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MISCELLANEOUS COMMUNICATIONS.

REMARKS UPON THE ACCOUNT OF THE IMPROVED VERSION OF  
THE NEW TESTAMENT IN THE QUARTERLY REVIEW.

LETTER II.

*To the Editor of the Monthly Repository.*

*Hackney,*

*Aug. 1, 1809.*

SIR,  
HAVING in the last communication discussed the miscellaneous remarks of the Quarterly Reviewers upon the Improved Version of the New Testament, let us now,

Secondly, attend to what they advance upon the subject of the preliminary chapters to the Gospels of Matthew and Luke. This the learned Reviewers appear to consider as their vantage ground. Here they plant their strong batteries, and from hence they discharge their most formidable volleys of argument, or abuse, at the Editors and Annotators of the Improved Version.

It may first be proper to state what these *horrific* Editors have done; for, from the outcry that is raised against them, it would be natural to conclude that they had struck out half the New Testament, and mangled the remainder, without any reason or authority, in order to support their own unscriptural system. The truth is,

that in the case before us, they have not expunged or altered a single line. The chapters in question are printed in their usual place; but those parts of them, the genuineness of which has been disputed by critics of great repute, are printed in italics, and the arguments for and against the question are stated calmly at the foot of the page.

It is a very silly and a very stale artifice, but it has its effect upon unthinking readers, for the advocates of one system to represent those of another as wilfully wresting and perverting the scriptures in favour of their own peculiar tenets. Of this sort of logic the writer of the article in the *Quarterly Review* has amply availed himself. "It would seem," says he, p. 318, "that these commentators are determined at all events to hold their own opinions, and to make the scriptures support them by some means or other." And he has no doubt convinced all his readers, who were by ignorance or prejudice properly pre-

disposed for such conviction, of the justice of his remark. Upon this principle the candid Reviewer represents the Editors of the I. V. as dishonestly expunging the prefaces to Matthew and Luke, and explaining away or perverting other passages which are supposed to contradict their preconceived opinions. All this is very false and absurd. Did the honest and learned Dr. Whitby wilfully prevaricate and misrepresent the meaning of those texts which he explains in support of Trinitarian tenets? Certainly not. When he wrote his Commentary he was satisfied that the interpretation which he then gave was the genuine sense of the scriptures, though afterwards upon mature reflection he was convinced of the contrary, and like an honest and good man, he published his recantation of Trinitarian errors. The same observation may be applied to Calvin, Beza, Grotius, and the *Fratres Poloni*, to Hammond and Lelerc, to Lowth, and Locke, and Clarke, and Doddridge, and others, all of whom were men of great learning, piety, and integrity, who inquired diligently into the sense of the sacred writers, and however they might be misled by preconceived opinions, and unknown prejudices, would have scorned the thought of wilfully perverting the scriptures to support their peculiar systems. And the Unitarians of the present day plead for and have a right to expect the same candour of judgment from their opponents. Nor do I believe that this Reviewer himself, whatever he may profess in order to depreciate the character of the objects of his abuse, can seriously credit the charge he

brings. He cannot in earnest believe that such men as Lindsey, and Priestley, and Jebb, and Lardner, from whom the editors borrow many of their most obnoxious annotations, were insincere in their expositions of the scripture; and that to answer a sinister purpose they imposed a sense upon the sacred writings, which in their consciences they believed to be false. Let him reflect upon his own conduct and blush.

I admire the candour so unusual in this critic, with which (in p. 319,) he states the various points in which the editors of the I. V. appear to depart from the popular creed, not only as to the proper humanity of Jesus, but likewise with respect to the personality and deity of what is called the Holy Ghost; the doctrine of Christ's atonement and intercession, the existence of angels and of separate human souls, and particularly the existence, powers, and attributes of the devil; the horrible doctrine of the eternity of hell torments, and the pleasing expectation of the ultimate restoration of all mankind to virtue and to happiness. This distinct exhibition of the principles avowed and supported by the editors of the I. V. will, it is hoped, excite a laudable curiosity in some, to consider the arguments by which they defend doctrines which to many may appear novel and strange; and this may in some instances, if not in all, be attended with good effect. And it may abate the prejudices of some intelligent and honest minds against the Christian religion, when they see that the language of the New Testament, fairly interpreted by

the rules of just criticism, gives no countenance to those strange and unworthy notions which pass with many for evangelical truths, and which if they were really articles of Christian faith, must prove to all rational inquirers an insurmountable obstacle to the reception of Christianity. So far the editors may thank their Reviewer for the increased publicity which he has given to their principles and to their work; and to this no doubt they may in part ascribe the late increased demand for the Improved Version.

The Reviewer pretends to believe that the Unitarians, regarding what he calls "the great doctrine of our Saviour's incarnation as a fatal obstacle to the establishment of Unitarian tenets," have for that reason *struck off* the prefaces of Matthew and Luke. But the fact is quite otherwise. And it is difficult to believe that a person of common understanding can be serious in representing the miraculous conception of Jesus as an argument for his pre-existence or divinity. Many proper Unitarians, ancient and modern, have admitted this fact, without ever dreaming of such a conclusion from it. The Reviewer will not allow the cases of Isaac and Samuel, and John the Baptist, to have been analogous to that of Jesus, "because they were born in the regular course of nature," but he will not say this of Adam and of Eve; were they then incarnate superior spirits, and not proper human beings? The question concerning the authenticity of the prefaces of Matthew and Luke, in a doctrinal point of view is trifling, it has little or no bearing upon the controversy con-

cerning the person of Christ. In fact it is a question purely critical.

The Reviewer professes (p. 320), that by investigating the arguments of the editors of I. V. upon this subject he "shall exhibit no improper specimen of their critical ability, of the fairness of their representations, and of their *pretensions to honest dealing*."—Upon this question he girds up his loins, and summons all his powers. Let us watch his progress and mark his success.

He first observes, that "the writers begin with distinctly admitting that these passages are to be found in all the MSS. and versions now extant."

This, methinks, looks something like *honest dealing*, in men who are charged by this amiable and candid Reviewer with "mutilating and perverting the sacred code of christian faith, with the most unsparing violence;"—"with violating every allowed rule of fair criticism;"—"with being guilty of artifice, falsehood, and fraud;" and "as being determined at all events to make the scriptures support their opinions by some means or other." It will be allowed that in this instance, at least, the editors of I. V. were disposed to state the case and the argument fairly, and to leave the decision with their readers.

The Reviewer goes on: "The annotators might have carried their admissions further. They might have told us that the most ancient fathers allude to these passages, and that the earliest opposers of Christianity never appear to have doubted their genuineness." Hold, gentle Sir! If by *fathers* you mean orthodox

writers, who believed the story, your assertion is true, though your logic is not very conclusive. But if by *fathers* you mean all early Christian writers, whether orthodox or otherwise, your assertion is false, and you know, or ought to know it, to be false.

As to the testimony of the opposers of Christianity, it is in this case of no consequence whatever. They were not very likely to take much pains to distinguish genuine from supposititious scriptures; and least of all to discard a story which furnished them, as is well known with so many plausible topics for ridicule and banter\*.

The Reviewer adds, "as a fact by no means unimportant as an accessory proof, that no objections were ever stated against the accounts in Matthew and Luke, in the early centuries, during the heat of religious contentions, when all parties sought to defend themselves and to assail their opponents by arguments of all kinds, industriously drawn from every quarter." p. 321.

I was quite at a loss to account for this strange and unqualified assertion, when the writer himself admits that the accounts of the miraculous conception were denied both by the Ebionites and Marcionites, till it occurred to me that all which the learned Reviewer could mean must be, that

the authenticity of these histories was never called in question by any of those sects which, however they might differ upon other points, were agreed in their belief of the miraculous conception: which no doubt is a notable discovery, and "a most important accessory proof." The Reviewer then sums up with an air of triumph his "body of evidence of the genuineness of the narratives."

1. "All the manuscripts which now exist contain them." Agreed.

2. "All the versions contain them." Agreed.

3. "All the ancient Christian writers refer to them as undoubtedly genuine."

Agreed, provided that by Christian writers you mean those only who believe in the miraculous conception.

4. "None of the earlier opponents of the Christian faith entertained the slightest doubt of them." Agreed, but

they were utterly incompetent to judge, and treated the story with the utmost contempt.

5. "None of the early sects into which Christians were divided, entertained the slightest doubt of them." This assertion is either an identical proposition, or a palpable falsehood.

Since then the Reviewer has not succeeded in proving that the Editors of the I. V. ought to have extended the limit of their concessions let us next inquire into the

\* Of the ill use which may be made of this narrative of the miraculous conception of Christ, we have a remarkable instance in the last Supplement to the Critical Review, a work which is conducted with great ability, and upon the most liberal principles. In a learned work of Professor Paulus, reviewed in this Supplement, it appears that the author strenuously contends for the genuineness of the disputed chapters. After which he explains away all the miraculous part of the narrative, and insinuates that Jesus was the illegitimate son of Joseph of Arimathea by Mary, born in adultery, at which gross and capital offence of his espoused wife, Joseph, her husband, and the reputed father of Jesus, was bribed to connive. Such abominable representations can only be made by the enemies of Christianity, with a design to expose it to contempt and derision,



validity of his replies to the arguments which they have advanced to justify the mark of doubtful authenticity which they have affixed to the introductory chapters of Matthew and Luke.

1. They observe that the genealogy in Matthew contradicts the narrative.

The table of genealogy is introduced for the express purpose of proving, that Jesus Christ was the descendant of David, who was the descendant of Abraham: agreeably to the predictions of the prophets, and the uniform expectations of the Jews. And how is this fact established? By exhibiting his pedigree from Abraham, through David, to Joseph. If therefore Joseph was not the father of Jesus, the argument would be null and void. Jesus is not the offspring of David, and therefore is not the expected Messiah.

But the writer of the narrative of the miraculous conception expressly affirms, that Jesus was not the son of Joseph, but of Mary only. The writer of the narrative therefore contradicts the writer of the genealogy. If the evangelist wrote both accounts he contradicts himself. If he was inspired to write them both, he was inspired to contradict himself.

All this may pass with the Quarterly Reviewer, if he pleases. His faith may be like that of the honest clergyman, who having subscribed the thirty-nine articles, wished to God that there were a hundred more, that he might prove his orthodoxy by signing them all. But he must excuse the Editors of the Improved Version, who are not blest with so easy a faith, if they think

that it argues more reverence of the Divine Being, and more respect to the evangelist, to maintain that neither the evangelist nor the holy spirit contradict themselves, but that the writer of the narrative is a different person from the writer of the genealogy.

After all, as a palpable contradiction is somewhat revolting even to a well disciplined believer, it is curious to observe the pains which our orthodox Reviewer takes to make it palatable, and the ingenious manner in which he applies his golden canon, "to believe everything to be inspired, and then to unravel difficulties as we can."

In the first place, he gravely observes, that "Joseph is not called the father of Jesus, but the husband of his mother." But does the Reviewer, or could the evangelist mean to cast a slur upon the character of Mary? In all reason the husband of the mother is to be regarded as the father of the child; and as such the evangelist unquestionably intended to represent Joseph, as he could not otherwise have established his proposition, that Jesus was the son of David, the son of Abraham.

"But," saith our learned Reviewer, "St. Matthew's object was to deduce our Saviour's regal descent; his title by law to the throne of David; and that this line was to be traced according to all Jewish law and custom through the espoused husband of his mother." But does the evangelist give any notice that when he asserts that Jesus is descended from David, he does not mean lineally but legally, according to some nice peculiarities of Jewish law? It is however, consonant to

all English, as well as to all Jewish "law and custom," to trace the pedigree through the husband of the mother. But if the child is proved to be the son of a different father, he would by every principle, whether of Jewish or of English law, and by the universal custom of all civilized nations, be excluded from all share in the paternal inheritance: and the writer would be regarded as little better than an idiot, who should attempt to justify the claim of a child by proving the legitimate descent of the reputed parent, when it was at the same time notorious, that the husband of the mother was not the real father of the child.

All this, however, so far from shaking, rather increases the sturdy faith of our orthodox Reviewer, who concludes with declaring his firm persuasion, that the evangelist, having given the pedigree of Joseph to prove that Jesus was the son of David, by distinctly stating, immediately afterward, that he was not in fact the son of Joseph, "betrays no incongruity; but on the contrary, shews a most strict and beautiful consistency."

2. The Editors of I. V. argue, that "though the narrative is to be found in all the copies of the gospel of Matthew which are now extant, we nevertheless know from the testimony of Epiphanius and of Jerome, that it was wanting in the copies of the Nazarenes and Ebionites, *i. e.* of the ancient Hebrew christians, for whose instruction this gospel was originally written."

In reply to this argument, the Reviewer complains, p. 322, that "Hebrew christian, Nazarene, and Ebionite, are here artfully

classed together as synonymous terms, when they are decidedly distinct." And to guard his readers against being misled, by the wiles of these artful and fraudulent annotators, he kindly informs them, that the Hebrew christians, for whom St. Matthew wrote his gospel, A. D. 66, were not the identical "Nazarenes and Ebionites of whom Epiphanius speaks, A. D. 370, who were posterior to the former by 300 years." But notwithstanding this wonderful discovery, our learned Reviewer does not pretend to deny, that both the Nazarenes and Ebionites were *sects*, as he is pleased to call them, of Hebrew christians. He argues indeed from Epiphanius, that the Nazarenes were different from the Ebionites, and that they used a *full* copy of Matthew's gospel: *i. e.* as the Reviewer interprets it, a copy containing the two first chapters. The learned Casaubon conjectures that the true reading in Epiphanius is *ε πληρες αλον*, *not a full copy*, which Jer. Jones, whose learned work upon the Canon was lately republished by the University of Oxford, affirms to be very probable. And having clearly shewn that Epiphanius had never seen a Nazarene gospel, this eminently learned writer adds, "that for aught Epiphanius knew, that gospel might be the very same with that of the Ebionites, as indeed it most certainly was."—Jones on the Canon. V. 1. p. 387.

After all, the plain question to be decided is,—Did any early copies exist of the gospel of Matthew, in which the two first chapters were wanting? And the uncontradicted and incontrovertible answer to this question is,

that they were wanting in the Ebionite copies of that gospel. And that the Ebionites constituted a very large proportion, if not the whole body, of the early Hebrew christians: who, whatever might be their opinion of other books in the New Testament, received the gospel of Matthew as genuine, and could have had no objection to the account of the miraculous conception of Jesus, had it been found in their authentic copies. Also, as this narrative contains the account of many extraordinary transactions of great publicity, which occurred in Judea at that time, it is absolutely impossible that these Hebrew christians should have been ignorant of them, or have denied facts which redounded so much to the credit of their master and his religion. This narrative therefore could not have been written by Matthew in that gospel which he composed for the instruction of the Hebrew converts.

Will you then believe these miserable Ebionites, whom St. Epiphanius denounces as heretics?—But, what does this holy man object to them? Hear the Quarterly Reviewer, p. 323. “They maintained the mere humanity of Christ. They affirmed him to be born of Joseph and Mary.”—Good. This then appears to have been very ancient doctrine. The Ebionites, as all allow, were contemporary with the apostles. We do not think much the worse of them for this belief, whatever Epiphanius or the Reviewer may do. Further, “They joined the ceremonial law with the gospel.” So did the Hebrew converts in the apostolic age: so did the apostles themselves, not excepting

St. Paul. Yet no one condemned them for it. Every one was left at liberty to enjoy his own opinion, and to regulate his own practice; they were only forbidden to impose the mosaic ritual upon gentile christians.—Again. These Ebionites received none of the four gospels, excepting that of St. Matthew.” They would then be particularly careful to keep this gospel pure and uncorrupt.—“They rejected all St. Paul’s epistles, and disallowed his divine mission.” In this they erred; but how this invalidates their evidence in the case of Matthew’s gospel I do not perceive. “But what is most important to be observed,” says this candid Reviewer, “they are distinctly mentioned as notorious for corrupting the scriptures to their prejudices, for mutilating and altering, without scruple,” and the like. And who is it that brings this charge against the Ebionites? The orthodox, their professed and merciless enemies. I, for one, am a little suspicious of the accounts which orthodox bishops and orthodox reviewers give of the characters, and of the works, of those whom they are pleased to brand with the title of heretics. Who can doubt that the Ebionites, in their writings, recriminated upon the orthodox, and retorted the charge of interpolation with as much vehemence, and full as much reason, as their adversaries alledged that of mutilation against them. Is it such miserable reasoning as this of the Quarterly Reviewer, that is to decide the judgment of calm enquirers in an enlightened and inquisitive age?

This writer is weak enough to add, “Why agree with the Ebi-

onites in rejecting the account of the miraculous conception, and not adopt all their alterations? Why not deny the other three gospels, and strike out the epistles of Paul?" My good Sir, you quite forget the state of the argument. The question is, Did any ancient copies of Matthew's gospel want the preliminary chapters? We answer that they were wanting in the Ebionite, and, as Mr. Jones says, *undoubtedly* in the Nazarene copy of that gospel. This fact obviates an objection: and we assign the reasons why we think their copies, in this instance, correct. Are we to admit their judgment in every thing, because we think them right in some things? What new logic is this? and to what conclusions will it lead?

As a counterpoise to the heretical Nazarenes, and more heretical Ebionites, the Reviewer has disturbed the ashes of bishop Horsley's orthodox church of Jewish christians, which had passed quietly into rest and oblivion. Who they were, or where they lived, or what they believed, this deponent sayeth not. But he appeals to the epistle of Barnabas "*a work, he says, p. 324, written undoubtedly in the apostolic age,*" for their existence and for the soundness of their creed. Concerning this same epistle of Barnabas, which is the foundation of our Reviewer's newly restored orthodox church of Jewish christians, the learned Jer. Jones remarks, that "it is a spurious, apocryphal and silly book; that it is self-contradictory, and contains many notorious falsehoods, gross mistakes, and pious frauds," of which he produces many instances: "that

it was not even written by a Jew, and was probably forged at Alexandria about the middle of the second century." Such is the foundation and chief corner stone of our Reviewer's church of orthodox Jews.

The Reviewer, presuming upon his readers' ignorance or indolence, appeals, p. 321, to Justin Martyr's Dialogue with Trypho, as an evidence for the genuineness of the disputed chapters. "Amongst these (*i. e.* the objections of Trypho) there is no reference whatever to any doubts concerning the authenticity of these accounts."

The truth is, that from Justin's work, it appears highly probable that the Jewish christians of that age, A. D. 140, had never even heard of the existence of these accounts; and it is most certain, that if they were known, they were rejected by many, probably by all, as an incredible tale. In Justin's Dialogue, Trypho, the Jew, scouts the very idea of the incarnation and the miraculous conception, as not only extravagant but silly *ε μονον παραδοξον, αλλα κη μωρον*. To which Justin replies, that he knows that this doctrine must necessarily appear extravagant to Trypho's countrymen, *i. e.* to Jews. (*τοις απο τη γενεας υμων* to those of your race.) But he adds, that even though he should not succeed in proving the pre-existence and miraculous conception of Jesus, and if he were a man born like other men, (*ανθρωπος, εξ ανθρωπων*) he might nevertheless be the Christ by election. And he adds, that this was in fact the belief of some even of the gentile christians (*απο της ημετερου γενεας, our own race*) to



which however he could not accede. This doctrine Trypho acknowledges to be the most rational, as the Jews all expected that the Messiah would be a man born in the ordinary way. The distinction which Justin here makes between the *race* of Trypho, *i. e.* the Jews, to whom his new doctrines appeared extravagant, and his own race, *i. e.* the Gentiles, some of whom held the same opinion with the Jews, together with Trypho's declaration of the uniform expectations of the Jews concerning the Messiah, appear to me fully to warrant the conclusion, that in the time of Justin the Hebrew christians universally, and considerable numbers even of gentile believers, regarded Jesus as a man born like other men, and chosen by God to be the Messiah. At any rate it is certain that many, at that time, held this doctrine. And consequently they must either have been ignorant of the existence of the disputed chapters, or they must have regarded them as unauthorised interpolations. And Justin himself, who though an enthusiast, was a man of amiable and exemplary character, so far from denouncing them as heretics, like the credulous Epiphanius, and his disciple the Q. Reviewer, appears even to apologize for the singularity of his own opinions, and expresses his hope, that if these doctrines should prove erroneous, his error might be regarded as venial, and not inconsistent with a belief in the Messiahship of Jesus.

