me, Mr. Editor, to conclude by earnestly recommending to your readers, the perusal of Dr. Priestley’s Essay on Civil Government, Sect. iv. (p. 76—109) in which he treats, in a masterly and unanswerable manner, of the pernicious effects of an *authoritative* code of education. I am, Sir,

V. F.

THE PERSECUTION OF VALENTINUS GENTILIS FOR HERETICAL OPINIONS CONCERNING THE TRINITY.

To the Editor of the Monthly Repository.

SIR, March 23, 1808.

Some months ago you gave us an account of the conduct of *Calvin* in the persecution of *Servetus**. I have no disposition to vindicate him in that matter. But it may tend to mitigate the severity of censure cast upon that great man, to consider the general spirit of the times in which he lived, and to be acquainted with other similar facts, occasioned by the gross error then generally prevalent,—That blasphemy ought to be pu-

nished with death. I have lately met with an old book, and I presume a scarce one, (for I never heard of it before) which contains an account of the tragical death of *Valentinus Gentilis*, at Bern, in Switzerland; originally written in Latin, and translated into English in the year 1696, by some one who appears possessed of a persecuting spirit, in no common degree, and who discovers a particular spite, through the whole, against Dr. *Sherlock*, whose sen-

* See M. Repos. vol. i. pp. 349, 449, 508; and vol. ii. p. 34.

§10 The Persecution of Valentinus Gentilis for heretical Opinions.

ments he represents as equally obnoxious with those of the above heretic. I should be glad if any of your readers could give some information concerning the editor and translator of this book, whom I suspect to be Dr. South, by whom a most bitter controversy was carried on about that time on the subject of the Trinity, with Dr. Sherlock. It would also be gratifying, if any one could supply a more particular and impartial account of this persecuted man. In more than one place the author refers to Calvin. In a note, p. 9, he says, "See Calvin's Narrative of Gentilis, in his *Opuscula*, p. 764."

If the following abstract of the above work should produce any further information about the subject, of it or in any degree promote an abhorrence of persecution for religious opinion, my end will be answered, who am

A friend to Universal
Liberty of Conscience.

The title of the above work, is as follows.

A short History of VALENTINUS GENTILIS, the TRITHEIST, tryed, condemned, and put to death by the Protestant Reformed City and Church of BERN, in SWITZERLAND, for asserting the Three Divine Persons of the Trinity, to be Three distinct eternal Spirits, &c. Wrote in Latin by Benedictus Aretius, a Divine of that Church; and now translated into English for the use of Dr. Sherlock. Humbly tendered to the Consideration of the Arch-bishops and Bishops of this Church and Kingdom. London. Printed and Sold by E. Whitlock, near Stationer's Hall, 1696.

After this general title to the English edition, there follows a dedication to the archbishops and bishops of the church of England, in which the translator expresses his detestation of the doctrine of three distinct spirits in the Deity, as maintained by some clergymen in that church, particularly Dr. Sherlock, "in

his pretended vindication of the doctrine of the ever-blessed Trinity, A. D. 1690," whom he scruples not to pronounce a Tritheist, and for whom he gives pretty broad intimations of his good wishes, that he might share the honours of martyrdom with V. Gentilis.

In an advertisement which follows, the Editor says, "I am not here concerned to make an exact parallel between the heresie of V. Gentilis and the opinion of Dr. Sherlock, as to all circumstances, it being enough for my purpose that they agree as to the main, viz. the assertion of *three eternal spirits*, &c. But my chief design is to shew the noble concern of a Protestant city and senate, in vindicating so high an article as that of the Trinity, against this heretical, Tritheistical innovation upon it,"—and I cannot but, *in honour to them*, wish that all Christian governors would shew the same magnanimous zeal and courage in the defence of their faith, though I confess, I wish not that they should do it the same way."

We have then the title of the original work:—*A brief account of Valentinus Gentilis; containing some passages of his life and just execution; together with an orthodox defence of the article of the holy Trinity against his blasphemies.*

Next follows, the author's dedication "to the most honourable and noble lords, Nicholas à Diessbach, Nicholas à Graffenried, treasurer, and Petermannus ab Erlach, most worthy senators of the republic of BERN, and his most honoured lords and patrons; *Health through Jesus Christ.*" In this curious dedication is the following passage concerning the proper method of maintaining the truth against heretics. Having spoken of "a parcel of ambitious men risen up, who, laying no restraint on their wild fancies, made a very ill use of the simplicity of the scripture, and began to affix new interpretations to texts," he says, "to keep these fellows within bounds, and to shew that their opinions were contrary to scripture, it was necessary that *better men should limit the sense of things in OTHER WORDS.*"

The book is divided into twenty chapters, of which the titles are given in a table of contents prefixed. Some of the principal of them are the following.—How and where V. Gentilis fell into those new opinions, and what great mischief he did by spreading them.—Upon what account he was brought

to Bern.—Concerning his writings, and the heads of his accusation.—Propositions taken out of his books.—His errors about the blessed Trinity.—What was the opinion of Arius, and wherein Gentilis and he do agree. [From whence it appears that he was more of an Arian than any thing else, and essentially differed from Dr. Sherlock and others, who held three infinite spirits perfectly equal, whereas he maintained the supremacy of the Father.]—Some of Gentilis's notorious blasphemies, [which differ little from the opinions of most other Anti-trinitarians.]—Of the vile scandals he hath falsely thrown upon the doctrine of our church.—Of the cheats and impostures whereby he endeavoured to impose upon good well-meaning people.—This last chapter closes with a brief account of his trial, condemnation and death, which should have been made the subject of an additional chapter. This is the most interesting part of the work, from which I make an extract, to give your readers some idea of the spirit of those times.

P. 130.—“Last of all, when he was to have taken his trial and to have defended his doctrine, he did by a remarkable piece of knavery, endeavour to obtain the privilege of a plaintiff,—and when that could not be granted him, he proposed his doctrine so ambiguously, and raised scruples about matters altogether impertinent to the controversy, as whether there was one most high God; and whether Christ was the son of God, &c. And now let all good men judge what we ought to think of this blasphemy, and how justly he was punished with death, who durst challenge others to dispute with him for their lives.—“But it is now high time to rid my hands of this business. In short then, after that we had used all manner of means with him, even from Aug. 5, to Sept. 9, but all to no purpose; he still persevering obstinate in his opinions, he was at last condemned to die, by the honourable senate. And because it may be acceptable to the reader, I shall here rehearse the sentence of condemnation which was pronounced against him. Whereas, Valentinus Gentilis, a native of Cosentia, in the kingdom of Naples, after eight years preparation to attack the doctrine of the Trinity, did begin openly to teach, that there were in the Trinity three distinct spirits, differing from each other in numerical essence,

among which (three spirits,) he acknowledges the Father only to be that infinite God which we ought to worship, which is plain blasphemy against the Son; and besides this, has broached several other dangerous errors, for which he was apprehended by the magistrates of Geneva, and being fully convicted of them, there made his recantation, and did publicly abjure these his wicked opinions; and bound himself by oath not to depart out of that city without leave of the senate, yet violated the sacred obligation of his oath by stealing away from thence, and by relapsing into the same erroneous opinions he had abjured, and re-assuming their defence with greater heat and earnestness, by disputing and writing books in opposition to the plain and express testimonies of scripture; and hath been guilty of the vilest scurrility, and most horrid blasphemies against the Son of God, and the glorious mystery of the Trinity: and lastly, since his being made prisoner to this honourable senate, hath notwithstanding that full and sufficient instruction which hath been given him, still continued obstinate in his perverse and heretical opinions: This honourable senate to prevent disturbances, and to root out such pestilent errors, have adjudged him to be beheaded.”—The writer then adds,

“As he was led out to execution, the obstinate wretch did not cease to glory in his unruly and pertinacious stubbornness, and expecting praise from it, (as the Devil's martyrs used to do,) never left off crying out, that he died a martyr for the glory of the most high God; but that we were all Sabellians, and held one God under three names; but that he did acknowledge no God more. And though we frequently answered him, that the things he laid to our charge were all false and slanderous and that all the noise he made about this most high God was only mere sophistry, and that his asserting more gods than one was downright impiety, yet we could work nothing upon him. For he still continued to repeat his old blasphemies, until he saw there was no help for him, but that he must be forced to lay down his neck to the block; then he began to falter, and said, he should be very willing to agree with us, if we would own Christ to be the son of God; when we told him, this was what we never de-

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nied. Then again did he discover his falsehood and treachery, as having been still used to appropriate the appellation of God to the person of the *Father* only. And in this horrid blasphemy he still persevered, the whole assembly that stood by praying to God that he would change his mind, and we continually exhorting him to repentance, he had his life* taken from him by the just judgment of God, and so his life and blasphemies ended together."

MR. FLOWER'S REPLY TO MR. PALMER, ON THE LIFE OF
MR. ROBINSON.

To the Editor of the Monthly Repository.

SIR, Harlow, May 6, 1808.

In your last number, I perceive, Mr. Palmer has "remarked a few things which," he is of opinion, "require animadversion in the Memoirs of the Life of Mr. Robinson," prefixed to the edition of his miscellaneous works. After perusing Mr. Palmer's letter, I beg leave to observe, that if those "things" he has noticed are all that "require animadversion," I shall indeed felicitate myself on having published what is as free from error as most human writings.

Notwithstanding Mr. Palmer's "animadversions," I am still firmly of opinion, that I have cast no "unjust or injurious censure," on the advice so indefinitely and injudiciously given by the late Mr. Orton to a young minister, respecting the "matrimonial connexion." I am still persuaded it was calculated to give a wrong bias to the minds of young ministers in general. To prove that I am by no means singular in my opinion, I refer your readers to the review of Mr. Orton's letters in the *Monthly*

Repository for June, 1806; in which the reviewer remarks as follows:—"Young dissenting ministers will doubtless profit by his counsels of prudence, though *if they be of a generous constitution, or a romantic cast of mind, they may, possibly think that his prudence is sometimes worldly.*"

Mr. Palmer proceeds to observe:—"If Mr. Flower had attended to the note subjoined to the passage on which he has animadverted, or to the following letter, he would have seen that his censure of Mr. Orton was groundless, and that his advice was superfluous." Now, Sir, I beg leave to add, that there does not appear to be any thing in either the note or the letter referred to, which tends in any degree, to render the "censure groundless;" and as to the hints I took the liberty of suggesting, Mr. Palmer, on reflection, will scarcely pronounce them "superfluous;" more especially as he affirms, "I have reprobated the plan of making money a principal object in the choice of a wife, with just severity." The "note sub-

* The writer subjoins this note. "How much better does it fare with Tritheism in England! which though it lost its head at *Bern*, lifts up its head as high as *Paul's* here." Referring to Dr. Sherlock then Dean of St. Paul's; intimating that he would have liked to see it somewhat lowered.

joined" to Mr. Orton's letter, contains the opinion of the Editor as to Mr. Orton's meaning; and the letter which follows expresses the satisfaction of the latter, on finding that the lady on whom his young friend had fixed his affections, possessed such a fortune, as might render the proposed match prudent. My objection however, to the original passage, as it stands in the letter quoted, remains in its full force; the public being left in the dark as to what Mr. Orton meant by "a handsome fortune," which he holds out to his young friend "he might reasonably expect to meet with in a wife, as many other dissenting ministers had done."

Mr. Palmer in his observation on the necessity of "prudence," in forming the conjugal relation, has only enforced what I had already hinted on the subject; but when he reminds young ministers, what they are not very generally apt to lose sight of, their expectations of a fortune in a wife, "on account of their liberal education, and genteel profession," he, in my humble opinion, adds weight to the cautions I have suggested. Although no one I hope, esteems a worthy, sensible, disinterested minister of the gospel more than myself, yet, I confess this esteem is not so much on account of his "liberal education, or genteel profession," but for his *work-sake*. It is no disparagement to the worth of a man, that he is, as is generally the case with dissenting ministers, indebted for his "liberal education," to the liberality of others; and as to the notion of the gentility of the profession of a teacher of Christianity,

it appears to me to be one of those fancies, generated from the corruptions which have unhappily pervaded the purity of Christianity in *all* established churches; and, although in a less degree, in *most* of the churches which dissent from them. Mr. Palmer is a *master* in our dissenting *Israel*; and I believe I am as well acquainted with, and as much indebted to his valuable writings on the subject of *non-conformity*, as most persons; but I do not recollect to have met in any part of them, nor, I may add, in any part of the New Testament, directions to young ministers to *give attention to*—"a handsome fortune in the choice of a wife, which they have a right to expect on account of their liberal education, and genteel profession." In short, a dissenting minister ranks as respectably in civil society, as any other class of men; but if his ideas on the nature of the Christian ministry are drawn from the discourses of our Saviour, and from the Epistles, he will not think himself entitled to more worldly honour on account of his "profession," than the respectable tradesman or mechanic. *The kingdom of Christ is not of this world*; and every one knows, or ought to know, the literal meaning of the word *minister*.

Mr. Palmer adds:—"Mr. Flower observes, that marrying for money, without affection to the person, is no better than legal prostitution;" and then asks,—"who is there that needs to be told this?" My language is, however, much stronger than that professedly quoted; and considering the importance of the subject,

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I hope your readers will excuse me for repeating it. "Let young men in general, and young ministers in particular be warned, that in the choice of a wife, when pure affection, that affection which prefers the person chosen to all other persons in the universe, is wanting, marriage, in the sight of God, is no better than legal prostitution, and happiness cannot be expected to follow." Does Mr. Palmer ask—"who is there needs to be told this?" I answer many young dissenting ministers in the circle of my acquaintance, and many more in the wider circle of Mr. Palmer's acquaintance, have very seriously needed to be "told this." They, by not paying due attention to such a warning, have gone on miserably lamenting the little happiness to be found in domestic connexions, "the dear and tender charities of life;" and it need not excite surprise, if, unless their conduct was followed by repentance, their minds at times were exercised with "doubts and fears" as to the happiness they should enjoy in a future life!

Having thus defended my own sentiments on a subject of considerable importance, candour, or rather justice requires me to add—since writing the "Memoirs," and within this fortnight, I have heard from good authority, that the fortune of the lady, on whom Mr. Orton's young friend had fixed his affections, did not exceed 500*l*. Had this fact been stated by the Editor, although it would by no means have prevented my suggestions, would certainly have prevented my censuring the advice of Mr. Orton in

the terms I have done. I am sorry this explanation was not given in the note subjoined by the Editor, as it would have tended to remove the suspicion of there having been any thing mercenary in the sentiments of a great and good man, who on account of his talents, his virtues, and his labours, will ever be esteemed one of the ornaments of the dissenting interest. It is however scarcely necessary to add, that were the young men of the "genteel profession" of a dissenting minister, when they come from the academy or college, to have ladies pointed out to them as possessing "handsome fortunes," and they, after making their choice, were to find the "handsome fortune" did not exceed 500*l*. they would in general feel most woefully disappointed!

With respect to the other "error into which I have fallen," I was led into it by Mr. Palmer himself. The title page to the excellent work alluded to, runs as follows:—"The Non-conformists' Memorial, &c. Originally written by E. Calamy, D. D. Corrected, abridged, &c. by S. Palmer." It was therefore natural for me to suppose, that Mr. Palmer's work was a new, although a much improved edition of Dr. Calamy's; but I perceive the latter did not bear that title. As, however, this "small error" was scarcely worthy the notice of Mr. Palmer, it is as little worthy any farther notice from,

Sir,
Your constant reader,
B. FLOWER.

ORIGINAL LETTER OF THE REV. R. ROBINSON'S.

To the Editor of the Monthly Repository.

