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BIOGRAPHY.

*Literary Memoir of Dr. Percy,
late Bishop of Dromore.*

THOMAS PERCY, the late Bishop of Dromore, was born at Bridgnorth, in the county of Salop, in 1729. Of his family we have no account, except that he descended from the antient line of *Percy*, of the house of Northumberland. This circumstance might have acquired for him that powerful patronage, which afterwards contributed more, probably, than even his real merits, to his high advancement in the church.

Who'd starve upon a dog-ear'd *Pentateuch*;
He surely knows enough who knows a *Duke*.

We are as uninformed, concerning Mr. Percy's course of education, as of the history of his family, till he entered at Christ Church College, Oxford, where he commenced *Master of Arts*, in 1753. On leaving the University, in 1756, his first promotion was to a college living in Northamptonshire, held with another, the gift of the Earl of Sussex. These benefices were not, probably, what are technically denominated *fat livings*; and our young divine

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might devote himself to literary composition, from motives of prudence, as well as inclination. This inclination would be fostered, in no slight degree, by his early connection with Johnson, and his literary associates, of whom he was the last survivor.

An established church, which enjoins a creed on her clergy, instead of encouraging them to chuse their own, can offer but slender inducements to *theological* enquiry. A young clergyman, provided with a liturgy for his desk, and satisfied with a stile of moral suasion for the pulpit, will rarely yield to, if he should feel, the temptation of becoming wiser than his teachers, the venerable councils of former ages. Nor will he easily forget that unless he has the effrontery to *dare think one thing and another tell*, it might cloud his fairest prospects, and darken *all the colour of remaining life*, to arrive at the unwelcome discovery, that the scriptures, critically investigated, are at variance with the creed, to which he has, *ex animo*, subscribed his assent and consent. It is therefore no proper subject of surprise, that, notwithstanding some splendid ex-

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ceptions, so many among the highest dignitaries of the Church of England, have appeared before the public in any character, rather than that of theologians.

The late Bishop of Dromore was, by no means, an exception to this remark. From the series of his publications, of which, in the want of other materials, the present memoir must almost entirely consist, it will appear that, excepting one offering to theology, his pen was devoted to other objects, though neither useless nor unimportant. To refine the classical taste of his contemporaries, and, at the same time, to inculcate the purest morality, appear to have been the worthy objects of his attention. He will be found, we believe, in his numerous selections, to have rigorously rejected, however veiled in obsolete language, every expression, which as Watts complains, even of the *Spectator*, "might raise a blush in the face of strict virtue;" a caution not always regarded by antiquarian editors, though in their own conduct correctly moral.

It will appear, in the course of this memoir, that it became an early object of Mr. Percy's attention, to trace modern literature from its rude commencements, and especially to investigate the literary antiquities of the northern nations. The first publication, however, ascribed to him, was a translation from the Chinese.

This publication was anonymous, though immediately attributed to his pen. It appeared in 1761, under the following title. *HAUKIOU CHOAN; or, The Pleasing History: a translation from the Chinese Language.* To which

are added, *The Argument or Story of a Chinese Play; a Collection of Chinese Proverbs: Fragments of Chinese Poetry.* With Notes, 12 mo. 4 vol. (M. Rev. xxv. 427.)

We are informed "that the translation was found, in manuscript, among the papers of a gentleman, who had large concerns in the East India Company, and occasionally resided much at Canton.—As the version was the work of a gentleman whose province was trade, and who probably never designed it for the public, nothing could be expected from him but fidelity to the original—the Editor, therefore, was obliged so far to revise the whole as to render the language somewhat more grammatical and correct, retaining the imagery, the allusions, the reflections, the proverbial sayings, any uncommon sentiment or mode of expression, and as much of the Chinese idiom in general, as was not utterly inconsistent with the purity of our own."

The *authenticity* of this work as a *translation*, amidst not a few venial literary impostures, received the following support from the journalist to whom alone we are indebted for our account of it. "These four thin folios of Chinese paper, on which the original rough translation of this novel was written (the fourth in Portuguese,) happened some years ago, to be shewn to some of the gentlemen concerned in this Review, who had then an opportunity of perusing the work, before it had received the polish and improvements of the learned and ingenious Editor, and so far they can bear testimony to the authenticity of the book; but to those who

have the pleasure of knowing this worthy gentleman, all such testimony will appear quite superfluous. The credit of his name and character being sufficient to secure the public from imposition, in regard to any publication, in which he may be concerned."—"The scheme and conduct of the Novel," is thus described by the same Journalist. "A young Chinese man of quality, of great virtue and uncommon bravery, has an attachment to a lady every way worthy of so accomplished a hero. Circumstances, however, are adverse. A powerful rival, with other great obstacles, intervene, and interesting adventures and vicissitudes follow. But love and virtue at length triumph over all opposition."

Describing the value of this publication, as presenting "a faithful picture of Chinese manners, wherein the domestic and political economy of that vast people is displayed," the editor adds the following happy illustration.—"There is not a greater difference between the man who is sitting for his portrait, stiffened into a studied composure, with every feature and limb under constraint, and the same person unreserved, acting in his common sphere of life, with every passion in play, and every part of him in motion, than there is between a people methodically described in a formal account, and painted out in the lively narrative of some domestic history." Avoiding unqualified praise of his adopted work, he acknowledges, that, "examined by the laws of European criticism, he believes it liable to many objections." The

faults he proceeds to ascribe to an "abjectness of genius in the Chinese, accounted for from that servile submission and dread of novelty, which enslaves their minds, and while it promotes the peace and quiet of their empire, dulls their spirit and cramps their imagination."

The *Chinese Play* is said to have been "acted at Canton, in 1719, found among the papers of the gentleman who first translated the Chinese Novel, and the second specimen, in any European language, of the talents of the Chinese for dramatic composition; the *Orphan of the House of Chao*, published by Du Halde, being the first." It might have been added, that the latter piece was critically analyzed by the late Bishop Hurd, in his *Discourse on Poetical Composition*, annexed to his *Horace*, (1753; [vol. 2d. p. 180.] though, for what reason, does not appear, omitted in the later editions of that *Discourse*. A translation from Du Halde, was, however, in the following year, published in a publication attributed to Mr. Percy.

From the Collection of *Chinese Proverbs*, the following will shew, as the reviewer expresses it, "that good sense is the same in all countries."

"Do not entertain a man who has just received a disappointment with an account of your own success."

"If one doth not pluck off the branches of a tree, while they are yet tender, they cannot afterwards be cut off, without the axe."

"In company, set a guard upon your tongue; in solitude, upon your heart."

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“The more haste a man makes to unravel a skain of thread, the more he entangles it.

“The most ignorant have knowledge enough to discern the faults of others: the most clear-sighted are blind to their own.”

On the *Fragments of Chinese Poetry*, the Editor remarks, much in the manner of Dr. Hurd, in the *Discourse* before mentioned, that “the only kinds of Poetry, that are cultivated much among the Chinese, are either shorter pieces, resembling the epigrams, rondeaus and madrigals of the last age, or else collections of moral apothegms, which are their only essays of any length.”

The account of this publication has been extended, perhaps, excusably, from the translation and the review of it having now the antiquity and rareness produced by the lapse of half a century. We shall conclude this part of our Memoir, with the following specimen of Mr. Percy’s versification, in a translation of verses, extracted from a Chinese Romance, and entitled an *Eulogium* on the *Willow Tree*, which it seems, has among the Chinese “a prime place in their gardens,” where it is cultivated “with as much care as the most delicate flower.”

Scarce dawns the genial year : its yellow sprays

The sprightly willow cloaths in robes of green ;

Blushing with shame, the gaudy peach is seen ;

She sheds her blossoms and with spleen decays.

Soft harbinger of spring ! what glowing rays,

What colours with thy modest charms may vie ?