Upon the whole therefore it is most evident, that the disputed chapters of Matthew's gospel were wanting in the copies of the He-

brew christians, early in the second century, and probably from the beginning: and that with whatever names of reproach these christians may be branded by orthodox bishops and their pious partizans, from Epiphanius to Horsley, and from the pseudo-Barnabas to the Q. Reviewer, their opinions and their characters were treated with great tenderness and respect by their contemporaries, and even by those who, like Justin, were of a different persuasion.

3. The Editors of I. V. argue, that "as it appears from Luke iii. 23. that Jesus was thirty years of age in the fifteenth year of the emperor Tiberius, he must have been born upwards of two years after the death of Herod, a circumstance which invalidates the whole narrative both in Matthew and Luke."

There are two ways in which those who believing with our Reviewer, in the inspiration of the writers, "unravel difficulties as they can," endeavour to get over this contradiction. The first is, that when the writer says of Jesus, that he was beginning to be about thirty years of age, he knew that he was at least thirty-five. But this is an inaccuracy of language which no one would think of charging upon a correct, much less an inspired writer, if it were not to save an hypothesis.

The other solution assumes, that Tiberius having been taken into partnership in the empire with Augustus, three years before his death, would create a twofold computation of Tiberius's reign; and that Luke dates his history from the earlier period. This is a mere gratuitous supposition, advanced like the other to support



a hypothesis. For though in the lower empire the double date of an emperor's reign was not uncommon, such a thing was never heard of in the time of Tiberius, though the Reviewer boldly asserts, without however attempting to prove, "that in point of fact there has been this twofold computation of Tiberius's reign." p. 327.

Nevertheless, in the true spirit of an orthodox believer, the Reviewer adds, "If we were wholly unable to give any probable solution, we should positively deny that this apparent discrepancy invalidates the whole narration." Bravo! An inspired writer first gives a long detail of what happened to Jesus in the days of Herod the king. He afterwards, with singular accuracy in fixing the date, ascertains that Jesus was not born till some years after Herod was dead. Of this discrepancy no probable solution can be given. Yet this contradiction does not stagger the resolute faith of our intrepid Reviewer. No. "We must unravel difficulties as we can:" and if we cannot unravel we must swallow them. Let your sceptical Unitarians laugh if they please. *Credo quia impossibile est.* I wish to God there were a hundred more.

4. To rescue the character of the evangelist from inconsistency, the Editors of I. V. express their doubts of the genuineness of the two first chapters of Luke's history, and remark, that though they are found in all the copies which are now extant, they were wanting in those of Marcion, a reputed heretic of the second century.

What reply does our honest and

candid Reviewer make to this argument? He first details from Epiphanius a string of extravagances, which that orthodox bishop has chosen to impute to Marcion; and then concludes with this sneering remark, p. 326. "We shall say no more, but must assure our readers that these annotators have all the appearance of being in earnest, when they produce the authority of this Marcion to invalidate St. Luke."

Now Sir, no person of common understanding can doubt, that the Reviewer was fully apprised, that the annotators of I. V. never thought of producing the authority of Marcion to invalidate St. Luke; but as an evidence to prove that certain narratives ascribed to that evangelist were not, in fact, written by him. But our worthy Reviewer thought that his word would pass with his well-meaning readers. Had an Unitarian writer been guilty of this disingenuous artifice, what an outcry should we have had of hypocrisy, falsehood, fraud, and what not; but when heresy is to be hunted down we all know, that in the estimation of many, the end will sanctify the means.

In abusing heretics, our learned Reviewer places the same confidence in the testimony of St. Epiphanius which he does in St. Barnabas, for the foundation of his orthodox church of Jewish christians. Let us then hear the character of this holy bishop, that we may be able to form a judgment of the credit due to his testimony, especially in cases in which heresies and heretics are concerned. "He had," says Dupin, (an honest and learned Catholic historian,) "much reading

and learning, but no faculty of discerning, nor exactness of judgment. *He often uses such things for reasons to refute the heretics, which are false.* He was very credulous, and not very accurate. He is mistaken in many places about very considerable matters in history, and gives credit too lightly to false memoirs and uncertain reports. He had much zeal and piety, but little conduct and prudence." Such is the character given of Epiphanius by Dupin, (Eccl. Hist. Cent. iv.) who nevertheless believes him to have been an eminent saint, and stoutly defends his catholic orthodoxy against the objections of Scultetus.

In the school of St. Epiphanius, our Reviewer appears to have been no mean proficient, and may therefore well be excused in speaking handsomely of his master, and in appealing to him upon all occasions. But others who are not so much in the habit of the sainted bishop of Salamis, of *using such things for reasons to refute heretics which are false*, may perhaps be disposed to demur to the account which St. Epiphanius gives of Marcion and his followers.

The fact is that Marcion was a very learned christian, of unblemished character, who flourished at the very beginning of the second century, before Justin, and who unfortunately blended the doctrines of christianity with the absurd opinions of the eastern philosophy, just as the platonizing theologues of the Alexandrine school corrupted it with that of the west, which, though more familiar to modern ears, is not one iota more rational. This phi-

losophizing christian received no gospel but that of Luke, in which I think that he was under an error, though his opinion in this instance has been adopted by some learned modern divines, who are as firm believers and as good practical christians as the Reviewer. Epiphanius, forsooth, accuses Marcion of corrupting and mutilating his copy of Luke's gospel; but Marcion himself maintains his copy to be genuine. And if he had ever heard of the preliminary chapters, which indeed does not appear, he would no doubt have rejected them as spurious additions to the genuine history. Ego meum dico verum, (says the honest Tertullian.) Marcion suum. Ego Marcionis adfirmo adulteratum, Marcion meum. Quis inter nos determinabit? &c. Adv. Marcion. L. 4. C. 3.

The fact then is clear. The disputed chapters were wanting in the copy of Marcion, a christian writer of unimpeached integrity, in the beginning of the second century, who maintained that his was the genuine unadulterated gospel of Luke, who probably had much better opportunities of information than those who came after him, and who could have no inducement to have rejected this narrative, had it been related by the evangelist.

What evidence then is there to rebut the testimony of Marcion? Epiphanius charges Marcion and his followers with mutilating the scriptures, and holding monstrous errors. And the orthodox church denounces them as heretics, and denies that they are christians. But I should like to know what these heretics had to say for themselves. I am rather slow to be-

lieve the accounts given of their tenets by their orthodox opponents : especially by those who are known to *use falsehood* in their arguments against heretics. Marcion himself denies the charge ; and his testimony is surely of equal value with that of Epiphanius. In fact, his character was never impeached for upwards of two hundred years, till Epiphanius propagated a base calumny to injure his reputation, of which Dr. Lardner reasonably suspects the holy bishop to have been himself the inventor.

That the orthodox church stigmatized the Marcionites as heretics, and that their testimony therefore is not to be credited, is an argument which might have gone down pretty well in the dark ages. But those times are past. The question now is, not what is a man's faith, but what is his moral character, in order to ascertain the credit due to his testimony. The Marcionites were as good christians as the orthodox. They believed in the divine mission of Christ, and they hoped for salvation by him. Upon this foundation they might, like their orthodox brethren, erect an edifice of wood and stubble. They might, and probably did, like most others, combine errors with the doctrine of Christ. But the foundation was good ; and their character correspondent to their profession. They were perhaps too much addicted to ascetic notions and practices ; but they were temperate, pious, benevolent and self-denying : many of them were confessors, and some of them suffered martyrdom for christian truth. And are such characters as these to be disparaged, and

their testimony discredited, because such miserable bigots as Epiphanius, and his disciple, the Quarterly Reviewer, denounce them as heretics ? And why ? Because truly the nonsense which the Marcionites mixed with christianity, was not the same specific nonsense as that of the Alexandrian or the Constantinopolitan school, which assumed to themselves the title of orthodox, and arrogated an authority to impose their own enormous creeds upon all who profess the christian name.

These are the arguments of the Editors of I. V. against which our Reviewer's learning and logic are chiefly directed ; with what success the reader will determine. Of other reasons he takes but slight notice.

The editors of I. V. observe, that it is improbable that no notice should have been taken of these extraordinary events, by any contemporary writer : to which the Reviewer replies, that it is no more remarkable than that the miracles, sufferings and death of Jesus are equally unnoticed. But surely, the appearance of the star, the visit of the Magi, and the massacre of the infants, are events of greater notoriety, and more likely to excite public attention, than the sufferings, or even the miracles of Jesus.

That all the miracles attending our Lord's birth and infancy should have been forgotten, that no expectation should have been excited from a person who was born into the world in circumstances so extraordinary, and of such great public notoriety, that when Jesus appeared in public, he should have been received as a perfect stranger, and that no-

thing more should have been recollected of his origin, but that he was the son of Joseph and Mary; and that his father and mother were well known in the neighbourhood is, I think, absolutely unaccountable upon the supposition of the truth of the narrative. Would nobody have recollected the hymns of the angels, the appearance of the star, the visit of the wise men, or the jealousy of Herod? Could nothing more be said of him, but "is not this Jesus the carpenter, whose father and mother we know, whose brethren are Simon and Joses, and whose sisters live among us? Whence hath this man letters, having never learned?" Are these the only questions which would have been asked? Are these the only circumstances which would have occurred to memory if the narrative had been true?

In reply to the objection that there is no mention of, and no allusion to these facts, in other parts of the sacred writings, our Reviewer refers to Gal. iv. 4.—God sent forth his son born of a woman. But if this expression proves any thing, it proves too much. It will prove that John the Baptist and many other persons, were conceived by miracle in the same manner as Jesus Christ. For our Lord says, Matt. xi. 11, *among them that are born of women*, there has not risen a greater than John the baptist. The truth is, that the phrase is a common Hebrew periphrasis to express a proper human being.—See Job xiv. 1. xv. 14.—Go, Mr. Reviewer, go and study your New Testament, and then return and write your criticisms. This salutary precaution will save

you many a blunder, and your friends many a blush.

To the objection that our Lord, if born at Bethlehem, would not have been uniformly called Jesus of Nazareth, the learned Reviewer states many reasons why he *might have been* so called; but not one to prove that according to the Jewish custom he *would* have taken his local title from a place in which he was not born.

To the argument that our Lord is repeatedly spoken of as the son of Joseph, without any intimation on the part of the historian, that this language is incorrect, no reply is made.

The editors of I. V. have urged, that some of the facts in this narrative have a fabulous appearance. To this the Reviewer, p. 329, replies in the good old way of a baffled polemic, "We know not how far these persons may carry their scepticism, but this we know, that they would only act in perfect consistency with what they here advance, if they deemed all that our Saviour taught and did, to be a cunningly devised fable." This is an insinuation worthy of St. Epiphanius himself, and utterly unworthy of confutation. He asks, "do not all the facts of our Saviour's history bear the same fabulous appearance?" I answer, most certainly not. What judicious reader would seriously maintain that our Lord's beneficent miracles, wrought in confirmation of his divine mission, and the important event of his resurrection, considered in all their circumstances and connections, have a degree of antecedent improbability equal to that of Joseph's dreams, or the star in the east.

The Reviewer denies that the writer of the narrative reasons from the Old Testament; but I believe no reader of plain understanding would doubt of this, who had not a hypothesis to maintain, and who did not find himself under a necessity of "unravelling difficulties as he could."

I trust that enough has been advanced to vindicate the Editors of the Improved Version, for having distinctly marked the prefatory chapters in Matthew and in Luke as of doubtful authority, and for having stated their reasons for it, calmly and fairly, at the foot of the page, without any harsh reflection upon those who might hold a different opinion, and might receive these narratives as genuine. Whether their unprovoked assailant, the Quarterly Reviewer, has been equally temperate and impartial the public will judge; and also of his qualifications for the office which he has assumed, of being the umpire of theological controversy.

When the objections to the miraculous conception of Jesus Christ, and to the genuineness of the disputed chapters, were first brought forward by Dr. Priestley, upwards of twenty years ago, my prejudices were shocked, like those of my orthodox neighbours; but I have now no hesitation to acknowledge, that after the severe discussion which the subject has undergone, there is no fact in history with which I am better satisfied, than that Jesus was the son of Joseph and Mary, and that the narratives of his miraculous conception are spurious and false.

It is not indeed easy to account for the origin of this forgery, and for its very general reception in

the gentile churches. But we know that from the earliest times, even in the very age of the apostles, writings were forged and circulated under their names: and a forgery of this nature would be very favourably received, as it would tend to efface the stigma every where cast upon the christians, from the mean and ignominious birth and station of the founder of their religion. The circulation of writings was not so rapid, nor could forgeries be so easily detected as in modern times, since the invention of the art of printing. It is likewise a most suspicious circumstance, that the fact was least credited in the place where it is said to have happened.

Had Matthew written the narrative of the miraculous conception of Jesus, there is no reason why the jewish christians, who were as solicitous as the gentiles to exalt the condition of their master, should not have received it. But in the time of Justin, with the exception of the invisible orthodox church, founded upon St. Barnabas, and discovered by our Reviewer, the jewish christians appear universally to have discredited it. Probably most of them had never heard of it: for Justin says, that to them his doctrine of an incarnation and a miraculous birth must needs appear very extravagant, and as Trypho adds, very silly. But it is highly incredible, if the fact was true, that it should have been totally forgotten in the country where it happened, and only known and believed by persons at a distance, who had no opportunity to enquire. This is directly the reverse of the evidence for the resurrection of Jesus. That event was



proclaimed and believed from the very first, at the place where it occurred; and it could not be contradicted by those who were most interested and inclined to disprove it, had it been in their power; and in whose power it would have been to have detected and exposed the falsehood with the utmost ease, had the apostles' declaration been untrue. Produce such evidence for the mira-

culous conception of Jesus, and the other public events connected with it, and all objections vanish into air. Till then a discerning reader will, at least, hold his judgment in suspense, and will not condemn the Editors of the Improved Version for fixing a mark of suspicion upon the disputed narrative.

I am, Sir,  
Yours, &c. B.

MRS. LEE'S MISREPRESENTATION OF MONTESQUIEU, ON THE  
SLAVE TRADE.—MONS. TURGOT.—MRS. SHEPPARD.

*To the Editor of the Monthly Repository.*

SIR,

July 9, 1809.

I have been reading the "Essay on Government," reviewed in your last number, (p. 338).—Amidst a variety of information on the important subjects discussed in that volume, I was surprised to find a severe censure of a great moral and political author, founded on a total misapprehension of his design. I beg leave to offer Mrs. Lee's note on this subject, to animadversion in the Repository, especially as it escaped the criticism of your Reviewer.

Mr. Clarkson, in "the History of the Abolition of the Slave Trade," (1. 49) has claimed Baron Montesquieu among "the forerunners in this great cause," in consequence of the sentiments expressed in his "Spirit of Laws." If however the authoress to whom I have referred be justified in her censure, Montesquieu must be placed in very different company, and is well described in the Task of Cowper.

He finds his fellow guilty of a skin  
Not colour'd like his own, and having  
pow'r

To enforce the wrong, for such a worthy  
cause  
Dooms and devotes him as his lawful  
prey.

To do justice to the author of "The Spirit of Laws," it will be necessary to quote the whole of his chapter, entitled "Of the Slavery of the Negroes." (B. xv. ch. v.) I shall distinguish by Italics those passages which, alone, are quoted in the "Essay on Government."

"Were I to vindicate our right to make slaves of the negroes, these should be my arguments.

The Europeans, having extirpated the Americans, were obliged to make slaves of the Africans for clearing such vast tracts of land.

*Sugar would be too dear, if the plants which produce it were cultivated by any other than slaves.*

These creatures are all over black, and with such a flat nose, that they can scarcely be pitied.

*It is hardly to be believed that God, who is a wise being, should place a soul, especially a good soul, in such a black, ugly body.*

It is so natural to look upon colour as the criterion of human nature, that the Asiatics, among whom eunuchs are employed, always deprive the blacks of

their resemblance to us, by a more opprobrious distinction.

*The colour of the skin may be determined by that of the hair; which, among the Egyptians, the best philosophers in the world, was of such importance, that they put to death all the red-haired men who fell into their hands.*

*The negroes prefer a glass necklace to that gold which polite nations so highly value. Can there be a greater proof of their wanting common sense?*

*It is impossible for us to suppose these creatures to be men, because, allowing them to be men, a suspicion would follow, that we ourselves are not christians.*

Weak minds exaggerate too much the wrongs done to the Africans. For, were the case as they state it, would the European powers, who make so many needless conventions among themselves, have failed to make a general one in behalf of humanity and compassion."

To the passages quoted in the "Essay," and here printed in italics, (p. 141, note,) are prefixed the following remarks.

"The arguments advanced by Montesquieu, (who it can scarcely be denied is as often wrong as he is right), are so weak, absurd and illiberal, that they only give validity to those which have been ably supported on the other side of the question."

After the quotation from Montesquieu, the note closes in the following manner.

"Those who have even opposed the abolition of the slave-trade on any grounds, must peruse, with a mixture of horror and contempt, the above *base and futile* arguments. They dishonour the *man*, as well as the *author*, and scarcely deserve an answer."

I am persuaded that every attentive reader of "the Essay on

Government," must be surprised, that a person of such discriminating talents as the authoress of that work possesses, could fail to discern, even in her own partial quotation, the severe, though ironical, censure of negro slavery, conveyed in the language of Montesquieu. At the same time, it was scarcely justifiable to arraign the principles of a great writer, upon such a partial quotation, and without reference to book or chapter. I promise myself, that the ingenious Essayist will not fail to take an early opportunity, (perhaps on occasion of a second edition of her work,) to vindicate the author of "The Spirit of Laws," from an undesigned misrepresentation of his sentiments.

Allow me to mention another advocate for "Abolition," who also, like Montesquieu, did homage to Liberty in "a land of slaves." I mean the French Minister, Turgot. In his life, published in 1786, and attributed to Condorcet, we are informed, that as Minister of Marine, in 1774, among other liberal projects, he devised the gradual abolition, not merely of the slave trade, but of negro-slavery,—the disgrace of modern nations.\*

In 1775, when he had become Controller General, a merchant, to secure the minister's favour, desired to give his name to a vessel built for the African slave-

\* "Accoutumé dès longtemps à réfléchir sur tous les objets de l'économie politique, il avoit vu avec quelle facilité, en suivant de nouveaux principes, en prenant la justice & la liberté pour base d'une nouvelle Administration, il pourroit produire une révolution dans le Commerce, détruire cette avidité tyrannique qui désole l'Asie pour dishonorer & corrompre l'Europe, rendre nos Colonies libres & puissantes, les attacher à la mere-patrie, non par leur foiblesse & la nécessité, mais par l'intérêt & la reconnoissance, assurer enfin leur existence, aujourd'hui si précaire, en faisant disparoitre peu à peu par des loix sages cet esclavage des Negres l'opprobre des nations modernes."

trade. Turgot, as his biographer informs us, rejected the offered compliment with the indignation of a virtuous mind, which cannot be reconciled to a crime by the frequency with which it is committed. His opinion, on this subject, he thus publicly declared, in defiance of those whose interests were connected with the preservation of that infamous traffic.\*

On another question unconnected with the preceding, but intimately connected with the best interests of mankind, this French minister had also the merit of expressing very enlightened and liberal sentiments. In a memorial to the king, (Louis xvi.) at the close of his short administration, he inculcated upon the monarch, the necessity of granting the most extensive religious toleration, on the grounds both of justice and sound policy. He argued, that if a prince believed his own religion to be true, he would deem it unjust for any one to deter him from the profession of it. He ought, therefore, to consider it as the same injustice to persecute those who were, with equal sincerity, professors of an opposite faith.† What the French

minister in vain attempted to accomplish by argument, an extended religious toleration, has been achieved by the policy of the French emperor, for it would be hazardous to attribute to a conqueror any purer motive.

Turgot was a correspondent and friend of Price; and it was no small praise to be worthy of such a friendship.

## VINDEX.

P. S. Any addition to your interesting account of Mrs. Sheppard, (p. 303,) will, I dare say, be acceptable. I have a Spectator with notes. 12mo. 1788.—At the end of No. 163, vol. 2d, is the following note.

“The letter in this paper signed *Leonora*, was written by a Miss Sheppard, who wrote likewise the letter in Spect. No. 140, signed *Parthenia*; but the letter in No. 92, signed *Leonora*, was written by another Miss Sheppard, sister to the former, and afterwards by marriage, Mrs. Perry. These two ladies were collateral descendants of Sir Fleetwood Sheppard, of facetious memory. D.”

Mrs. Perry was probably the sister mentioned by Mrs. Sheppard, at the beginning of her letter from Stockholm.