SIR,

I request you to insert in your liberal publication the following letter, not included in Mr. Flower's late edition of Robinson's works. It is taken from "The General Baptist Repository, by Adam Taylor," which comes out half yearly, in eight-penny numbers. Of its genuineness, no one acquainted with Mr. Robinson's writings can doubt.

Your's,

A. B.

An original Letter from the Rev. R. Robinson, of Cambridge, to the Rev. D. Taylor, of London.

Chesterton,

DEAR SIR, Monday, March 23, 1789.

I received your favour of the packet last Friday evening, and now address myself to answer your queries, very briefly, because I hope shortly to have the pleasure of seeing you, and thanking you face to face.

I beg my duty to father Britain, but I do not intend to preach any where in town. I shall visit London as I would Paris. Preaching exposes one to so much company, so many solicitations, so many refusals, or weak compliances, to so many silly censures, and in brief to so much trouble and fatigue, that I choose to rid my hands of it.

My profound respects to good Mr. Lowdell, to whom I answer three things. First, I thank him for his civility respecting the committee. Mr. Jeffries sends me all the papers, and my opinion of the Test is published in a sermon not long since preached to all the deputies of the churches in this county. I am not sure whether I sent you one, and I doubt now whether Dilly has one. Secondly, I keep poring over my manuscripts, and do not regret delay, for baptism is an amazing subject, and occupies a large part of ecclesiastical history. My first volume is of *baptism*,

not *baptists*. I never knew, till lately, that any had been baptized in milk; but this, and a thousand other curious facts, go to prove that when men depart from pure scripture, no bounds are to be set to their extravagancies. Thirdly, I am ready to begin to print, whenever I can find a bookseller to take the hazard and trouble off my hands.

My humble thanks are due to you for your sermon on the eternity of future punishment. You know I always admire your integrity and your christian spirit; but I think, when you survey your argument, pages 10, 11, from the *multitude*, you will see reason, as a baptist, to retract it. It is a great misfortune to be governed by authorities. Lexicographers are no authority in a case of criticism; but we have no critical learning among us. I wish our young folks would study canons of criticism; but human creeds blast this, and tell young men, that there is turpitude in mental error, and with this silly stuff poison free inquiry at the source.

I am greatly obliged to you for the Minutes, &c. especially for the paper concerning the foundation of your fund. It is a sensible, well-written piece; and it contains the sum of all I say to the particular fundees. I am no friend to endowments of any kind; and I would have nothing to do with any, except in hope of correcting the viciousness of them. I understand the creed of the particular baptist fund, used as a *test* to their poor brethren, hath fallen under the censure of a learned gentleman in this university, in a new publication. I have not yet seen the book. You doubt whether this be tyranny. I am so fully convinced of it, that I shall never recant my opinion, and never call it by a softer name. I shall amend by adding the *most foolish* tyranny that ever was exercised. In the pope, in the first city in the world, inhabiting the most splendid palace, surrounded by all that nature and art call great, with a prescriptive title acknowledged by prelates and princes, the government of conscience is a specious tyranny. In the reformers it was a low-life and barbarous tyranny,

for which the pretence of orthodoxy was a beggarly apology. In us poor anabaptists, whose only merit is, not literature and superior devotion, for in them the very monks excel us, but a love of liberty; in us, what is the government of conscience, the consciences too of upright though poor men, struggling against hunger, nakedness, cold, contempt, and penury, but a silly tyranny! Can five pounds a year bribe these poor things into an acknowledgment of human authority over conscience, and tacit denial of the sufficiency and perfection of scripture! O poor hearts! As wise and competent as their Lords in London, they ought not to be insulted with a scrap of scholastical divinity. Pray, good Sir, with what face can such inconsistent men ask for the repeal of the test act? what do they mean to subvert prelates and civil magistrates, not out of love to mankind, but that they may have an opportunity of playing Jupiter themselves? Yes, yes, I have given their imposition a right name, and instead of altering it, I will think of something more harsh, and more fully expressive of the injustice and cruelty of all such demagogues, as publish their silly oracles in the name of Almighty God, and under pain of damnation, not merely to him that denies, but even to him that doubts the truth of what they please to whistle! Are they Christians in town? so are we in the country. Have they the scriptures? so have we. Have they understandings and consciences? so have we. Are they then to *add* to the scriptures, and tell us what we are to believe on every idle question which they please to start? Pray God forgive them, and enlighten their dark minds into the dignity of man, the nature of civil government, the perfections of God, the sufficiency of scripture, the kingly office of Jesus Christ, the bond of union among Christians, and other subjects of the same kind, of which one would suppose they had never heard.

I perceive by the proceedings of the general assembly of 1788, p. 4, that we may expect some account of your denomination from yourself and Mr. Kingsford. It is questionable whether I ever write the history of modern English baptists; and if I do I shall not come at them these three or four years. My notion of the dignity of history forbids me to publish any thing little and

unimportant, and therefore I see very little to publish of the modern baptists in London. The glory, the love of liberty universal, is departed from Israel, at least from that part of it, which presumes to strut forward, and give itself out for *the cause*. The particulars are intoxicated with a false system of disjointed metaphysics, which they call the *gospel*. The generals, if one may judge by their books, which they publish as a body, are less tenacious of a system of *faith*, but equally zealous for an impracticable *discipline*. What else can be understood by Leicester case, where they tax some of their members with *faction*? Or by the case of Leak, where they busy themselves about *suits*, I suppose they mean *courtship*? What does Halifax mean by speaking of expenses *necessary* to maintain the cause of *Christ*? Is there not reason to fear that Nottingham hath been too busy in excommunicating? Is Burnley wise to lay out 300*l.* when they can raise only 50*l.*? And what do they mean at Nottingham by, Zeal in the cause of the Lord Jesus? Does the association take cognizance of property, deeds, titles, &c.? And do the churches pretend to give advice more full to the purpose, than sensible and respectable attorneys? See Wadsworth. Does not the case at Longford imply the power of the association to judge and choose a pastor, for a people who pretend to independency? And are you aware, that your books are bought, bound up, preserved in libraries, and intended to be used as arguments against you and your successors, in proof of your exercising dominion, and in apology for the exercise of that dominion which the friends of an established hierarchy intend to perpetuate? See, say they, "How futile all the objections urged by these people against us are, when they are obliged to exercise the same dominion to uphold their congregations." "Behold," say they, "Their faith and discipline are weak and unproductive; by their own confession neither their families nor their churches are in a state of superior knowledge, or refined morality."

Believe me, my friend, you are off the bottom of the old baptists, whose history is edifying, because it exhibits genuine freedom and sublime virtue. The present plan of all parties in England is obscured by priesthood, and the poison of that pervades every part of the body, and in proportion as any body

grows important to the church, "the King of kings, and Lord of lords, the express image of the Father, the brightness of his glory" diminishes in splendour, and goes into an eclipse; in our churches partial, in the climes of popery total. Degrees of more and less are the only distinctions between us and

established corporations, calling themselves churches. Should I proceed I might write a folio. Hoping shortly to see you, and wishing you every benediction that can make a man great, good and happy,

I remain, dear Sir, your's ever,
ROBERT ROBINSON.

ON THE LIGHT OR SPIRIT OF CHRIST WITHIN MAN, AS PRO-
FESSED BY THE FRIENDS, IN REPLY TO VERITAS.

In the number for the first month of this year, p. 31, appeared some "observations on the inward light of the Quakers," by Veritas; occasioned by a paper signed Philo inserted in the Monthly Review, in reply to a critique in that work. Who was the writer of the paper addressed to the Monthly Reviewers, under the signature of Philo, I know not, neither have I before me either the Monthly Reviewers' critique or Philo's answer; but as Philo may not be a reader of the Monthly Repository, I hope to be excused for offering a few considerations in reply to those arguments which "militate," as Veritas thinks, "against the adoption of such a doctrine."

If I understand Veritas, he condemns the friends for ascribing that to the light of Christ in man, which belongs exclusively to the scriptures. To simplify the point under consideration, I shall premise three propositions which can admit of little, if any, controversy. 1st. That God revealed his will to the saints of old by his spirit, and that from these revelations proceeded the scriptures of truth. 2ndly. That as the peculiar excellency of the scriptures consists in their being dic-

tated by the spirit of God, so the spirit must be superior to the scriptures. 3dly. That consequently these immediate inspirations or dictates of the spirit, must have been to the sacred penmen, at least, more immediately a rule of conduct than scriptures previously written, though proceeding from the same spirit, without either superseding or undervaluing the said scriptures. These propositions appear so self-evident, that I shall not detain the reader by attempting to prove them.

Thus the question between the Friends and their opponent resolves itself to this single point: Whether the spirit of God, which not only taught the Israelites, through the medium of the written law, but also immediately by the urim and thummim, and by his prophets as particular or difficult occasions required, has entirely taken his flight from the earth, and left, instead of his immediate presence in the Holy of Holies in the temple and with the prophets, a few general written instructions for our moral and religious conduct? Veritas must first prove from the scriptures that this is one of the features by which the new covenant is dis-

tinguished from the old, before he can reasonably expect to convert us to an opinion so frigid and sterile, which grants us less of the divine presence under the Christian than under the Mosaic dispensation; but he has not attempted to support his novel opinion by a single passage of scripture. The doctrine of divine influence is, indeed, expressed in such indelible characters in the sacred writings, that it is admitted by the generality of Christians; the principal difference between the Friends and others, consists rather in the mode and extent of the influence of the spirit, than in the thing itself. As our opponent has not attacked us on scripture ground, I shall be brief and only observe, nearly in the words of the apostle; that if as the things of a man are only known by the spirit of man, so the things of God knoweth no man but the spirit of God: then the scriptures, which relate to the things of God, cannot be known to man by his natural reason, unenlightened by the spirit of God; hence the apostle James recommends those who want wisdom, not to himself nor to any outward writing, but to ask of God who giveth liberally and upbraideth not; which agrees with what our Saviour also says, that our heavenly Father will give his holy Spirit to them that ask him. The Spirit is, therefore, as Barclay observes, "the foundation and ground of all truth and knowledge, and the primary rule of faith and manners." Not as opposed to, or contradicting the holy scriptures, which were written by its dictates, but as being that, without which, in various instances, they cannot be under-

stood and applied so as to edify and build us up in the faith of the gospel.

Not having Philo's paper before me, I cannot fully judge of the accuracy of the analogy he has drawn, between human reason and the spirit of God, with respect to the laws instituted by each, but it must be admitted that the holy spirit is as much superior to the scriptures, as human reason is to the laws instituted by it. As nothing can rise higher than its source, so human laws will partake of the fallibility of human reason and require revision; but laws instituted by the holy spirit, cannot require revision through any defect in the source whence they proceed, hence "the infallibility and permanency of the scriptures" are not affected by this analogy between them and human laws; nevertheless the holy spirit is not limited by its own institutions, so as to be prevented abrogating them when they have answered the end designed; thus the Mosaic dispensation which was only intended as a school-master to lead to Christ, was abrogated by the holy spirit after its types and figures were fulfilled in Christ to whom they pointed. There must have been some confusion in the ideas of Veritas, when he supposed that it would not be contended for by Philo, that the doctrinal parts of Christianity "exist inherently" in the holy spirit that gave them forth. What Barclay says, is, that though the spirit *can* reveal "an historical faith and knowledge of the birth of Christ in the flesh *without* the means of the scriptures," it is not usually so revealed, neither is "to be ex-

pected by us or any other Christians."

"The fairest way of investigating the subject now under discussion," says Veritas, "is to consider the effect which a general assent to this opinion would most probably produce, among the various sects professing Christianity." I had always thought that the scriptures were primarily the criterion whereby we were to judge of the truth of any religious opinion, and that its practical tendency was to be decided by the conduct of those who hold such opinion; but it seems that Veritas has discovered a new, and what he conceives to be, a fairer criterion to judge of the practical tendency of a doctrine, by producing instead of its real genuine fruits, some hypothetical fruits. Facts were against our opponent, he had therefore, recourse to hypothesis, and what is the result? He is obliged to suppose that a number of persons could embrace a certain opinion without its producing its usual effects on their "habits and modes of thinking." These effects must be better known to those who have felt them, than to one, who denies the existence of the "inward light" by which they are produced; and I am inclined to think that the whole of the reasoning of Veritas, with regard to this divine light, may possibly arise from his inattention to the effects of its operations on the mind. Instead of making man presumptuous and confident in himself, it makes him absolutely dependent on a superior power for every good and perfect gift,—for this divine light is not considered as something that man has at his own com-

mand, or which he can appropriate to himself; but as a free gift imparted to him through Christ, for his deliverance from the evil and darkness of his fallen nature, and which only illuminates his understanding in proportion to his obedience to its dictates. Let us now compare this sentiment with that which is adopted by those who consider themselves the advocates for human reason:—they ascribe to this faculty, not only an ability, independent of divine influence, to comprehend the spiritual truth revealed in the scriptures, but also consider themselves authorized to reject any doctrine contained in the scriptures, that their reason cannot fathom, or that does not square with their pre-conceived notions, whereby they would make the revealed will of the infallible God bow to the decision of the fallible unenlightened reason of man. It requires but little consideration to determine which of these two opposite opinions ascribes the most to God, and the least to the creature, and consequently which of the two is not likely to cherish pride and self-confidence, (the *genuine* parent of religious asperity and of persecution) and if it were necessary, this might be illustrated not by hypothetical, but by real facts.

I ascribe to a want of a perfect knowledge of what we believe, with respect to the divine light in man, the assertion of Veritas that its "power and influence on the human mind, must of necessity overcome all opposition and impress upon the heart of every individual one simple and uniform truth." For we do not believe that it consists with the scheme of

divine government and the moral agency of man as set forth in the scriptures that the liberty of the actions of men, should be destroyed by the irresistible impulse of a superior power; so that though we believe that all are, as they submit to the operations of the holy spirit within them, in a proportionate degree led and governed by it, yet the careless and disobedient who despise its reproofs and will have none of its instructions are not taught by it, for though it invites all, it compels none.

Veritas calls upon Philo for an accurate distinction between the inward light and human reason; this distinction has been already, I should suppose, sufficiently pointed out to prevent any mistake with respect to our views; and for further information, I may refer Veritas to 1 Cor. chap. ii. Jer. xxxi. 31 to 34. Heb. viii. 7 to 11. Joel, ii. 17, and to various other passages of similar import: for if the scriptures, which he considers as the only revelation of the Divine will to man at this day, will not convince him, it is not to be supposed that any thing I could further add would

be of any avail. An explanation is also requested by him between the inward light, and "the enthusiasm of the various sectarists;" but until I am informed what is meant by "the enthusiasm of the various sectarists," I must decline any reply to a question, the terms of which are too indefinite to convey any distinct meaning. To prevent an error not unusual in discussions of this nature, it should be observed, that the Friends do not deny the use of reason in religion, what they maintain is, that the reason or understanding of man must be enlightened by the holy spirit, before he can have a right conception of spiritual or divine truth.

Justice to Veritas requires me to acknowledge the moderation with which he has stated his objections to the doctrine of the divine light in man, and the respectful manner in which he speaks of the Society of Friends; and I hope he will seriously reflect what it is that makes this "class of men, individually an honour to society," seeing that no effect can exist without a cause.

J. B.

ON POPULAR PREACHING; IN ANSWER TO "A MODEST QUERIST." LETTER III.

SIR, *April 15, 1808.*

When I first read the "Queries concerning Popular Preaching," in your last Volume, (p. 642,) I little expected to be now asking your indulgence to notice a third time, the objections of your correspondent. My former letter was hastily concluded, just as I had reached his fourth query, which I beg leave to quote:

"Strongly and pointedly as Unitarian preachers may assert and inculcate their doctrines, can such of them as are unlearned, disprove by fair and just arguments, the erroneous notions that are generally maintained, and show that the doctrines of a plurality of persons in the divine nature, the satisfaction of Christ, &c. are built upon inconsistent and false interpretations of scripture?"