No silkworm decks thy shade ; nor could supply

The velvet down thy shining leaf displays:

The publication of this Chinese Novel, was followed, in 1762, by “*Miscellaneous Pieces, relating to the Chinese.*” Of these, the only one original was “a Dissertation on the language and writings of the Chinese.” Among the Pieces, is a translation, as we have mentioned from Du Halde, of *The Orphan of the House of Chao*, with Dr. Hurd’s criticism on that drama.

In 1763 appeared the *first fruits* of Mr. Percy’s researches in another quarter. “This little tract was drawn up for the press in the year 1761.” It is entitled “*Five Pieces of Runic Poetry: Translated [in prose] from the Islandic Language,*” the *originals* being annexed, “as vouchers for the authenticity of his version.” “This attempt” is described as “owing to the success of the *Erse* fragments,” the authenticity of which Mr. Percy is inclined to dispute, “till the translator of *Osian’s* poems thinks proper to produce his originals.”

In his preface, our translator has the following ingenious remarks on the contrarieties in the character of “the ancient inhabitants of the northern parts of Europe.” “If we sometimes revere them for that generous plan of government, which they every where established, we cannot help lamenting that they raised the fabric upon the ruins of literature and the fine arts. Yet they had an amazing fondness for poetry, and it will be thought a paradox, that the same people, whose furious ravages destroyed the last poor remains of expiring genius among the Romans, should cherish it with all possible care, among their own countrymen.” These trans-

lations shew, as the translator observes "that the poetry of the *Scalds* chiefly displays itself in images of terror." In a note to the *Dying-Ode of Regnar Lodbrog*, attributed to the 9th century, the translator, in the expression of "a mass of weapons," detects "a sneer on the Christian religion," which they considered as the religion of cowards, because it would have corrected their savage manners," or rather because they had not witnessed the Crusades into the *East*, or the wars for "religion and social order" in Christian Europe.

In 1764, was published, in one small volume, 12mo. *The Song of Solomon, newly translated from the original Hebrew, with a Commentary and Annotations.* This translation has been long ascribed to Mr. Percy, and we apprehend, may be now confidently regarded as the production of his pen. The translator describes his work as "an attempt to rescue one of the most beautiful pastorals in the world, as well as the most ancient, from that obscurity and confusion, in which it has been involved by the injudicious practice of former commentators. The generality of these," he complains, "have been so busily employed in opening and unfolding its allegorical meaning, as wholly to neglect that literal sense, which ought to be the basis of their discoveries." On the contrary, it is his "sole design to establish and illustrate the literal sense;" proposing, "in a future attempt, to enquire, what sublime truths are concealed under it." The translator's reasons for expecting to discover "sublime truths," concealed in the Song of Solomon, are

the following, the last of them, especially, not very cogent:—

"That this fine eastern pastoral was designed for a vehicle of religious truths, is an opinion handed down from the earliest antiquity. That it *may be* so, has been clearly proved by one of the best critics of the age (Dr. Lowth): and that it *is* so, may be strongly presumed, not only from that ancient and universal opinion, but from its being preserved in a book, all whose other contents are of a divine religious nature."

While the New Translation was in the press, "appeared a new edition of the *Prælectiones*, with notes, by *Michaëlis*," who, according to our translator's postscript, (p. 103) differs from Lowth, as to the Song of Solomon "being a sacred allegory, and is inclined to look no further than the literal meaning. Yet allows it to be a production not unworthy the celestial muse, and thinks it was inserted in the great code of sacred and moral truths, to shew that wedded love has the express approbation of the Deity." It is surprising that the learned professor could discover any recommendation of marriage, in the story of an amorous prince, possessed already of "threescore queens and fourscore concubines," yet inclined, like a modern grand seignior, to add another bride to his seraglio. It is yet more to be admired that our translator could conjecture (p. 103), "that this elegant description of conjugal love is, after all, only a veil to shadow that divine and tender regard which subsists between the Redeemer and the souls of men; a subject," he adds, "of so much importance as to deserve

a particular and distinct inquiry, and therefore reserved for a future undertaking."

Dr. Watts has hinted at the progress of good sense and sober-mindedness as to the religious use of the *Song of Songs*. In a later edition of the Preface to his *Lyric Poems*, first published in 1709, he has this note:—"Solomon's Song was much more in use amongst preachers and writers of divinity, when these poems were written, than it is now, 1736." Whiston, about this time, in a Discourse on the subject, had called in question, not only the divinity, but the moral decorum of the book, alledging "the general character of vanity and dissoluteness, which reigns through the *Canticles*, in which there is not one thought that leads the mind toward religion, but all is worldly and carnal, to say no worse." At the date of the "New Translation," it had become quite safe for a clergyman, without incurring scandal, to consider the *Canticles* merely as a work of human genius, *prudently* reserving the point of a spiritual sense. In thus considering it, the translator adopted the scheme of *Bossuet*, who divides the book into seven parts, each comprehending one day of the nuptial festivities.

The "Annotations," annexed to the New Translation, discover a critical acquaintance with the customs and phraseology of the Hebrews, and are interspersed with apposite quotations from the Greek and Roman Classics. In the preface, the notes marked B. are ascribed to "the Rev. Mr. Binnel, of Newport, in Shropshire," who died "while the sheets were printing off," and whom the trans-

lator regrets as "the assistant and companion of his studies, the instructor of his youth, and the correspondent of his riper age."

In 1768, appeared "The Outlines of a New Commentary on Solomon's Song, drawn by help of Instructions from the East." The author, the late Mr. Harmer, since well known by his "Observations on Divers passages of Scripture," commends "the learning, the candour and the elegance displayed in the *New Translation*." Of this he makes *large* use, if indeed his own work were not occasioned by its publication. He however, differs from *Bossuet* and the translator, and contends, in opposition to the latter, that the *Song of Songs* was occasioned by Solomon's marriage with Pharaoh's daughter, introducing among the characters a former wife degraded on occasion of that marriage. This work of Mr. Harmer being, we believe, little known, in comparison with his "Observations," we subjoin from his preface the following explanation of his plan.

"That *two* wives of Solomon, the one *just married*, and another whose jealousy was greatly awakened by that event, are referred to, and indeed introduced as speakers, which is the *ground-work* of the whole of what I have offered, and, for aught I know, a thought *perfectly new*, is a point about which I have *very little doubtfulness* in my own mind, though perhaps I may not be so happy as to have the generality of my readers adopt the sentiment.—When I speak of my sketching out the interpretation of this venerable Song, I would be understood to mean, as to the *literal sense* of it, the giving of which the

author of the New Translation, very judiciously observes, is *the first duty of an expositor*, without which it is impossible to discover what other truths are couched under it, though it has been terribly neglected."

Mr. Harmer communicates his plan in Remark xii. and xiii. of the Outlines. Dr. Priestley remarks on this poem, (Notes ii. 92.) that every attempt made to give a spiritual meaning to it, has only served to throw ridicule on those who have undertaken it." Yet Mr. Harmer found the gospel-state adumbrated in the *Song of Songs*, adducing "the likeness we may observe between Solomon's marrying a *Gentile* princess, and making her *equal in honour and privileges* with his former Jewish queen, and in *her* being frequently mentioned afterwards in history, while the other is passed over in *total silence*; and the conduct of the *Messiah towards the Gentile and Jewish churches*." This learned *Biblicist* was still further satisfied with his plan, because "the *universal church* is spoken of under the notion of a *bride*, and the *Messiah* as her husband, Ephes. v. He found also support in "St. Paul's method of explaining the history of Sarah and Agar," and at length arrived at all the *determinateness* that can be expected, in a matter that has been so perplexed by the learned, and," as he added, *unlike a fierce polemic*, "of no greater consequence to our salvation."