\* “Un Negotiant, par une de ces adulations usées dont les Ministres commencent à ne plus être flattés, lui proposa de donner son nom à un Vaisseau destiné à la traite de Negres. M. Turgot rejeta cette offre avec l'indignation d'une ame vertueuse, qui n'a pu être familiarisée avec l'idée d'un crime par l'habitude de le voir commettre; et il ne craignit point par ce refus d'annoncer publiquement son opinion, au risque de soulever contre lui tous ceux qui croient l'intérêt de leur fortune lié avec la conservation de cet infâme trafic.”—Id. p. 124.

† “M. Turgot se crut obligé de faire un Mémoire où il expliquoit au Roi ses principes sur la tolérance, et où il prouvoit qu'un Souverain, convaincu que la Religion qu'il professe est la seule véritable, doit laisser la liberté absolue de la croyance et du culte à ceux de ses sujets qui en professent une autre; qu'il est obligé à cette Tolérance par devoir de Conscience, par une obligation rigoureuse de Justice fondée sur le Droit naturel, par l'humanité, enfin par Politique.—Il prouve que plus un Prince croit à sa Religion, plus il doit sentir combien il seroit injuste et tyrannique de la lui ôter, et plus aussi il doit juger qu'il commettrait la même injustice s'il troubloit la conscience de ceux qui, avec une égale bonne foi, sont également persuadés d'une Religion contraire.”—Id. p. 129.

## CLERICAL PETITIONERS.

*To the Editor of the Monthly Repository.*

MR. EDITOR, May 20, 1809.

It is well known to you, that in 1771 and 1772, two attempts were made by the clergy and members of the church-establishment to obtain relief in matters of subscription. The *Clerical Petitioners* met at the Feathers Tavern, in the Strand, and published their reasons for applying directly to the legislature for relief, without any previous reference to the episcopal bench.

Another Clerical Assembly, composed of a different set of men, met at Tennison's library, near the Mews, "to request (as they express themselves) a revision of the articles and liturgy and forms of subscription; but judged it fitting to consult first their spiritual superiors and to be directed by them. Upon application to the Archbishop of Canterbury, (Dr. Cornwallis,) he replied in terms of candour to their intentions, and that he would lay their wishes before his brethren."—See Lindsey's *Vindiciæ Priestleianæ*, page 51—2. To the Clerical

Assembly belonged Dr. Porteus, the late Bishop of London; Dr. Percy, the present Bishop of Dromore, author of the *Reliques of Ancient Poetry*, &c.; and Dr. Yorke, Bishop of Ely, lately deceased. The object of my present communication is to procure, from some of your correspondents, the names of the other clergy who united in these endeavours. Let us know who have been, and who are, the friends of truth. A knowledge of this kind would be to us, the spear of Ithuriel, and enable us to distinguish friends and foes.

With the same view, Sir, I think it desirable to obtain, if possible, a list of such as in the preceding year, 1771, joined in the petition for relief from subscription, and presented that petition to the House of Commons. Its fate, though it was ably supported, is well known. The *Monthly Repository* seems to me the proper record for the names of these confessors of christian truth. T.

## MILTON'S RELIGION.

*To the Editor of the Monthly Repository.*

SIR,

As it is very probable, that many of your readers are among the list of subscribers to two small volumes of sermons, lately selected from various authors, and published by J. H. Bransby, I hope you will consider your truly valuable miscellany as a proper

channel to remove any mistake or inadvertency, which may appear in the above volumes, however trifling or insignificant it may at first sight appear. What I now allude to, will be found in vol. ii. of these sermons, p. 60, where, in a capital discourse on "the importance of prayer," the preach-

er says, "some few instances may be adduced of christians, of regular and serious deportment, who have lived without any visible signs of worship," &c. To this assertion a short note is added, as follows. "Milton, for example—*Johnson's Life of Milton*." Now whether this note has been made by the original composer of the sermon, or has been placed where it is by the ingenious editor, is not of so much importance, by far, as whether Milton really was such an example. Perhaps the following extract from "*Remarks on Johnson's Life of Milton*," may assist your readers in forming a right judgment.

"The Doctor's next debate with himself is concerning Milton's religion. The appearances in this part of Milton's history puzzled Mr. Peck before him, who, after decently drawing the saw to and again, fixes Milton in Quakerism. Dr. Johnson seems to think he was of no church, merely, as it should seem, because he was neither of the church of Rome, nor of the church of England. If not, to what purpose is the following reflection? 'To be of no church is dangerous.' We cannot admit even Dr. Johnson's experience to decide this matter for us; who, indeed, hath immediately destroyed his own hypothesis, by acknowledging that Milton, who associated with no particular church, 'appears to have had full conviction of the truth of christianity; to have regarded

the holy scriptures with the profoundest veneration; to have been untainted with any heretical peculiarity of opinion; and to have lived in a confirmed belief of the immediate and occasional agency of Providence.' 'And yet he grew old without any *visible* worship.' Does it follow, from hence, that Milton grew old without any worship at all? Yes truly, such is the conclusion. In the distribution of his hours, says the Doctor, there was no hour of prayer, either solitary or with his household: omitting public prayer, he omitted all.

"But these particulars, wherever the Doctor got them, must have come from persons who had no more honest business in John Milton's closet than Dr. Johnson himself, who never was there; nor can possibly know what was done, or what was omitted in it." "All this, however, is mere speculation. We learn from Richardson, that one of Milton's family, at least, attended *public* worship; and more of them might, for any thing the Doctor knows to the contrary."

Before I conclude I would, by way of confirmation of the above "*Remarks*," beg leave to observe, that our great poet, who, in his *Paradise Lost*, has put into the mouths of our first parents so many admirable invocations and adorations, was of all, or most men, very unlikely to live in the habitual neglect of secret or family devotion.

Your's,

An admirer of Milton.

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ON THE EXISTENCE OF THE DEVIL.

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[Concluded from page 330.]

The only passage in *Jude* is one of very doubtful authority. I do not mean, that it is wanting in any of the most ancient copies which are now extant; but, of doubtful authority, because it is inconceivable that an inspired apostle, or one who had a com-

petent knowledge of the history of the Old Testament, and of the dispensation of the gospel, should introduce such a fabulous legend as that which is the subject of the 9th verse. "How that Michael, the archangel, when contending with the devil, he disputed about



the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, 'The Lord rebuke thee.' If any one can build his faith in the existence of such a being, on such a contemptible story as this, I would leave him in quiet possession of his opinion; for there is little room to hope, that reason will have much influence, where absurdity has obtained such an absolute dominion.

We must now proceed to the passages contained in the book of Revelations, which might be altogether omitted as foreign to the subject; for, as the characters introduced in this book are allegorical ones, no argument can be drawn from such a work for the existence of an invisible spirit, the author of evil, and the supposed seducer and enemy of mankind; but it will be more satisfactory to enumerate these passages, and to suggest the most approved interpretation of them. It is scarcely necessary to mention, that the book of Revelation is a prophetic one; that its object is to describe the rise and fall of Anti-christ, which is the spirit of persecution, and every thing which opposes itself to the establishment of the true kingdom of Christ, that is, of the pure and uncorrupted doctrine of the gospel.

The first passage is part of the epistle to the church of Smyrna, one of the seven to which John addressed himself. It evidently refers to the persecutions of those days, predicting their continuance for a certain definite time, and holding out encouragement to perseverance and fidelity. Ch. ii. 10. "Behold the *devil* shall cast some of you into prison." It must im-

mediately be perceived, that in this instance, as in others, the word is used in its original sense, and ought to be translated *the accuser*. The whole verse is thus translated by Mr. Wakefield, and nearly in the same words by the editors of the Improved Version. "Be not afraid of what thou art about to suffer. Behold the accuser is going to throw some of you into prison, that ye may be proved, and ye will have trouble ten days:" that is, according to the meaning of the prophetic language, for ten years. It is to be recollected that John was at this time suffering from the persecutions, which extended to the churches of Asia, being banished to the island of Patmos, by order of Domitian. A stop was put to this persecution, during the reign of this emperor. John returned to Ephesus, and visited the churches in that neighbourhood. But though Domitian himself might not authorize any further cruelties towards the christians, advantage might be taken of the edicts, which had formerly been issued against them, by those governors of provinces, who were unfriendly to the christian faith. The rage of persecution would not immediately subside, and probably severities, not unlike those which had been inflicted in the time of Nero, extended to the church at Smyrna.

The word does not occur again till we meet with it, chap. xii. 9, where it is said, "That the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent called the devil and satan." If we look to the preceding verses, we shall find that the dragon is described as having "seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his head;" which, in the

opinion of the best critics, sufficiently indicate what is meant by this emblematical figure. The description is universally applied to the Roman empire; the seven heads alluding to the seven forms of government, which succeeded each other, previous to the dissolution of the empire; and the ten horns, to the ten kingdoms into which it was divided at that period. Every thing, which is ascribed to the dragon, must therefore be understood of the power which was exerted by these governments, against the cause which is represented by the woman that fled into the wilderness. It cannot therefore be supposed, that the words, "that old serpent called the devil and satan," if they be genuine, are to be understood of the being usually denominated the devil. This is so evident, that I cannot help considering them as the gloss or interpretation of some transcriber, too many of which, it is to be feared, have crept into the original text.

At the 10th verse, the same character is spoken of, as "the accuser of the brethren," which leads us to the meaning of the 12th verse, where the word occurs for the third time: "Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea, for the devil, that is, the accuser, or the dragon, the persecuting power, is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time." Ch. xx. describes the termination of this power, and the recurrence of the same explanation of the term, in the second verse, strengthens the suspicion, that it is the comment of some copyist and not the language of the apostle. I must quote the

preceding verse to preserve the connection. "And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit, and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the devil and satan, and bound him a thousand years."

There is only one passage more to which I shall have occasion to refer: it occurs ver. 10. "And the devil that deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever." It is evident that the term "*devil*" describes an emblematical character, as well as the terms, "*the beast*" and "*the false prophet*." Being cast into the lake of fire and brimstone must signify, the judgment that will be brought upon those powers or governments which supported them, and the terms "*for ever and ever*," must be limited by the existence of those powers to which they refer.

Thus I have examined all those passages in which the word *Διαβολος* occurs in the N. T. I shall now arrange them under three heads, that we may form our conclusions with greater precision and accuracy. The first shall include those which merely allude to the existence of such a being as the devil: the second, those which imply, that he hath access to the human mind, and some ascendancy over it; and under the last, I shall arrange those passages, in which the word is used in its original sense, without any reference to such a being. I shall adopt the translation of Mr. Wakefield, with which that of the Improved

Version will generally be found to agree.

I. Passages which merely allude to the existence of the devil. These are very few.

Matt. xxv. 41. Then will he say to them on the left hand : away from me, ye cursed, into that everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.

John viii. 44. The devil is your father, and ye willingly perform the lusts of your father. He was a man-slayer from the first, and continued not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When any one speaketh a lie, he speaketh according to his own kindred ; for his father also is a liar.

Jude, ver. 9. Whereas Michael, the archangel, when he was contending in dispute with the devil, about the body of Moses, did not presume to bring against him a railing sentence, but said, The Lord rebuke thee.

The most that can be said of these passages is, that a notion of the existence of an evil being was prevalent among the Jews, which will not be controverted. The point to be ascertained is, how far the writers of the New Test. assert, that such a being hath access to the human mind, and any influence over it.

II. Passages of this description fall under the second division into which we have distributed the subject.

Matt. iv. 1. Then was Jesus carried away by the spirit, into the wilderness, to be tried by the devil.

Matt. iv. 5. The devil taketh Jesus with him to the holy city, &c.

Matt. iv. 8. Again the devil

taketh Jesus with him into a very high mountain, &c.

Matt. iv. 11. Then the devil leaveth him, and behold angels came up and ministered to him. To which add the corresponding passages. Luke iv. 2, 3, 5, 6, 13.

Matt. xiii. 39. The enemy, who sowed the weeds, is the devil.

Luke viii. 12. Those by the road-side, are the hearers to whom the devil cometh, and taketh away the word out of their hearts.

John xiii. 2. So Jesus, when supper time was come, (the devil having already entered the heart of Judas Iscariot, that he might deliver him up), knowing, &c.

Acts x. 38. How God anointed this Jesus with the Holy Spirit, and with power, and how he went through the country doing good, and healing all that were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him.

Acts xiii. 10. O ! full of all guile, and of all craftiness ! son of the devil !

Heb. ii. 14. That he might destroy, through death, him, who hath the power of death ; that is, the devil.

James iv. 7. Withstand the devil and he will flee from you.

1 John, iii. 8. Whoso committeth sin is of the devil ; for the devil sinneth from the first : and for this end did the Son of God appear, that he might destroy the works of the devil.

1 John, iii. 10. Hereby are discovered the children of God and the children of the devil.

These are the only passages which can be supposed to assert, that the devil has any influence over the human mind. Many of these may be considered as doubt-

ful, or as more properly belonging to the former class; and others, when compared with the observations, which have been made upon them, in the preceding part of this essay, will not be thought to have much weight in the argument. The remaining passages are,

III. Those in which the word *Διαβολος* is used in its primitive sense, and should be translated *accuser*, *calumniator*, or *slanderer*.

John, vi. 70. Did I not choose you twelve, and one of you is an accuser.

Ephes. iv. 27. Nor give any room to the accuser.

Ephes. vi. 11. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the devices of the accuser.

1 Tim. iii. 6. No novice, lest he be puffed up, and so fall into blame from the accuser.

1 Tim. iii. 7. No novice, lest he fall into reproach and a snare of the accuser.

1 Tim. iii. 11. Their wives also must be respectable, not slanderers.

2 Tim. ii. 26. And they may recover their senses to perform his will, after being rescued alive by the servant of the Lord out of the snare of the accuser.

2 Tim. iii. 3. Without natural affection, irreconcilable, slanderers, &c.

Titus, ii. 3. That elderly women likewise, behave as becometh saints, be no slanderers, &c.

1 Pet. v. 8. Be sober, be watchful: for your slanderous adversary, like a roaring lion, is going about, and seeking whom he may devour, &c.

Rev. ii. 10. Behold the accuser

is going to throw some of you into prison.

N. B. The remaining passages in this book, as they refer to symbolical characters, need not be recited.

It appears then, that in more than a fourth part of those few passages, in which the term *Διαβολος* is used in the N. T. it has no reference to any invisible being as the author of evil, instigating and influencing the human mind; but is applied to human agents, actuated by bad principles and designs; and this distinct and natural sense of the word, justifies the conclusion, that in other instances it is only used figuratively, as are the words sin, death, &c.; or in reference to a prevalent, but unfounded opinion, that an evil or fallen demon, the enemy of God and man, had access to the human mind, and considerable ascendancy over it. If this notion were supported by other evidence, these passages might be supposed to coincide with it; but to those who argue with the apostle James, i. 13. "Every man is tempted when he is drawn aside of his own lusts and enticed," it will appear more probable, that the notion, which seems to be conveyed by them, was only one of those absurd opinions borrowed from the Heathen Mythology, which the scripture writers did not think it necessary formally to refute, knowing that it would never be seriously adopted, by those who examined "the certainty of those things in which they had been instructed." It will also appear, how little foundation there is for the mischievous opinion, that the thoughts and inclinations of men are subject

to any foreign controul, which they are little able to resist ; and it may reasonably be hoped, that when the source of moral evil is properly understood, men will be more habitually watchful over themselves, and not attempt to palliate their guilt, by attempting to throw the load upon a subtle and invisible adversary.

J. W.

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GLEANINGS, OR SELECTIONS AND REFLECTIONS MADE IN A  
COURSE OF GENERAL READING.

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## No. XLI.

*Signior Brundisi.*

Signior Brundisi was a native of Milan, but being a lover of antiquities, he removed to Rome with an independent annuity, which he took care to expend. He was suspected of writing the bitterest pasquinades, not only against the government, but in opposition to many tenets of the most holy catholic faith. He died at Rome, April 10, 1760. The church, as they did not allow him to be one of their communion, would not grant him christian burial ; but deposited his remains in unconsecrated ground, without the gate leading to the Appian way. Over the grave was placed a stone, with the following inscription :

“ Here rots,  
“ His soul irrecoverably lost,  
“ The residuum of Sig. Brundisi,  
“ Late the promoter of depravity, sedition and schism.”

Brundisi left his little effects, consisting of fifty Roman crowns, and a scanty wardrobe, to the Jesuits of Paraguay and the exiled brotherhood, then in the Campagna, for supporting, as he expressed it, the *drama* of their order and the honour of the pontiff.

## No. XLII.

*The Atonement.*

This “ peculiar doctrine” of the Calvinistic gospel is also a “ peculiar doctrine” of popery. A celebrated orthodox preacher, at Naples, half a century ago, took occasion to introduce into one of his sermons, a familiar dialogue betwixt God and Jesus Christ, in which our Saviour begged and prayed that God would not damn mankind ; but God being inexorable and deaf to all entreaty, our Saviour then said, “ Well ! if your justice must exceed your mercy, be so kind as to damn me and spare them.” This, the preacher added, God was merciful enough to comply with.

## No. XLIII.

*Fortune.*

The smile of Fortune, says Mr. Burke, makes conquerors ; it is her malice which discovers heroes.

## No. XLIV.

*Royal Calvinist.*

Toplady relates, in one of his controversial pieces, with great pleasure, the following anecdote of king William 3d and Bishop Burnet.—The arminian prelate



affected to wonder, "How a person, of his majesty's piety and good sense, could so rootedly believe the doctrine of *absolute predestination*!" The *Royal Calvinist*, (so our author styles the king), replied, "Did I not believe *absolute predestination* I could not believe a *Providence*. For it would be most absurd to suppose, that a Being of infinite wisdom would *act* without a *plan*, for which plan, predestination is only another name."

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No. XLV.

*Daniel Whiston.*

The learned professor Whiston had a brother, Daniel, in the church, who left behind him several hundred sermons that he had never preached!

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No. XLVI.

*Divine Husbandry.*

Bishop Hall's ingenuity and epigrammatic wit sometimes amuse and please those who refuse to be instructed in his divinity. His writings abound with what may be properly called *thoughts*. His sentences are texts; his figures pictures. There is justness, as well as smartness, in the following metaphorical description of the course of judicial Providence.

"If God meet with a very good field, he pulls up the weeds, and lets the corn grow; if indifferent, he lets the corn and weeds grow together; if very ill, he gathers the few ears of corn, and burns the weeds."

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No. XLVII.

*Orthodox Argument for the Authenticity of Scripture.*

Tertullian's notable saying, *Credo quia incredibile est*, has

been repeated by many of the champions of the church. One of them, a worthy disciple of the orthodox father, *Abbadie*, vindicates the narration of Moses, on the ground of its inconsistency. Moses, he says, is so inconsistent with himself, that he establishes the existence of one God, and then talks as if there were many. He introduces Jacob wrestling against God, and the mortal comes off victorious. Could he have advanced such an apparent absurdity, if the fact had not been true? He advanced it because he knew it to be true, though he did not understand it.

Such a reasoner as *Abbadie*, was well qualified for studying the Apocalypse, and defending the divinity of Christ. Abraham Booth endeavoured, but in vain, to make him a favourite with the English Calvinistic Dissenters.

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No. XLVIII.

*Nursery for Ministers of State.*

Bishop Burnet, who boasted of having been acquainted with five of our sovereigns, left a paper to be published after his death, entitled "An humble representation to those who are to sit on the throne." In this paper, which contains much excellent advice, there is the following curious project for rearing ministers of state.

"A Prince, who would be well served, ought to seek out among his subjects the best and most capable of the youth, and see to their good education, both at home and abroad; he should send them to travel, and order his ministers abroad to keep such for some time about them, and to send them from court to court, to learn their language, and observe their tempers: if but twelve such were constantly kept on an allowance of 250l.

a year, the whole expence of this would rise to but 3000l. a year : by this inconsiderable charge, a prince might have a constant NURSERY FOR A WISE AND ABLE MINISTRY."

The good bishop also recommends particular care to be taken in "the nomination of the chaplains of ministers abroad, *that there may be a breed of worthy clergymen, who have large thoughts and great notions, from a more*

*enlarged view of mankind and of the world.*"—Did the bishop, who had been a great traveller, intend here to characterize himself?—This reminds the Gleaner to put a question which he has long wished to see answered:—What was the origin of Travelling Fellowships in our Universities—how many are there—and what are their endowments?

## BIBLICAL CRITICISM.

### THE INTENTION OF JESUS IN WASHING THE FEET OF HIS DISCIPLES.

Bishop Hurd, in the tenth number of the first volume of his *Sermons preached at Lincoln's Inn*, is unwilling to allow, that the sole or the chief end of our Saviour's washing the feet of his disciples, (John xiii. 1—18), was to give them a lesson of humility and condescension: he considers him as signifying, by this ceremony, "the efficacy and value of his own precious blood, by which alone they, and all mankind, were to have all their sins purged and washed away for ever." I shall examine the reasoning by which this interpretation is attempted to be established.