The Querist, if I understand him, entertains apprehensions, certainly not ungrounded, that the

managers of the Unitarian Fund, will frequently employ missionaries, who, as Ben Jonson said of Shakespeare, have "small Latin and less Greek." I will go further, and admit that these bold innovators, as "the height of their offending," though by no means destitute of learned assistance, will not refuse the services of a missionary absolutely "unlearned" in a scholastic sense, while they satisfy themselves, as R. Robinson described the unlearned preachers in his connexion, that though *illiterate*, he is not *ignorant*, especially not "ignorant of religion, that only science which they elect him to teach." (Claude Vol 1. Adv.)

Such a preacher, however, in the opinion of "a Modest Querist," would be likely to fail in his attempt to "disprove by fair and just arguments, the erroneous notions that are generally maintained." Is your correspondent aware to how small a number among an inconsiderable minority of Christians, his objection, fairly pursued, would reduce the Unitarians, qualified to controvert the popular creed? His learned preacher should have attained, not merely to an ability of translation, which may be acquired at a grammar school, but to such an acquaintance with idioms, dialects, and the powers of language from researches into profane literature, together with such a knowledge of ancient versions and various readings, as may enable him to decide on the authenticity or sense of a disputed passage, as the result of his own critical and studious inquiry. I say, of his own inquiry, because if he rely on critics and commentators, the unlearned may do the same;

not, I grant, with equal gratification to himself, yet with no small satisfaction and becoming confidence, if, as in the case supposed, he be a man of thought and reflection. To furnish such a man with "armour of proof," in which he may "contend for the faith once delivered to the saints," appears to be a noble object, worthy to occupy the laborious life of the most learned Christian, and far above that of merely gratifying the taste and securing the applause of a scholar like himself.

I might offer the Querist, a shorter and, perhaps, a more satisfactory solution of his difficulty. The strength of the Unitarian cause he will probably allow to consist in the agreement of our doctrine with the general tenour of the scriptures, rather than in the solution of difficult passages. Facts support this opinion. There have been, and still are, unlearned Christians, who have attained to the knowledge of *One God, the Father of mercies, and one mediator, the man Christ Jesus*, before they had any access to the writings or conversation of Unitarians. They were led to these conclusions from a serious and diligent examination of the New Testament, in the common version, affected as that certainly is by the orthodox prejudices of the translators. If persons under such disadvantages, found "arguments" sufficient to "disprove" the errors of the popular creed, surely an Unitarian missionary, with such helps as he may now command, cannot be at a loss, even though destitute of that learning which, I am persuaded, such a man would have no wish to undervalue. I should be ashamed to argue so plain a case.

322 *Mr. Carpenter's Remarks on Mr. Belsham's Strictures. Let. III.*

I may here close this letter, as the Unitarian Fund is no farther directly concerned with the queries of your correspondent. If the object of that Fund be just and highly important, the managers must not suffer themselves to be diverted to other objects, however desirable. Such certainly are—the instruction of “young persons in the original languages of the Old and New Testaments,” and a “mode of education in the seminaries of Dissenters,” which shall render “theology” paramount to “classical and mathematical lore.” But when the Querist proposes that “Sunday schools and schools of industry should be attended to, and directed by Unitarian ministers” as a new project, I wonder where he can have passed his days not to know what Unitarians have attempted with encouraging success among the population of Birmingham, Nottingham, and other places which offered scope to their exertions. Indeed, the more I consider the paper of “a Modest Querist,” the more I suspect that he has lived out of the Unitarian

world, though he has happily discovered our doctrine perhaps while musing by “sedge Cam,” or wooing fair “truth in Maudlin’s learned grove.” Nor is it at all surprizing that

“The man who stretch’d, in Isis’ calm retreat,
To books and study, gives seven years complete,”

should unconsciously depreciate the capabilities of the man, whose theology has been acquired in the college of fishermen, and his literature in the university of the world. By hazarding this conjecture I alarm myself. I, an *unmatriculated* wight, may have been discussing questions of learned import, with one who has not only tasted but drank deep of “the Castalian spring.” Should your correspondent be thus stout, I trust he will be merciful; and I assure him, that unless I am confirmed in my opinions by his rejoinder, which I shall eagerly expect, I will, with your permission, fairly own myself corrected.

Your’s.

IGNOTUS,

MR. CARPENTER’S REMARKS ON MR. BELSHAM’S STRICTURES,
LETTER III.

SIR,

Old Swinford,
June 4, 1808.

In this concluding letter I wish to suggest some thoughts respecting the pre-existence and atonement of Christ, doctrines which my friend Belsham regards as irrational and unscriptural, but which appear to me consonant to the best dictates of reason and

plainly revealed in the gospel of Christ.

Our pre-conceived notions of the probability or improbability of these doctrines, will have a considerable influence on our minds, in our interpretation of those passages which are adduced in favour of them. The materialist, who thinks that there is no ra-

tional principle in man distinct from his body, could not easily be induced to believe that a pre-existent spirit constituted the rational principle or soul of Christ. And they who think it strange and absurd, that the Maker of the world should become a tender infant, and pass through the different stages of human life, will be inclined to put some other interpretation on those passages of scripture which seem to reveal this doctrine. But who will pronounce it irrational to suppose that the self-existent Jehovah commissioned his son to form this world and that system of which it constitutes a part? or who will say that it is absurd to believe that this exalted person might take upon him the human form for benevolent and important purposes? It is indeed wonderful, and furnishes matter for the warmest gratitude that, *God so loved the world as to send his only begotten Son into it, not to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved.*

It appears to me not improbable (as I suggested, many years ago, in the *Theological Repository*;) that each system of worlds may have a Being of a similar nature, appointed by the great Creator of all, as its maker and vicegerent. This supposition derogates nothing from the unrivalled power and glory of the self-existent Jehovah, on whom these glorious beings must be equally dependant with the meanest of his creatures, whilst it vastly increases the sum of happiness that is enjoyed in the universe. For, how great the delight which these delegates of the most High would derive from being employed in communicating his

blessings to inferior orders of beings! This however is only matter of conjecture. But that Christ was the maker of our world, I conclude from the declaration of John I. 10. *He was in the world, and the world (not αἰών but κόσμος) was made by him, and the world knew him not.* Mr. B. says that there is not one instance in which the word *γινώσκειν* in the N. T. signifies to create. Let him turn to Heb. xi. 3, where this word is used and must have that signification. There are many passages in which it exactly corresponds with our word *made*, and I think it can have no other sense in this striking and decisive declaration of St. John. If we farther suppose that Christ was the maker of the solar system, the idea appears to me sufficiently extensive for what the same apostle says v. 3. *All things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made*, and also for that declaration of St. Paul, Col. I. 16. *For by him were all things created that are in heaven and that are in earth.* This will appear to some too limited a sense for these words. But how any can understand this last passage and the verses with which it stands connected, in a sense consistent with the simple humanity of Christ, appears to me strange. Dr. Doddridge says, "to interpret this as the Socinians do, of the new creation in a spiritual sense, is so unnatural, that one could hardly believe it, if the evidence were not so undeniably strong, that any set of learned commentators could fall into it." For it is after the apostle had spoken of Christ as *the image of the invisible God, the first born of the whole creation,*

and the maker of all things visible and invisible, that he refers to the spiritual creation, when he speaks of him as the head of the church. My friend has, I think, laid far too much stress on the silence of the three first evangelists, respecting the pre-existence of Christ. Negative arguments may be allowed in some cases to have considerable weight, but not when they are opposed by those which are of a positive kind. Whether these apostles were fully acquainted with this doctrine, and if they were, why they did not declare their belief in it, may furnish matter for curious speculation, but cannot weigh against the positive testimony of two other apostles, one of whom wrote avowedly to supply what they had omitted. Eusebius says that John in his gospel begins with the divinity of Christ, which had been reserved by the Holy Ghost for him as the more excellent person. And Theodore says that when the other gospels were brought to John, he expressed his approbation of them, but said it was fit that the things also concerning the divinity of Christ, should be recorded, and he was induced to begin immediately with the doctrine of Christ's deity. But I am inclined to think that the three first evangelists were not altogether ignorant of the exalted nature of Christ, particularly from a passage in Mark xiii. 33, where our Lord says, *of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, nor the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father.* This seems strongly to intimate, that Christ is superior to men and angels, but inferior to the Father. I know that the Athanasians en-

deavour to reconcile this passage to their system, by saying that though Christ did not know this in his human, yet he did in his divine nature. But he declares that the Father alone knew it. In what manner the Unitarians attempt to reconcile it to their system I do not know.

If those passages of scripture which my learned friend has represented as interpolations or mis-translations were really so, which I think is far from being clear, there are still a sufficient number remaining to establish the doctrine in question. He speaks of our Lord's figurative and enigmatical discourse in John iv. But he renders it much more enigmatical than is necessary, by what appears to me a very strange interpretation of these words: *Does this offend you, what if you should see the Son of man ascend up where he was before? q. d.* What if I should disclose to you truths still more remote from your apprehension and more offensive to your prejudices.

Independently of particular passages of scripture, which appear to reveal this doctrine, there are two arguments of considerable weight, viz. that love to Christ is enforced as an essential part of the Christian religion, and that he is appointed to be the judge of the world. I do not find that Mr. B. has made any observation on the first of these, but to the second he has given the same answer which Dr. Priestley did, when I discoursed with him on the subject. He supposed that the judgment of the world by Christ was to be understood in a figurative sense, and in favour of this opinion alledged those passages,

which say that the saints shall judge the world, and that the twelve apostles shall sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. But surely these difficult and obscure texts are not to invalidate the truth of those numerous and strong declarations, which assure us that Christ shall raise the dead and judge the world. If we are to understand the words in a figurative sense, when it is said that we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, I do not know what rule of criticism will forbid our interpreting in a figurative sense the declaration that the dead shall be raised.

It is said that the captain of our salvation being made perfect through suffering, militates against the notion of his exalted and divine nature. But I apprehend that there is no being in the universe, however exalted his nature, (the infinite Jehovah excepted,) but what may attain still higher degrees of excellence; and that every benevolent exertion, and every act of resignation, will still further increase his virtue and piety.

Our pre-conceived notions respecting the atonement of Christ, will influence our minds in the opinion that we form of those passages of scripture, which are alleged in favour of this doctrine. They who think it inconsistent with the divine justice and benevolence to make the innocent suffer for the guilty, or to bestow blessings upon the guilty on account of the virtues of the righteous, will be disposed to understand in a figurative sense, the declaration of our Lord, that *his blood was shed for the remission*

of sin, and also that of the apostle Paul, *in whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins*. But we know that vicarious sufferings and blessings do, in numberless instances, constitute a part of the government of God, and therefore cannot be inconsistent with his perfections. And from hence it follows that it may be consistent with those perfections for Christ to suffer for guilty man, and for guilty man to partake of salvation through his sufferings. But the sacred writers not thinking it sufficient to speak of this doctrine, as merely consistent with the divine attributes, always represent it as an illustrious display of the holiness and mercy of God, and admirably calculated to promote our gratitude and obedience.

The doctrine of an atonement, in one sense or other, has been the prevailing opinion of mankind in all ages. It constituted a part of the Jewish religion, and it was reasonable to suppose that the Christian religion, proceeding from the same source, would contain the same doctrine.

The more I consider the language of the N. T. the more fully am I convinced that it reveals the doctrines of the divinity and atonement of Christ. My friend may regard this as a faith that can swallow mountains. But when he spoke of the present age as one, in which men were disposed to exercise such a faith, he might have added, it is also an age, in which there are others who profess to know every thing and believe nothing. He should also recollect that this was once his own faith, when the scriptures were the same as they are now, when

he was equally desirous of understanding their meaning, and perhaps equally free from prejudice. And he may further consider that whilst he believes in the miracles of the N. T. he will be regarded by Deists, as having that faith which can swallow mountains.

There is a considerable body of Christians, who cannot receive some of the doctrines of the high Calvinists, because they think them inconsistent with the divine attributes, nor on the other hand can they agree with Mr. B. and some of the modern Unitarians. They think, that to call in question the divine authority of the Lord's-day, and to say that the scriptures are not the word of God, must have a dangerous tendency. They are not perfectly agreed in their religious sentiments, for they are to be found both in the established church, and in all the different denominations of Dissenters. But they agree in their love of serious, practical religion. They agree in highly valuing the means of grace,

and agree in their deep sense of the great evil of sin. They agree in an humble conviction of their need of a Saviour, and this Saviour is dear to their souls. They also agree in highly valuing such writers as Henry and Watts and Doddridge. Yet from the class of serious Christians, I am far from excluding such men as Lindsey, and Priestley, and Belsham*. With the latter of these I have spent many an agreeable, and I hope profitable day, not only when our sentiments were alike, but since that period. And though I think he is too strenuous and positive in maintaining his present system, yet no difference of sentiment can prevent my entertaining a high sense of his integrity and piety, as well as of his great abilities.

Sincerely wishing that your Repository may be the means of diffusing Christian knowledge, and especially Christian charity,

I am, Sir,
Your obliged servant,
B. CARPENTER.

* My friend speaks of my pluming myself upon my charity, and proclaiming it to the world. I certainly think it of more importance to make a public profession of charity than of faith. And I apprehend that those who believe in the absolute deity of Christ, and those who believe in his simple humanity, are in general less candid than those whose sentiments lie between these two extremes. I know a worthy minister who received a letter from his Trinitarian brother, containing the following sentiment: There is no room in heaven for idolaters or heretics, and since you regard me as the one, and I you as the other, there can be no great cordiality betwixt us. But the heretical brother would not exclude the Trinitarian one from heaven. I shall however mention what appeared to me a want of candour on the other side of the question. It respects the late Mrs. Rayner, a lady of strong sense and uncommon generosity. She was a great friend of Dr. Priestley, but could not bear his opinion respecting the dormant state of man after death, and wrote a long letter to him on this subject. No, she would exclaim, I shall continue the same conscious being after death, that I am now. I have repeatedly heard her express great indignation against Mr. Urwick, for asserting in his own pulpit the pre-existence of Christ. She did this once when he was present, and he only made this calm reply, You did not hear me condemn those who disbelieve it. Certainly Trinitarians, Arians and Socinians, have a right to maintain their own sentiments in their own pulpits; but when they proclaim them in the pulpits of their brethren who are of different sentiments, I think they transgress the bounds both of prudence and charity.

MR. FOX'S ACCOUNT OF MR. LOCKE'S EXPULSION FROM OXFORD.

SIR, June 12, 1808.

You will, I believe, readily preserve in your Repository, the following extract from the "introductory chapter" to Mr. Fox's Historical Fragment.

After stigmatising in a manner worthy of himself the legal murders of Russel and Sidney, he says that, "when their memory shall cease to be an object of respect and veneration, it requires no spirit of prophecy to foretel that English liberty will be fast approaching to its final consummation." He adds that, "the very day on which Russel was executed, the University of Oxford passed their famous decree, condemning formally, as impious and heretical propositions, every principle upon which the constitution of this, or any other free country, can maintain itself." In this connexion the author introduces the following account of "Mr. Locke's expulsion from Oxford."