The *New Translation* gave occasion to another work which appeared some years after. It was published anonymously at Edinburgh, in 1775, and entitled "The Song of Solomon, Paraphrased,

with an Introduction, containing some remarks on a late New Translation of this Sacred Poem: also a Commentary and Notes, Critical and Practical. Written in the year 1769." This work is dedicated to Bishop Lowth, and introduced by a letter to an unnamed *reverend* friend, in which the writer acknowledges his obligations to the New Translation, but proceeds to shew, that it is, in his "apprehension, both defective and faulty, in several respects." This commentator is certainly more *at home*, in the spiritual sense of the *Canticles*, than his precursor, a disposition likely to be encouraged by "Dr. Gill's Explanation of the Divine Song," which he had just met with, as well as Harmer's *Outlines*. To both works he frequently refers.

He not only speaks "of Christ the heavenly bridegroom, whom Solomon, in this poem is certainly meant to represent," but his fancy runs riot upon this notion, till he presently adds, "The author of the book of Canticles, (for Solomon, as the rest of the prophets, was only the instrument,) the author, I say, was not a man, but he who judges right; not from appearances, nor from any irregular motion in his own breast, as man does, but who knows the inmost thoughts of his frail imperfect creatures." The "three-score queens and fourscore concubines," are considered as a sort of *heir looms*, descended to Solomon, "the spoils of war in his father's time, the purchase of his own treasure, or fallen to him as his regal inheritance." Having thus disposed of these *bosom slaves*, Whom eastern tyrants from the light of heaven

Reclude

our commentator can bring himself to believe that "however criminal Solomon became in his old age," this early purchaser, if not inheritor, of *queens and concubines*, "still retained the simplicity and innocence of his youth, at the time this poem was wrote." He can, however, express himself in a manner more creditable to a sober judgment. Having maintained that "a mind untainted by vice, will find in the Song of Solomon, solid instruction," he adds:—

"If we examine the lives of such as have been noted for enthusiastic flights, we shall find, that, if they have not lived in the practice of vice, (though too many of them have,) yet have they been persons of wild and wanton dispositions, careless of their conduct, and more careless of their conversation and studies, such as have had strong passions, and been only kept from indulging them by the restraints of conscience, fear, regard for reputation, or by having met with cruel disappointments. Such persons, when they take a turn to devotion, love God with the same sensual affections they were wont to feel for an human object, and find their own warm ideas in places of scripture, where no such are really to be found. And though in all this they may not be absolutely criminal, yet are they too apt to deceive themselves and others. The love of God is not a sensible passion, nor to be judged of by the seeming pious affections which possess the imagination, and which

sometimes in a pleasing transport agitate the whole frame. *If you love me, keep my commandments*, saith our blessed Saviour. And an excellent rule it is, whereby to judge of the reality of our affections. But then on the other side, let us not fancy we do this where there are no affections at all."

Mr. Percy, as we have seen, proposed to follow his New Translation, by a search after "sublime truths," concealed in the *Song of Solomon*. This he reserved for a future undertaking. Mr. Harmer, expressed a wish to see "what allegorical sense he would put on this antient poem," and in the Commentary, published at Edinburgh, hopes were entertained, "of seeing such a work performed by him." Mr. Percy, however, to the credit of his maturer judgment, appeared not to have pursued the subject further. If he ever addressed himself to the "particular and distinct inquiry" he had proposed, he probably soon found it a labour more *herculean* than he had expected, to assimilate the sensual *Solomon* to the pure and holy *Jesus*. Their characters would no more *amalgamate* than "the iron and the clay," in the image presented to the imagination of the king of Babylon. Our industrious scholar soon attempted another subject, to his successful prosecution of which he was principally indebted for that reputation he has acquired among the writers of his time.

[To be continued.]

Died, October 5th, at Bewd-
ley in Worcestershire, SAMUEL
KENRICK, Esq. This excel-
lent man was the third son of the
Rev. John Kenrick, Minister of
the Dissenting Congregation at
Wrexham in Denbighshire, and
was born at Wynnehall, in the
same county, in the year 1728.
Having received his preparatory
education in that neighbourhood,
he was sent, in the year 1743, to
the University of Glasgow. This
circumstance gave a colour to all
the events of his succeeding life:
and he always regarded it as most
kindly ordered for him by Provi-
dence. Having passed through
the classes of languages and phi-
losophy, he entered the Divinity
Hall, and attended the lectures of
the celebrated Dr. Leechman,
who had been recently elected to
the theological chair, after violent
opposition from his orthodox
brethren. Time past lightly on
with Mr. K. while he pursued his
studies. The period of academical
education and the place where it
has been carried on, seldom fail to
be remembered with regret and
affection by an ingenuous mind,—
being endeared by two of the
highest pleasures which a human
being can enjoy, the acquisition of
knowledge and the formation of
friendship. In the mind of Mr.
K. these feelings were peculiarly
strong—being heightened, perhaps,
by the contrast between the stu-
dies of his youth and the business
to which his later years were de-
voted. Even when he was on the
verge of eighty, accident having
renewed his connection with the
University, his affection for his
Alma Mater revived with una-
bated strength; and he was de-
lighted to compare its present in-

stitutions and numbers, with those
of his own day, of which he re-
tained a most accurate remem-
brance. It was at college that
his acquaintance began with Dr.
Wodrow, who was also studying
under Dr. Leechman, and who
has given so interesting an account
of his master, in the Memoir pre-
fixed to his Posthumous Sermons.
Similarity of temper and pursuits
soon ripened their acquaintance
into the closest friendship, which
only the death of Dr. Wodrow
interrupted. (See M. R. vol. vi. p.
122). They were accustomed to
meet after the hour of lecture, to
compare and correct the notes
which they had taken, and to pur-
sue the ideas which their teacher
had suggested. Mr. Kenrick
never spoke of Dr. Leechman but
with enthusiastic affection; re-
garding himself as indebted to him
for those rational and animating
views of God and of the Christian
Revelation, which he early em-
braced and cherished to the end
of life. His vacations were spent
with his near relation, the Rev.
Rob. Millar, minister of the Abbey
Church, Paisley, the learned au-
thor of the History of the Propa-
gation of Christianity.

Mr. K. continued at Glasgow
till the year 1750, when he was
engaged as Tutor to the two sons
of James Milliken, Esq. of Milli-
ken, in Renfrewshire. With the
elder of these young men he set
out in the spring of 1760, to make
a tour on the Continent. At the
Hague, he became acquainted with
the learned translator of Mosheim,
who gave him much valuable in-
formation respecting the route
which he was to pursue. From
Holland (as we were at war with
France) they past through part of

Germany into Switzerland, and resided for a considerable time in the delightful neighbourhood of Lausanne. Crossing the Alps, they took up their residence at Turin, and were frequently at the court, then not a little celebrated for the politeness and affability of the royal family. From this city they went to Florence, and thence to Venice, where Mr. Milliken died in April, 1763, and Mr. K. soon after returned to Scotland. He had soon occasion to visit the Continent again with the second and only surviving son, to whom the air of the South of France was recommended by the physicians. He conducted him to Montpellier, where he staid a long time and afterwards visited with him several of the principal cities in France and Germany.

Soon after his second return to this country, he settled at Bewdley, and conducted a banking establishment there between thirty and forty years. The active management of its laborious and often anxious concerns, devolved on him till within a twelvemonth of his death. Though his early habits had not been those of a man of business, his industry and inviolable integrity, gave the concern which he superintended an unusual respectability and permanency, and obtained for himself an honourable competence. Though much occupied by this employment, nothing could check that ardent love of mental cultivation which he derived from the studies of his youth. Whatever time could be spared from business and from the calls of duty, he eagerly devoted to ancient and modern literature. He was master of the French and Italian languages, and when in

Italy, had translated *George Barnwell*, which was represented there with applause.