The preacher desires us to remember, that "nothing was more familiar with the Jews, than to convey an information to others, especially if that information was of importance, by natural, rather than artificial signs, by deeds, rather than words." This, no doubt, is a just and pertinent observation: for it is added, that "every one knows" the fact,

"who has but dipped into the history and writings of the Old and New Testament;" and hence it will be admitted, on both sides, that the transaction before us is "a lesson conveyed to the disciples in this form."

But it is said, that "this way of information was occasionally made to serve two contrary purposes, either to give more force and emphasis to an instruction, or to clothe it with some degree of obscurity, or even ambiguity." The answer is not difficult: obscurity or ambiguity was then only designed when *prophetic* representations were conveyed, either by words, as in the parables contained in Matt. xiii. or by actions, as in the cases of Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Michaiah and others. Where nothing more was proposed than instruction in religious doctrines or in moral duties, obscurity and ambiguity seem to have been most carefully avoided.

We are told, nevertheless, of a "primary sense" and of "a se-

condary sense, a less apparent one, but more momentous," which may be designed in such actions: concerning which supposition it is sufficient to remark, that even if it be admissible, in regard to the prophetic language and communications, yet, from the nature and reason of the subject, it is not justifiable in our interpretation of an historical narrative, or a moral precept.

Important as the lesson of humility and charity, given by Jesus to his disciples, in washing their feet, is acknowledged to have been, and becoming his character, still, we are asked, "does it rise up to those ideas of importance which we are prepared to entertain of an action performed at such a time, and so awfully introduced?—all which announces something beyond and above a common lecture of morality; something which might be suitable to close the instructions of such a teacher." A common lecture of morality it, assuredly, was not: it was a lecture of sublime and evangelical morals, of morals unknown to the Jewish and Heathen world; and it was a perfectly suitable close to the instructions of one who was eminently a preacher of righteousness, and whose discourses enforce the purest virtue and devotion, sanctioned by new and peculiarly engaging motives. I can little approve of the intimation that this fine lesson of christian humility and benevolence was a common lecture of morality: such intimations are false, incautious and of dangerous tendency; but they are often made by wri-

ters and preachers who refuse to take their views of the gospel from the New Testament alone. The solemn manner in which the narrative of this transaction is introduced, will be sufficiently accounted for by a reference to the characters and situation of the parties.

Bishop Hurd infers from the deportment and language of Peter, and from our Lord's reply to his question, that something more was meant by this incident than the history obviously discloses. When the fervent apostle, surprised at the condescension of his master, said to him, "dost thou wash my feet?" Jesus, to remove his scruples, answers, "what I do, thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter;" respecting which words it is observed, that they "are ambiguous, and may mean, thou shalt know immediately, from the explanation I am about to give of this action, or thou shalt know hereafter in due time, and by other means, what the import of it is." But in truth this ambiguity, as it is styled, is chargeable merely upon king James's translators: for the passage ought to be rendered, "thou knowest not what I am doing now, but thou shalt know *when I have done*." (Compare verse 7 with 12—16,) So that the explanation to be given is limited to the close of the transaction; "thou shalt know when I have done." Nor does this language convey any thing more; however improperly it has sometimes been applied.\*

But the words, "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me,"

\*. That *μετὰ ταῦτα* has the sense of *immediately*, appears from Thucyd. L. ii. Sect. 49.

are stated by this author to be enigmatic; and it is asked, "had Peter no part with Jesus, that is, was he incapable of receiving any benefit from him, unless he had this ceremony of washing performed upon him, when that ceremony had no further use or meaning than to convey a moral lesson?" I answer, the declaration "thou hast no part with me" simply means, that the apostle must be considered as disclaiming to be a member of the little society of which our Lord was the head, unless he suffered his Master to perform the kind domestic office of washing the feet towards him as well as his companions; and the exclamation of Peter, in consequence, is strictly agreeable to this idea.

Every man sees how naturally and how well the habit of humbling ourselves, if it can be so called, to the meanest duties of benevolence, is illustrated and recommended by the example of Christ upon this occasion. But where is the connection between this ceremony and the supposed fact, that our sins are washed (washed, I mean, according to the gross and popular notions of the matter,) in his blood? An entire and not a partial ablution of the body, would surely have better signified this alledged correspondence.

I infer then, that the delivery of a grand evangelical lesson was the primary, not to say the only end of Jesus in this transaction. He would shew, not subordinately, but chiefly and directly, that we were to follow his example in a readiness to do as he had done. To consider him as designing to teach, enigmatically and mysti-

cally, - a doctrine stated to be so essential and important as to be a corner stone of Christianity, is a glaring abuse of the scriptures, rather than a sober interpretation of them.

It is worthy of observation, that the popular doctrines of religion are, in general, endeavoured to be supported by the epistolary writings of the New Testament, and not by the historical. The discourses of our Lord, in particular, are too plain and simple and moral for the purpose of those who claim the distinction of being evangelical believers; and it is only in consequence of their being racked and tortured by such criticism as the late Bishop of Worcester employed in this sermon, that they can be made to speak the language of modern orthodoxy.

This prelate was an elegant classical scholar. To the character of a good divine he had no fair pretensions. Thus much appears from the attempt which has now been animadverted on: nor is it the only evidence of the fact. The letter addressed to him by Mr. Evanson, on his sermons at the Warburtonian lecture, he neither did nor could answer. But it is curious to remark with what pity, real or affected, he speaks of that accomplished person, in a late posthumous publication. "I know not," he says, "what is become of the poor man." Much is it to be wished that Bishop Hurd had not been totally ignorant of the history of Mr. E. from the period of his resignation. He would then have learned that this "poor man," after a long course of piety, virtue and usefulness, after the cheerful enjoyment and bountiful use of a handsome and

independent income, died in peace, faith and hope, and is embalmed in the memory of congenial relatives and of respectable and numerous friends. The affluence which the established church pours into the lap of some of her

favoured sons, could not have made such a man more truly opulent : its pomp and splendour could not have rendered him happier or more honourable !

June 28, 1809.

N.

ON EPHES. ii. 1—6; EPHES. i. 17, 18; 1 COR. vii. 14.

I. It does not appear that any of the critics have thoroughly understood the passage in Ephes. ii. from the 1st verse to the 6th, inclusively. It is confessedly an obscure place.

The word (*ἡμᾶς*) us, in the 5th verse, should not, perhaps, be taken as synonymous with (*υμᾶς*) you, in the first ; or the contrast and antithesis, between the Jews and the Gentiles, which run through most parts of the chapter, would be entirely lost. And if *you* and *us* are not opposed to one another here, the antithesis does not begin sooner than at the 14th verse, and then abruptly. It may be doubted whether [*τα ἀμφότερα*, with the article,] *both*, in that verse, be agreeable to grammatical construction, and Greek phraseology, unless the two parties had been *before* introduced. With submission, therefore, I would propose a new rendering of the beginning of this chapter, which removes this difficulty, if it be any, and exhibits a very important, and a very beautiful view of the apostle's meaning. I shall adopt the New Version, lately published, with a few variations.

“ 1. And God hath given life (*καὶ υμᾶς ὄντας νεκροὺς*) *both* to *you* (Gentile converts) who were

dead in offences and sins ; 2. in which ye formerly walked, according to the course of this world, according to the powerful ruler of the air, (the powerful ruler) of the spirit that now *worketh* in the sons of disobedience ; 3. among whom even *all* of us (Jews and Gentiles) lived formerly in the desires of our flesh, fulfilling the wishes of our flesh and of our minds, and were, in our unconverted state, children of anger even as others ; 4. but *both* to you, God, who is rich in mercy, through his own great love with which he hath loved us ; 5, and *also* to us, [*καὶ ὄντας ἡμᾶς νεκροὺς*] who were dead in offences, hath given life together, in Christ ; 6. and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places, in Jesus Christ.”

I add to the reason above stated, that the three verbs here [*συνεζωοποίησε, συνηγάγε, συνεκάθισε*] are compounded with the same preposition [*συν*] *together*. And surely the first, as well as the two last, should be referred to the union of Jews and Gentiles together, and not their union with Christ, in the thing predicated. To give a different sense to the preposition, in words which are so closely connected, would not



be just. “*He hath given us life together, he hath raised us up together, he hath made us sit together, in Christ.*”

Though the preposition [εν] in be not found before *Christ*, in the first case, as in the two others, it may not be thought of much moment. Examples of the omission, in other places where it is doubtless to be supplied, might be easily produced. And it would be nothing strange if it should have been *omitted* in transcribing, especially as (εν Χριστω) *in Christ* occur in the next verse. Or, (εν Χριστω) *in Christ*, in the first instance, may be an *insertion*, by mistake of words that belong to the following part of the sentence. But without laying any stress on this conjecture, I think that the above translation is not invalidated by the want of the preposition before the word *Christ*, which is as easily supplied here as in other places. The antithesis, *you* and *us*, at least, is not here affected, and will comport with the present versions.

II. There should not be, perhaps, any stop between the 17th and 18th verses of the first chapter of this epistle. I see that the words [πεφωτισμενους τους οφθαλμους] are translated by the case absolute in the old and new versions; “the eyes of your understanding being enlightened.”—Now this rendering of the objective case can be supported by very few authorities, and is certainly harsh. Without any separation between the two verses, we arrive at a fine explanation of the phrase, “*a spirit of wisdom and revelation,*” and the passage will then stand thus. “That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father

of glory, may give you *a spirit of wisdom* and revelation, in a knowledge of him, (even) *the eyes of your mind enlightened*, that, &c.”

I cannot help expressing a suspicion that πεφωτισμενους is a corruption, and that the true reading was πεφωτισμενοις, which would properly refer to υμιν, in the last verse, and remove every difficulty. At the same time, if we admit that the writer may have forgotten the case in which he had used the former word, and refer πεφωτισμενους to υμιν, notwithstanding the failure in grammatical accuracy, the same end is gained as by supposing an error in transcription. The most elegant Greek writers may be produced as having fallen into a similar inadvertency. To avoid prolixity, I will instance only in one passage out of Xen. Cyrop. Lib. 8. Βουλομενος δε τινα κατασκοπον πεμψαι επι Λυδίας, και μαθειν ο, τι πρασσει ο Ασσυριος, εδοξεν αυτω, κ. τ. λ. Here Βουλομενος and αυτω do not agree in case, though accuracy required that they should do so; but I must now dismiss this text.

III. Baptists, Pædobaptists, and Antibaptists, have, in their turn, endeavoured to derive support to their respective opinions from the obscure text, 1. Cor. vii. 14, which probably has no reference to baptism in any form. Mr. Wakefield produces it as a decisive proof that infants are, *by birth*, christians, and on that account, have no occasion for baptism at any age. Dr. Toulmin, with great judgment and spirit, has turned Mr. W.’s conclusion into absurdity, by applying his reasoning to the case of the husband and wife, who would, on

Mr. W.'s ground, be christians by virtue of the marriage of the one believing with the unbeliever. The sense given to [*ἅγιος*] *holy*, by Mr. W. is probably right on the whole. It signifies separated to a religious use, and as applied to christians denotes their belief in christianity. But the verb [*ἁγιάσαι*] is *sanctified*, which is derived from it, must retain the same signification by every principle of just criticism. Now an observation or two will set every thing in this text in a clear and pleasing light, consistently with this sense of these words.

1. "*Is sanctified*" [*ἁγιάσαι*] is not in the present, but past time, and should be translated *hath been sanctified*, or *hath, in many cases, been sanctified*.

2. "*Your children*" [*τὰ τέκνα ὑμῶν*] mean, as in many other instances, not infants, but the young, *your youth*.

3. "*Otherwise*" [*εἰπεὶ ἄρα*] should give way to, *if it were not so, or if this be not the case*, as more clearly shewing the force of the reasoning here employed.

With these observations in view let us now translate the passage.

"For the unbelieving husband has been frequently converted, [or brought to a belief in Christ,] by the wife; and the unbelieving wife has been often converted by the husband: if this were not the case, [if this effect were not produced by relative connections,] your youth would now be unconverted, [or heathens;] but now, [by the influence of family connections,] they are converted, or believers in christianity."

Well, therefore, might the apostle advise the continuance of the marriage union between persons, one of whom only was a believer. There was great reason to expect the conversion of the other. And this reason is urged expressly in the 16th verse, which I take to be decisive of the justness of the above interpretation. "For how knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband? Or how knowest thou, O husband, whether thou shalt save thy wife?"

PRIMITIVUS.

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EXPLANATION OF JOHN III. 13.

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John III. 13. Now no man hath ascended up into heaven, but he who came down from heaven, even the Son of Man, who is in heaven.

These words of Jesus have been understood by some of a local ascent into heaven, of an actual descent from heaven, and continued presence there. To this interpretation it is a sufficient objection, that it is language which

Jesus used in conversation with Nicodemus, and that it is incredible, that he should have communicated to the Jewish counselor, a clandestine visitor, a doctrine of which John, the fore-runner of Jesus, appears to have been ignorant, and of which Jesus had given no intimation to his chosen disciples. It is incredible that Jesus would have revealed to a secret, and perhaps a disingenu-

ous enquirer, what he concealed from his sincere and avowed followers.

But it is further to be observed, that Jesus is here speaking of himself as one having a human form and nature, as "the Son of Man," and we are told by the apostle, if we needed any assurance upon this subject, "that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God." That Jesus, as the Son of Man, could in a literal sense have ascended into heaven, have descended from heaven, and have been at the same moment in heaven, is only consistent with the faith of those who admit, that the bread and wine used in the eucharist, after the benediction of the priest, are actually transformed into the body and blood of Christ, though, to the human senses, and in every ascertainable property and quality, they are certainly still bread and wine, as much so as those which have not

been transformed by the priestly benediction. It is very evident, however, that Jesus is not speaking of himself, but of his authority and doctrine; of the commission and communications which he had received from heaven, which he was authorised to make known to mankind, and in the exercise of which commission he was then engaged. It is equally evident, that he is alluding to the authority and mission of other prophets, particularly of Moses, and intimating that his own was much superior, his character pre-eminent, and the communications which he had to make much more extensive. The following verse decidedly proves that Jesus had the Jewish lawgiver in his mind, when he made use of the figurative language. See Jones's Illustrations of the Gospels, *in locum*.

Halifax, J. W.  
June 16, 1809.

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## REVIEW.

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

POPE.

ART. I. *Sermons, on several Subjects, by the late Rev. William Paley, D. D. &c. &c. Longman and Co. pp. 543.\* 8vo. 1808.*

An advertisement prefixed to these discourses, informs us that they were not originally composed for publication; that it was undoubtedly the author's intention that they should not have been published; and that in a codicil to his will, after directing that a sufficient number of copies be distributed among his parishioners, he adds, "I would not have the said sermons published for sale." Under these circumstances, and without any reference to the quality of the sermons, we have no hesitation in saying that they

\* A copy of the first edition is before us: we have seen the *fourth* advertized.

ought not to have been given to the world.

The executors are of the contrary opinion: and, in their behalf, it is pleaded, that "the circulation of such a number of copies as Dr. P. had directed, by his will, to be distributed, rendered it impossible to adhere to the other part of his direction." Now the difficulty of adhering to it we do, indeed, admit: but the impossibility we are too dull to perceive. And if the mere difficulty of discharging a trust could justify an executor in neglecting or violating it, this very important and responsible office would be worse than inefficient. Nor are we sensible of there having been a necessity to publish these sermons, "as the only means of preventing a surreptitious sale." Granting, for a moment, that there were no other methods of preventing such a sale, (though it would still have been in the power of the executors to have disowned, if not to have stopped, so base a proceeding) we lay our finger upon the author's prohibition, "I would not have the said sermons published for sale;" by which clause he intended, unquestionably, to bind his executors, and by which therefore they ought to have been bound. Injunctions of this sort are not to be trifled with, for the sake of meeting an actual, and still less a contingent evil. The transgression of a duty on my neighbour's part, does not authorise a dereliction of it on mine.

Several sermons were transcribed by the author himself, for printing, we repeat not for publication—and he had designed to transcribe others. Nevertheless,

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the whole was left by him in an unfinished state; and there were many things which, in his own judgment, might be omitted, and others which might be altered or consolidated. How far the person, to whom the further choice and subsequent revisal and arrangement of them were entrusted, has been judicious in his selection, &c. we have not an opportunity of ascertaining; though, according to Mr. Meadley's Memoirs of Dr. P. there has been an omission of some sermons well calculated for general usefulness. Be this as it may, the unfinished state in which the copy was left, ought, most surely, to have been considered as a strong additional reason for withholding these discourses from the public at large. Whether the profits of the sale are devoted, like those of the sale of *Bishop Warburton's Letters*, to some charitable institution, or to what other uses they are applied, we are profoundly ignorant.

So much for the advertisement! The sermons themselves are thirty-five in number, unequal in length, and yet more so in style and reasoning and general merit and effect.

In some views they make a favourable impression on us: they shew that the author was zealously attentive to one of the most important duties of his parochial charge,—that he *composed* sermons for the instruction of his audience, and composed them, for the most part, in a way particularly calculated to administer instruction to a mixed congregation—that he did not satisfy himself with the delivery of merely moral essays, but was earnest to pro-

mote the spirit and power of religion, and that he laid great (he could not lay an excessive) stress on that rational seriousness of temper, and strict purity of heart, without which christian virtue can have no existence. We add, that the happy and familiar didactic manner which characterizes his *authorized* publications, is to be seen frequently, though by no means uniformly, in this volume.

For literary excellencies we did not look, in the first place, in the sermons of Dr. P. to his parishioners: of these he could not here be ambitious: he had too much good sense and piety to aim at them; nor are we disappointed at their absence. What has disappointed us, is the absence of that which is far more material in a christian preacher,—the habit of explaining the scriptures upon sound principles of criticism, and in perfect consistency with themselves. A discourse which the Doctor published, many years since, on “Caution in the Use of Scriptural Language,” led us, we own, to expect from him something better on this head, than we have actually found. In these sermons, his practice is to quote texts with little or no regard to the situation of the speaker, writer, hearers or readers, to the connection of the passage, or to the sense of the same terms and phrases in other parts of holy writ. So far Paley appears, upon the present occasion, as an ordinary man. Instead of ranking, in this respect, with the great preachers of his church, he stands upon the very same ground with the most uneducated teachers of the most uneducated denominations: nor, in

his comments on the language of Jesus, the evangelists and the apostles, can we often recognize the penetrating and vigorous mind which produced the *Horæ Paulinæ* and illustrated *the evidences of christianity*.

To justify our opinion of these sermons, we shall now review them in their order.

The first, from 1 Pet. iv. 7, is on “seriousness in religion” a most indispensable disposition;” it is chiefly employed in an inquiry into the causes of the levity of temper which effectually obstructs the admission of every religious influence; and it is, on the whole, an admirable and useful discourse. If it wants any thing, it is a distincter enumeration of the several leading thoughts and something more of personal application, in which latter excellence most of Dr. P.’s sermons are materially defective.

Of the second, the subject is “the love of God,” (*love to God*) from 1 John, iv. 19. The author considers the importance of this love, the means of acquiring it, and the effects of this disposition upon our lives. Upon all these points he makes some good remarks; though we have read and heard better discourses on the same topic. The arrangement is less perspicuous than we could have wished: no notice is taken of the process by which the affections become disinterested, though it is particularly illustrative of the love of God, considered as the crown and perfection of religious virtue; and the writer misapprehends Rom. v. 5, which text is really limited to the first believers, who received miraculous gifts



that have long since ceased. The sermon concludes with a proper recapitulation.

In the third, Dr. Paley represents "meditating upon religion," from Ps. lxxiii. 7. Here we find many thoughts that occur in the first discourse, and similar misinterpretations of scripture, on the subject of the Holy Spirit, to what are discoverable in the second. Before we proceed, we must observe that in Gal. v. 5. *the spirit* means the gospel-dispensation as opposed to the *flesh*, which signifies the Jewish.

The fourth sermon, from 1 John, iii. 2, bears as its title, "of the state after death." In the beginning of it the writer quotes our Lord's words to Nicodemus, (John, iii. 12). "If I have told you, &c." and by *heavenly things* understands things which will pass in heaven : whereas, not only the context, but, moreover, the sense of the words in other parts of the New Testament shews, that by *heavenly things* are intended *sublimier truths than he had just been stating*. Much of the discourse is occupied in no very edifying illustration of the reasons why "we know not what we shall be ;" and the conclusions at which Dr. P. at length arrives, are little distinguished either by originality or usefulness. This sermon, like the preceding, might have been advantageously omitted, and supplied by one more practical and interesting.