Among the oppressions of this period, most of which were attended with consequences so much more important to the several objects of persecution, it may seem scarcely worth while to notice the expulsion of John Locke, from Christ-church College, Oxford. But besides the interest which every incident in the life of a person so deservedly eminent naturally excites, there appears to have been something in the transaction itself characteristic of the spirit of the times, as well as of the general nature of absolute power. Mr. Locke was known to have been intimately connected with Lord Shaftesbury, and had very prudently judged it advisable for him, to prolong for some time, his residence upon the Continent, to which he had resorted originally on account of his health. A suspicion, as it has been since proved, unfounded, that he

was the author of a pamphlet which gave offence to the government, induced the King to insist upon his removal from his studentship at Christ-church. Sunderland writes by the King's command, to Dr. Fell, Bishop of Oxford and Dean of Christ-church. The reverend prelate answers, that he has long had an eye upon Mr. Locke's behaviour; but though frequent attempts had been made, (attempts of which the Bishop expresses no disapprobation,) to draw him into imprudent conversation, by attacking, in his company, the reputation, and insulting the memory of his late patron and friend, and thus to make his gratitude and all the best feelings of his heart, instrumental to his ruin, these attempts all proved unsuccessful. Hence the Bishop infers, not the innocence of Mr. Locke, but that he was a great master of concealment, both as to words and looks; for looks, it is to be supposed, would have furnished a pretext for his expulsion, more decent than any which had yet been discovered. An expedient is then suggested to drive Mr. Locke to a dilemma, by summoning him to attend the College on the first of January ensuing. If he do not appear, he shall be expelled for contumacy; if he come, matter of charge may be found against him for what he shall have said at London, or elsewhere, where he will have been less upon his guard than at Oxford. Some have ascribed Fell's hesitation, if it can be so called, in executing the King's order, to his unwillingness to injure Locke, who was his friend; others with more reason, to the doubt of the legality of the order. However this may have been, neither his scruple nor his reluctance was regarded by a court who knew its own power. A peremptory order was accordingly sent, and immediate obedience ensued. Thus, while, without the shadow of a crime, Mr. Locke lost a situation attended with some emolument, and great convenience, was the University deprived of or rather thus, from the base principles of servility, did she cast away the man, the having produced whom is now her chiefest glory; and thus, to those who are not determined to be blind, did the

true nature of absolute power discover itself, against which the middling station is not more secure, than the most exalted. Tyranny when glutted with the blood of the great, and the plunder of the rich, will condescend to hunt humbler game, and make a peaceable and innocent fellow of a college the object of its persecution. In this instance, one would almost imagine there was some instinctive sagacity in the government of that time, which pointed out to them, even before he had made himself known to the world, the man who was destined to be the most successful adversary of superstition and tyranny.

Such is the literary monument raised to John Locke by a mind in many respects congenial, in a work which, under all the disadvantages of an unfinished posthumous publication, contains too much of the language of the author's heart speedily to perish. That the University should not long ago have retrieved her reputation, by paying some distinguished honours to the memory of her ill-requited son, may appear unaccountable, till it is recollected, what Oxford cannot forget, that the author of the "Essay concerning Human Understanding," was also the author of

"The Letters for Toleration," "The Treatises on Government," and "The Reasonableness of Christianity."

The fame and the neglect of Locke, may well justify the exclamation of the poet—

"See nations slowly wise, and meanly just,
To buried merit, raise the tardy bust!"

The centenary of the revolution was celebrated, while its advocate had no public honours, though, it is worthy of remark, that, just at the same period, was restored on the Royal Exchange the statue of Charles II. the persecutor of Locke and the pensioner of France, but he was a crowned head, and as *Shakespeare* says

"There's such divinity doth hedge a king."

The public prints have announced a design at length to rescue the national character from the reproach of ingratitude to the memory of Locke—a design which I hope will be amply encouraged.

Your's

SELECTOR.

REVIEW.

"STILL PLEAS'D TO PRAISE, YET NOT AFRAID TO BLAME."

POPE.

ART. I. *Sermons on various Subjects*, by George Walker, F.R.S. late Professor of Theology, in the New College, and President of the Philosophical and Literary Society, Manchester. 4 vols. 8vo. Johnson.

The first and second volumes of 1790, when the respectable author was pastor of the congregation of Protestant dissenters, at the High-Pavement, in Nottingham.

This being so long before we commenced our career, as Reviewers, and the Discourses having been already appreciated, and received their meed of praise, those volumes do not come within our province. With pleasure, however, we announce this new impression, as a favourable omen of the reception they have met with, and take into our hands the two additional volumes, which accompany them. The known abilities of the author, and the high estimation in which his name was held, will naturally raise the reader's expectations: nor, we presume, will they be disappointed. The worthy author, we have to lament, is now no more: but the Sermons before us, which, according to proposals published a year and a half ago, were designed, and in a great measure prepared, for the press by himself, will remain as memorials of his talents and spirit, and perpetuate his name with honour.

The third volume, which continues the series of numbers, from the second, contains seventeen discourses. The subjects are: 1. The Requisites to Religious Understanding, from Dan. xii. 10, preached at an Ordination. 2. On Sympathy, preached as recommendatory to the General Hospital at Nottingham, from John xi. 25. 3. On Sincerity, John i. 47. 4. Reflections on Human Life, considered as a Drama, 1 Cor. vii. 31. 5. On Death, as a change to the virtuous and to the wicked*. 6. On the improbability and inefficacy of Repentance, when habitually protracted. Isa. lv. 6. 7. Christianity a perfect light. Eph.

v. 8. 8. Names the friend of party in religion, and injurious to true christianity, 2 Cor. x. 7. 9. On the Christian Armour. Eph. vi. 13, 14, 15. 10. Rich towards God, and prepared for Death. Luke xii. 20. 11. Christian Magnanimity, Ps. cxii. 6, 7. 12. Self examination, as preparatory to the character of Religion, 2 Cor. xi. 28. 13. On the abuse of the Divine Forbearance. Eccles. viii. 11. 14. On Self-deceit. Jer. xvii. 2. On some of these subjects, the author extends his discussions through two discourses.

In the first discourse, delivered at an ordination, Mr. Walker corrects the superstitious ideas of that service, which have been frequently attached to it, even among Protestant dissenters; while he aims to place it in a point of view both rational and useful.

"In this day of inquiry," says our preacher, "wherein all the institutions and usages of our ancestors have very properly been subjected to a severe examination, ordination has not been exempted. Bigots have thought too much of it, and your over-rational men appear to think too little of it. I will tell you therefore, in a few words, what in my soberest judgment it ought not to mean, and what I think it does mean. It ought not to mean, that the officiating ministers have any of the apostolic powers committed to them. Their character and conduct, in the most favourable view, argue themselves to be only men, and the candidate will assuredly issue out of their hands a mere man, subject to the weakness and failings of human nature; yet with a wise use of his talents and advantages, and with that assistance of his Maker, which we cannot calculate, and which it becomes us not to doubt of, capable of those improvements, and of those utilities which will do honour to himself, render him a blessing to those with whom he

* Job. xiv. 14.—N. B. Here is an error both in the contents and as the text stands at the head of the sermon, for in each place it is stated to be taken from the prophecy of Jeremiah instead of the book of Job.

shall be connected, and be highly acceptable to his God. On the other hand it does mean, that in the face of the Christian world, and in the presence of that great Being from whom Christianity proceeded, you elect the minister who is presented to us as your future teacher, monitor and guide, to conduct your public worship, to assist you in the walk of Christian verity and duty, to counteract the vitiating influence of the world, to rescue you from its littlenesses, debasements and corruptions, and minister to the great object of all your Christian warfare, your final acceptance with God, and admission to the blessedness of heaven. It means that the officiating ministers know the object of your choice enough to justify their concurrent approbation; that they believe him to be invested by God with abilities fitted for the office to which he devotes himself; that his education has been directed to the improvement of these abilities; that there are no ill-omened appearances of a light, a worldly or a vicious mind; and that if these advantages and these promises be seconded by future diligence and honesty, he will not, he cannot defeat the expectations which you entertain of him. In fine, it imports a moral contract between you and him; that he shall teach, and that you will receive his teaching with attention, with a disposition to be instructed, but with a reserve of your own judgment; that he shall admonish, reprove, correct, and that you will submit yourselves to his admonitions and reproof, nor suffer any pride or petulance, or baser interests to resist the good tendency of his virtuous admonitions; that he shall lead and guide; and inasmuch as he is vindicated by the truth of human nature and the truth of God, that you will honestly, humbly and affectionately present yourselves to his guidance.

"In this view ordination is a highly becoming usage. Public religion requires the notoriety and solemnity of public acts; while a more important act of public religion cannot be, than that engagement, which is to minister to your character as good men, and to your happiness as expectants of a glorious hereafter. It guards against the introduction of improper men into the ministry; against the being seduced to a choice, which wise, experienced and honest ministers will not ratify with

their approbation. If I did not view ordination in this respectable and useful light, I would bear no part in this office; for with the higher view of acting my part before God, I hope that I am above all temptation of acting another part before men; and in this I trust, I speak for my brethren also."—Pp. 2, 3, 4, 5.

From the sermon on Sincerity, we are tempted to quote the following passage on the importance of inward serenity and self-approbation.

"A man's heart is his home, his perpetual home, to which from all the bustlings of the world, its fatiguing cares, and flattering promises, he must every day retire; and if he find not in his visits to this home a kind, a cheerful and a gracious reception, not one of his flattering attainments and tumultuous joys will afford him a consolation for the peace which he has lost, for the dissatisfactions and upbraidings of his own mind. If therefore in his daily visits to this home, and as interested only in his present life, and while the promise of life is yet young, he find from this unpleasant reception the bitter which turns his sweet into gall, what must be his sensations, when in the rude shocks of this world of trial he must encounter those disappointments, which annihilate the world to him, the wreck of fortune, the death of children, the attack of excruciating pain, or the tedium of lingering disease; but more still, what indeed must be his sensations, when death summons him before that being, in whom he has not cultivated the hope, that is the balm to every care, the medicine to every grief, and the only cordial in that hour of serious apprehension."—Pp. 96, 97.

In the sermon entitled "Christianity a perfect light," are the following sentiments.

"It is not the least advantage of the ministerial profession; that it leads us to a conversation with the best book that ever was put into the hands of man, perhaps to a more attentive and familiar conversation with it, than in a different profession we might have known. If may be owing to this, that whatever our conduct be, we have higher ideas of the duty of a Christian, than others appear to be possessed of;

that we consider it as the intention of the gospel not only to instruct us in what is right and in what is wrong, but to separate us from the world by a glorious distinction of character; and raise in us an ardour in the pursuit of holiness, which knows no bounds, which admits of no mediocrity, which aspires to be holy as God is good, and to prove its fitness for the high rewards of heaven, by reaching in this state of trial at the best and most exalted character of the heavenly inhabitants. This at least is certain, that those are ignorant of the spirit of the gospel, who have not these sentiments. Pp. 187, 188.

“Herein lies the superior excellency of the institution of the gospel, that embracing every honourable argument of mere human wisdom, it urges others, which apply to every man’s feeling, which speak with equal force to the learned and unlearned, which inspire the soul with a daring and a fortitude such as it can derive from no considerations which it finds within itself alone, and which terminate with the grave. It speaks not only of what reason and the voice within command, but what God expressly wills, what has all his authority, and is rendered sacred and necessary by the holiness of his nature. It summons us to duty from considerations of dutifulness to a Sovereign, of gratitude to a Benefactor, and of the highest possible interest to ourselves. It unites in one unbroken view here and hereafter, time and eternity; assuring us from him who hath both worlds at his disposal, that godliness hath not only the promise of the life that now is and will soon be past, but of that also which is to come and will never know an end. Pp. 199, 200.

“There ought to be a grace, a dignity and richness about the character of a Christian; the name ought to suppose whatever in the way of virtue and holiness is within the reach of man. But we wear our Christianity as an easy garment, which in every hour of indulgence may be laid aside; we expect the fulfilment of the divine promises, as if God were to intrude himself into a low-born, groveling, vicious soul; and we were to be fitted for heaven, only in that moment when we hope to enter it.” Pp. 209, 210.

In the sermon on Party Names, our author observes,

“Inestimable are the advantages of the gospel; and he who feels not the conviction of this upon his mind, has but to carry himself back in imagination to the age of thick darkness and of gross corruption, which preceded the ministry of Christ, or to transplant himself to those regions, wherein at this day, the human character is no ways raised by the views of a sublime, rational and moral religion.” P. 230.

The tests of a religious character, which our preacher lays down in the Sermon on Self-Examination, are

“1. Whether the love or hatred of sin be more prevalent in you? Religion in her whole service invites the saint and the sinner; to the one she is the food and entertainment of his soul, to the other, the ministering angel that may purify his soul; but she asks of both a virtuous inclination in every approach to her; and in the last instance, that she has ministered to holiness, to progressive and increasing holiness in both.”

“2. Let us examine ourselves how we stand affected to good men.—To love goodness, and not to love a good man wherever he be found, is a contradiction which, I think neither the charity of man or of God will reconcile.—Are uprightness and piety in any one of the fellow-creatures around you, the great attractive, the strong foundation, the generous bond of your affection to and complacence in him? This is a more interesting test of our inward and entire love of goodness, of a soul that is altogether Christian, than we perhaps are apt to think of; and by which, if we would please, a little oftener, and more seriously to try ourselves, we should better know ourselves and the truth of our own character, than in our present way of delusion I fear we many of us do.”

3. “Let us inquire how we stand affected to another world.”

In the discourse on the Divine Forbearance, Mr. Walker says,

“I have observed in all minds of a low form, and who aspire not to an elevated morality, a prurient inclination to debase themselves, and trample on human nature, as incapable of one offering that can be acceptable to the majesty of heaven.” P. 345.

“By Self-deceit,” in the discourses on that subject, our author says, “I understand, every way in which we are

led to impose upon ourselves, to conceal or mis-apprehend the truth, to prevent the application of those moral principles which conscience and the voice of God have revealed to us, and provided as our director and guard." It is traced to its first origin in education; in those wrong impressions to which even the best conducted education is subject, and which are the luxuriant growth of a bad one. "The forming the minds of youth," remarks Mr. W. "depends not only on those to whom their education is specially intrusted, but every one around them is a preceptor in a greater or less degree, and from every source they are drinking in impressions, and likings, and aversions, and habits."

His nervous and spirited censures on the influence of fashion deserve an attention which it is to be feared that they will not meet with from those whom they most concern. Referring to the state of society, in it, he says,

"The monster fashion rears its head, the most complete destroyer of the whole work of God in the mind of man that ever was invented by wit or wickedness. Having quitted the nurse, the very outset in life is an initiation to the will and law of fashion. As they advance in years this sovereign regard to fashion prescribes their whole line of conduct. Propriety, decorum, morality, and even revelation, are, step by step, habituated to give way to her capricious and immoral commands.—The intercourses of friendship and domestic sociability are vulgar; and it is more polite to measure society by the number

of their guests, whom they hardly know, or whom they may despise and hate, than by any one quality which God designed to constitute the blessed intercourse between man and man.—Their Christianity also must be of the fashionable mode; and without one honest conviction at heart, they will desert the faith of their fathers, because it is not the faith of the polite and fashionable world." Among other causes of self-deception, which our author enumerates, one is, "men's contrasting their faults with crimes of a darker hue in others, or in fine, with any crimes to which they are not themselves addicted: by which means they are soothed in the indulgence of very criminal passions, and have their consciences reconciled to a course of life, which in its general character cannot be reconciled with virtue. The flattery of a dressed exterior in religion is considered as another powerful auxiliary in the work of self-deception. A third cause is stated to be "a presumptuous or mistaken notion of the last judgment, and of the distribution of the actors of this world in that great day; a general notion, which is found to have pervaded Christendom, that there will be but two great classes of mankind at the last day, and that, without regard to the infinite diversity of character, which must be found in each, the one will without exception be received, the other without exception be rejected."