Mr. K. was a decided Unitarian, at a time when that obnoxious name belonged to few, and was owned by still fewer. He was one of the first members of the Western Unitarian Society, instituted by his nephew, the late Rev. T. Kenrick. His early emancipation from Calvinism he owed to the rational principles of sacred criticism which he learnt from Dr. Leechman. He always delighted in the study of the scriptures, and frequently employed himself in comparing the original of the N. T. with different Latin translations and the principal English and Foreign Versions. His manners were marked with that dignified politeness, which naturally flowed from a benevolent, liberal and cultivated mind, guided by experience of the best society. Though his disposition was tinged with reserve, it was wholly free from moroseness: towards his family he was most affectionate and kind; and the author of this tribute to his memory, can testify the lively interest which he took in the welfare of remoter relatives. He was universally respected and beloved in the neighbourhood in which he lived; and the strong sympathy and deep regret which were expressed during his painful illness and on the event of his death, proved the estimation in which he was held by those to whom he had been long and intimately known. To the grief which his numerous relatives have felt at the removal of one whom they loved and honoured, is united the recollection that he was the last survivor of a generation of their ancestors, who

were eminent for piety and worth : when they too shall be gathered to their fathers, may those who come after them, be able to bear testimony to *their* characters, in the same spirit of truth which has dictated this imperfect memorial !

Original Letters of Dr. Priestley's, on Baptism : communicated by the Rev. R. Scott.

Portsmouth,

SIR, *August 17th, 1811.*

I do not approve the practice of the posthumous publication of all the letters and fragments that may be met with, which have been written by learned men. It is oftentimes nothing less than a violation of trust. When, however, the writer himself did not wish his communications to be confined to the person to whom they were addressed, but gave him permission to shew them to any of his friends, to whom he might think they would be useful, as in the present instance, it appears to me we may, without any breach of that confidence which private correspondence demands, give such communications to the public, and, particularly, when they are illustrative of the scriptures. Under this impression, I send you two letters from Dr. Priestley to Mr. Clement Sharp, of Romsey, in this county, and the answer of Vigilus to some queries proposed by Mr. Sharp, in one of his letters to Dr. Priestley. As the Dr. does not disclose the name of his friend Vigilus, I shall only add that this excellent critic wrote, also, in the Theological Repository, under the signature of Eusebius. The originals are in the

possession of Mr. Sharp, of this town, son of the late Mr. Clement Sharp. Your insertion of these letters, in the Monthly Repository, as soon as your limits will permit, will oblige,

Your faithful friend,
RUSSELL SCOTT.

LETTER I.

Leeds, Feb. 4, 1770.

SIR,

As your letter seems to bear the marks of a sincere desire of information, and not to have been written for any captious purpose, my thoughts on the subject of baptism are at your service, or that of any of your friends to whom you may chuse to communicate them.

It appears to me, that few persons in this western part of the world, enter sufficiently into the ideas and notions of the Jews and other people of the East ; and that your objections to infant-baptism, cannot be satisfactorily answered, without laying aside some of the ideas peculiar to this part of Europe, and especially in modern times.

Nothing was, or indeed is, more common in the East, than to express sentiments and purposes by *actions* ; and so natural was it to the Jews, to denote purity of heart by outward washing, that we find by the success of John's preaching, that, though he did not pretend to teach a new religion, but only insisted upon repentance, and greater regularity and strictness of manners then was common among the Jews ; yet, that few of them made any difficulty of being baptized, considering it nothing

more than a profession of repentance and a new life, and therefore it is called the baptism of repentance. With respect to the subjects of baptism, we should consider, more than we do, the great power of a master of a family in the East, and how far his own acts affected his wife, children and servants, and indeed every thing belonging to him: thus, though circumcision was a religious ceremony, expressive of a covenant between God and Abraham, it was applied, not only to the children of Abraham, but also to all that were born in his house, or bought with money, i. e. his slaves, who were not in the least interested in the covenant. In fact, it only concerned Isaac; Ishmael who, however, was circumcised, had no interest in it at all. See Gen. xvii. 12, 23. The circumcision of Ishmael, of the children of Abraham in general, and of his slaves, was not considered as any act of their's, but only of their master, and therefore, their consent was not in the least necessary.

When the Ninevites repented, at the preaching of Jonah, the cattle were made to fast, as expressive of the contrition of their masters.

I have no doubt but that the Jews admitted proselytes to their religion, by solemn washing or baptism as well as by circumcision; indeed, considering their ideas and practices in other respects, I should have wondered if they had not done it, and I have as little doubt, but that when a master of a family embraced their religion, their children, if not their slaves also, were baptized and circumcised. This then being the

common practice of the Jews, our Lord had no occasion to give any particular instruction, as to the proper subjects of baptism. When a head of a family was converted to Christianity, he and *all his house*, i. e. his children and slaves, were baptized; not as a mark of their being Christians, but of their master being one, and of the obligation he was under to educate them in that religion, and inculcate upon them the maxims of it; this is an obligation that is peculiarly sacred, and hardly ever fails of success all over the East. There is nothing that a Mahometan is more intent upon, than to make his servants good Mussulmen. When the children were grown up, or the slaves changed their service, they might adhere to the religion they had been brought up in, or not, as they pleased. Infant-baptism appears to me to have been the uniform practice of Christians, as far as I can collect from the primitive fathers, till an idea was introduced, of the peculiar efficacy of baptism, as such, to wash away sins, and the safety of dying soon after baptism, before a person had contracted fresh guilt:—on this account, Constantine the Great, and many others, deferred baptism till the hour of death. Afterwards, slaves being generally enfranchised and considered as acting for themselves, and the power of fathers over their children having never been so great in the northern nations, Christianity and all the badges of it, came to be considered, in all respects, a personal thing; and hence the conclusion, that no persons could be the subject of any of its institutions, but with their

own consent, expressed when they were arrived at years of understanding.

For my own part, I endeavour to adhere to the primitive ideas, and consider the baptising of my children, as nothing more than a declaration of my being a Christian myself and, consequently, of my obligation to educate them in the principles of the Christian religion.

I have no doubt, but that the only antient mode of baptism was immersion, and I should rather approve of it at present; but since it is the application of *water*, that expresses the purity of heart and life, peculiar to Christians, and not any certain quantity of it; and since the meaning of the rite is as well understood in whatever manner it be administered; and, also, since dipping is sometimes imagined at least to be dangerous for the health of children, I think a scrupulosity in this punctilio unnecessary; and therefore, in this respect, I do not think it worth while to make any alteration in the common practice. If I thought immersion the only proper baptism, I should certainly submit to it without delay.—I do think that baptism was intended to be always observed in the Christian church, though I should readily admit to communion one who thought otherwise, and had not been baptised.

I have not sufficiently considered the passage in St. Paul, you mention.

I shall be glad if these few thoughts shall prove to be of any service to you; but I doubt not but you will think for yourself, and act with freedom and spirit, becoming a Christian, whatever

your conceptions be. The censure of the world is not to be regarded, where the least punctilio of religion is concerned; but let us not forget, that there are things of more importance than positive institutions. Wishing you all the consolation of our most excellent religion, in the decline of life; and and that you and I may have a happy meeting, in that world with which it brings us acquainted,

I am, Sir,

Your very humble servant,

J. PRIESTLEY.

LETTER II.

Leeds, 12 Sep. 1770.

SIR,

I received yours of the 29th of May, only a few days ago. It was not found in the pack of wool, till the manufacturer had occasion to make use of it. Being very busy myself, I sent your queries to an ingenious friend of mine, who signs *Vigilius* in the Repository, and I enclose you his answer, which I much approve, in his own hand writing. I wish it may give you the satisfaction you want; but, in this imperfect state, we are not to expect a perfect solution of all our doubts and difficulties. We must be content with as much light as is sufficient to guide our conduct; and, in lesser things, we must often be determined by probabilities only, certainty not being to be had.

I am sorry for the loss you have sustained, but it is happy that you do not grieve as one without hope.

I am, with every good wish,

Dear Sir,

Yours sincerely,

J. PRIESTLEY.

P. S. I would recommend to your perusal a pamphlet intitled, "Dipping not the only or Scriptural method of baptising."

THE ANSWER OF VIGILIUS TO
MR. SHARP'S QUERIES.