Sermon the fifth, from the same text, has a double title. "On purity of the heart and affections. Of the state after death." It is a sort of moral improvement of the last : its drift is that those who hope to resemble Christ hereafter

in glory, must resemble him now in purity ; nor is it the least valuable in the volume.

In the sixth the author treats on "faste for devotion," from John iv. 23, 24. This sermon, though particularly calculated for members of the church of England, may be read, nevertheless, with pleasure and advantage by christians of all denominations.

The seventh discourse, from Matt. ix. 13, lays down "the doctrine of conversion." We doubt whether by the text our Lord meant any thing more than that he did not come to call the self-righteous Pharisees to repentance so much as those whom they deemed to be sinners. Our author's purpose is to shew that one class of hearers need conversion, or an entire and thorough change, and another, improvement. And we meet with many pertinent remarks, accompanied, however, by that kind of erroneous scriptural criticism of which we gave an example under the fourth sermon.

We perceive, with satisfaction, that several of these discourses are on devotional subjects. The eighth, from Luke v. 16, is intitled "prayer in imitation of Christ." A fulness of mental devotion is stated as the source of our Lord's visible piety ; and the operation of it is clearly represented. Without being remarkably striking, this sermon is plain, judicious, and of an useful tendency.

"Filial piety" is recommended in the ninth, from Gen. xlvii. 2. It presents us with many just observations on points in Joseph's history, but enlarges chiefly, and very agreeably and instructively, on his duty and affection to his

father. We only wish that the author had pursued the subject at greater length, and brought it more immediately home to his hearers and readers.

The object of sermons the tenth and eleventh, from Ps. li. 3, is to prevail with us "to think less of our virtues and more of our sins." Without subscribing to every sentiment, or concurring in every criticism, found in these two discourses, we think highly of their design and execution.

In this connection, we cannot avoid declaring that those Christians who judge it unscriptural to speak of being saved through the merits of Christ, are far from relying on their own merits, but look for the mercy of God, as manifested in the gospel and mission of their divine master, for everlasting life.

"Salvation for penitent sinners" is the title of sermon the twelfth, from Luke vii. 47.—This, like many of our author's discourses, wants unity and application: it contains however proper remarks on the danger of insensibility to religion.

The thirteenth, from Ex. xx. 5, is an excellent vindication of the Almighty's visiting the "sins of the fathers upon the children." For perspicuity and happiness of method, and for critical and expository correctness, this is the best sermon in the collection.

"How virtue produces belief, and vice unbelief," is shewn in the fourteenth, from John vii. 17. To most of the author's illustrations of this fact we make no objection: but what he says on supernatural assistance appears to us to be unwarranted by scripture; and Matt. xiii. 12, surely re-

quires, as well as admits a very different explanation. This sermon is better than some of the preceding, in that it has a larger, a more appropriate and a more useful application.

"John's message to Jesus," no very easy part of the gospel history, is considered in the fifteenth, from Matt. xi. 2, 3. Dr. P. acquiesces in the common solution of the difficulty, and thinks that the end of the message sent from the baptist to Jesus was to remove the doubts of his disciples, and not his own. Some observations follow upon miracles, regarded as a proof of the divine mission of Christ. The subject is slightly treated; and the sermon, which has more of the air of an essay or dissertation than of a popular discourse, need not have been printed.

The sixteenth, from Ps. xix. 12, 13, is "on insensibility to offences." *Secret faults* are described as faults unknown to the offender himself: it is shewn, from the nature of habit, that such faults are possible, and even probable; and from this view of the case some very instructive lessons are deduced.

In this selection of Dr. P.'s sermons there is more of sameness than was either necessary or desirable. The seventeenth, for example, is on much the same topic with the first and third: for it is intitled "seriousness of disposition necessary," from Luke viii. 15. Though the text is not very happily chosen, yet the subject is one of those which the author treats with advantage, and even with some variety.

Discourses the eighteenth and nineteenth are, respectively, inti-

ded "the efficacy of the death of Christ;" "all stand in need of a Redeemer;" but have the same text, Heb. ix. 26. The Doctor assumes that the death of Christ was efficacious to the pardon of human sin. However, he has neither clearly stated his views of the doctrine of atonement, nor entered into any comparison and explanation of the texts which he produces. The *reconciliation* spoken of in Col. 1. 20, is the union of christian believers of both Jewish and Gentile race, into one body; an union accomplished by the cross or death of Christ, as the consequence of which the polity of the Jews was destroyed and christianity offered to the heathens.

In the twentieth sermon, from Rom. vi. 1, the writer attempts to prove that "the efficacy of the death of Christ is consistent with the necessity of a good life." The same laxity of statement and reasoning, the same misapplication of scripture pervades this sermon with what we noticed in the foregoing:—the death of Christ is never spoken of in the N. T. as the *cause* of salvation: that cause is the free love of God.

A much better discourse is the twenty-first, on "pure religion," from Jam. i. 27. It describes and properly exposes the state of those who pretend to be pious and benevolent without the cultivation of personal purity.

"The agency of Jesus Christ since his resurrection," is represented in the twenty-second, from Heb. xiii. 8. Although the context limits the meaning of this passage to the unchangeableness of the christian doctrine, yet Dr.

P. has thought fit to explain it of Christ's person, power and offices; points not in themselves unimportant, but about which this verse is totally silent.

We have next three sermons, the twenty-third, twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth, from 1 Cor. iiii. 16, on "spiritual influence in general." The error running throughout them, is that of interpreting certain passages as of christians in general, which ought to be interpreted only of the very first converts. It is remarkable that, in a visitation sermon, to which we have already adverted, Dr. P. recommended a "caution in the use and application of scripture language," which he has not observed himself. Either then the sermon of which we speak should no longer be published, or those before us should have been kept back. In that valuable discourse he says, "It becomes every man who undertakes to explain the scriptures, before he determine to whom or what an expression is now-a-days to be applied, to consider diligently whether it admits of any application at all, or whether it is not rather to be restrained to the precise circumstances and occasion for which it was originally composed," and he asserts concerning texts similar to those which he brings forward in his sermons on spiritual influence, that "they mean nothing to be found or sought for in the present circumstances of christianity." It therefore appears to us that he is, in this instance, inconsistent with himself, and has not pursued his own principle to its just extent. We explain by Matt. vii. 11. Luke xi. 13; and we re-

peat that the rule "to him who hath, &c." bears no relation to the present subject.

"Sin encountered by spiritual aid" is the theme of the three succeeding discourses—the twenty-sixth, twenty-seventh and twenty-eighth, from Rom. vii. 24. These are of much the same character with those immediately foregoing. Dr. P. is still unsuccessful as a scripture critic; and his whole reasoning falls to the ground when it is seen, as every attentive reader will see, that his text, on which he mainly relies, is descriptive of a very different case from what he imagines. We refer, for the true meaning of the passage, to Belsham's Review of Wilberforce, p. 44. (8vo.)

Our author is more himself in explaining "the destruction of the Canaanites," sermon the twenty-ninth, from Josh. x. 40. Nor have we met with a better reply to the objection taken from this fact.

"Neglect of warnings" is the useful subject of the thirtieth sermon, from Deut. xxxii. 29. This is a very judicious, serious and impressive, though not sufficiently copious, discourse. The quotation in the concluding paragraph is from the works of the late Dr. Percival, and occurs also in our author's *Natural Theology*. (p. 495, 1st ed.)

Sermon the thirty-first, from Matt. xvi. 26, is on "the terrors of the Lord," which, like many of the titles, is far from being appropriate. It is a plain discourse, and, in the main, fitted to be useful.

"Preservation and recovery from sin" are treated on in the thirty-second, from Tit. ii. 11, 12.

It is an eloquent and forcible admonition "to deny ungodliness," by reforming at once, and not gradually.

From Ps. cxix. 71, the preacher discourses, in sermon the thirty-third, on "this life" as "a state of probation." The fact is placed in several strong points of light, and we meet again with the author of *Natural Theology*. Our readers will be pleased, and we hope instructed, by the following extract:

"Of sickness we may remark how wonderfully it reconciles us to the thoughts, the expectation, and the approach of death, and how this becomes, in the hand of Providence, an example of one evil being made to correct another. Without question, the difference is wide between the sensations of a person who is condemned to die by violence, and of one who is brought gradually to his end by the progress of disease; and this difference sickness produces. To the christian, whose mind is not harrowed up by the memory of unrepented guilt, the calm and gentle approach of his dissolution has nothing in it terrible. In that sacred custody in which they that sleep in Christ will be preserved, he sees a rest from pain and weariness, from trouble and distress," &c.

"The knowledge of one another in a future state" is the subject of sermon the thirty-fourth, from Col. i. 28. This has been no uncommon topic of discourse from the pulpit: nor does our author discuss it with particular success and originality; though he certainly makes a good application of his doctrine. The sense which he puts upon Heb. xii. 22, seems to us to be incorrect. We beg to refer to the Mon. Rep. vol. ii. pp. 142, &c.

"The general resurrection" is the theme of the thirty-fifth and last sermon, from John, v. 28, 29. Whoever has read Dr. Paley's



*Moral and Political Philosophy*, will be reminded by the beginning of this discourse of a very striking passage in that work. The sermon before us is a short but excellent commentary on its text, and furnishes a fair specimen of a parochial discourse,—of a discourse, we mean, adapted to the most ignorant, yet not tiresome and revolting to the most intelligent or even fastidious, hearers. Had all the contents of the volume been of this quality, little or no room would have been left for censure. Our judgment of these sermons will have been sufficiently visible in our review of them: and that review, we humbly presume, may assist our readers in forming, on satisfactory principles, their own opinion.

ART. II. *The True Character of the Son of God Defended: in Remarks on Mr. Wright's Essay on the Miraculous Conception of Jesus Christ.* By E. Shinfield. Cash, Wisbech; and Richardson, London. 12mo. 50 pp. 1809.

Mr. Shinfield is an humble admirer of Mr. Andrew Fuller, and an enemy to "Hebrew, Greek and Latin." The *English* language, however, he might surely have made himself master of before he attempted to write it; though in that case he might have borne the mark of reprobation which he discovers with horror, in Mr. Wright, "the applause of monthly *Reviewers*."—His pamphlet is equally characterized by bad temper, bad argument and bad grammar. Of his

abusiveness the reader can desire no specimen; of his mode of reasoning and writing enough will be seen in the following note. p. 26.

"I take the liberty here to remark, that Jesus never did call himself 'a Son of Man,' nor *does* his apostles call him so, in any of their epistles; but emphatically, THE SON OF MAN. The true difference of which I leave to the critical sagacity of Mr. W. to determine; observing only that if Jesus had called himself 'a Son of Man,' he had a human father, he not being so called, therefore he had not a human father."

ART. III. *Abolition of Tithe recommended, in an Address to the Agriculturists of Great Britain; in which the increasing and unjust claims of the clergy are fully examined and disputed; with some observations on the present construction of the Law of Tithing, and its dangerous consequences to the landed interest of this country.* By Richard Flower. 8vo. pp. 43. Eaton, London. 1809.

This is a bold and sensible pamphlet. The evil of the tithe system has long been felt. Mr. Flower traces its history, points out its injustice and impolicy, shews that, bad as it was in its origin, it has been stretched far

beyond its first design, and predicts that, without legislative interference, it will operate as a bar to the growth of corn. He recommends the "total abolition of tithe by general and fair commutation."



**ART. IV.** *The Sunday Scholar's First Book ; being all that is judged necessary as a Preparative for beginning the New Testament in Sunday Schools. By a Constant Attendant upon, and an ardent Well Wisher to those eminently useful Institutions.* 24mo. pp. 56. 5s. per dozen. Eddowes, Shrewsbury.

This is one of the few tracts tional and heartfelt. It may be that may be safely introduced also added, that it is well printed, into Sunday Schools. The reli- —a great advantage to an ele- gion which it teaches is both ra- mentary school-book.

**ART. V.** *An Introduction to the Study of Moral Evidence ; or of that Species of Reasoning which relates to Matters of Fact and Practice ; with an Appendix on debating for Victory and not for Truth. By E. J. Gambier, M. A.* The second edition enlarged. Rivington, London.

The first edition of this work observe at present, that we are was reviewed in our Reposi- happy to find its republication tory for November, 1806. To necessary, and that we consider that number we refer our readers the additions as real improve- who may be desirous to see a full ments, by which many of the account of it ; and shall only rules are more clearly illustrated.

**ART. VI.** *A Discourse on the Being of a God. By an Unitarian.* 4to. pp. 11. Doncaster. 1809.

There is something disingenuous Unitarian, which in this country in this publication. The form of at least always denotes a chris- a sermon is chosen for a rhapsody tian, is assumed by a deist, who on the fabulousness of all revealed writes scoffingly of the founder of religion ; and the name of an our faith.

**ART. VII.** *Two Sermons, on Christian Zeal and on the Progress of the Gospel. By Charles Lloyd.* 8vo. pp. 43. Johnson, London. 1808.

These sermons are too full of ing in just observations on human matter to admit of a brief analy- nature, on the state of society, sis ; but they may be character- and on scriptural christianity. ized and recommended as abound-

# INTELLIGENCE.

## CASE AFFECTING THE CIVIL RIGHTS OF UNITARIANS.

We deem it proper to lay before our readers the following narrative, relating to the Civil Rights of Protestant Dissenters in general, and of Unitarians in particular. We make no further preface than to remark that, we are answerable for the truth of the relation, it having been carefully taken down from the lips of the person principally concerned.

Mr. S. — of the parish of — in the county of Middlesex, a man of humble circumstances, but of good sense and upright character, a shoemaker by trade, was applied to by a poor neighbour to take his son, as an apprentice. He expressed his willingness to do so; and the parents of the lad applied to the parish, in which both they and Mr. S. reside, to bind him out; in consequence of which Mr. S. and they met the parish officers and others, at a public meeting for parish business. Here every thing was presently arranged, to the satisfaction of all parties. It was agreed that the boy should be apprenticed at the expense of the parish, and that his intended master should have the pecuniary consideration usual in such cases; viz. the sum of 4l. 2s. of which one half should be paid in six weeks from the signing of the indentures, and the remainder at the expiration of half the period of apprenticeship. The officers, knowing of Mr. S.'s non-conformity, made it a condition of the contract that the boy should go to the parish church; to which, the parents being of the established religion, no objection was, or could be, made. They appointed Mr. S. to appear before the magistrates at the Police Office, Worship Street, Shoreditch, on a given day, when they would take care to be ready, as far as concerned them, to put the last hand to the bargain. It appears that parish indentures, to be valid, must be signed by two magistrates.

On the day appointed, (which was Wednesday, June 21,) Mr. S. appeared at Worship Street, and found two of the constables of the parish at the office, with the blank indentures. Soon after he had entered the Justice Room, a

tradesman was called before the magistrates, whose errand was similar to his own. There were two magistrates on the bench; one of them, the only active one, a clergyman. The Reverend Magistrate, after putting one or two customary questions to the Tradesman now before him, asked "What religion he professed?" The Tradesman answered, "The Protestant Religion." But he was further questioned as to what denomination of Protestants he ranked among; and he stated that he attended a Calvinistic chapel at Hoxton. On being also asked "whether he taught the Assembly's Catechism to his family?" and having replied in the affirmative, he was enjoined by the Reverend Magistrate to teach this catechism to his apprentice. The Magistrate added, that there was little difference between the denomination of christians to which the Tradesman belonged and the Church of England; only it was a pity that that denomination had no regular form of church government. He and his brother Magistrate then signed the indentures.

Mr. S. was next called, when the following dialogue passed between the Reverend Magistrate and himself

*Magistrate.* What is your name?—  
S. — S. —

*Mag.* Has this boy any friends?—

S. Yes, he has parents, who are here.

*Mag.* What religion are you of?—

S. I am a dissenter.

*Mag.* Of what denomination?—S.  
An Unitarian.

*Mag.* An Unitarian! what! don't you believe the bible?—S. Yes, I do believe it.

*Mag.* You don't believe in the Son of God!—S. Yes, I do believe in him.

*Mag.* You don't believe our Saviour to be God; you believe him to be a man. You don't understand your religion.—S. Yes, I think I do understand it.

*Mag.* You deny the first chapters of the Gospel—you deny Christ to be God.—S. Certainly, I don't understand the scriptures that Christ is God.

The Reverend Magistrate now left his seat, in seeming perturbation, and consulted some books. In a few minutes

he returned with a book in his hand, and, taking no notice of Mr. S. pointed out a passage, relating to religion, to the Trade-man who had been before examined, and talked for some little time, of the necessity of faith in the merits of the Saviour, in order to salvation.

When he had ceased, Mr. S. resumed the conversation.

S. But, Sir, will you not bind the boy?

Mag. No. You might as well be a Mahometan, or a Jew, as a Socinian.

S. I don't want Sir, to teach the boy my doctrines; I have no objection to his going to church.

Here the father of the lad interposed, and said that he was perfectly willing that Mr S. should have his son, and that he himself would see to his going to church.

Mag. That may be; but I cannot consent, and will not sign the indentures.

The other magistrate, to whom the clergyman now appealed, declared himself of the same mind.

Mr. S. then retired, convinced that he ought to expect nothing from the

magistrates. But, as both he and the boy's parents were now anxious that he should be apprenticed, as agreed upon, he went immediately and purchased indentures at his own expence, the poverty of the parents preventing their rendering any assistance in the purchase. He was not without hope that the parish officers, who had shewn themselves friendly in the matter, might be induced, notwithstanding the conduct of the magistrates, to advance the promised parish allowance. But on application to them he finds, that they do not consider themselves justified in paying the money, and herein they are no doubt right. The consequence is, that Mr. S., who can ill afford such a sacrifice, loses, on account of conscience, the parish allowance and the sum paid for the indentures. His own reflection, upon furnishing the writer with the foregoing account, accords with his known meek, unobtrusive character:—"I did not know that Unitarianism was a crime: and little thought it would be worth any man's while to persecute me for my religion."

*Hackney, August 17, 1809.*

### QUAKERS' YEARLY EPISTLE, 1809.

DEAR FRIENDS,

In turning our attention to you, in your various allotments, we are encouraged to offer you this testimonial of our love; a love which is felt to be the blessed consequence of our endeavour to serve the Lord, from whom it springs. We desire that you also may be furnished and replenished with this greatest of spiritual gifts. It will contribute to sweeten life; and, through the efficacy of redeeming mercy, it will disarm death of its terror. In pursuit, however, of this "pearl of great price," oppositions will arise, during your state of probation: yet do not be dismayed, but be patient. "Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit," even "of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient." James v. 7 & 8. Remember that the fruit which you seek, is not only peace, in such proportion as the Lord shall see meet to bestow it, in time; but peace, in eternal fulness, with him for ever.

The subjects of our care, in this Meet-

ing, have been conducted with much of that brotherly love and condescension which our Christian principles enjoin; and we have been permitted from time to time to experience that refreshment of mind, which induces us to believe that our meeting is still owned by our holy head and high priest, Christ Jesus.

Our present engagements have been similar to those which have had our attention in preceding meetings. At our last, we believed it right, by a special minute, to urge our monthly and quarterly meetings to stir up those to whom is intrusted the care of children and young people, to a conscientious discharge of that sacred duty. We are now disposed to express our warm desire, that the youth may co-operate with our concern, by being willing early and seriously to watch over their own conduct, by the help of that "true light" (John i. 9) which is not withheld from the humble mind. Dear young friends, be not only willing to submit to the gentle admonition and restraint of those who desire for you, above every other attainment,

a growth in the holy fear and love of God; but be watchful even over your own thoughts: for thought is the spring of action. Out of the heart, as was observed by our blessed Lord, proceed those evil practices which defile the man. And if you should, as yet, be startled at the supposition of defilement, let us say, in consonant language, that in the heart are conceived those evil propensities, which, if unrestrained, will mar the work of sanctification. Above all, do not forget or neglect to let your souls arise in frequent supplication to the Preserver of men: who hears the prayers of the humble, and is well pleased with the dedication of youth—the sacrifice of the beginning of your strength.

A part of the object of the advice which we have mentioned as having been the late concern of this Meeting to give to parents, was to train up their families in plainness—a comprehensive word. At this time, on reviewing the subject, a fear has prevailed among us, that not a few elder friends, and even some who take part in our discipline, have not been sufficiently exemplary; particularly in the furniture of their houses. It seems, therefore, right to caution all against giving way, in this respect, to the varying, and often costly fashions of the age. Though it is a weakness which does not seem to savour so much of personal pride, as does vain attire; yet it bespeaks a mind engaged with trifles, and a fondness for shew which is inconsistent with the christian character; and it disqualifies for duly advising such as may rush into further degrees of extravagance.