But we must stop. This article has already occupied too much room. The Review of the next volume must be reserved for a future number, T.

ART. II. *Sacred Truths addressed to the Children of Israel, residing in the British Empire, containing Strictures on the Book, entitled the "New Sanhedrin," and Observations on some of the Proceedings of the Grand Sanhedrim at Paris.* By L. Cohen, 12mo. pp. 51. 2s. 6d. Exeter.

Books of divinity come so rarely from the Jews, that when we meet with one we cannot help viewing it with attention. Mr. Cohen, the author of this little work, is of the house of Israel, and his object is to shew, that the Jews can gain nothing by altering their pre-

sent belief, to prove the local restoration to the land of promise, and to demonstrate clearly, that Buonaparte is not the man, the promised Messiah, — principles which the author of the "New Sandhedrin" (see M. Repos. Vol. II. p. 650.) endeavours to set

aside. As far as the letter of the Mosaic law avails, and it is dangerous to depend upon any thing else, Mr. C. is successful. The figurative interpretation of the whole of the Old Testament would reduce it to a mere book of poetry.

The Jews in this country, we learn from the work before us, look with no favourable eye upon the Grand Sanhedrim. They complain especially of the new law of inter-marriages, which they consider as overturning their religion. The attempt to prove Buonaparte to be the Messiah, must, says our author, "make the Emperor himself smile, when he recollects the stumbling block to his *divine* mission which he experienced at Acre, in his attack on Palestine, to recover the promised land."

"Now therefore (Mr. C. concludes,) if the Sanhedrim have done truly and sincerely in that which they have undertaken for the house of Israel, then let them rejoice in Buonaparte, and let Buonaparte rejoice in them; or else let fire come out from Buonaparte and destroy the Sanhedrim. Judges 9." p. 36.

The author alludes to the attempts of the Missionary Society to entice his brethren from their religion, and says that they have inveigled only two or three individuals, who have been "well paid" for their conversion. Withdraw, he says, all worldly benefits, and the sincerity of these changelings will soon be discovered.

In common with all Jews, this writer erroneously considers the

truth of Christianity as synonymous with *the Divinity of Jesus of Nazareth*. He shews that Jesus cannot be received as God in consistency with the law of Moses; nor indeed, he adds, as a prophet, for the Christian faith dispenses with the eternal "witnesses of the covenant, circumcision and sabbath." But it behoves the Jews to reflect that the New Testament, which is the only rule of Christian belief and practice, teaches no other god than the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and enjoins nothing inconsistent with the Jews retaining their peculiarities and observing their ritual to the end of time. On this subject they would do well to consult Dr. Priestley's Letters to their nation.

Mr. Cohen states in a "postscript," that the arts and sciences are not sufficiently encouraged among the Jews. He himself, at a great expense, and with much labour, began to construct a machine for facilitating mowing and reaping; but failing in his expectations of support from "the opulent of his people," he was obliged to drop the scheme altogether. He acknowledges however, "the noble offer of his Grace the Duke of Bedford," of bearing him out in "the whole expense." He recommends the institution of a Jewish society for the encouragement of arts and sciences, "a measure which would (we admit,) redound to the honour of that nation."

ART. III. *Trihemeron Sacrum, or an abridged Preparation for receiving the Lord's Supper, with Forms of Service, and Rules of Abstinence to commence on Friday Noon, in the preceding week.* 24mo. pp. 46. Rivingtons. 1806.

It is curious to observe, how nearly our high-church divines approach to Popish principles, while at the same time they plead for the oppression of honest Papists. They are tender to their "Roman Catholic brethren," as they are called in the Tract before us, every where but at home.

This little manual is designed to revive the worst part of popery—its superstition; with regard to which, chiefly, the reformed religion is a blessing: for in point of metaphysical absurdity and unscriptural belief, the Protestants are not much behind the Papists. The author states that—the Lord's supper is *essentially necessary to salvation*; regrets that—our reformers "in their zeal for alteration," *abolished the days of weekly fasting or abstinence*; hopes that—"a revision of the liturgy, under the proper authorities will take place," with a view to re-establish some ecclesiastical

rules annulled at the reformation; and calls upon the legislature (such calls are, we observe, becoming common,) to *interfere* and "attach DISABILITIES and FINES to the neglect of the sacrament."

This recommendation to parliament—worthy of a monk of the darkest age—may excite the nonconforming reader's abhorrence; but the following directions will, it is probable, recal his good humour.

"It is recommended to the person who proposes receiving the sacrament, to begin his abstinence on the Friday at twelve o'clock, or at farthest at three o'clock. The quantity of food necessary for sustaining the body must be discretionary, as circumstances respecting health and strength of constitution shall direct; with this observation, that *fish, which in its utmost latitude, is the permitted article among Roman Catholics, affords where it abounds, the most nutritious as well as luxurious food*. This abstinence should have reference to what we drink as well as to what we eat; *all strong liquors are to be carefully avoided, and it might be well to abstain from the use of butter, with our morning or evening tea.*" Pref. p. 9.

ART. IV. *The Claims of the Establishment, a Sermon, preached August 30, 1807, at Croydon in Surry, by John Ireland, D. D. Prebendary of Westminster, and Vicar of Croydon.* 8vo. pp. 26. Hatchard, 1807.

This is a feeble attempt to support the base and wicked cry of "No Popery," and to bend the arguments of Locke and Paley into subservience to the views of the present ministry. The exceptions to toleration, unwisely admitted by these liberal writers, furnish our political preacher

with a plausible argument against their general principles.

He revives, though writing against Papists, the argument *jure divino*, and seems to consider this plea sufficient to silence both Calvinists (meaning we suppose Protestant Dissenters) and Catholics. He asserts (and throughout

the whole of his discourse he mistakes assertion for argument,) that the deprivation of civil rights is not persecution, and that toleration to be perfect must imply an exclusion from certain privileges. In concluding, the "Vicar of Croydon," puts it to "the conscience" of the Catholic, whether he ought not to submit to every hardship that the government of the country may in its wisdom impose upon him, in imitation of the primitive Christians, who, for an example to after believers, bore quietly "unprincipled persecution," and "supported government, though marked with the most bloody hostility to them!"

Is this an insidious blow at our religious rulers' cool and cruel irony? one would charitably hope so; for who would choose to tax a dignified clergyman of "the best constituted church in the world," with impudence bordering on profligacy, or folly approaching to idiocy?

Dr. Ireland avows himself the author of the "Letters of Fabius, addressed to Mr. Pitt, in the year 1808." This was an unnecessary display of frankness; the "Letters" we believe were never heard of beyond the bounds of the printing-office, and the name of their author is not likely, judging of him from the specimen before us, to drag them from oblivion.

ART. V. *The Student and Pastor; or Directions how to attain to Eminence and Usefulness in those respective characters. To which are added A Letter to a Friend, upon his Entrance on the Ministerial Office, and an Essay on Elocution and Pronunciation, by John Mason, M. A. New Editions with additions, and an Essay on Catechising, by Joshua Toulmin, D. D. 12mo. pp. 244. Symonds. 1807.*

Mr. Mason's "Student and Pastor," is a well known and generally approved work. It abounds with good sense and rational piety.

The "Letter to a Friend" is of the same class, judicious and serious.

In an "Essay on Elocution," more excellence is expected than in any other branch of writing. It is honourable to the reputation of Mr. Mason, that his Tract on this subject has long received the stamp of public approbation.

"In the course of a few years it went through three impressions. Mr. Dodsley, publisher, eminent for genius and taste, adopted it and inserted it in

the 'Preceptor.' It was originally published without the name of the author, and met in that state with considerable encouragement at one of our public Universities; but when Mr. Mason claimed it as his own, by prefixing his name to the second edition, that learned body is said to have scouted it from their walls as the work of a Dissenter." Pref. pp. xi. xii.

The present edition of these little works is rendered valuable by Dr. Toulmin's Notes, which represent him to the reader in the light of a rational Christian and a faithful pastor.

The "Essay on Catechising," is a very suitable appendix to the "Student and Pastor."

ART. VI. *A Concise View of the Suecession of Sacred Literature, in a Chronological Arrangement of Authors and their Works, from the Invention of Alphabetical Characters, to the Year of our Lord, 345. By Adam Clarke, A. M.* 12mo. pp. 312. London, 1807.

The author of this work, Mr. Adam Clarke, is already known to the public, not disadvantageously, by a bibliographical dictionary, published in successive volumes, and lately brought to a close. The object of that work was to furnish an account of the chief editions of the most valuable and curious books in various languages, intermixed with short critical observations and occasional anecdotes. It displayed an extensive acquaintance with subjects of bibliography; at the same time, in some parts, owing probably to want of leisure, a circumstance which may easily be inferred from the known engagements of the author, it was not executed with all that accuracy which is desirable in performances of that nature.

The present is a work somewhat similar in design, and requiring similar qualifications for its execution. It proposes to give an account of ecclesiastical writers, in chronological succession, from the earliest period till the invention of printing, containing short accounts of their lives, catalogues of their writings, analyses of some of their principal works, with notices of the *first* and the *best* editions of each author, and of the best translations which have appeared in the English language. The present volume extends to A. D. 345; another it is supposed, will complete the design.

The articles which we have particularly examined, appear to

have been executed with considerable accuracy. P. 39. The account of the pretended Aristeas, as is well known, is that six persons were deputed from each tribe for the translation of the Hebrew scriptures into Greek, in all seventy-two, whence the name of the version. P. 50. The account given of Mangey's Philo, if meant to describe the exterior splendour of the edition, is true; if intended to relate to the critical qualifications of the editor, is considerably over-rated; learned men both at home and abroad, have complained much of the faults of that edition. The convenient edition of Pfeiffer, might have been mentioned. P. 101. The memory of Napier, the inventor of logarithms, is somewhat insulted by the application of the vulgar proverb, "Ne sutor ultra crepidam," because he made a computation from the book of Revelation, of the duration of the world, which time has disproved. The fate of other calculators of future events from the same data should have saved him from this reproach. P. 109. The edition of the apostolical fathers by Cotelierius should have been mentioned. P. 280, 281. The editions of different works of Eusebius by R. Stephens, contain only the Greek.

The subject on which Mr. Clarke enters most largely into critical disquisition is that of the notorious text, 1 John, v. 7; which he honestly, though with some

reluctance, abandons to its merited fate. He however contends for a higher antiquity of the Dublin MS. (the only MS. containing the verse which has even the *slightest* title to notice,) than the opponents of its authority are willing to allow. In support of his opinion he furnishes a fac-simile of the spurious passage, and the two following verses, which he says, and we have no doubt with truth, is executed with greater accuracy than any preceding copy. Comparing this with the specimens of Greek palæography in Montfaucon, he supposes the Codex Montfortii to be of the thirteenth century. On the other hand, the best judges, and among them a critic who is more conversant with Greek MSS. than any other of the age, without hesitation say, that this Dublin copy, from its internal characters, cannot possibly be referred to a higher period than the fifteenth, and was most probably written in the sixteenth century. We are wholly disposed to abide by their decision. The opinion is perfectly unbiassed, for the age of the Dublin MS. is a circumstance of no moment in the general controversy. If written a thousand years ago, its testimony would be of no more weight than if written yesterday, for the interpolation, whenever inserted, was inserted by translation from the Vulgate, by some writer, who betrays himself by his language not to have been a native Greek, and has in the preceding verse introduced a corruption, the cause of which is obvious in the Latin copies, but which could not possibly have happened in the Greek.

Since therefore this passage, which we should be ashamed any longer to call the *disputed* text, is wanting in all the Greek MSS, (the exceptions which have been made, we scarcely need say, are unworthy of notice,) is unsupported through the whole of Greek antiquity, is found in no ancient version but the Latin, and is wanting in many of the best copies even of that version, we are at a loss to conceive on what grounds Mr. Clarke can say in his Preface, "I would not have my readers imagine, that the proofs against the authenticity of this passage are *demonstrative*,—to me they are not so; yet they are strongly *presumptive*." We at least find it difficult to conceive of moral evidence approaching more nearly to demonstration.

We cannot avoid on this occasion expressing some surprise, that our ecclesiastical rulers suffer this text still to disgrace our bibles as printed by public authority. Let them seriously reflect on this sentence of Griesbach. "Si tam pauci, dubii, suspecti, recentes testes, et argumenta tam levja, sufficerent ad demonstrandam lectionis cujusdam *γνησιότητα*, licet obstant tam multa, tamque gravia et testimonia et argumenta, nullum prorsus superesset in re critica veri falsique criterium, et *textus Novi Testamenti universus plane incertus esset atque dubius*." We perfectly agree with this writer, that if by such evidence the genuineness of this text is not disproved, there exist no laws of evidence by which the truth of Christianity itself can be proved. We must return to mysticism, and inward, unintelligible principles of faith.

We had intended to say a few words on the testimony of Cyprian, and the orthodox confession of faith offered to Hummeric, on which Mr. Clarke is disposed to lay some stress, but our limits will not permit, and the subject is scarcely worth the trouble of repeated investigation.

Mr. Clarke's object in this work is laudable, and both his example and his advice we strongly recommend to the notice of his brethren. In his style there is sometimes a whimsical quaintness which we should wish to see cor-

rected. Jehovah Tsebaoth is ranked as the first of the Hebrew classics, because the decalogue was written by the finger of God. "The book of Psalms," it is said, "is one of the most sublime productions ever exhibited to the world." This is praise which will not be contested. It is added, "and the most perfect poetic composition that perhaps the human genius can ever attain to, even under a divine inspiration." This, we conceive, is more than either a critic or a divine can have a right to say. D.

P O E T R Y.

On Mrs. Mary Ann Titford, who died just after Child-birth, March 3, 1808.

HARK the knell tolls, — portentous
sounds I fear;
Haply some friend, grim-visag'd death
has torn
From this fair earth, from each connexion dear,
And left surviving relatives to mourn.
Too true my fears; the much-loved
Mary's dead.
Weep ev'ry eye, bemoan her fate forlorn,
Frenzied with pain, her sainted spirit
fled
Soon as the unconscious innocent was
born.
Ah! hapless babe! on thee no mother
smiles,
No kiss maternal on thy lips imprest,
No soothing voice to soft repose beguiles,
No food nutritious yields to thee her
breast*.
Warm with devotion, free from bigot
spleen,
Thy mother worshipp'd at religion's
shrine;
To her, life's duties had no frowning
mein,
Nor forc'd her placid bosom to repine.

Deep in her breast tho' sickness plung'd
his dart,
And pallid hues spread o'er her face
benign,
Tho' torn with pain, her mild-unmur-
muring heart
Bow'd to her fate, with fortitude divine.
Sweet consolation! balm to sorrow deep!
MARY entomb'd was Virtue's favourite
child.
Fond, virtuous husband cease, ah! cease
to weep,
And yield thy soul to resignation mild.
Snatch'd from terrestrial scenes of grief
and care,
From wasting sorrow and heart-tortur-
ing pain,
Midst realms celestial and with angels
fair,
She lives where peace and rapture cease-
less reign.
Consoling thought! repress your mur-
m'ring sighs,
Bewailing parents, kindred, friends
sincere!
Has she not gain'd the bright, the im-
mortal prize,
Bliss ever blooming thro' the ETERNAL
YEAR?
Fort-street, Spitalfields.

J. S.

* The infant is since dead.

MONTHLY RETROSPECT OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS;

OR,

The Christian's Survey of the Political World.