Rom. vii. 14. *We know that the law is spiritual: its commands extend their obligations to the passions and affections of the spirit, and are calculated to form and establish in it all holy dispositions and good habits: but I (a sinner under the law) am carnal: feel myself strongly inclined to indulge the passions and lusts of the flesh: sold under sin: being in the condition of a miserable slave, who having sold himself to a master, is no longer at liberty to act according to his own better sentiments, but must obey his master's dictates. St. Paul borrows the thought and expression from the Old Testament: particularly it is said of Ahab, 1. Kings xxi. 20, Because thou hast sold thyself to work evil in the sight of the Lord. See also v. 25, and on, in what follows of Ahab's story, the condition of a slave sold under sin: when he heard this message from God, he humbled himself, no doubt, begging forgiveness, and purposing amendment: but the tyrant in him prevailed; he returned to wickedness and perished in it. See also a like expression, 1 Maccabees i. 15, and were sold to do mischief. But in all these cases it is the sinner's own doing. See also 2 Kings, xvii. 17.*

Quest. I. What privileges are annexed to Baptism? Answer. From the words of the institution, *to be disciples*, or received among Christ's disciples, (the word μαθη-

τευσατε, Matt. xxviii. 19. should have been translated *disciple*, all nations) *and taught to observe all things whatsoever Christ hath commanded. Invaluable privileges!*

Quest. II. Who are the proper subjects of baptism? Answer. Those who want the privileges. As to children; in many cases of common life and affairs, parents not only may, but are obliged to introduce their children to privileges without their expressed consent, nay, even before they are capable of giving consent, and are justly blamed if they neglect the opportunities to do it: such as making them members of an advantageous corporation, or society. Parents also, not only have a right, but are obliged to instruct their children in every thing that they apprehend will be useful and ornamental to them hereafter, and have a right to demand their attention to such instructions, and to initiate and accustom them to practice those things they have instructed them in, so long as they remain under their care and tuition: afterwards they are to choose for themselves, whether they will continue to observe them. Under the above description, must be ranked *all things whatsoever Christ hath commanded*. By baptism, we do not lay our children under obligations to observe or to do what otherwise they would not have been obliged to. All persons to whom the gospel is, or shall be preached, are, and will be obliged to observe all things, whatsoever God hath commanded by his son Jesus; we only procure for them certain privileges that will hereafter be very advantageous to assist them to fulfil that duty to which they

were antecedently bound to the Author of their beings and therefore we should be very blameworthy to them, if we neglected to do it. Thus the children of the Jews were, without their own consent, introduced by circumcision into like privileges, and furnished with similar assistances for performing the duties they owed to God; and Moses commanded that people, Deut. vi. 7. *These words which I command thee this day, shall be in thy heart; and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them, when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.*

Quest. III. How is baptism to be administered? **Answer.** The mode is not precisely directed; and, therefore, I think, is left to discretion, and may be performed in the manner in which baptism, i. e. washing, is usually practised in each country. After our Lord had exhibited before his disciples, sufficient evidence that he is the Messiah, and they had, by the mouth of Peter, declared, once and again, their belief in him, as the Christ, the Son of God, I conceive he baptised them into that profession, and thereby invested them with what he calls a part, i. e. a share or portion *with him*; and that he did it by *washing* their

feet, a very common mode of *washing among the Jews*. And when Peter, being informed that it was to give him a *part* with his master, desired that not his feet only, but his hands and head also might be washed, he was answered that a *partial washing* was sufficient for the present purpose. Perhaps I may be somewhat singular in this interpretation; but it appears to me to place this part of our Lord's history in the clearest and most striking light; and there are many circumstances of the evangelist's relation of it, that deserve particular attention. See John xiii. 1—10.

Quest. IV. Are not the children of Christians in some respects holy, and have an interest in the kingdom of Christ? **Answer.** Undoubtedly. God, by the prophet Ezekiel, ch. xvi. 20, 21, challenges a special property in the children of the Jews. And the Apostle (1 Cor. vii. 14.) declares that the children of believers, even when one only of the parents is such, are *holy*; by which, in scripture language is meant *belonging unto God, or devoted to his service*. If, therefore, there be any institution appointed as a sign, or token of this holiness, certainly, such children have a right to the sign, who have the thing signified.

EXTRACTS FROM NEW PUBLICATIONS.

Nature of the Serpent, Genesis
iii. 1.

[From Dr. Adam Clarke's Bible.]

The word in the text which we, following the Septuagint, translate *serpent*, is *nachash*, and according to Buxtorf and others, has *three* meanings in scripture. 1. It signifies to *view*, or *observe attentively*, to *divine* or *use enchantments*, because in them the augurs viewed attentively the flight of birds, the entrails of beasts, the course of the clouds, &c. and under this head it signifies to *acquire knowledge by experience*. 2. It signifies *brass*, *brazen*, and is translated in our Bible, not only *brass*, but *chains*, *fetters*, *fetters of brass*, and in several places *steel*: see 2 Sam. xxii. 35. Job. xx. 24. Psalm xviii. 34. and in one place, at least, *filthiness* or *fornication*, Ezek. xvi. 36. 3. It signifies a *serpent*, but of what kind is not determined. In Job xxvi. 13, it seems to mean the *whale* or *Hippopotamus*. By his spirit he hath garnished the Heavens, his hand hath formed the crooked serpent, *nachash bariach*: as *barach* signifies to *pass on*, or *pass through*, and *beriach*, is used for a *bar* of a gate or door, that passed through rings, &c. the idea of *straightness*, rather than *crookedness*, should be attached to it here; and it is likely that the *sea-horse* is intended by it.

In Eccles. x. 2. the creature called *nachash*, of whatsoever sort, is compared to the *babbler*; surely the serpent, *nachash*, will bite

without enchantment, and a babbler is no better. Let the reader keep this in mind.

In Isaiah xxvii. 1. the crocodile or aligator, seems particularly meant by the original. In that day the Lord shall punish Leviathan the piercing serpent, &c. And in Isaiah lxv. 25. the same creature is meant, as in Gen. iii. 1. for in the words, *and dust shall be the serpent's meat*, there is an evident allusion to the text of Moses. In Amos ix. 3. the crocodile is evidently intended. Though they be hid in the bottom of the sea; thence will I command the serpent, *ha-nachash*, and he shall bite them. No person can suppose that any of the *snake* or *serpent* kind can be intended here; and we see from the various acceptations of the word, and the different senses which it bears in various places in the sacred writings, that it appears to be a sort of *general term*, confined to no one sense. Hence it will be necessary to examine the root accurately, to see if its ideal meaning will enable us to ascertain the animal intended in the text. We have already seen that *nachash* signifies to *view attentively*, to *acquire knowledge* or *experience by attentive observation*: so *nachash-ti*, Gen. xxx. 27. *I have learned by experience*—and this seems to be its most general meaning in the Bible. The original word is, by the Septuagint, translated *οφις* a serpent, not because this was its fixed determinate meaning in the

sacred writings, but because it was the best that occurred to the translators; and they do not seem to have given themselves much trouble to understand the meaning of the original; for they have rendered the word as variously as our translators have done; or rather our translators have followed them, as they give nearly the same significations found in the Septuagint: hence we find that *οφις* is as frequently used by them as *serpent*, its supposed literal meaning, is used in our version. And the New Testament writers, who scarcely ever quote the Old Testament, but from the Septuagint translation, and scarcely ever change a word in their quotations, copy this version in the use of this word. From the Septuagint therefore, we can expect no light, nor indeed from any other of the antient versions, which are all *subsequent* to the Septuagint, and some of them actually made from it. In all this uncertainty, it is natural for a serious inquirer after truth, to look *every where* for information. And in such an inquiry, the Arabic may be expected to afford some help from its great similarity to the Hebrew. A root in this language very nearly similar to that in the text, seems to cast considerable light on the subject. *Chanas* or *khanasa* signifies *he departed, drew off, lay hid, seduced, slunk away*: from this root come *akhnas*, *khanasa*, and *khanoos*, which all signify an *ape*, or *satyrus*, or any creature of the *simia* or *ape* genus. It is very remarkable also, that from the same root comes *khandas*, the *DEVIL*, which appellation he bears from that meaning of *khanasa*, he *drew off, seduced, &c.* because he *draws men off* from righteousness, *seduces*