The amount of the sufferings of Friends, of which an account has been this year brought to the Meeting, from Great Britain and Ireland, is upwards of thirteen thousand pounds. They are principally for tithes, priests' demands, and those called church-rates, and a considerable part for military demands. A few young men have suffered a temporary imprisonment under the militia laws. We retain an unabated concern that Friends may be strengthened to support, on principle, our testimony against a ministry not depending on the fresh opening of the Spirit of Christ in the heart, and supported by pecuniary means. We believe also, that this testimony to the purity of genuine and free gospel ministry, strongly evinces that the formation of our Society was

not an effort of human wisdom: neither is there any thing more calculated to sap our foundation, and render us a degenerate church, than a general departure from this principle.

We are inclined also, dear friends, to draw your attention to the root of our testimony against war. It is no other than christian love, and that righteousness which produces peace, quietness, and perpetual assurance, as its natural fruit. This draws the mind away from those passions and desires, in which are laid the foundations of contest. Let us then frequently examine our hearts, yea, let us prove our own selves, and see how far the seed of contention withers, and a resignation to suffer is cherished there. And since, as we have mentioned, some of our young men *have* suffered, and more may probably suffer imprisonment, we are deeply desirous that they may walk consistently with their testimony in every respect; shewing by their conduct, that they truly follow a Master who was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners.

At this meeting, as at former ones, we have received epistles from our brethren in the several Yearly Meetings in North America, and one from that of Ireland. On the continent these meetings appear generally attentive to the important concerns of religious society; a care to sympathize with the oppressed objects of slavery remains, and we believe will remain as long as the evil exists; and the more recent engagement of some of these Yearly Meetings, to diffuse the benefits of civilization among the native Indian tribes of America, subsists in unabated vigour. The account from Ireland is encouraging, and induces an animating hope, not only that the Yearly Meeting there is favoured with zeal and discernment, but that many individuals are under a preparation of heart to become advocates of our Christian testimonies and principles.

In the silent lapse of time, several of those who have long been endeavouring to support the cause of Truth, and divers who have been wont to meet with us for that purpose in this annual assembly, have attained the limit of their allotted probation, and we humbly trust are safely arrived beyond the reach of sorrow. Of such events we have again, at this Meeting, received some impressive accounts. We perceive the apparent chasm which their removal occu-



sions; but we may be animated in observing their peaceful close—how, as they approached the confines of that “city which hath foundations,” (Heb. xi. 10.) their hearts were filled with hope, and their tongues employed in praise:—as it were, the beginning of a song, of which the melody is unlimited, and the duration eternal. “The Lord is my strength and song, and is become my salvation.” (Ps. cxviii. 14.)

We are also comforted in observing from year to year, and not often more than the present year, a succession arisen and arising, of such as appear to be endeavouring to serve the Lord in uprightness of heart: some in one way and some in another. In the Lord’s service, there is employment for every talent with which he has endowed his creature, man; each should be employed in the proper and allotted department; and all to his praise. “There are diversities of gifts,” saith the apostle, “but the same spirit.” (1 Cor. xii. 4.)

Having therefore no reason to think that the great Head of the church hath forsaken us, but that he is still willing, as our hearts stand open to him, to qualify for judges and for counsellors, let us endeavour, by his gracious assistance,

and with unceasing prayer to him for that holy help, to hold on our way. And you, tender youth, yet in that most critical time of life, in which men often receive the bias which forms them into servants of their God, or warps them away from his fear, and sometimes almost irretrievably, let us again, in conclusion, press you to ponder the path of your feet. The earlier you are devoted to his service, the better servants you will be. And he is served in little things, and not in those only which appear great and highly beneficial to others. But what attainment is greater than to be able in a pure heart to say, “Thy will be done?” and this, by the spirit of him who taught his immediate followers after this manner to pray, may be attained even in childhood. It will be a most precious morning sacrifice to the Lord, who hath given you life; who stands ready, as you faithfully serve him, to store it with blessings; and who can finally crown it with a peaceful immortality.

Signed in and on behalf of the Meeting, by

JOHN WILKINSON,  
Clerk to the Meeting this Year.

#### WILTSHIRE CONFERENCE OF GENERAL BAPTISTS.

The last half yearly meeting of this Conference was held at Downton, near Salisbury, on Easter Wednesday and Thursday, and the ministers who usually attend it were nearly all present, as well as some others not immediately in the connection.

Three discourses were delivered on the occasion; one on Wednesday evening, and the other two in the afternoon and evening of Thursday; the first by Mr. Smith, late of Taunton, on *The nature of the kingdom of God*; the second by Mr. Webley, on *Humility*; and the third by Mr. Jones, on *The co-operation of churches with their ministers*. The administration of the Lord’s Supper then followed, as is usual in these meetings,

and all christians present were invited to partake.

From the reports made by the different ministers, it appeared that the churches, in general, enjoyed peace; though no great additions had lately been made to them.

As some inconvenience had often arisen from the holding of this Conference half-yearly, it was resolved, that from henceforth, its meetings should be annual, and that the time should be midsummer; accordingly, the next meeting was appointed to be held at Lyndhurst, in the midsummer of 1810, when Messrs. Jones, Kingsford, and Smedley, will be expected to preach.

D. J.

#### MR. WEBLEY’S ORDINATION, AT WEDMORE.

On Wednesday in the Whitsun-week, Mr. Samuel Webley publicly commenced his pastoral connection with the General Baptist Church, at Wedmore,

Somerset.. The religious service on that occasion was conducted in the following manner: Mr. Hook, of Melksham, prayed, and Mr. Smedley, of Downton,



read a few appropriate portions of scripture, and delivered some excellent remarks, explanatory of the nature of the service; then Mr. Jones, of Trowbridge, proposed a few questions to Mr. Webley and to the church, prayed for a blessing on the connection formed between them, and delivered what is usually called the *charge*: afterwards, Mr. Aldridge, of Lyndhurst, set forth, in a judicious discourse, the important duties of churches to their ministers, and concluded with prayer. Besides these discourses, there were two others delivered on general subjects; one on Tuesday evening and the other on Wednesday evening; both by Mr. Smedley.

The auditory was respectable and attentive, so that it is hoped some favourable impressions have been produced.

Mr. Webley is a native of Trowbridge, in Wiltshire, where about six years ago he became a constant attendant at the ministry of Mr. Jones, and

joined his church. Appearing to possess some talents for a public teacher, he became latterly a pupil of Mr. Jones's, and under his direction completed a brief course of preparatory studies for the ministry, being patronized chiefly by the Unitarian Fund.

We understand that he has lately licensed his own dwelling-house, at Blackford, for preaching. This place is about a mile and three quarters from Wedmore, and it is singular, that though a populous village, it has neither church, chapel, nor dissenting meeting-house in it: consequently, Mr. Webley's preaching there on Sunday evenings, being a novelty, attracts more hearers by far than his house can contain. May he meet with much success in breaking this new ground, so as to bring many to the knowledge of the only true God; the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

D. J.

#### MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

The *Fiftieth Annual Meeting* of this society was held, as usual, in London, on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, May 10, 11 and 12, 1809.

On Wednesday morning, the society met for their first religious service at Surry Chapel. Mr. Peddie, minister of the associated congregation of Bristo Street, Edinburgh, preached, on Psalm xlv. 17. "He directed the attention of his audience, 1st, to the promise in the text,—that the name of Christ shall be remembered in all generations; and, 2ndly, to the means which God has employed, and will employ, for its performance. The means by which this name has been, and will be preserved, were then pointed out,—the volume of scripture, the ordinance of preaching, and the active exertions of the lovers of Christ, which naturally led to a recommendation of missionary efforts."

In the evening, the meeting was held at the Tabernacle. Mr. John Clayton, jun. of London, preached the sermon, from Isa. xxix. 8. "The preacher proposed, 1st, to take a view of the church's enemies; 2ndly, to examine their expectation of success; and 3rdly, to expose their final overthrow. The conclusion was properly adapted to promote the great objects of the Missionary Institution."

"On Thursday morning, the annual business of the society was conducted at the Rev. Mr. Wall's meeting house, where more persons applied for admission than could get in. The chair was occupied, as usual, by J. Hardcastle, esq. treasurer of the society. Mr. Waugh prayed. The original plan of the institution was read by Mr. Platt; and the minutes of the last annual meeting by Mr. Buck. The report, which was very copious, was read by the secretary, (Mr. Burder.) While the committee withdrew to nominate directors for the following year, Dr. Collyer delivered a very animated address to the society, *whose satisfaction and delight was too great to be altogether suppressed.* The 133d psalm was then sung; and Mr. Hogg, late of Thrapston, concluded with prayer."

Tottenham Court Chapel was filled at so early an hour in the evening, that the service commenced soon after five, instead of six o'clock. Mr. Richards, one of the ministers in the connection of the late Lady Huntingdon, and who has for several years stately resided at Hull, preached the sermon, on Ezek. xvi. 60. "The preacher first noticed the pleasing promise made to the Jewish nation; that, notwithstanding their transgressions, God would remember

his covenant, &c.; 2ndly, that they should painfully remember their former ways of sin and folly; 3rdly, that Jew and Gentile shall, in due time, be happily united in the christian church; 4thly, that there will be the nearest relation, as well as the closest union, between them; 5thly, that some of the unworthiest and vilest characters shall be made partakers of pardoning mercy and gospel grace; and, lastly, that all these happy effects shall be produced by a new covenant. The improvement of the subject included gratitude for the covenant of grace, the encouragement it affords to backsliders, the motives it suggests to mutual love amongst christian professors, and a powerful incitement to the Missionary Society to the exercise of faith, prayer and exertion."

The fourth and last sermon was preached, on Friday morning, in St. Bride's Church, by Mr. Martyn, junr. curate of Pertenhall, near Kimbolton, Huntingdonshire. The text, Psal. xcvi. 10—18. "In discoursing on which he considered, 1st, the nature and extent of the kingdom of God; 2ndly, the duty and privilege resulting from them; and, 3rdly, the encouragement afforded by the present times. The sermon concluded with an animated exhortation to exertion and liberality."

In the afternoon, the usual business was transacted in the school room of Sion Chapel. The sermons were ordered to be printed, and are, with the Report of the directors, now lying before us; an 8vo pamphlet of more than 100 pages. The Lord's Supper was administered, in Sion Chapel, at the close of the day, to a vast number of communicants, the ministers officiating forming, of themselves, no mean congregation.

The collections on these several occasions were splendid, and were as follows:—

Surry Chapel	—	£386	15	7
Tabernacle	—	174	3	1
Tottenham Court Chapel	—	153	0	6
St. Bride's Church,	—	184	10	0
Sion Chapel	—	180	10	0
Total	—	1078	19	2

These great collections, the largest the society ever made, may be, in part, ascribed to the representations made by the preachers, and by hand-bills distributed for the purpose, of the excess of the disbursements over the income of the society, by a very alarming sum.

Since the meeting, a circular letter has been put out by the directors, stating that in the year ending the 31st of May, 1809, the disbursements of the society amounted to 9611l. 19s. 6d. and that the amount of receipts, including the annual collections, was only 3960l. 2s. 1d. leaving a balance against the society of 3651l. 17s. 5d. Towards this, the *Evangelical Magazine* announces that the sum of 857l. 14s. 4d. has been received in occasional contributions and legacies, whilst it laments that there is the actual balance of 2794l. 3s. 1d. upon the expenditure of last year unprovided for. Hence, the directors conclude that there is a necessity of *more vigorous exertions* by the friends of the Missionary Society; not once suspecting that there may be a no less pressing necessity for the Directors' controuling their expenditure, which, on some occasions, has appeared improvident. We think, on looking over the several Reports of the directors, that we could point out many, not inconsiderable, sums that have been absolutely wasted.

The REPORT for the last year, like that for the preceding, gives the society occasion for hope rather than joy.

OTAKEITE was the first and favourite missionary point with the society. At several successive annual meetings, the beauties of Otakeitan scenery were set forth by the rude eloquence of the preachers, and the imaginations of their hearers were inflamed by the richly-coloured representation. The islands of the South Sea were, in fancy, pre-destined to be the seat of a more spotless and benign profession of religion than had been witnessed since apostolic days. They were warbled in hymns—they were consecrated in prayers—they were discovered in prophecy. But the experience of three or four years dissipated these illusions; and, for a wearisome length of time, the society has been doomed to consider Otakeite as a barren spot: the missionaries, with all their persevering labour, have produced none of the fruit of conversion.—Two of the missionaries, Messrs. Youl and Elder had gone, when the last accounts were received, from Otakeite to Port Jackson, in New Holland, in order to procure wives, with whom they intended to return. Mr. Jefferson, whose illness was mentioned in our last account of the society, [Vol. iii. p. 450,] died September 25, 1807. "The brethren, Nott and Hayward," have visited Huaheene and

two other of the Society islands, in the Paramatta schooner; the chiefs of these islands behaved with kindness to them; and a great number of the inhabitants heard them preach. A hope is expressed that the increasing commerce between New South Wales and Otaheite will afford many facilities to the missionaries for visiting the neighbouring islands.

In AFRICA, the Society has the following stations:—

*Bethelsdorp.*—Here the Mission flourishes. Dr. Vander Kemp writes that it contains betwixt 60 and 70 houses, each at an average of 10 inhabitants, whose industry increases. Impelled by missionary zeal, the doctor meditates a mission to “the long neglected island of Madagascar.” As some of the “brethren, as well as some of the converted Hottentots” propose to accompany Dr. Vander Kemp, the directors have fixed on two missionaries, Messrs. Wimmer and Pacalt, who being natives of Germany, it is expected, will easily acquire the knowledge of the Dutch language, to succeed them.

The following passage in the Report pleased us exceedingly.—“Mr. Read mentions that the Magazines, Missionary Transactions, &c. which we sent him were very acceptable; but nothing, he adds, rejoices our hearts so much as the abolition of the slave-trade. Oh! happy Britain! to be the means (probably) of the total destruction of such an evil. I hope this is a proof that God has not destined our dear land to immediate destruction. We held a day of public thanksgiving; we assembled all our people, old and young, and pressed on their minds the horrid iniquity of trading in human flesh, that our youth might remember it to their latest years. Brother Ullbricht conducted the worship. A hymn was sung, composed by Dr. Vander Kemp, and very applicable to the occasion. The sympathetic feelings of this brother, for these poor people, have induced him, in the last three years, to redeem seven of them from slavery, which has cost him about 8 or 900*l*. Being eye-witnesses of the horrid usage of the poor slaves still in bondage in this colony, so renowned for its mildness to them, we agreed to be urgent at the throne of grace, in public and private, that the Lord may be pleased wholly to do away this great evil.”

*Orange River.*—This station is “under the superintendence of the Brethren

Anderson, Kramer and Jantz,” who, besides preaching, &c. catechize the children and instruct them in the rudiments of common learning, and teach the inhabitants also to lay out gardens, cultivate the land, and build houses; thus gradually reforming their wild and wandering habits, and promoting their civilization. Seventeen persons have been baptized here. The station, it is added, has suffered much from the small pox; but the introduction of the vaccine inoculation appears likely, through the divine blessing, to eradicate this evil, as it has hitherto been attended with extensive and complete success.

*Namaquas.*—No particulars are given of this mission, but a reference is made to No. xx. of Missionary Transactions, where there is said to be a very interesting description, by Mr. A. Albrecht, of the Namaqua country and its inhabitants, including their manner of life, their various customs, religion and government.

*Graaf Reinet.*—Here Mr. Kicherer, who brought over to this country the three converted Hottentots, resides, in the bosom of a large christian society. He boasts of 1000 communicants at the Lord’s table.

The attention of the society has been of late turned to ASIA; the mention of which, naturally leads the directors to notice the opposition to missionary efforts in this quarter of the globe. A torrent of abuse and a volley of threats are let forth, not in the most christian manner, against the enemies of Indian conversions. The outcry raised on this subject has, it seems, caused the society to withhold, till now, the particulars which they have received concerning the operations of their missionaries in Asia.

At *Madras*—“brother Loveless is labouring with diligence, as a preacher of the gospel, in that populous district called the Black Town.” He is superintending master at the Male Asylum, where he has nearly 300 youths under his care. He receives much countenance, and his salary from government, for the above-named service, was expected to be raised to 200*l*. per annum. He has been also encouraged to set on foot a charity school, for the benefit of other destitute male children, and obtained a sufficient fund with which to commence it. Fifty boys were actually in this new seminary in March, last year.

The directors report, with an appearance of heart-felt regret, the death of the Rev. Dr. Kerr, senior chaplain of



the presidency at Madras, and a sincere friend to missionaries. He departed this life in April, 1808.

*Vizagapatam*.—In this settlement, “the brethren Cran and Des Granges” are making progress in translating the Evangelists into the Telinga language, and are printing and circulating short catechisms and other tracts. In these labours, they have been assisted by Arandarayer, a Bandida Bramin, a convert to christianity, who has a perfect knowledge of the Telinga. They have continued to preach in the Fort, to the Europeans, every Lord’s day; and to superintend and assist in the instruction of large schools, which they had raised for the native children; in which laudable undertaking, they were supported and assisted by the subscriptions and donations of our affluent countrymen, and countenanced by the government.

At *Tinnevely*—“brother Ringeltaube” has wandered, in pursuit of his mission, more than the directors approve, who have instructed him to “become more stationary.”

*Negapatam*—a populous place, has a Dutch church, to which, the directors say, “our worthy and beloved friend Vos,” having been invited by the society, has been appointed by the governor at Madras. The city contains seventeen great, and sixty-eight small, pagodas, and five Mahometan mosques; besides two Roman Catholic and two Protestant churches: “the Romans are five times more numerous than the Protestants.”

A cloud of discouragement hangs over the mission at *Surat*.—Dr. Taylor, the society’s missionary, wearied as should seem in the service, has accepted, without the consent of his brethren, and without consulting the directors, a situation under government, as a medical professor. He professes to have done this to serve the mission; but the society do not, apparently, thank him for this service. They say that his conduct has deterred an accepted missionary from going out to this settlement, who has been further so much discouraged by this event as to relinquish their service. A declaration, not called for, that the directors do not wish or intend to insinuate any thing against Dr. Taylor’s “moral and religious principles,” would almost raise a suspicion that these are really called in question.

“Three brethren” have been lately devoted to missionary service in India.

Two of them, Messrs. Pritchett and Brain, are intended for the Birman Empire; and the other, Mr. Hands, for Seringapatam. Messrs. Gordon and Lee, now in America, are to proceed and join themselves to “the brethren at Madras and Vizagapatam.”

*Ceylon*—is a scene of preparation rather than of action. The missionaries here are Messrs. Erhardt, Read and Palm. Palm and his wife are situated near Jaffnapatnam; his studies have been chiefly directed to the Tamoul or Malabar language, in which he appears to have made considerable proficiency, being assisted greatly by the scriptures, long since printed in that language.

One missionary, Morrison, is in *China*—studying “this almost unknown language.” From the insight he has already got in it, he pronounces that the difficulties of acquiring it are by no means insuperable. He has been helped forward by a native Chinese, professing the Roman religion, and has met with friendly aid from the European and American gentlemen engaged in commerce.

“Mr. Weisenger, a promising young man, has been sent from the seminary at Gosport to the island of MALTA,—where he is to reside for a time, in order to improve himself in the knowledge of the modern Greek language and of the Italian, with an ultimate view of proceeding to the Greek islands, and also to the continent, to circulate the modern Greek Testament among the inhabitants.” The New Testament, in modern Greek, is printing by the British and Foreign Bible Society.

In AMERICA,—Mr. Pidgeon is at *Restigouche*, near the bay of *Chaleur*, in *New Brunswick*, labouring, it is said, “not without success.”

Missionary efforts seem to have succeeded better in the WEST INDIES than elsewhere.

Mr. Elliot has been at *Tobago*—about a year. He has preached at many different estates, and also in the town of Scarborough. “The negroes, in general, have discovered the greatest readiness to receive instruction, both from preaching and catechising.”

The mission at *Demarara*—has flourished under Mr. Wray. Mr. Post, an opulent planter, has been a great friend to the mission; he first proposed, and has since liberally supported it. He is said to have been at the expence, in behalf of the cause of religion, in little

more than a year, of more than 1000l. ! A subscription has been also raised, amongst other individuals, of nearly 200l. towards the mission. By this generous support, a chapel, called Bethel-chapel, has been erected, where, on the Lord's day, 400 or 500 slaves, besides a considerable number of whites and people of colour, attend. Of the negroes, 24 have been baptized; 150 "are earnestly seeking the salvation of their souls;" and 200 can say the whole of Dr. Watts's First Catechism by heart, &c. The good effects of Mr. Wray's mission are said to be felt beyond the immediate sphere of his labours. There is also, it is added, a visible change for the better, in the manners of the negroes who hear the gospel.