THE political events of the present day are fraught with wonder and astonishment. The great designs of Providence are carrying forward, and in vain does the arm of flesh attempt to resist them. But how would our fathers have been astonished at events, which have created with us no surprise, and by the majority of people have not been noticed. In one day, since our last, a newspaper announced the following events that had taken place the preceding day. High mass was performed in the chapel of the Portuguese ambassador, the pope's nuncio sitting in a chair of state by the great altar, and a secretary of state, with several of the nobility, assisting at this grand ceremony. A hundred years ago, nay thirty years ago, the presence of a pope's nuncio in England would have excited universal alarm, and a secretary of state in those days would not have had the courage to be in company with him, much less to have been in the same chapel with him, whilst mass was saying. This is a pleasing proof, that much of the religious intolerance, which has so disgraced the protestant world, and particularly the people of the united kingdom, is worn away. Happy should we be, if it were entirely removed; and that, upon the true Christian principle, that the religion of Christ was established in our hearts, and that we disdained to ill treat our brethren, or to deprive them of any civil rights on account of their religious persuasion.

In the same paper that announced the solemn mass in the Portuguese chapel before the pope's nuncio and a secretary of state, we read another document relative to popery, of greater importance, and which ought to excite great rejoicing in the protestant world. An order has been issued by the French general for the cardinals to quit Rome, and the pretended holy father was terribly alarmed on this occasion. He foresaw himself left destitute of all counsel and advice, and his infallibility

it seems was not sufficient for the guidance of the community, still bending beneath his spiritual yoke. He issued his mandate to his cardinals, not to quit Rome but by force, and even then not to move farther from Rome than they were compelled to do. The force we hope, has been exerted; and we shall feel none of those compunctions which false compassion endeavours to excite. That dominion, raised by tyranny and fraud, must be subdued: and, if it should end in the holy father being separated from all his counsellors, and rendered utterly incapable of executing another act of his pretended spiritual authority, we shall adore that Providence which has permitted us to see the end of the vilest tyranny that was ever imposed upon mankind.

Who could have imagined, thirty years ago, that this seat of fraud should be in such a condition? That the successor of those wicked men, who trampled upon the necks of kings and people, should in so short a time be reduced to such an abject state of dependance? God grant that his tyranny may not again revive! that his pretences at infallibility may become the laughing stock of all mankind! that his residence may be purged entirely of the unclean beasts that inhabit it! and that the inhabitants of the world, freed from his delusions, may look to Christ and to the words of scripture, and not to any pretended vicar of our lord and master.

Yet, in wishing the downfall of papal tyranny and papal superstition, we would be far from injuring our catholic brethren in their mode of worship, which is perfectly independent of the pope or his miserable conclave: we read with pleasure the protest of several peers on the catholic question, in the same paper, and this third singularity is a proof to us, that papal superstition soon must fall. Protestants have been very guilty in their mode of attacking it. They have used force instead of argument. They have lost sight of the spirit of the

gospel, and attacking with carnal weapons their deluded brethren, have had the mortification of seeing, that they clung still more closely to their errors. A different conduct would have long ago made a material change. If the protestants, instead of persecuting their catholic brethren in Ireland, and provoking them to madness, had held out to them the right hand of fellowship, had shewn in their own conduct the good fruits of religion, had made the scriptures their guide, and appealed to them alone, Ireland at this time, would not see popery the predominant religion, but would have renounced falsehood for truth. But do protestants differ so much from papists, that any one reflecting man should think it a matter of importance, to which sect he belongs? If one side says "Our pope is infallible;" if the other side says "A teacher, who teaches aught against our articles or creeds or confessions shall be punished;" there must be a very great difference indeed in the opinions taught by these parties, for a person to give credit to either. Christ's yoke is easy and his burden is light; but the chains and fetters of these traditional and unscriptural Christians are galling, and not to be borne, however gilded over by fashion and popular opinion.

The petition of the Irish catholics for liberty of conscience has been rejected: but the debate upon it has done great good. The enemies to liberty of conscience and freedom of religion, have been completely driven out of the field of argument. Never were more miserable subterfuges heard. The advocates for religious toleration carried every thing before them, as far as argument and eloquence could avail in both houses: but numbers prevailed. On counting votes they were in a minority. Yet every friend to religion must rejoice, that even among the bishops one voice was heard in favour of true Christian principles. The bishop of Norwich has done himself immortal honour. His speech has been read with general approbation all over the united kingdom. He stood upon the true ground of Christian charity and love, that the friends of true religion must be friends to religious liberty, and that it was to betray the cause of truth, to suppose that any evil could arise by extending liberty of conscience to all. Great will be the effect of this speech every where, but

particularly in his own diocese, where he is generally beloved, and which he kept totally free from the yell of "No popery," when it was lately raised for such base and sinister purposes.

The discussion, we say, has done good, but it will not be seen for some time. The question was taken up on a very narrow ground, the relief of the catholics in Ireland: but are they the only persons, whose case calls out for relief? An enlightened statesman, who is also a venerable presbyter of the church of England*, has seen the question in its true light, and with a truly patriotic and at the same time a truly Christian spirit, he wishes to see our code of laws freed entirely from all the intolerant statutes with which it is disgraced. He has since our last, published an excellent pamphlet, in which he recommends "a more extended discussion in favour of liberty of conscience," and he wishes it to be carried on with that temperance and moderation, that all men may see the expediency and propriety of the measure. He has begun this measure in concert with several gentlemen and clergymen of the church of England, only one dissenter having been permitted to sign the paper. He justly considers, "that on this principle alone, can protestants justify their separation from the church of Rome; on this alone can Christianity accomplish the gracious purpose of its divine author, can become the religion of the world, and the source of continual improvement in virtue and happiness to all mankind." The true Christian views these efforts with pleasure. He rejoices to see the attempts made by men to disentangle themselves from error. The grand point however is to teach men to be Christians, that is, to acknowledge Christ as their lord; and he who believes this true doctrine, must hold up his hand against every infringement of the right of conscience.

What is it indeed that the church of England-man and the papist are contending about? Why should they slight each other so much? Are they not both equally intolerant? and do they not in the same creed hold out to eternal perdition those of a different faith? "No!" says the church of England-man boldly, "No! I do not believe so." "Look at the Athanasian creed," we say, "which is ordered to be said or sung in your churches." "But I never read it," he re-

* Mr. Wyvill.

plies, as a church of England man said to us the other day, "and I sit down, when it is read." "Then you are not a member of the church of England; or, if you wish to side with it in preference to other sects, you ought to be for toleration, since you want toleration yourself." In the discussion proposed by Mr. Wyvill, we wish that all churches should be examined. Dissenters' meetings, as well as established Churches, require to be taught the first rudiments of Christianity. Love one another. The intolerant crucify Christ, and whatever may be the effect of the discussion or of future petitions, the true Christian can consider the necessity of them, only as sorrowful instances of the little progress that Christianity has made among us. He who studies the scriptures for himself, looks for the day, when the kingdoms of the world shall become the kingdoms of the Lord and his Christ, instead of attempting to set up an authority paramount to that of our Saviour.

The sentence of Mr. Stone has excited some sensation among the reflecting part of the community. The bigots and the worldly-minded are outrageously against him; but the reflecting clergymen, without entering into any question on his opinions, view the manner in which he has been treated, with great horror and disgust. They say, that the revival of an obsolete statute, without the proof of one single person being condemned in the manner that Mr. Stone has been, is not only a thing unheard of for many years in our country, but would more become an advocate for torture, than the mildness of the church of England. They say too, that the statute of Queen Elizabeth, was never meant to be enforced in the manner in which it has been in this instance, to the total exclusion of the scriptures: for, that in the discussions of her days, her divines referred to the scriptures, and Mr. Stone would have been adjudged to act against the scriptures, and to reason falsely, before they would have thought of condemning him. They cannot see in the act of parliament, the least intimation of a spiritual court, framed of civilians: only one court is indeed mentioned, the high commission court, but that consisted partly of divines and partly of eminent statesmen, not of technical lawyers. They inquire what is to be the state of cler-

gymen, if the new rule were to be acted up to, and upon every supposed deviation in a sermon from the articles, the bishop, instead of exercising his pastoral care and paternal authority, in questioning his brother, should immediately convent him into a criminal court. They say too, and in this the true Christian must perfectly agree with them, that the whole proceeding is contrary to the discipline, laid down by St. Paul; but that argument was never discussed in Doctors' Commons. Mr. Stone's case is before another civil doctor, and we see that the matter will not easily end. The great question is, whether Mr. Stone is not the truest friend, as he calls himself, to the church of England: for either he is right or he is wrong in his opinions. If he is right in his opinions, he has properly, and like a true son of the church, called upon it to revoke its errors. If he is wrong, he has certainly acted in obedience to his vow at ordination: and it becomes a church to treat an aged presbyter, upwards of seventy years of age, with some respect at least, and to shew in what manner the study of fifty years has been mis-applied.

In the foreign political world, Spain is the great object of attention, and hopes are entertained in this country, that insurrection rages in various provinces. The Spaniards are placed in a very strange situation. Deprived of both their kings, with a foreign army in the heart of their country, how are they to act? All the bonds of union are broken, and for what are they to fight? They are to fight for their country, it is said, and drive out the French, and then settle their government as they please. But is there any reason to expect a better government in the end, if framed by Spaniards rather than Frenchmen? The men used to the management of their affairs, are chiefly churchmen, and no prospect appears as yet of enlargement of mind in any of their proceedings. It is impossible that the great mass of the people should be worse off under the government of the French, than under their late princes and clergy. Their ancient spirit has been broken, and we expect them to act with that ancient spirit. If that spirit should revive, not only the French would suffer, but all the supporters of the former tyranny, and Spain would exhibit scenes similar to those in the re-

Mrs. Sarah Cooke

volution of France. Little indeed do we know of the internal state of Spain. One thing however is certain, that Cadiz would not admit our troops within its walls, nor suffer us to have possession of its fleet. The French sovereign has laid his plan too wisely, to fear much from our interference, and it is probable, that every thing will be settled at Bayonne; the Cortez will be renewed; the Inquisition destroyed; and the whole received with general satisfaction in Spain. Some one province may perhaps make a few struggles, and assisted by England be depopulated like the Vendée.

In Sweden, better hopes are said to be entertained by its king. The Russians have been checked in Finland, and the French have not yet landed in Sweden. Troops from England have arrived at Gottenburgh; but where they are to

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act is, it seems, not settled. Another month will afford more accurate accounts.

Austria is reported to be in great agitation. Troops are raised with great alacrity, and it was rumoured, that they were destined to act against the great sovereign of Europe. Vain hopes! Upon what foundation can they have been erected? His influence is too firmly fixed. He is still at Bayonne, directing at his ease the councils of Europe, and when he has settled Spain, to what point he will direct his attention, the cabinets of Europe wait submissively for his resolves. Having freed Spain from its horrid Inquisition, its priests, and its monks, he may probably lower the crescent of Mahomet, and rescue the Greek church from the tyranny of its masters, and its own vile superstitions.

OBITUARY.

Died at Alresford, Hants, Thursday the 12th of May, Mrs. SARAH COOKE, wife of Mr. Thomas Cooke, in the 26th year of her age. Six days previous to her dissolution, she was delivered of twins, one of which was still-born and the other survived only a few hours. On that day week her remains, in one coffin, together with those of her *three* children (for the *eldest* was still-born seven months before,) taken up from the church-yard and being put into another coffin, were conveyed to Newport, in the Isle of Wight, when they were interred in the family vault of Thomas Cooke, Esq. sen. in the church-yard of that town. The following Sunday, the Rev. Mr. Tingecombe delivered at the General Baptist place of worship, an appropriate and affecting discourse from 1 Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians, chap. xv. v. 55. *O death, where is thy sting?* The hymns were sung in a soft and pathetic manner, as was also POPE's *dying Christian*, accompanied by the organ at the close of the service. The whole was conducted with an interesting solemnity, and left a lasting impression on the heart. The moralist and divine have ever considered the evanescent nature of life, a fruitful

subject of reflection, and on the present distressing occasion there is abundant matter for meditation. *What is your life,—is it not a vapour that appeareth for a little time and then vanisheth away!*

J. E.

Died at Portsmouth in his 67th year, Sir JOHN CARTER, Knt. a character generally and most deservedly respected and valued throughout the county, whether considered in a public or private capacity. His parents were both Dissenters, and belonging to that denomination, designated by the term, rational dissenters. His father was a merchant of considerable eminence and of invincible integrity, in this town. From him he inherited a strong and unshaken attachment to those political principles which seated the house of Hanover on the throne of England. And though obliged occasionally to comply with that disgraceful statute which appoints, as a necessary qualification for discharging the duties of a magistrate, the receiving the Lord's supper agreeably to the forms of the established church, he remained firm to the principles of dissent from the doctrines and worship of that church.

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He was born on the 16th December 1741, and in September 1763, was elected an alderman of this borough. About the year 1768 or 9, he began to act as a magistrate; and never was there one who attended to the duties of that important office, with more assiduity, impartiality, and zeal for the interests and honour of his country, for the accommodation and comfort of his neighbours, or the prompt and mild administration of justice to all.

At Michaelmas, 1769, he was first chosen mayor of this borough. In the summer of 1773, during his second mayoralty, the king made his first visit to Portsmouth, where he was received with much greater marks of affection and loyalty, than he had been given to expect. Desirous to make some return to his good people of Portsmouth for their attentions to him, he wished to confer the honour of knighthood on their mayor; a title, at that time, held in higher estimation than, from its repeated prostitution, it now is. Of this honour, Mr Carter was not in the least ambitious; and, indeed, so averse from it were both he and Mrs. Carter, that he declined it. He was informed that his Majesty considered this refusal as proceeding from a disregard in the Carter family to the royal favour; this consideration, and the earnest persuasion of his friends, induced him to yield a reluctant compliance: he was accordingly knighted on the 23d of June 1773. In the summer of 1782, his father retired from Portsmouth into Sussex, and left the direction of the Carter influence * in the corporation to this, his oldest son. This influence he invariably used with the greatest possible disinterestedness, with the nicest sense of honour, with the purest principles of independence, and with the most scrupulous integrity. Wholly unambitious, he sought neither to promote his own interests, nor the aggrandizement of any part of his family; neither for whom nor himself would he ever ask a favour. The interests and welfare of others were uniformly the objects of his pursuit.

In the year 1784, he was appointed Sheriff of the county; which honourable office he filled to the entire satisfaction of all parties, with and dignity to himself.

In the years 1782, 6, and 9, he was severally elected to the office of chief magistrate in this town; and again in 1793: it was during this, his 6th mayoralty, that the king, in the summer of 1794, made his third and last visit to this port. His majesty's person on this as on his former visits, was immediately attended by the peace-officers of the corporation; and what few of the military accompanied him in his walks, always followed the civil power.

During the mutiny at Spithead, in the spring of 1797, Sir John Carter rendered a very essential service to the town and country by his mild, conciliating, and patient conduct. The sailors having lost three of their comrades, in consequence of the resistance made to their going on board the London, then bearing the flag of Admiral Colpoys, wished to bury them in Kingston church-yard, and to carry them in procession through the town of Portsmouth. This request was most positively refused them by the governor. They then applied to Sir John Carter, to grant their request, who endeavoured to convince the governor of the propriety and necessity of complying with it, declaring that he would be answerable for the peace of the town and the orderly conduct of the sailors. The governor would not be prevailed on, and prepared for resistance, and resistance, on both sides, would, most probably, have been resorted to, had not the calmness, the perseverance, and forbearance of Sir John Carter at length compromised the affair, by obtaining permission for the sailors to pass through the garrison of Portsmouth in procession, but the bodies to be landed at the Common Hard, in Portsea, where the procession was to join them. For soliciting and obtaining this indulgence to the sailors, he was stigmatized as a "jacobin," and loaded with many opprobrious epithets by persons whose high stations, at least, should have taught them better, and which he, though possessing the

* The writer of this article purposely avoids entering into the long and severe contest between the Carter interest and the late Lord Sandwich, then first Lord of the Admiralty, for this influence, as not placing the character of Sir John Carter in any new point of view.