them from their obedience to God, &c. Is it not strange that the *devil* and the *ape* should have the same name, derived from the same root, and that root so very similar to the word in the text? But let us return and consider what is said of the creature in question. Now *the nachash was more subtle, arum, more wise or prudent than all the beasts of the field, which the Lord God had made.* In this account we find, 1. That whatever this *nachash* was, he stood at the *head* of all inferior animals for wisdom and understanding. 2. That he *walked erect*, for this is necessarily implied in his punishment,—*on thy belly* (i. e. on all fours) *shalt thou go.* 3. That he was *endued with the gift of speech*, for a conversation is here related between him and the woman. 4. That he was also endued with the *gift of reason*, for we find him reasoning and disputing with Eve. 5. That these things were *common to this creature*, the woman no doubt having often seen him walk erect, talk and reason, and therefore she testifies *no kind of surprise* when he accosts her in the language related in the text; and indeed, from the manner in which this is introduced, it appears to be only a *part* of a conversation that had passed between them on the occasion. *Yea, hath God said, &c.* Had this creature never been known to speak before his addressing the woman at this time, and on this subject, it could not have failed to excite her *surprise*, and to have filled her with *caution*; though from the purity and innocence of her nature, she might have been incapable of being affected with *fear*. Now I apprehend, that none of these things

can be spoken of a *serpent* of any species. 1. None of them ever *did*, or ever *can* walk erect. The tales we have had of two-footed and four-footed serpents, are justly exploded by every judicious naturalist, and are utterly unworthy of credit. The very name *serpent* comes from *serpo* to creep, and therefore, to such it could be neither *curse* nor *punishment* to go on their bellies, i. e. *to creep on*, as they had done from their creation and must do while their race endures. 2. They have no *organs* for *speech*, or any kind of articulate sound; they can only *hiss*. It is true, that an *ass*, by miraculous influence, may speak; but it is not to be supposed that there was any miraculous interference here. God did not qualify this creature with speech for the occasion, and it is not intimated that there was any *other agent*, that did it; on the contrary, the text intimates, that *speech* and *reason* were natural to the *nachash*; and is it not in reference to this, the inspired penman says? *The nachash was more wise or intelligent than all the beasts of the field that the Lord God had made!* Nor can I find that the *serpentine genus* are remarkable for *intelligence*. It is true, the *wisdom of the serpent* has passed into a proverb, but I cannot see on what it is founded, except in reference to the passage in question, where the *nachash*, where we translate *serpent*, following the Septuagint, shews so much intelligence and cunning: and it is very probable, that our Lord alludes to this very place, when he exhorts his disciples to be *wise, prudent or intelligent as serpents*, *σοφοιμοι ως οφεις*; and it is worthy of remark,

that he uses the same term employed by the Septuagint, in the text in question, *οφης ην φρονιμωτατος*, *the serpent was more prudent or intelligent than all the beasts, &c.* All these things considered, we are obliged to seek for some other word to designate the *nachash*, in the text, than the word *serpent*; which on every view of the subject, appears to me inefficient and inapplicable. We have seen above that *khanas*, *akhnas* and *khannos*, signify a creature of the *ape* or *satyrus* kind. We have seen that the meaning of the root is, *he lay hid, seduced, slunk away, &c.* and that *khanas* means the *devil*, as the inspirer of evil and seducer from God and truth; see *Goliuz* and *Wilmet*. It therefore appears to me, that a creature of the *ape* or ouran outang kind, is here intended; and that Satan made use of this creature as the *most proper* instrument for the accomplishment of his murderous purposes against the life and soul of man. Under this creature he *lay hid*, and by this creature he *seduced* our first parents, and *drew off* or *slunk away* from every eye but the eye of God. Such a creature answers to every part of the description in the text: it is evident from the structure of its limbs and their muscles, that it might have been originally designed to walk *erect*, and that nothing less than a sovereign controuling power, could induce them to put down *hands*, in every respect formed like those of man, and walk like those creatures, whose claw-armed paws, prove them to have been designed to walk on all fours. The subtlety, cunning, endlessly varied pranks and tricks of these creatures, shew them, *even now to be wiser*

and more *intelligent* than any *attentive watching, looking, &c.* other creature, man alone except. and for *chattering or babbling*, ed. Being *obliged* now to walk on all fours, and gather their food from the ground, they are literally obliged to *eat the dust*; and though exceedingly cunning, and careful in a variety of instances to separate that part which is wholesome and proper for food, from that which is not so, in the article of *cleanliness*, they are lost to all sense of propriety; and though they have every mean in their power, of cleansing the aliments they gather off the ground, and from among the dust, yet they never, in their savage state, make use of any. Add to this, their utter aversion to *walk upright*; it requires the utmost discipline to bring them to it, and scarcely any thing offends or irritates them more than to be obliged to do it. Long observation on these animals enables me to state these facts.

Should any person who may read this note, object against my conclusions, because apparently derived from an Arabic word, which is not exactly similar to the Hebrew, though to those who understand both languages, the similarity will be striking: yet, as I do not insist on the identity of the terms, though important consequences have been derived from less likely etymologies, he is welcome to throw the whole of this out of the account. He may then take up the Hebrew root only, which signifies to *gaze, to view attentively, pry into, enquire narrowly, &c.* and consider the passage that appears to compare the *nachash* to the babbler, Eccles. x. 11, and he will soon find, if he have any acquaintance with creatures of this genus, that for *earnest*,

they have no fellows in the animal world. Indeed, the ability and propensity to chatter is all they have left of their original gift of speech, of which they appear to have been deprived at the fall, as a part of their punishment.

I have spent the longer time on this subject, 1. because it is exceedingly obscure; 2. because no interpretation hitherto given of it, has afforded me the smallest satisfaction; 3. because I think the above mode of accounting for every part of the whole transaction, is consistent and satisfactory; and in my opinion, removes all embarrassment and solves every difficulty. It can be no solid objection to the above mode of solution, that Satan in different parts of the New Testament, is called the *serpent*, the *serpent that deceived Eve by his subtlety*, the *old serpent, &c.* for we have already seen that the New Testament writers have borrowed the word from the *Septuagint*, and that the *Septuagint* themselves use it in a *vast variety and latitude of meaning*; and surely the *ouran outang* is as likely to be the animal in question, as *nachash*, and *ophis*, are likely to mean at once a *snake*, a *crocodile*, a *hippopotamus*, *fornication*, a *chain*, a *pair of fetters*, a *piece of brass*, a *piece of steel*, and a *conjuror*; for we have seen above, that all these are acceptations of the original word. Besides, the New Testament writers seem to lose sight of the animal or instrument used on the occasion and speak only of Satan himself, as the cause of the transgression, and the instrument of all evil. If, however, any person should choose

to differ from the opinion stated above, he is at perfect liberty so to do: I make it no article of faith, nor of Christian communion; I crave the same liberty to judge for myself that I give to others, to which every man has an indisputable right, and I hope no man will call me a heretic, for departing in this respect from the common opinion, which appears to me to be so embarrassed as to be altogether unintelligible.

MISCELLANEOUS COMMUNICATIONS.

Design of the History of the Fall.

SIR,

Lincoln.

It is possible I may be repeating sentiments which have been published before, but as I do not recollect to have seen them any where, you will if you think proper give the following a place in your Repository.