"Mr. Post, earnestly wishing to obtain a suitable person, as a teacher in a colonial school, of which he is an acting trustee, applied to the directors, who sent out, as soon as possible, Mr. Davies, one of the missionary students, who, beside the tuition of youth, will assist Mr. Wray, and preach, if permitted, in various other places. Mr. Adam has also been sent over with the same view." Two young ladies have also gone out, under patronage of the society, as wives to Mr. Davies and Mr. Wray.

"The good work of God in Demerara," the directors subjoin, "has met with some opposition, and fears have been entertained lest the missionaries should be silenced. The Lord has, however, raised up friends among persons in power in the colony; and application has also been made to the British government for protection."

The MISSION TO THE JEWS, supported for several years past, has been attended with "great difficulties and painful disappointments." Mr. Frey, the convert and preacher, has, in discontent, relinquished his connection with the society, "and associated himself with another body, professing to have the same object in view." This "dereliction of their agent," however, did not appear to the directors to discharge them from their duty. They have, therefore, en-

gaged the services of other ministers to continue the Lecture to the Jews, in Artillery-street Chapel, on the Lord's days; and have instituted a meeting of prayer, on behalf of the children of Israel, to be held at the same place on Friday evenings. They recommend the volume of *Essays*, written at their request by the Rev. Mr. Ewing, of Glasgow, and several small tracts which they have printed.

Mr. Asa, "a learned Jew from Berlin," another convert, has been for about a year and a half under the patronage of the society. He has been some months under Mr. Bogue; and is applying himself to the study of medicine in the London Hospitals. His intention is to return to his family at Koningsberg, to perfect himself in his profession.

An account is also given of two Jewish converts on the continent, whom a foreign correspondent recommends to the society as missionaries. The directors, however, will probably, after their late, and perhaps dear-bought, experience, take them up with caution.

The MISSIONARY SEMINARY, under Mr. Bogue, of Gosport, was thinned, the last year, by nine of the students being drafted off for foreign parts. At present there are only five students; but the number is likely to be soon enlarged.

Thus have we, with considerable labour, copied into our pages the substance of the Report of this active society. Our opinion of calvinistic missions is well known; we conceive that, as far as they succeed, they lead Jews into a worse error than that of not believing in the Messiah, and that they confirm Heathens in their most corrupt superstitions; and so far we deprecate their success, and cannot sincerely sympathize with their well-meaning conductors in their disappointments and regrets: but we do fervently rejoice in them as the means, under Providence, of exciting religious enquiry, of circulating the scriptures, and of diffusing useful education among the abject poor.

EXTRACTS FROM THE FIFTH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE UNITARIAN FUND, READ TO THE SOCIETY, MAY 24.

In our account of the Annual Meeting of the Unitarian Fund, p. 299 of the present volume, we explained that it was agreed to discontinue the publication of VOL. IV.



the Reports, and to insert the substance of them in the *Monthly Repository*. It was also determined, that the Committee should be at liberty to make known, through the same medium, such particulars of their proceedings as they should judge interesting to the subscribers at large. Agreeably to these regulations, we are enabled to give, in the present number, Extracts from the Fifth Report, comprising the most material parts of it; and in our next, we hope to be favoured with some account of *Mr. Wright's mission in Scotland*. EDITOR.

It was to be expected, that as the object and plan of the Fund became better known, it would meet with more general support. The year that is now past has realized this expectation: more names have been added to the list of subscribers, and a larger sum raised in subscriptions than in any preceding year, since the first institution of the Fund. This the Committee cannot help ascribing to the conviction of the utility of the society and of the prudence of its measures, produced in the minds of the Unitarian public, by the published proceedings of the Committee and by the character and exertions of the missionaries.

The missionaries residing in Wales have not been inactive during the last year. Mr. Benjamin Philips has taken two journeys of considerable extent, and reports "that he was very well attended at all the places he visited, that the people are more and more desirous of hearing Unitarianism, and that the number of Anti-Trinitarians is increasing."

To the number of the Welsh missionaries has been added by the Committee, on the recommendation of the Rev. T. Rees and others, Mr. D. Oliver, minister of Gellionen, Glamorganshire, an able, zealous and judicious Unitarian preacher. He submitted to the Committee, in September, the plan of two journeys, one in the counties of Glamorgan and Brecknock, to the extent of 116 miles; which will occupy 17 days, the other in the counties of Glamorgan and Carmarthen, to the extent of 70 miles, which will occupy 10 days. These he was encouraged to undertake; which he has accordingly done, and with sufficient success to animate him to future labours. He found every where a disposition to hear the truth; and reports that there are frequent secessions in the Welsh dissenting churches, on account of Unitarian principles, and that buildings are proposed to be erected for the worship of the One God.

The following is an extract from a letter of Mr. Lyons's to the secretary, dated Chester, Feb. 24, 1809.—"I have lately discovered an Unitarian Baptist

minister, a Mr. Astbury, who has only just emerged from the gloomy dungeon of Calvinism. He was formerly a Methodist local preacher, and has been for some years past the minister of a small congregation at Kinsley, a little village about twelve miles from Chester. His conversion to Unitarianism was partly occasioned by conversation with a Mr. Jones, of Namptwich, and partly by reading some of Mr. Wright's publications; but he is much better acquainted with his bible than with controversy, and from his simplicity, piety and zeal, I think there is reason to hope that he will be very useful in the good cause. He is a labouring man, who never possessed the means of much improvement, but he appears to have a strong mind: he has never received more than 10 or 12l. a year for preaching. When I last saw him, he told me that he had been upon a visit to some of his Baptist friends in North Wales; but that his change of sentiments had given them great offence. However, since that time, a man out of that neighbourhood called upon me, to have some conversation upon doctrinal subjects, and it appears that Mr. A.'s conversation has fairly put him into the way of enquiry. He has given up all that was Trinitarian in his creed, and I think it will not be long before the few remaining absurdities which he now holds will share the same fate. I gave him several of the Tracts which you sent me, and such others as I thought would be useful to him, and he seemed highly delighted with the thought of communicating his treasure to his neighbours and brethren at home. I have also circulated, in Mr. A.'s neighbourhood, a cargo of the same materials; and I hope to be able, in a short time, to make out, by means of these good friends, a little circuit of village-preaching for myself."

During the last year Mr. Wright has been in labours abundant. The following is a summary of his missionary journeys.—1808. *June*. A journey into Yorkshire, to Thorne, &c. from home 13 days, travelled 220 miles, preached seven times.—*July*. A journey into

Norfolk, and to Palgrave in Suffolk: from home six days, travelled 160 miles, preached twice.—*August.* A journey in Cambridgeshire; from home 5 days, travelled 60 miles, preached twice.—*September, October and November.* Journey into Kent and Sussex: from home 15 days, travelled 500 miles, preached 34 times, and attended many meetings of conference.—1809. *Feb. and March.* Journey to Boston, Lincoln, Thorne and its vicinity, to York and Leicester; from home 20 days, travelled 300 miles, preached 13 times.—*March.* Journey into Norfolk; from home 5 days, travelled 80 miles, preached twice.—*April.* Journey in Lincolnshire, as far as Boston; from home 4 days, travelled 60 miles, preached once.—*April.* Journey to the North Marshes in Lincolnshire, and to Hull; from home 20 days, travelled 240 miles, preached 15 times.—To the above are to be added, four journeys in the south of Lincolnshire; 100 miles, 12 days, seven sermons.—In all, since the last anniversary, Mr. Wright has travelled in the service of the society more than 1700 miles, been from home 140 days, and preached 84 sermons. In this computation, a preaching journey to Norwich is not reckoned, as it was undertaken at the invitation and charge of the congregation assembling in the Octagon chapel.

Mr. Wright gives the following account of the society raised, by his means, at Thorne, in Yorkshire. "The congregation kept increasing each time, and the hearers were remarkably attentive. I was much engaged in conversation during the time I was at Thorne. There is one man in particular with whom I am highly gratified; he is a young man, illiterate, by trade a smith; he has not attended above a year. The progress he has made in the knowledge of the scriptures during that time is surprising, when his disadvantages are considered. He has to work hard all day to support his family, yet he reads and thinks much. The questions he asks, and he is full of them, are very pertinent. He asked me one question, which I found had arisen entirely from his own reflections, and which I mention as a specimen of his inquiries: it was, 'Whether Jesus was ever called the only begotten son of God, prior to his exaltation; unless in reference to that event.' He had written down a long list of passages of

scripture, on each of which he required my thoughts. He is a man of good character and amiable spirit. I hope in time, if he go on, he will become capable of public usefulness among his poor brethren. He has got the Improved Version, and is reading it with avidity. A few people at Thorne meet together, amongst themselves, to worship the One God. They have had some difficulties since I saw them before; but are now in peace. I carried a few books which they had not before amongst them."

In his tour in Kent, in the month of October, Mr. Wright spent one Sunday at Canterbury, thus described in his journal.—"Sunday the 16th, preached at Canterbury. Just before I entered the pulpit in the afternoon, I received a letter, of which the following is a copy.

REV. SIR,

It is very likely you will be attended this afternoon by several persons who have lately become converts to the Unitarian faith, in consequence of having met with, and perused your very sensible and well-written treatise on the satisfactionist scheme, as well as your little but satisfactory tract on the humanity of Christ. Those converts to rational christianity, expect to hear from you what they are to think of Christ, whether a man or a god, or a being of a middle nature. They are come, sir, fully expecting that you will say something on those heads that shall, in perfect conformity with your valuable writings on the same subjects, be immediately to the purpose; by an attention to which, sir, you'll much oblige

Yours very respectfully,

CLERICUS.

It so happened, that the discourse I had prepared to deliver, was such as the above letter called for. I preached from 'This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, hear ye him.' After the introduction, I first showed how the person of Christ, as literally and truly a man, was identified, by the voice from heaven at his baptism, the voice from the excellent glory in the text, by his death, burial, and resurrection, and indeed by the whole gospel history. Next considered his character. He is the Son of God. Not literally or by nature, as one man is the son of another, as this would involve the grossest absurdity; but by office, &c. 1. As he is the Messiah, the messenger of God to men,

2. As he is raised to the highest state of privilege. 3. As he was the brightest living image of God that ever appeared among men. 4. As he was the first begotten from the dead, and so declared to be the Son of God with power. 5. As God hath highly exalted him. Then proceeded to shew that he was the beloved or approved Son of God, and not at any moment the object of his wrath or displeasure, against whom the sword of his justice was directed. The reason why he was the beloved Son of God; *i. e.* on account of his superior moral excellence and worth;—so that by imitating him, we may all become the beloved sons of God. Lastly. Considered the connection between these views of Christ and the command, ‘hear ye him.’—We had a full congregation, and I had a very attentive hearing. In the evening we had a conference meeting.”

A letter from Mr. Platts, of so late a date as May 18th, contains information of too pleasing a nature to be passed over by the Committee. He says,

“A person who has been a respectable local preacher amongst the Methodists, for 30 years, has become an Unitarian and Universalist. He resides about 16 miles from Boston, and has been over twice on purpose to hear me preach, and to enquire after the truth. There is also a person lives within a few miles, who was a member of my congregation at Boston, two or three years since. He remains stedfast in the truth and zealous in the cause. They are anxious to have Unitarian worship among them, and wish Mr. Wright to make it in his road always when he goes into the North, which I think he may without much inconvenience; and I will go with pleasure whenever I can find time; and I hope Mr. Pickersgill, the preacher referred to, will be able to keep up religious worship, by the help of God, after it is once begun. They inform me that they have made known their sentiments to a gentleman in the neighbourhood, who is friendly and charitable to all sects, who has expressed himself highly pleased with the intention of these friends, and has offered a piece of ground for the erection of a chapel for Unitarian worship.”

The concluding part of the multifarious intelligence received by the Committee, which they select for the information of the subscribers, and the proceedings upon which they are most

anxious for the opinion and approbation of the general meeting, relate to the case of Mr. Gisburne, Unitarian preacher, at Soham, in Cambridgeshire. The state of things at Soham, and the neighbourhood, was described in the Third Report: it appeared to the Committee, to warrant them, soon after the last anniversary, upon application, recommended by Mr. Wright and the secretary, in granting assistance to Mr. G. in support of worship at Soham and the adjacent villages. Hence Mr. G. became connected with the Fund, and his cause was identified with that of the society at large.

The congregation at Soham appears to have been entirely calvinistic on Mr. G.’s first going amongst them. He himself acquired, and of course disclosed, other religious views by degrees. The avowal of his Unitarian sentiments offended, as was to have been expected, some of the congregation, and a few individuals withdrew; to which step they seem to have been determined, in a great measure, by the introduction of Mr. Gisburne’s name into the Unitarian Fund Report. After their secession, the congregation flourished, and appeared heartily united. The seceders perceiving this, and fearing that by leaving the society they had contributed to give it a decidedly Unitarian character, resolved to return in a body and to cast out Mr. Gisburne; to use their own language, if they could, by *fair* means, if not by *foul*. They now attended the public worship which, at the same time, they professed to abhor; and, for the sake of preserving a right to vote in the affairs of the society, accepted the Lord’s supper from the hands of a minister whom they were known to detest, and with a people whom in the bitterest manner they reviled. At various meetings they endeavoured to accomplish their purpose of ejecting Mr. G. by questions put to the vote; but were always left in a small, and constantly lessening minority. Thus defeated, they became outrageous, and proceeded the length of interrupting the public worship. On several Sundays they raised a tumult in the meeting house, which would have been disgraceful in any meeting for business merely secular; till the towns-people, wholly indifferent to the religious differences in the society, interfered and expressed their indignation of such lawless proceedings. Nei-



ther awed however by public opinion, nor restrained by a sense of religion, they persisted at intervals in their barbarous behaviour. One of their measures was the bringing of books of controversy to the place of worship, and reading them out whilst Mr. G. was carrying on the public service. He appears to have conducted himself, in the midst of these scenes of disorder and violence, with great prudence; but being disturbed on the morning of a Sunday in October, by one of the party standing up in the middle of the congregation and reading a book in an audible tone, while he himself was publicly reading the scriptures, he requested the offending individual to pay attention, and to allow others to pay attention, to God's word. This request produced the following reply:—"Here's Mr. Fuller's book against the Socinians, you had better read this;" which profane answer was only the signal for a volley of coarse and rancorous abuse. Unable to proceed with the public worship, Mr. G. was constrained to appeal to the civil power for protection; but the officer called in declined acting, alledging that he had no warrant from any magistrate. The disturbers were emboldened by this refusal of the officer to do his duty; and with a trustee at their head, ventured, after the morning service, to lock up the doors of the meeting house. In this situation Mr. G. was for waiting legal redress, but one of his friends, who was also a trustee, resolved that the place should be open as usual in the afternoon, and accordingly opened a window in it by force, through which Mr. G. entered, and from within turned back the lock of the door. Upon this, the same constable who would not act in the morning, went into the meeting house and took Mr. G. into custody, acknowledging, at the same time, that he had no warrant for this measure. Thus arrested, Mr. G. was kept in confinement five hours; at the expiration of which, the parties were heard before two magistrates, clergymen, and the Calvinists were bound over to prosecute him at the next Cambridge Assizes, and two of his friends were admitted bail for his appearance. The next Sunday, the place being opened by his adversaries, he went thither, that by his absence he might not seem to vacate his right; he found the entrance to his pulpit barred

against him, and was thrust back from it by violence.

In this stage of the business he applied to the Committee for advice and assistance. They could not hesitate a moment as to the propriety and necessity of supporting him against a faction, whose object it plainly was to crush him; but they felt a difficulty as to their power, according to the Rules of the Fund, to conduct any law proceedings; they resolved therefore to defend him with all their might, reserving the question of the formality of their conduct for this present general meeting, pledging themselves, at the same time, as individuals, to save the Fund from any charges incurred, which the subscribers might think foreign from the object of the society, however proper in themselves. They directed Mr. G. to procure some temporary place of worship; and sought out the best legal advice. At the period of the assizes, the secretary, accompanied by an able attorney, went down to Cambridge. Cross indictments were preferred against Mr. G.'s prosecutors. British justice lent her aid to the cause of truth. The gentlemen of the grand jury, after hearing evidence, threw out the bill lodged against Mr. G. and found as true, two bills which the solicitor of the Fund presented against some individuals of the faction. Thus was malice completely discomfited, and the persecutors of Mr. G. caught in the very snare which they had prepared for him; but as revenge is not the sentiment of a christian heart, Mr. G. and his friends and advisers adhered even now to a proposal which they had before made, to submit the dispute to amicable arrangement. In the issue, the sum of 60 guineas was agreed to be given to Mr. G. towards the erection of a new place of worship; he to retire from the old meeting-house, and to drop all legal proceedings against the rioters. This sum may appear unsatisfactorily small; but the meeting house which is relinquished is a small and slight building, and the trustees are, almost without exception, Calvinists, who would never have suffered an Unitarian minister to be at peace. In this manner ended an affair which at first threatened Mr. G. and his congregation with nothing short of dissolution as a religious society.

From the time of his exclusion from the meeting-house, Mr. G. has made use

of an assembly room at Soham, and has had a considerable auditory; several persons of respectability have attended his preaching, who have but lately entered the course of inquiry. The place now used is inconveniently small, and is besides held by a precarious tenure; Mr. G. and his friends therefore think of obtaining a new building for Unitarian worship. The Committee are well persuaded that it is consonant to the object of the Fund to patronize this object; but it may be allowed them to observe, that the degree of assistance which the society shall render to this promising cause, will be in some measure determined by the resolution of the subscribers, as to the expences of the law-proceedings.

To the above account of the Unitarian congregation at Soham, it may be proper to add, that it being resolved, at the general meeting, that the expences of Mr. Gisburne's defence should be

defrayed by voluntary subscription, the committee for the present year have voted the sum of 40l. towards the erection of the new meeting-house; subscriptions have been already obtained, in behalf of Mr. Gisburne sufficient to cover the expences at Cambridge, with a balance in favour of the place of worship. The structure is begun and will be finished in a few weeks. As a considerable sum is yet wanting to make up the estimated amount of the cost of the building, it is confidently hoped that the opulent and liberal-minded friends of Unitarianism, in various places, will step forward in behalf of the poor but interesting people at Soham. It is particularly recommended to ministers to exert themselves in this cause. Subscriptions will be received by the Rev. John Gisburne, Soham; and by John Christie, esq. Mark Lane, treasurer, and the Rev. Robert Aspland, Hackney, secretary, to the Unitarian Fund.

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## MONTHLY RETROSPECT OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS;

OR,

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

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"A most awful scene of destruction has been presented" since our last. A large "town on fire in almost every quarter." The fire was occasioned by a most tremendous cannonading, and showers of rockets from several posts, at a small distance from the town. The distress of the inhabitants cannot be conceived, but by those who were eye-witnesses of it. Ye mothers who have children at the breast, ye fathers who have reared a youth to the hopes of manly perfection, ye may feel for the widows and orphans that this fire has made. Driven from their houses by the falling of the roofs and walls, death seized them in the streets; his winged messengers flew to their prey in every direction. The noise of the cannon, the crash of houses, the bursting of bombs, the screams of the women and children, struck horror in every breast for two nights and a day. At last a solemn pause ensued, interrupted only by sobs, and sighs, and groans: here a mother

was binding up the mangled limbs of the child that had just learned to form the accents of pleasure, now turned into those of unutterable woe; there a father was digging out of the ruins his half-expiring son; the husband was searching for his bride, and the old man, stupified with horror, was contemplating the wreck of all his family. Such were the calamities occasioned by this tremendous fire, by the great improvements that have been made in our days, in the awful work of destruction. Such are the scenes produced by war; such were the sights presented, according to our poet's noble imagination, to our first parent, by the archangel, when the fatal consequences of sin were pointed out to him.

Lamentable state of the human race! Yet cannot it always remain so, and, in spite of the infidelity of the present day, we look forward with confidence to the time when reason shall have its due influence with mankind, and bending their



knees devoutly to the God of love, they will prove their love to him by loving their brethren. In that case, differences of opinion will be softened by other modes than those of force; and the instruments of destruction will be converted to their proper purpose, the subduing of the earth to the benefit of mankind. We enter not into the necessity of the destruction which has taken place, on which our brave soldiers and sailors can feel like ourselves; but we will soothe the distempered mind by the hopes of better days, by the assurances that war and tumult cannot last for ever. Who that looks on the destruction of Flushing, and the noble road cut through the Alps by the Duke of Savoy, would not wish that the money and labour employed to overthrow the works of human industry, were expended in giving facility to the nobler exertions of peace.