Sir John Carter, Knt.

very "milk of human kindness," was under the necessity of resenting, by declining all farther intercourse with them. So great was Sir John Carter's influence over the sailors, that they most scrupulously adhered to the terms he prescribed to them, in their procession to the grave. Two of their comrades having become "a little groggy," after they came on shore, they carefully locked them up in a room by themselves, lest they should be disposed to become quarrelsome or be unable to conduct themselves with propriety. It was a most interesting spectacle. Sir John accompanied them himself through the garrison, to prevent any insult being offered to them: at the Common Hall, he was joined by Mr. Godwin, the friend and associate of his youth, and a very worthy magistrate of this borough: they attended the procession till it passed the fortifications at Portsea: every thing was conducted with the greatest decorum: when the sailors returned and were sent off to their respective ships, two or three of the managing delegates came to Sir John, to inform him that the men were all gone on board, and to thank him for his "great goodness" to them. Sir John seized the opportunity of inquiring after their admiral, as these delegates belonged to the London: "do you know him your honour?" Yes, I have a great respect for him, and I hope you will not do him any harm: "no, by G—d, your honour, he shall not be hurt." It was at that time, imagined Admiral Colpoys would be hung at the yard-arm, and he had prepared for this event by arranging his affairs and making his will: in this will he had left the widows of the two men who were so unfortunately killed, an annuity of 20l. each. The next morning, however, the admiral was privately, unexpectedly, and safely brought on shore, though pursued by a boat from the Mars, as soon as they suspected what was transacting; the delegates brought him to Sir John Carter and delivered him to his care; they then desired a receipt for him, as a proof to their comrades of their having safely delivered him into the hands of the civil power. The admiral, on his first appearance at Court, afterwards acknowledged to the king that he owed his life to Sir John Carter, and assured his majesty that his principles were misin-

terpreted and his conduct misrepresented, and that he had not a more faithful and worthy subject in his dominions. The honourable influence which the suavity of his manners, his gentle unassuming demeanour, his kind unostentatious deportment obtained for him, was most usefully conspicuous during the riots, on account of the scarcity in July, 1797; and also during a mutiny among the Buckinghamshire militia, among whom he fearlessly mixed, exhorting and prevailing with them to return to their duty. Indeed, wherever he could be useful, either by personal exertions, by his influence, or by persuasion, there he was constantly to be found. He was denounced, at the head of a long list of inhabitants of this town, to Mr. Reeves as a "jacobin" and an enemy to his king and country. A gentleman of rank who belonged to that association, on seeing this immediately struck his own name out of the list of the committee and association. The Duke of Portland, then Secretary of State for the home department, received a very strong letter against him, which letter his Grace sent to Sir John, assuring him at the same time, that the government placed the utmost confidence in his honour, integrity, and patriotism, and concluded by proposing to offer a large reward for the discovery of the writer; this, with a dignified consciousness of the purity of his conduct, Sir John declined, though from some well-established conjectures, the discovery might possibly have been easily made. And this inestimable consciousness enabled him to meet with the greatest composure, every attempt which the rancour and violence of party-rage made, to sully his reputation and destroy his influence. So pure, so disinterested, so honourable were his political principles, that when, in the year 1806, he was offered a baronetage by Mr. Fox, he declined it, and on the ground that he believed the offer to have been made for his undeviating attachment to the characteristic politics of that great man; and that to accept it, would be a manifest departure from his principles. It was these principles which induced him to offer a seat in parliament for the borough of Portsmouth, to that distinguished friend of liberty, Thomas Erskine. The same principles led him to

Sir John Carter, Knt.

make a similar offer to that most respectable, independent, and highly valued character, Sir Thomas Miller, Bart. who has declared that nothing, but the truly honourable way in which the seat was offered to him, could have induced him to return again to the fatigues of parliamentary duties. It was his conciliating temper which led him during the late violence of party, to propose as the other representative, some moderate member of the administration: in the first instance the late Lord Hugh Seymour, and afterwards Captain, now Admiral Markham, in compliment to their common friend the Earl of St. Vincent. Some persons are apprehensive, but on what grounds is best known to themselves, that those who succeed to the leading influence in the corporation will not preserve the same independence of mind, the same purity of political principle, nor the same disinterested conduct. In the year 1796, he was again elected mayor, as also in the year 1800, and in 1804, he filled the chair of chief magistrate for the ninth and last time. Whether he acted as mayor, or as a magistrate for the borough, or county, he was uniformly mild, impartial, and upright; nor was he ever deterred by personal difficulties or inconveniences, from a faithful, active, and even minute attendance on the widely extended duties of his laborious office. The poor ever found in him, a friend; and the unfortunate, a protector. He was ever willing and ready to afford relief by his purse, or to render assistance by his advice. The peace, comfort, and happiness of others, and not his own interest, were unwearied objects of his pursuit. To the widow and the fatherless, he was a father and a guardian. Many persons prevailed on him to undertake the direction of their concerns, by which he set their minds at ease: to these affairs he was equally, or if possible, more attentive than to his own. Never was there a character, in which there was less of self, than in his.

It were superfluous to add, in what manner such a man filled the respective relations of son and brother, husband and father, friend and master. He preserved through life, a guileless simplicity of manners, an unaffected modesty, and an unassuming deportment. Those who knew him will long recol-

lect his placid, frank, and benignant countenance—the true index of his heart and mind.

His unceasing attention to the duties he was called to perform, the great interest he took in the concerns of his friends, and those who entrusted their affairs to him, and the constant exertion of mind and body these varied duties required, contributed to wear out a constitution not naturally strong. For two or three years his friends have remarked with grief, the gradual decline of his health. He quitted life with the same quietness and composure he had passed through it. His lamp went gently out; he drew his last breath during sleep; and died at twenty minutes past three in the afternoon, of the 18th of May.

His servants and numerous tenantry, spontaneously paid the same external tribute of affection and regard they pay to a near relative, by shutting up their houses. The internal sense of the loss they had sustained was manifested not merely by the tears shed at his funeral, but by constant ejaculations of sorrow and lamentation.

A family vault was built for him in the burying ground of the Unitarian dissenters of this town; of which society he was nearly the oldest member. This society, in public testimony of the high estimation in which they held his character, of the love they bear to his numerous and amiable virtues, and of the regard they feel for his memory, wear, for one month, the livery of grief and sorrow. His funeral took place at seven o'clock in the morning of the 25th of May, and was as unostentatious as his life had been. The burying ground being only a short distance from his house, he was carried thither by eight of his servants, and followed by his son, his youngest and only surviving brother, and his oldest nephew. The hour and day were wished by the family to be kept as private as possible; but so anxious were the people to pay their last tribute of affection and esteem to him that, on the mornings of the 23d and 24th, great numbers were assembled before six o'clock in the morning; and on the morning of the interment, many hundreds were waiting more than an hour for admission into the chapel. The Southern Unitarian society have in him lost a valuable member. Indeed,

Mrs. Fawcett.

the general loss sustained by his death, no individual can replace; nor can any one singly, occupy the station he filled in society.

He has left a widow and six children to lament the loss of one of the kindest and most affectionate of husbands, of one of the most attentive and fondest fathers. The oldest is married to Captain Eveleigh, of the Royal Engineers, the second to Captain Giffard, of the Royal Navy, and Lieutenant-governor of the Royal Naval College, in the Dock-yard. The remaining three daughters are unmarried. His son is a minor; a young man of very amiable manners and the most promising talents; he was educated under the modest but classic Cogan, of Higham-hill, Walthamstow; and is now studying at Trinity College, Cambridge, for the common law.

Portsmouth.

On Saturday evening May 14th, died in the 61st year of her age, Mrs. FAWCETT, the wife of the Rev. Samuel Fawcett, of Mountfield-house, near Bridport. She was in so good a state of health the preceding Lord's day, as to be able to attend public worship three times. A fever seized her on the Monday morning, which baffled all medical skill to stop its progress. For the first three days, she had the perfect use of her rational faculties, and though very restless and in considerable pain, expressed a cheerful resignation to the divine will, respecting the result of her disorder. On the fourth day, the fever affected her head, and she was from that time generally delirious till her death. Her remains were, on the succeeding Tuesday, deposited in her family vault in Crewkerne church.

Mrs. Fawcett was very generally respected, but her intimate friends who were best able to appreciate her worth, most highly esteemed and valued her, for the excellent qualities by which she was distinguished. She so regularly discharged the various duties of life, as to be always prepared for every event. With respect to devotional exercises and domestic occupations, no one could more closely observe the apostolic precept, "let all things be done decently and in order." Her aversion to indolence, induced her to devote a considerable part of her time to some useful active em-

ployment, and she has left behind her valuable memorials of her patient industry and unwearied perseverance. Strict in the observance of the forms of religion, she was not, as is too often the case, a stranger to the benign power of it. So far from having a spark of that pharisaic spiritual pride, the language of which is "stand thou aside, for I am holier than thou," she was eminent for humility, a pleasing and amiable trait in her character. When her spirits were not depressed by bodily infirmities, or by tender recollections of her children, who were snatched in early youth, from their affectionate parents, by the unsparing hand of death, she was not only innocently cheerful but even facetious.

Trained up in the school of affliction, she had learnt "to feel another's woes." She was sympathizing and compassionate to the afflicted, and more frequently went to "the house of mourning, than to the house of feasting." The last visit that she made was on the Sunday preceding her death, to a respectable lady confined by sickness, the wife of Mr. Joseph Downe, of Bridport. Before the close of the week, they had both finished their mortal course; and the same day on which the one was interred, the other was conveyed to her silent mansion. How precarious is human life! By what a slender tie do we hold our dearest friendships on earth! and how valuable is the gospel, which, by revealing the doctrine of immortality, and giving a sure pledge of it in the resurrection of Jesus Christ, affords Christians an abundant source of consolation on the death of their pious friends, and in the serious contemplation of their own dissolution! What system of either ancient philosophy or modern infidelity, can in this point of view, be compared with Christianity!

In religious sentiments, Mrs. Fawcett was a professed Calvinist. Her regards however, were not confined to persons of that respectable class, but extended to Christians of other denominations. Though the views of the writer of this short sketch, differed on some points of religious doctrine very considerably from those she entertained, he never experienced from her (during the 13 years he had the happiness of living with her and her beloved partner, his much respected friend) the least slight on account

of his opinions. Their harmony was not hereby interrupted for a moment. Her friendship was steady and uniform, and none but words of kindness to him ever dropt from her lips. Were Christians of every denomination to cultivate such an amiable disposition, and allow to each other without censure, the exercise of the unalienable right of private judgment in matters of religion, they would, amidst a variety of discordant sentiments, maintain the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace and love, and thus most creditably adorn and most effectually recommend the cause of Christianity.

T. HOWE.

Bridport, June 13, 1808.

On Monday, May 23d. at Chester-ton, near ambridge, aged 75, Mrs. ROBINSON, relict of the Rev. Robert Robinson. Her maiden name was Ellen Payne. Mr. Robinson married her, while both were resident at Nor-wich, in the year 1759. He received with her, as he states in one of his published letters, an hundred pounds. She bore him twelve children. To have been the wife of so extraordinary a man was no light distinction. Mrs. R. is described as having studied, and contributed to, her husband's domestic happi-ness.

On Friday June 17th died at Cotting-ham, Mrs. BRIGGS, wife of Mr. Christopher Briggs, one of the deacons

of the Unitarian church, Bowl-alley lane, Hull.

Animated by sincere and fervent, but unostentatious piety, few women have filled their sphere with more *exemplary propriety* in the constant exercise of the duties of a wife and a mother.

Her numerous offspring were trained to knowledge and virtue by the exhibi-tion of the greatest placidity of temper and mildness of demeanor, united with undeviating resolution and unshaken firmness respecting every plan of instruction or mode of correction she thought necessary to be pursued. The result was the *pleasing and interesting* sight of a large family of children equally loving and beloved, each know-ing their place and proceeding through the daily routine of domestic engage-ments with the regularity, facility and cheerfulness which marked their habi-tation as the "place where the Chris-tians lived."

The affliction that terminated in the death of this excellent woman, was sin-gularly painful, distressing and long protracted; yet from her no murmuring word escaped. Her eyes beamed with kindness and benevolence to her family and friends who were around her; her heart glowed with sentiments of vene-ration, resignation and gratitude to her God. To his hands she committed her affectionate husband and endeared chil-dren, with the pleasing hope of meeting them again, in due time, to part no more for ever.

W. S.

INTELLIGENCE.

ANNUAL ASSEMBLY OF GENERAL BAPTISTS.

This assembly was held as usual, on the Tuesday in Whitsun-week, June 7th. The usual routine of business was gone through. The meeting was numerous and harmonious.—Religious service began at 11 o'clock. The Rev. J. Evans, read the scriptures and the hymns; the Rev. J. Jeffery, of Horsham, prayed; and the Rev. R. Wright, of Wisbeach, preached and concluded in prayer. The audience was considerable: Mr. Wright's discourse was appropriate and impres-sive; he drew irresistibly the attention

of his auditors, and was heard with uni-versal satisfaction and pleasure. His text was Phil. i. 17. *I am set for the defence of the gospel.*

The object of the preacher was to produce an increase of zeal and liberal exertion in the cause of truth and righteousness among his brethren. He began with stating that the apostle showed the steadfastness of his faith by his zealous and unwearied exertions to promote the gospel; and contended that though in the first place, the miracles

which were wrought by the apostles were essential to the early rapid success of Christianity; yet, the zeal and activity of the first Christian teachers and their adherents had a material influence in producing the effects which attended their labours; and enforced the imitation of their liberality, zeal, and persevering exertions. "If," said he, "we become lukewarm and inert, the best of causes will languish under our hands, we shall have to complain, *my leanness, my leanness*, the precious words of truth will freeze on our lips, we shall work no deliverance in the earth." Mr. W. exhibited the considerations which should stimulate our zeal and persevering exertions in support of the pure gospel.

1. That it is of the highest authority, as it originated with God, was communicated to the world by the most glorious of all his messengers, confirmed by the most signal miracles, and that Jesus endured all his sufferings in its defence, and sealed it with his blood.
2. That the gospel is of the greatest importance to mankind, as it reveals the character of the one and only God, is the word of salvation, and the only sure record of eternal life.
3. That the gospel is calculated to produce the most happy effects, as its tendency is to enlighten the mind, to make men virtuous and good, to unite them in the bonds of mutual love, and to lead them to the enjoyment of the most solid and durable peace.
4. That if the friends of truth are inactive its enemies will not be so.
5. That mistakes respecting the leading doctrines of Christianity are not innoxious.
6. That the circumstances of the times in which we live, should stimulate us to make every possible exertion for the promotion of pure uncorrupted Christianity.—The preacher then attempted to show what Christians should do if they would promote the pure gospel. He began with exhorting them not to attempt to throw the whole of the work on their ministers, reminding them that, though ministers are to take the lead, they must assist and promote their efforts. He showed that all are called to promote the gospel and that if they would do it, they must first seek to understand the gospel for themselves, and be free and fearless in their inquiries after truth.
2. They must live under the influence of the gospel and be imbued with its spirit.
3. They must adorn it in their lives.
4. That as the

gospel is promoted by public teaching, Christians are to promote it by providing for the education of pious and zealous young men for the ministry.