On reading a critique on Dr. Clarke's hypothesis of the fall, it appeared to me not improbable that, although the account of the fall has been in general justly considered in the light of an allegory, yet there has been an error in imagining that it refers to sin in general. Upon this supposition it has been found extremely difficult to account for the introduction of the leading characters of it, as the serpent, the woman and the forbidden fruit. May not the distinguishing part they act in this drama, be fully explained, by the supposition that the forbidden fruit was idolatry; that the serpent is brought in as the tempter, because it was the earliest emblem of a false God; that the woman tempted Adam, in the same way as the Israelites were tempted and drawn into idolatry, by having intermarried among their heathen neighbours, and as we read that the wife of Job also employed all the flippancy of her tongue to per-

suade that upright man to take leave of the God of his worship, when he found he would not come to his succour.

The first caution that the Almighty would give to an intelligent being, if he gave him any, would certainly be not to suffer his attention to be arrested by the second causes of his happiness, but to carry them forward to the great First Cause, and let him be the object of his admiration and worship.

In the state in which the first pair are described as being placed, I see scarcely a possibility of their being guilty of sin, of a moral kind; they were exposed to no temptation, nor could they well fall into any sin, except that of paying a reverential homage to the heavenly hosts, those splendid creatures of God, who by their imposing appearances and useful agency might seem to call for their adoration. We are assured that the first species of idolatry which sprang up in the world, was the worship of the heavenly bodies, and it was undoubtedly the most natural. Next to them, the serpent was one of the first images of Deity that were employed by man. Not that the serpent was deified; for this I am persuaded was not originally intended, what-

ever corruptions may have afterwards sprung up amongst idolaters. But the serpent, for some reason or other, perhaps for that sagacity for which he has been so much celebrated by Mr. Bryant in his *Ophion*, and by others before him, and for having "wisdom and intelligence no way inferior to man*," was preferred by the early Pagans as the proper representative of Deity in their temples. The serpent is therefore made the first moving instrument of mischief.

The history informs us that he tempted *Eve*. The Jews, and all the eastern nations, considered the tender sex as much inferior in understanding to the males: and, as the running into idolatry was a strong mark of weakness, the writer supposes that the woman would be first disposed to this weakness, and would be a proper instrument to lead her husband into it. Or, may it represent a weaker and more ignorant race of mankind, who first abandoned themselves to the worship of idols, and whose example was dangerous to the Israelites?

This supposition on the account of the fall, is much corroborated by the consideration of the time when, and the person by whom it was written. It has been supposed to have been written by Moses; and at a period when the subject of idolatry seems to have occupied all the thoughts of both leaders and people among the Jews. The former using all their energies to deter the congregation from idolatry, and the latter exhibiting the strongest predilection for that vice. They had taken their love of false gods from the

* Believe this who will.

Egyptians, a wise and a learned people; therefore, perhaps, the fruit was said to be of the tree of knowledge, and among the Egyptians it was that the serpent was held in the highest esteem. It was the design of the author of this allegory to intimate that amongst the evils which followed in the train of this greatest of crimes, the disrobing man of his innocence and his immortality were the first and the greatest.

The unwillingness of the man and his wife to meet the Lord in the garden after they had been guilty of so great a sin is now become a proper and a beautiful part of the history, and the sewing of fig-leaves together to cover their nakedness, strongly marks the weak and insufficient arguments by which the Israelites were disposed to justify their departure from the worship of the God of their fathers.

Without pursuing these thoughts farther, or attempting to explain the less important features of the story,

I am, Sir,
Your obedient Servant,
J. W.

An ancient New Year's Gift.
Islington, Jan. 1st, 1812.

SIR,

I lately met with an old book, entitled "Priestcraft in Perfection, or a Detection of the Fraud of inserting and continuing this Clause—*The Church hath power to decree Rites and Ceremonies and Authority in Controversies of Faith*, in the Twentieth Article of the Articles of the Church of England. London. 1710." In running my eye over its contents, I found the following curious note, which I transcribe without any remarks for the use of your Mis-

cellany. Indeed the article speaks for itself, and your intelligent readers may be gratified with its insertion. I am Sir, Yours,

J. EVANS.

"*Dr. Nowell, Dean of St. Paul's*, having gotten several fine cuts and pictures representing the stories and passions of the saints and martyrs, caused them to be bound up in a Common Prayer Book and laid it for the Queen's use in the place where she commonly sat, intending it for a *New Year's Gift* to her Majesty and thinking to have pleased her fancy therewith. But it had not that effect but the contrary, for she considered how this varied from her late injunctions and proclamations against the superstitious use of images in churches, and taking away all such relics of popery. When she came to her place at St. Paul's, she opened the book and perused it and saw the pictures, but frowned and blushed and then shut it, and calling the verger bad him bring her the old book wherein she was formerly wont to read. After sermon instead of taking horse, &c. she immediately went into the vestry and applied herself to the *Dean* thus :

Q. Mr. *Dean* how came it to pass, that a new service book was placed on my cushion?

D. May it please your majesty, I caused it to be placed there.

Q. Wherefore did you so?

D. To present your majesty with a *New Year's Gift*.

Q. You could never present me with a worse.

D. Why so, Madam?

Q. You know I have an aversion to idolatry, to images and pictures of this kind.

D. Wherein is the idolatry, may it please your majesty?

Q. In the cuts resembling *angels* and *saints*, nay grosser *absurdities*—pictures resembling the BLESSED TRINITY!

D. I meant no harm, nor did I think it would offend your majesty when I intended it for a *New Year's Gift*.

Q. You must needs be ignorant then. Have you forgot our proclamation against images, pictures and Romish relics in the churches? Was it not read in your Deanery?

D. It was read. But be your majesty assured I meant no harm when I caused the cuts to be bound up with the service book.

Q. You must needs be very ignorant to do this after our prohibition of them.

D. It being my ignorance, your majesty may the better pardon me.

Q. I am sorry for it, yet glad to hear it was your ignorance rather than your opinion.

D. Be your majesty assured it was my ignorance.

Q. If so, Mr. *Dean*, God grant you his spirit, and more *wisdom* for the future.

D. Amen. I pray God.

Q. I pray Mr. *Dean* how came you by these pictures? Who engraved them?

D. I know not who engraved them, I bought them.

Q. From whom bought you them?

D. From a German.

Q. It is well it was from a stranger, had it been any of our subjects we should have questioned the matter. Pray let no more of these mistakes or of this kind be committed within the churches of this realm for the future.

D. There shall not.

This matter occasioned all the clergy in and about London, and the churchwardens of each parish to search the churches and chapels, and caused them to wash out of the walls all paintings that seemed Romish and idolatrous, and in lieu thereof *suitable texts* taken out of the holy scriptures to be written. Strype's Annals of Q. Eliz. pages 238, 239."

Unitarianism in Wales.

Hackney,

SIR, Dec. 23, 1811.

As an instance of the progress of Unitarianism in Wales, I beg leave to relate a circumstance which was mentioned to me a few months since by a respectable clergyman of the established church on the spot. One of his parishioners, and formerly his very constant hearer, was induced to join a Baptist congregation in the neighbourhood, with whom he continued two or three years and then returned to his parish church. On being questioned by the clergyman as to the cause of this change, he assured him his sentiments remained the same as when he joined the Baptists, and had *theirs* continued the same also, he would never have left them, but that latterly the whole congregation had (to use his own expression) "run Unitarians."

If this should be deemed worthy a corner of your valuable Repository, its insertion will oblige,

Yours respectfully,
S. C.

Hebrews' Hope of a Future State.

SIR, Sep. 22, 1811.

It has been much disputed

among the learned, whether the sacred writers of the Old Testament had any expectation of surviving the stroke of death. There are undoubtedly many passages, particularly in the Psalms and in the prophets, which seem to intimate that they had this hope, but if, after all, their original import is so doubtful as to admit of a different construction on principles of just criticism, it must be allowed that no great stress can fairly be laid upon them.