The Expedition, for which such grand preparations had been made, and on which mighty expectations had been built, has begun its enterprize, and succeeded in the previous steps to its operations. The number of ships of war, of men, of guns, and ammunition, exceeds any thing of the kind that has ever departed at the same time from our shores. It sailed over to the Dutch coast without interruption, and troops were landed on the islands of Walcheren and Beveland with scarcely no opposition. The latter island, of course, surrendered; and of the former, nothing could make resistance but the town of Flushing, which was strongly fortified and garrisoned. To hold out against the force sent against it was impossible: the only thing that could be done by the French commander was done, and he compelled us to make those approaches which checked us in our future operations. After the batteries were opened on the town, and the ships had taken their posts to play upon it, the fall of the place was inevitable. Nothing could withstand such immense powers of destruction, and the Governor's flags of truce were listened to, as soon as he could make his mind up to deliver the place. The garrison were made prisoners of war, and the citizens placed in a very favourable situation. Thus the whole island is subject to us, and the forces are now employed on the ulterior object of their embarkation.

The importance of this conquest will be differently estimated. It depends on

the immediate object to be attained, and the value set on having the complete command of the Scheldt. The immediate object is supposed to be the destruction of several men of war in the river, which have been built near, and are now lying above Antwerp. This enterprize is doubtless attended with considerable difficulty, as, by the length of time consumed against Flushing, the French must be completely prepared for their defence, and they may bring in all the forces under the king of Holland, as well as those that filled the garrison towns in Brabant and the Netherlands. To be baffled in the undertaking, would doubtless be extremely mortifying to its projectors, though it is certain, that the possession of the island of Walcheren must render those ships inefficient, and leave the trade of Antwerp at our mercy. What a fluctuation there is in human politics! A few years ago an Emperor of Germany and King of Austria, was bestirring himself, to render the Scheldt navigable to his subjects in the Netherlands. This was opposed by the Dutch, and the fort of Lillo stopt the progress of his ships. At this moment the whole river is lost to Austria; the Dutch fort of Lillo has probably surrendered to us: our ships are in the Scheldt, and the French are baffled in their attempt to form a marine on this river.

Success has so far attended the arms of the British; but in another quarter victory has not been obtained without great slaughter on our side. The state of affairs in Spain is very imperfectly known in this country. The junta has possession of the southern provinces; the middle were chiefly occupied by the Gallo-Spanish king, and Madrid, the capital, was in his possession. A large army of English, under the command of Sir A. Wellesley, marched through Estramadura, and entered New Castille, the province in which Madrid is situated. There they were joined by Spanish forces, so that the combined army amounted to about sixty thousand men. They encamped near the Tagus, having before them the small river Alberche, and the town of Talavera on the right. The Gallo-Spanish king had collected his troops, to the amount of fifty thousand men, and determined to prevent the farther advance of the combined army, as the country was open to Madrid; and if it was not checked here, he might tremble for his capital. With

this view he poured down his troops, with an immense artillery, and commenced an attack, which, by all accounts, was as tremendous as any that this war has seen. The brunt of the battle lay on the English troops, in the centre of the left wing: the Spanish troops on the right having but little share in the engagement. The battle lasted a night and the greater part of two days; but the enemy were every where repulsed, and compelled to give up their enterprise, leaving behind them an immense number of killed and wounded, several pieces of cannon and some colours. Their retreat was however made in good order, and our army was not able to pursue them. Why this was not done by the Spaniards, who were so little affected by the main battle, occasions no small degree of surprise.

The victory was not obtained on our side without prodigious slaughter. Upwards of five thousand men were killed, wounded, or missing; but a reinforcement of English arrived the day after the battle. The place to which the Gallo-Spanish king retreated is not ascertained; but the specimen he has had of English valour may make him fearful of venturing on another attack. In this case it can hardly be doubted that he will be pursued by the combined army, strengthened, we should imagine, by great reinforcements from the Junta; for if the Spaniards are really in earnest, now is the time for their exertions. Madrid must of course fall, and the Gallo-Spanish king must make another march northwards to his old entrenchments, to the north of the Ebro in Old Castille. If the Cortez were immediately assembled in Madrid, and a real constitution given to the people, with those improvements which experience has discovered to be necessary, Spain might become an independent kingdom. But a Buonaparte has had the credit of destroying the inquisition, and of diminishing the influence of a lazy, overbearing priesthood. We are not certain that these would not revive on the subjection of the French; and what is the independence of a kingdom, if its subjects are kept in the worst of thraldoms, — that of an inquisition and a priesthood. The checks thus given to the French arms, in Holland and Spain, have animated the hopes of many, who look forward to future contests on the Danube. But they do not consider at what a

distance from the grand scene of negotiations these events have taken place. The destruction of a few ships in the Scheldt prevents the French from meeting us on the sea: the occupation of Walcheren and Beveland curtails the dominions of the king of Holland: the Gallo-Spanish king may be made to retreat over the Pyrenees; but all this does not affect the troops with the French emperor; nor can the Austrians recruit their shattered finances, or hope to give spirit to their troops. Yet it has been said that the peace is not near. The negotiations however continue, and they are carried on with the greatest privacy. Buonaparte remains at Schoenbrunn, exercising his troops, not merely for ostentation, but to have them in readiness for a future conflict. He is also fortifying his posts on the Danube, and should the armistice be broken, he will evidently be better prepared for renewed hostilities than his enemy.

The Archduke Charles has given up the command of the army to the Prince of Lichtenstein; but not without some severe reproofs on the conduct of several officers and regiments. But there is no need of so much censure. He had to fight with a superior genius, and a better disciplined army. In the French army superiority in rank follows superior merit and services; in the Austrian army an officer may be put over the head of another on various pretexts; and it is not therefore to be wondered at, if in disorders that might naturally occur, "the officers of his staff knew not how to apply a remedy." It is easy for the unfortunate to throw blame on each other. Nothing however but despair will urge them again into the field, and the glory of the house of Austria is sunk for ever.

The new state of things, that is to take place on the Danube, may afford much matter of conjecture to the politicians. It is surmised that the Austrian cabinet will be permitted to take indemnities for what it loses in the west, by a vigorous contest for new territories with the Turks. Thus Russians, French and Austrians will be armed against the unhappy empire which has kept so large a portion of the world in ignorance and superstition. The Austrians retain the places they had taken possession of in Poland, since the war began; and if it is determined that they should act against Turkey, they will form a strong force to

act either in combination with, or separately from, the Russians; and whilst these armies march against Constantinople, the French will make an easy conquest of Greece.

Thus the Mahometan superstition is expecting a blow, which will reduce its temporal consequence; and it is remarkable, that whilst their sacred town, Mecca, is in the possession of a new sect, Rome, the other seat of fraud and imposture, is in the hands of a new master, and its former chief has lost all his influence. The Pope, however, remembers the arms his predecessors were wont to use. He has protested against his enemies; and till more, he has excommunicated them. Nay, he refuses to receive the very liberal allowance made to him by Buonaparte. The state of this spiritual chief is happily altered since he was the terror of the world; and we may anticipate his annihilation, together with that of the long train of his ministers, who, with the name of christians, have disgraced the holy religion of our Saviour, by so many outrages. It is in vain that they call upon their mother of God, and prostrate themselves before their images. The church of Christ must be purged from such blasphemy and such abominations: and, as Papacy and Mahometism sprung up nearly together, so it is probable they will fall. This century may witness their annihilation, or at least sink them into such contempt, that none but the most ignorant of mankind will give heed to their idle tales.

The Pope may have been emboldened to take this last step, by the appearance of the British force against the Neapolitan territories. A considerable number of troops have left Sicily. We have taken an island in the bay of Naples, and landed troops in Calabria. It should seem too, that the Gallo-Neapolitan king is far from being without apprehensions for his safety; but our intelligence from that quarter is very little to be depended upon. If our troops succeed, the inhabitants must expect the return of their former monarch, and the restoration of the Lazzaroni, and neither event can afford them much consolation. It would be a curious thing, if the Pope should owe his restoration to power to the arms of a protestant prince, and that prince, the most inimical to his superstition.

The Russians find themselves not

without reach of our attacks, and the recesses of the White Sea do not secure them from our cannon. We are said to have attacked Archangel, and to have acquired there a considerable booty. It is not probable that such a place should be retained. Of Sweden we hear little. That country is endeavouring to recruit itself from the evils of the late struggles, and the abdicated king seems to live in perfect security. If we look to the east of Europe, we find that China has resisted the entrance of our armed men into its ports, and a curious document has reached us, in which the emperor warns us, by his Mandarines, to withdraw the troops that had been landed at Macao. He informs us that we are a "bad kingdom, situated on an island, originally employed in making watches to enable us to pay our taxes, and from the especial goodness of the emperor, permitted to trade with his empire." This shews in what estimation we are held by the Chinese, who, however, are not to be condemned for acting with that spirit which assuredly would be excited in England, if foreign troops were landed in our island.

America has received the intelligence of the demurs to the last treaty; but hopes are still entertained that the difficulties will be removed. The English and Spaniards united have cleared St. Domingo of the French; and in Africa we have succeeded also in driving them from Goree. Trade flourishes with the Brasils, and the Spanish settlements enjoy a repose, which was scarcely to be expected in such times of confusion.

At home the chief events to excite public attention, have been the trial of Lord Gambier, and the meetings of Middlesex and the Common Council of London. The former excited more interest in the navy than on shore. Lord Gambier desired himself a court martial on his conduct, which had been so far called in question by Lord Cochrane, that he declared his intention of resisting a vote of thanks to the admiral, if it was proposed in the House of Commons. The reasons for this opinion are fully given in Lord Cochrane's evidence at the trial; and, after a long hearing, the admiral was most honourably acquitted. This does not prevent Lord Cochrane from resisting in the Senate a vote of thanks, should the question be brought into the House. As a captain he may bow to the decision of the court martial;



as a member of the House of Commons, he is at full liberty to withhold his thanks, and the very gallant part which the noble Lord took in the engagement, and the honours which he received on the occasion, will assuredly give considerable weight to his opinions.

The meeting at Middlesex was called by a very great body of freeholders, and the result of their deliberations is of high importance to the country. The subject of the call was the state of the Representation of the House of Commons, which no one can doubt is materially altered from its original plan. The king's writ could not have been sent to places without an inhabitant, or to places with not a dozen inhabitants, unless form had been more attended to than reason, and the innovations of time had met with no opposition from the dictates of prudence. Of the present state, the freeholders justly complain; and they petition Parliament to take the subject into consideration, and to remedy the evil in the manner which experience of the past would dictate. It is to be hoped that their prayers will be attended to, and that a proper reform may be made in due time, by those who are best capable of doing it, lest the work

should fall into worse hands, and the upholders of abuses complain too late of their own indiscretion.

The Common Council of the city of London had a meeting on a very extraordinary occasion,—to take into consideration a very injudicious motion, made by one of its members, to rescind a previous vote of thanks to Mr. Wardle, for his very eminent services. The motion was unanimously rejected; the compliments to Mr. Wardle were renewed; and opportunity was taken, in several resolutions, to cast a severe censure upon those ministers of the crown who had been engaged in jobbing for seats in Parliament. The measure attempted was indeed a very insidious one; but it was seen through, and properly resisted: and it has proved to the public, that however the hand of power may prevail in countenancing abuses, yet there is sufficient spirit left in the country to protest against them. The root of the evil is, however, in the state of the representation; for ministers could not job in seats of Parliament, if the electors were sufficiently numerous; and if places only sent members to Parliament, which could pay their members for their services.

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#### A COMPLETE LIST OF NEW PUBLICATIONS, ON MORALS AND THEOLOGY IN AUGUST, 1809.

##### I. *Select List.*

Modern Orthodoxy identified with Antichrist. A Discourse delivered on the 22nd of June, 1809, at a Meeting of Unitarian Ministers, assembled in Boston, and published at their request. By John Grundy. 8vo. 1s.

Five Essays on the Proof of Man's Future existence. To which is prefixed, the second edition of seventeen Sermons, on important subjects. By Pendlebury Houghton. 8vo. 7s.

##### 2. *Single Sermons.*

Fidelity Crowned: a Sermon on the Death of the Rev. John Clark. By John Innes. With an Address delivered at the Interment, May 29, 1809. By W. Jay, of Bath. 8vo. 1s. 6d.

The Mystery of the Seven Stars, as emblematical of the Ministers of the Gospel, explained and improved. A Sermon preached at the Baptist Monthly Association, in the Meeting House, Little Prescott Street, Goodman's Fields, April 20, 1809. By Thomas Thomas. 1s.

The Gospel Doctrines of Baptism, Justification and Sanctification briefly and soberly stated; or, an Attempt to point out the Difference in some leading Particulars between the more sound Interpreters of the Doctrines of the Church of England, and what are called Evangelical Ministers. A Sermon preached before the University of Oxford, on Sunday, Feb. 12, 1809. By the Rev. John Morris, late Fellow of Queen's College, Assistant Minister of Curzon Chapel, May-Fair. 1s.

Discourses delivered at the Ordination of the Rev. Thomas Raffles, over the Congregational Church at Hammer-smith, late under the pastoral care of the Rev. William Humphrys, on Thursday, June 22, 1809. The Introductory Discourse by the Rev. John Humphrys, of Union Street, Borough; the Charge by the Rev. Wm. B. Collyer, D. D. of Peckham; and the Sermon to the People by the Rev. Robert Winter, D. D. of New Court. Together with a Confession of Faith, &c. by Thomas Raffles. 8vo. 2s. 6d.

3. *History and Biography.*

*The Mythology and Rites of the British Druids: ascertained by rational Documents, and compared with the general Traditions and Customs of Heathenism, as illustrated by the most eminent antiquarians of our age. With some Remarks on ancient British Coins.* By Edward Davies, Rector of Bishopston, Glamorgan; Author of the "Celtic Researches." Royal 8vo. 18s. Extra boards.

A new Analysis of Chronology; in which an attempt is made to explain the History and Antiquities of the Nations recorded in the Scriptures; together with the Prophecies relating to them, on principles tending to remove the imperfection and discordance of preceding systems of Chronology. By William Hales, D. D. Rector of Killesandra, &c. Vol. I. 4to. 6 copper plates. 2l. 2s.

4. *Controversy.*

A Letter to Mr. William Vidler, in answer to one from him, which is also annexed. Together with a Preface, in which is a Caution to all those whom it may concern, whether Jew or Gentile. 6d.

Remarks on Mr. Greville Ewing's Pamphlet, entitled "Facts and Documents, &c." By Robert Haldane. 1s.

Letters addressed to Bishop Skinner,

of Aberdeen, on his Vindication of Primitive Truth and Order. To which is prefixed, a Preliminary Discourse on the present State of the Controversy concerning Ecclesiastical Government. By Patrick Mitchell, D. D. Minister of Kemnay, Aberdeenshire. 9s. boards.

5. *Poetry.*

*The Sceptic; a Philosophical Satire.* 1s. 6d.

Attempts to amuse by a Muse's Attempts; containing the Horrors of Slavery, and a Variety of Epigrams and Jeu d' Esprits. By Joseph Stewart, jun. [Publishing by subscription.] 5s.

6. *Miscellaneous.*

Letters on Godly and Religious Subjects, shewing the difference between true christianity and religious apostasy. 2 vols. 12mo, 9s.

Essays, Explanatory and Experimental, upon a few select Passages of Scripture. By Stephen Lowry, of Falmouth, M. D. With a recommendatory Preface. By Dr. Hawker. 12mo. 4s.

Death of Buonaparte and Universal Peace; a new explanation of Nebuchadnezzar's Great Image and Daniel's Four Beasts. To which is added, a Chronological Table of the Sovereigns, included in the number 666. By L. Mayer. 8vo 5s.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

We have received the following Sums.—

<i>On account of the Unitarian Fund:</i>				L.	s.	d.
Mr. Thomas Colfox, of Bridport,	—	—	—	10	0	0
Mrs. Arnold, of ditto,	—	—	—	10	0	0
<i>On account of the York Academy:</i>				L.	s.	d.
Mr. Thomas Colfox, of Bridport,	—	—	—	10	0	0
Mrs. Arnold, of ditto,	—	—	—	10	0	0

We have also to acknowledge the receipt of the tale entitled "The Orphan Sisters," from A. M. P. for the CHRISTIAN TRACT SOCIETY. It will be laid before the committee; the Editor of this work will, however, venture to recommend it to this female correspondent, to exercise her pen again in the same cause. —The story, entitled "William's Return; or, Good News for Cottagers," is in the press, and will be published in a few days, forming No. 1, of the Society's Series of Tracts. Subscriptions and communications will be received by the Editor; as also by the Treasurer, Secretary and Committee.

A friendly remonstrance has been received on the subject of our admitting unbelievers to occupy the pages of the *Monthly Repository*. We are obliged to the writer; but it is still our opinion that it is, on the whole, expedient to allow the objectors of christianity to bring forward their reasons where they can be met by the strong arguments of rational christians. We follow Dr. Priestley's example, in his *Theological Repository*, in challenging infidels to the contest; and after such a challenge, we ought perhaps to allow them some latitude in the choice of their



weapons. It would be better that they should argue seriously; but what is to be done if they have no serious argument to produce? Something is gained to the cause of religion, when it is shewn that its opposers can only bring against it sneers and smart and witty sayings. The Editor is bound to take care that nothing profane pollutes his pages, and that the general character of his work is in unison with rational christianity; but with these provisos, he still thinks it right to invite all parties, from the highest rank of orthodoxy to the lowest pitch of scepticism, to discuss in the Monthly Repository the several points of their belief or unbelief. He differs reluctantly in this matter from some respected friends; but he trusts to their candour, to permit him to pursue the course which he regards as most honourable and most advantageous to christian truth, and in which he believes that the approbation of a large majority of his readers follows him.

The following communications are intended for publication:—Enquiry concerning Ordination.—Account of the Suffolk Humane Society.—A and Y's Metaphysical Difficulty.—An Unitarian Christian, to Mr. Ambrose Phillips.—Mr. Hampson on the meaning of the expression, "being filled with the Holy Ghost."—Sabrinus on the Decay of Presbyterian Congregations.

The following are under consideration:—P. K.'s Additional Illustrations.—A Constant Reader on Mr. Stone's case.—Allegorical Picture of the Revolutionary World, from the Book of the Revelation.—Observer, in reply to Anti-Baptistes.

The Review of Layard's Sermons, sent in, or about, January, 1806, is mislaid. As G. in reply to M. on the subject of Mr. Wyvill's Petition, gives up the expediency of a present application, on the part of the Dissenters, to Parliament, it will not be necessary to carry the controversy further.

A Correspondent from Totness wishes to enquire of Gogmagog, what was his authority for representing [Vol. i. p. 640] Sir Isaac Newton and Mr. Locke as Unitarians? Our Correspondent expresses a hope that this animated writer, with a terrible name, is not too enfeebled by age or sickness to answer the enquiry; but should this be the case, he would be thankful to any other person for information on the subject.

T. C. would be glad to see the following questions discussed; viz. "The lawfulness of defensive war; and how far it is incumbent on persons to pay every tax that is imposed by the Legislature, without the least evasion, on christian principles!"

A request is made by A. B. in a letter dated Chatham, August 19, 1809, that some correspondent would be so good as to reconcile our Lord's explanation of the sign of the prophet Jonah, that "the Son of Man would be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth," with the known fact of his having lain in the grave only *two nights and one day*!

The Rev. Mr. Blake, of Crewkerne, desires us to insert the under-written paragraph, as a supplement to the account of the meeting of the Southern Unitarian Society, at Poole, given in our last, p. 410.

"Mr. Blake's absence from the meeting of the Southern Unitarian Society, on the 5th of July last, was occasioned by a letter, which he received from Poole on the evening of the 2nd, informing him, that public notice of the postponement of the meeting had been given, and that an advertisement to the same effect had been sent for insertion in the Salisbury paper."

*The Subscribers to the Monthly Repository are informed; that Nos. xiii. xiv. and xv., which have been for some time out of print, and for which repeated demands have been made, are now reprinting, and that a second edition of these Numbers may be had in a few days of the Publishers. It is earnestly recommended to Subscribers to complete their sets, without delay, in order to obviate future similar disappointments. Single Numbers may be had, price 1s. each; and Vols. I. and II. in boards, price 12s. 6d. each, and Vol. III. in boards, including the Supplement, price 13s. 6d.*