5. By enabling their ministers to live independent of worldly business, that they may devote themselves wholly to the work.
6. By promoting a serious and steady attendance on their ministry.
7. By assisting their ministers in the circulation of books, the formation of schools for the children of the poor, and in every practicable plan of benevolence.
8. By free and pious conversation with their ministers, with each other, and with their neighbours and acquaintance, and in particular by instructing their families, &c.
9. By doing all they can to promote the general diffusion of rational views of the gospel, and practical godliness.

Mr. W. noticed the obstacles there are to the success of the gospel in its purity, and observed that these, instead of discouraging should stimulate our zeal the more, as truth must ultimately prevail, and no good effort properly directed, can fail of sooner or later producing important effects. He exhorted his brethren to unite with those who show by their exertions they are set for the defence of the gospel; and concluded by shewing that the faithful servants of the Lord will receive a glorious reward.

After reading this abstract of the sermon, the reader will no doubt feel, with us, a wish that it might appear in print. It would be generally useful in the General Baptist body, and indeed amongst other denominations.—The friends afterwards dined together at the King's-head tavern, Poutry. About 60 persons sat down to dinner; at which, as well as at the religious service, we observed several persons present, not belonging to the general Baptists. The growing union of the friends of rational religion of every sect is the most promising feature in the character of the present times. After dinner Mr. Wright called the attention of the company to the subject of the *Monthly Repository*; the success of which is owing in a considerable degree to the exertions of the antient and liberal denomination whose meeting is here recorded.—Although the assembly was as fully attended as has been usual, there were some persons absent who have heretofore been considered as members, and absent, it is

thought, on the ground of religious opinion. In fact, the Trinitarian part of the General Baptists has been for a long time gradually diminishing, and is at length from secessions or conversions, become nearly extinct in the old connexion, which consist almost entirely of Unitarians, meaning by that term, what it strictly denotes, Anti-trinitarians. In this proper sense of the term, we should rejoice to hear that this denomination adopted the appellation *Unitarian*, in preference to that of *General Baptists*. An opinion concerning the great object of worship forms a more

natural and reasonable distinction, in the present state of Christendom, than an opinion concerning the extent of Christian redemption. But we make the suggestion with diffidence, and beg that it may be received with candour. We respect and esteem our General Baptist brethren. They are the only body of Christians, connected by church discipline or rather by Christian fellowship, who encourage freedom of inquiry and exercise unbounded liberality. Peace be within their dwellings, prosperity within their churches!

GENERAL MEETING OF THE UNITARIAN FUND.

The fourth general meeting of this Society, was held on the Wednesday in Whitsun-week, June 8th, in the Unitarian chapel, Parliament-court, London. The religious services of the day were introduced by the Rev. Robert Aspland, with reading the scriptures and prayer; the Rev. James Lyons, of Hull, (of whom see an account, p. 166 and 272) preached the annual sermon; and the Rev. Abraham Bennett, of Ditchling, concluded with prayer — Mr. Lyons, from Gal. vi. 9. *And let us not be weary in well doing; for in due season we shall reap if we faint not*, shewed that pursuing the object of the Unitarian Fund was *well-doing*, pointed out the obstacles to success, and laid down the grounds of encouragement. The sermon displayed considerable ability, and from the manner of its delivery as well as from the matter it contained, was exceedingly impressive and affecting. The preacher drew a delicate but striking picture of the ever-memorable Dr. Priestley, which no one was at a loss to understand; and another of an Unitarian missionary, which drew the eyes of all the auditors to a gentleman present, whose name and labours are familiar to our readers. The history of Mr. Lyons, recently made known, added inexpressible force to many of his observations. His feelings were evidently much agitated in certain parts of the discourse, and the congregation sympathized with him. — A general and unanimous wish was felt by the auditory that the sermon might be published; and as it was understood that the society could not, as such, undertake any publication (excepting reports of its own

proceedings,) individuals brought in their subscriptions to the secretary, amounting to more than *twenty guineas*. In a short time therefore, the public will have an opportunity of judging of the correctness of our description. The sermon cannot be expected to please so much in reading as on the delivery, but we shall be much disappointed if it do not prove universally interesting. — Immediately after the public service, the *fourth report* of the committee was read by the secretary, Mr. Aspland. It was shorter than the two former printed reports, but it is hoped not less important or encouraging. It announced the receipt of a benefaction of twenty guineas from America. A considerable part of it was occupied with Mr. Lyons's missionary tour in Scotland, which appears to have been not without considerable success. For further particulars our readers must wait for its publication, which will take place in a few days. [N. B. A copy of the report will be sent to every subscriber in the district of the three-penny post. Country subscribers are requested to direct the secretary, *without any expense of postage*, how their copies shall be delivered.] The congregation at the chapel was more numerous than on any former occasion, and highly respectable, and the collection at the doors liberal. — In the formation of the society for business, Joseph Holden, Esq. was called to the chair. The report of the committee was adopted and ordered to be printed. The treasurer's report was delivered and received with high satisfaction. The finances of the fund are improved since the meeting in October, notwithstanding

standing an extraordinary expenditure. The following gentlemen were chosen into office the ensuing year:

Treasurer.

John Christie, Esq. 52, Mark-lane.

Secretary.

Rev. Robert Aspland, Hackney.

Committee.

Mr. David Eaton, 187, High Holborn.

—Thomas Freeman, Dyer's-court, Aldermanbury.

—James Young, Hackney.

—William Titford, Union-street, Spitalfields.

Rev. Thomas Rees, Paternoster-row.

Mr. Thomas Hardy, Walworth,

—Ephraim Burford, Stratford.

Auditors.

Mr. G. M. Davidson, Fish-street-hill,

—Ebenezer Johnston, Bishopsgate-st.

The meeting was conducted with the utmost harmony, and the society adjourned to Whitsuntide, 1809.

THE DINNER was on the same economical plan and at the same place, (King's-head, Poultry,) as on former occasions. Before the time appointed for dinner, the room set apart for the occasion, overflowed with company. ONE HUNDRED and FIFTY persons were at length assembled. Wm. Friend, Esq. was in the chair. We were delighted to observe a large proportion of young persons in the company. The following names of Gentlemen present occur to us; Messrs. Allen, of Finsbury-square, Barber, of Denmark-hill, J. and W. Barnard, of Harlow, S. Barton, Bentley, Bellerby, Bicknell, Bradley, Browne, of Ditchling, Burford, Christie, G. Cooper, Freeman, Garfitt of Boston, Grice, Hardy, Hawkes, of Stortford, Hickes, Holden, Jacks, E. Johnston, Lanfear, Moore, of Dorking, Rankin, Rutt, Shipley, J. Silver, Simons, Sowerby, Spyring, Staley, Stower, Sturch, Richard Taylor, Titford, Wood, of Hackney, Young, &c. &c. We recollect the following ministers; Messrs. Aspland, Bennett, Blundell, Michael Brown, Coupland, of Headcorn, Davies, of Milford, Joseph Dobell, of Cranbrook, Eaton, Ellis of Guildford, Evans, Gisburne, of

Soham, Holt, of Cirencester, S. King's-ford, of Canterbury, Lyons, Marson, Marten, of Dover, Philpot, of Saffron Walden, Piall, of Smarden, Potticary, T. Rees, Simpson, of Hackney, Stevenson, of Leicester, Stewart, of Bessel's-green, Vidler, Wright.—We think it proper to record some of the names and sentiments given from the chair*, all of which were neatly prefaced by the chairman. 1. Religious liberty all over the world. 2. The Unitarian Fund. 3. The Rev. J. Lyons. 4. The Unitarian book societies. 5. Our missionaries. 6. The venerable Mr. Lindsey. 7. The memory of Dr. Priestley. 8. Mr. Belsham. 9. Success to the Monthly Repository. Some compliments were also paid from the chair to individuals present.—On Mr. Lyons's health being given, Mr. Wright favoured the company with the history, as far as it was within his observation, of Mr. L.'s change of opinions; and the chairman and the secretary stated some particulars of the sermon, delivered in the morning, for the information of those gentlemen that had not heard it. In addressing the company Mr. L. was strongly affected. He thanked the society for their exertions to which he, particularly was indebted; for to Mr. Wright's missionary journeys, which they encouraged and supported, he owed in a great measure his present views of truth. It must have been highly gratifying to Mr. Wright to be appealed to at such a meeting by Mr. Lyons, as religiously speaking his *Father*.—The missionaries severally addressed the company; viz. Messrs. Wright, Gisburne, Bennett, Marson and Vidler, and Mr. Rees in behalf of the Welsh missionaries. They described the cause of Unitarianism as every where growing and expressed their sense of the excellence of the Unitarian Fund Institution, which had not only enabled them in a pecuniary point of view, to devote their time and talents to the service of scriptural Christianity, but had also infused animation and zeal into their bosoms.—The mention of Mr. Belsham's name naturally led to

* On this subject, (happily not an important one,) some of our respectable correspondents in the country differ from us, but we submit it to them, whether it be possible to convey to persons not present at the dinner an idea of the meeting without reporting the proceedings of the chairman. Toasts, whatever objections may lie against them, are the only means of uniting a very large company and of drawing forth interesting discourse; and the report of them is the best picture of the temper and spirit of a public meeting.

the consideration of the improved version of the New Testament, which is nearly completed, chiefly by the labours of that gentleman.—The treasurer, Mr. Christie, as soon as a suitable occasion offered, pleaded with much earnestness the cause of the Fund: the secretary also explained the object and vindicated the measures of the society, at considerable length; he regarded the talents and characters of the missionaries as a sufficient reply to every objection.—Mr. Eaton, on being alluded to, very properly, as the projector of the Unitarian Fund, detailed the history of the proceedings that led to it, and expressed in glowing terms his satisfaction and joy in beholding the society attain in two years, such a state of strength and

vigour.—In the course of the evening Messrs. Johnston, Rutt, Sturch, &c. delivered their sentiments on matters before the meeting.—Throughout the whole day perfect unanimity and cordiality prevailed. Such a meeting for such a purpose, (the propagation of Unitarianism,) was never before seen in England.—A large sum was obtained in new subscriptions.—At the first public dinner in 1806, the company consisted of 70 persons; at the second in 1807, of 100; and at this third, of 150. This is a just picture of the increasing powers of the Fund. What may be its ultimate influence in the cause of truth and righteousness, no one can calculate!

A COMPLETE LIST OF NEW PUBLICATIONS ON MORALS AND THEOLOGY IN MAY AND JUNE, 1808.

Letters upon Arianism, and other topics in Metaphysics and Theology, in Reply to the Lectures of the Rev. Benjamin Carpenter. By Thomas Belsham. 8vo. pp. 144. (First published in the M. Repos.)

The Propriety of the Time of Christ's appearance in the world; with Reflections on the Nature and Utility of Public worship. A Sermon, preached May 23, 1808, at the opening of the New General Baptist Meeting-house, Cranbrook, in Kent. By John Evans, A. M.

A more extended Discussion in Favour of Liberty of Conscience, recommended by the Rev. Christopher Wyvill. Second Edition. 8vo. pp. 22.

A History of the Penal Laws against the Irish Catholics, from the Treaty of Limerick to the Union. By Henry Parnell, Esq. M.P. 8vo. 6s.

The Goodness of God acknowledged in Recovery from Sickness. Two Sermons by the late Rev. Wm. Turner, of Wakefield. 1s.

Joseph's Consideration; a Sermon preached in Clare-hall Chapel, Feb. 29, 1808. By the Rev. J. Plumptre, M.A. 1s.

The Nature and Importance of a Good Education; a Sermon preached, January 14, 1808, before the Promoters of the Protestant Dissenters' Grammar School, lately opened at Mill Hill. By David Bogue, A. M. 1s.

An Essay on the Inspiration of the Holy Scriptures, and a Dissertation on Family Worship, with Notes. By the Rev. A. Bower, late of Aberdeen. 12mo. 1s. 6d.

Christian Unitarianism vindicated: being a Reply to a Work, by John Bevans, jun. entitled "A Defence of the Christian Doctrines of the Society of Friends." By Verax, 8vo. 7s.

A Brief Apology for Quakerism. Inscribed to the Edinburgh Reviewers. 1s. "Stubborn Facts" examined, and Real Facts stated. By J. Upton. 12mo. 1s.

An Appendix to "Remarks on a recent Hypothesis, respecting the origin of Moral Evil," occasioned by the "Reply of Mr. Jos. Gilbert," in two Letters to that Gentleman; in which his improper spirit and gross misrepresentations are exposed. By William Bennet. 1s.

A Defence of the Principal Doctrines of Evangelical Religion, in a Letter to a Barrister, occasioned by his "Hints." By A. Layman. 3s.

Memoirs of the Life and Character of the Rev. Cornelius Winter. By W. Jay. 8vo. 9s.

A New Version of the Psalms, in blank verse, with a Latin version of the 8th Psalm in Alcaic verse. By the Rev. Thomas Dennis, Curate of Haslemere, Surry. 8vo. 10s. 6d.

A Poetical Epistle on the Abolition of the Slave Trade; addressed to Mr. Wilberforce. By F. Sanson. 4to. 5s.

'The Reapers' Song. Written by the Rev W. B. Collyer, A. M. Set to music for four voices, with accompaniments. By James Peck. 1s.

NOTICES.

MONUMENT TO LOCKE.—The committee for carrying the above object into effect, have determined on their plan. Subscriptions will be received at the Literary-Fund Office, the use of which has been offered to the committee, where a model of the intended monument will soon be exhibited to the public. Each subscriber at two-guineas, is to have an elegant engraving of the monument. Subscribers of five-guineas,

will be presented with a medal, executed by Mr. Bolton, of Soho, with the head of Locke, and on the reverse, a representation of the monument; subscribers of ten-guineas, the same in silver.——Subscriptions will be forwarded to the committee by the Editor of the Monthly Repository.

Mr. PARKES has for some time been engaged in revising the *Chemical Catechism*, in order to accommodate every part of that work to the new facts lately developed by the highly interesting and truly important discoveries of Mr. Davy. A new edition (being the 3d.) thus amended, and with other very considerable additions is in the press, and will be ready for publication in the course of the next week.

CORRESPONDENCE.

We must again bespeak the indulgence of our correspondents for postponing the insertion of various communications. Some controversial articles which have been lying by us a considerable time we despair of being able to make use of: the writers of them will we trust give us credit for a sincere wish to do justice to our correspondents as well as to give satisfaction to our readers. Our task in editing the M. Repos. is the more difficult from the pleasing circumstance of our having so great a number of voluntary communications. The articles we insert are not always better than those we omit, though in our judgment better adapted to each other.

Mr. Marsom's first letter on the pre-existence of Christ, in reply to Mr. Belsham, the Clergyman's last notice of J.M. and Mr. Belsham's final answer to Mr. Carpenter, shall appear in our next number; to which also we are obliged to defer the Obituary of Bishop Hurd, of Rev. Joseph Bradford, and the Additions to and Corrections of the Obituary of the Rev. W. Wood, and the account of the Anniversary of the Western Unitarian Society, with other articles of Intelligence.

We have received a long letter signed *A Free-thinking Christian*, complaining of our account of the little society called "Free-thinking Christians" in our last number, and purporting to be a correction of the errors of our reporter. Had it answered its professed end, we should have been thankful for it and would gladly have laid it before our readers; but in fact, it does not convict our reporter of one real error, and is besides so ill-written, so frivolous, so unintelligible, and so boastful that we could not admit it into the Monthly Repository, without subjecting ourselves to general censure. We would recommend to the Free-thinking Christian instead of challenging Unitarians to a contest with him to make himself acquainted with their writings. By rejecting his letter, we do not however determine upon his opinions, nor do we wish the sect to be implicated in the act of one of its members. In short, our magazine is open to all "thinkers," and the "freer" the better; but in becoming writers for the Monthly Repository, they must restrain themselves within certain limits, viz. those of orthography, grammar, and sense.