So far at least is certain, that the hopes and fears of a future life, made no part of the Mosaic code, the sanctions of which were all temporal: yet the law, in the language of an Apostle, was "the school-master to bring men to Christ." By this introductory dispensation they were taught the knowledge of the one living and true God—the theopathic affections were excited and cultivated; a purer morality was enforced, and the great duties of justice and humanity were called into exercise. But, if the various texts, already alluded to as seeming to point towards a future state, are capable of being interpreted on different principles, it will follow, that no sufficient evidence appears from their writings that the Jewish worthies had any definite expectation respecting it.

Here then a great difficulty occurs, for how can it have happened that whilst the philosophers in the Heathen world express such extreme anxiety on this momentous subject, that these eminent Jews, who in common with them, had their allotted share of afflictions and trials in this life; were alike subject to sickness and sorrow, and eventually to death,

should remain so entirely silent? When the author of that affecting composition which in strains so pathetic, on the banks of the Euphrates, describes the anguish of his own mind and that of his companions in captivity, driven from their country, despoiled of their property, and bereft of every thing they held most dear—in circumstances so afflicting, was it nothing to them, whether this fleeting life were the whole of their existence? How then shall we account for this extraordinary phenomenon? In my own opinion, Mr. Editor, it admits but of one solution: these eminent persons, Isaiah, Jeremiah and others, “of whom the world was not worthy,” had such just conceptions of the Supreme Being, were so habituated to look up to Him in all circumstances, “who alone liveth and reigneth” “from everlasting to everlasting,” to put their whole trust in God, whom they knew to be “abundant in mercy and truth;” were so constantly in the habit of devoting themselves entirely and with such filial confidence to his service, that even in respect to their future destiny, although no promise had been vouchsafed, “perfect love had cast out fear.” Does the dutiful child, who has full and intire confidence in the wisdom, the goodness, the affection of a beloved parent, fear to follow wherever he may lead? Neither did they fear “though they should walk through the valley of the shadow of death.” Contrast with this, the wretched state of mind of the forlorn wanderer in polytheistic darkness. Some faint traces indeed of the footsteps of infinite wisdom, goodness and power did occasionally break through the gloom, to

irradiate the mind and cheer the desponding heart of the philosophic sage; but by what doubts and difficulties was he not frequently assailed? How often would the perplexing inquiry occur—“Who is this great Being and what is his name?” “Does he indeed govern the world?” “Are men, feeble, weak, imperfect, worthy of notice?” “Does his power extend beyond the grave?” “Has he given any intimation that it does, or entered into any engagement how he will use it?” Well might solicitude and fear take possession of mens’ hearts in such circumstances—“They looked for help but there was no man, neither found they any to comfort them.”

I should be glad, Mr. Editor, if some of your numerous correspondents would favour us with their sentiments on this curious and interesting subject, which cannot fail, whatever may be the result, to shew in a very striking light the unspeakable value of the pious and devout affections, and of those divine dispensations, the Jewish and the Christian, on which they principally rest for their support.

I remain Sir, your constant
Reader and well-wisher,
AN INQUIRER.

Adult Baptism in connection with Church Discipline.

Maidstone.

Is it probable that a more eligible mode can be devised, of distinguishing between the serious professor of christianity and the wavering and unthinking, than the use of that rite, which was instituted by Christ himself, as the instrument of setting apart his disciples?

Are there not similar reasons for the continuance of this practice, which existed for its first adoption? will it not, if applied to adults as a profession of their faith, suggest the like powerful motives to reflection, and to the formation of good and stable resolutions? and is it not likely that assemblies, whose views of christianity in general, and of this ordinance in particular, are rational and consistent, would experience the promotion of the habits of seriousness, order, unanimity and useful discipline, by the application of the solemn rite of baptism to serious believers alone, as the general mode of receiving them into their body?

Would not its observance constitute a suitable introduction to the other christian ordinance? and is not the regular use of these two ordinances, an important means of keeping up and promoting the profession of christianity? do they not furnish at once a proper foundation and stimulant to the exercise of those branches of discipline, which relate more immediately to moral conduct? The circumstance of occasional or even of stated attendance at a place of worship, is of itself no proper evidence of the profession of christianity; but if there be no mode of distinguishing between him who does adopt that sacred profession, and him who does not, what foundation can there be for proceeding to farther acts of Christian discipline?

Is there not reason to believe, that as the baptism of adults, in token of their Christian faith and obedience, tends to the promotion of useful discipline, so the practice of infant sprinkling, too often

produces effects precisely the reverse, by introducing the indiscriminate use of the term *Christian*, without regard either to personal profession, or character?

To the perpetuity of baptism, the declaration of the apostle Paul, that he "was not sent to baptize but to preach the gospel," has been urged as an objection; but have we not equal reason to infer, from the exhortation of Christ, "labour not for the meat which perisheth, &c." that we should entirely neglect to provide for our corporeal wants, and apply our minds solely to religious contemplations?

Is there not reason to believe, that the indiscriminate use of the term baptism, with respect to the very different actions of immersion and sprinkling, and its indiscriminate application, to persons of all ages, in sickness as well as in health, have gone hand in hand with each other, and that both originated in superstitious ideas relative to the saving influence of the rite, independently of its natural effects on the minds of the professors?

As immersion is allowed by the concession of many of the more liberal of those, who have nevertheless adopted the practice of sprinkling, to have been the original mode of baptism, and the more appropriate signification of the term,* which is farther confirmed by the uniform practice of the Greek churches; and as this mode is unexceptionable, with respect to persons possessing health and vi-

* See quotations to this effect from the works of Tillotson, Burnet and Whitby, in Foot's Practical Discourse on Bapt. p. 10—12, note e: as likewise Calmet's Diction. Art. Bapt. Robinson's Hist. f Bapt. p. 499, &c.

gour, but liable to serious objections, in its application to infants, and to the sickly and infirm; is it not probable from this circumstance that it was instituted with the view to the former only? and is not this conclusion much more honourable to christianity, much more agreeable to the character of its founder, than the supposition, that it was intended to subject the unconscious infant to obligations, concerning which he could have no knowledge nor choice of his own? and that it should seem to avail itself of the bias which might be produced in its favour, from the apprehensions of approaching dissolution, to increase the number of its professors?

Does not the moral purification, which is promoted by christianity, result chiefly from that intimate union between the views of mortality and of immortality, which it produces? and is not this significantly expressed by being as it were buried in, and rising again out of the water? whereas aspersion, while it conveys a much less emphatic idea of purification itself, bears no analogy whatever to the means by which it is produced.

Should not submission to this ordinance at a suitable season, and in suitable circumstances, be regarded as a valuable privilege, whereby every individual who is capable of it, is in turn enabled to make an open and solemn avowal of his faith and good resolutions, and not as a painful duty, to be undertaken with reluctance, 'a yoke which can with difficulty be endured?'"* P.

* See some valuable remarks relative to the subject of the above queries, in

"Nolo Episcopari."

Ditchling;

SIR, Nov. 15, 1811.

In that useful little book, the Protestant Dissenter's Catechism, by Mr. S. Palmer, at page 34, 2d ed. in a note, I find the following sentence: "Though it is well known that the office (of a bishop) is a very desirable one, and is generally sought after with great eagerness, the bishop elect solemnly declares against having used any undue means to obtain it, saying, *Nolo Episcopari*, i. e. I am unwilling to be a bishop."

In Jacob's Law Dictionary, 2d ed., under the word Bishop, I have found the following quotation: "Mr. Christian, in his notes on 1 Comm. 380, says, that the supposed answer of a bishop on his consecration, *Nolo Episcopari*, is a vulgar error." As these authorities are contradictory to each other, one must be incorrect. If any of your Correspondents will be kind enough to inform me on which side the error lies, I shall feel myself much obliged; and perhaps it may be useful to others.

A. B.

A Collection of Facts relating to Criminal Law.

"What a lamentable case it is that so many Christian men and women should be strangled on that *cursed tree of the gallows*; insomuch as if in a large field a man might see together all the Christians that but in one year come to that untimely and ignominious death, if there were any spark of grace or charity in him, it would make his heart to bleed for pity and compassion."

Lord Coke. *Epilogue to his Third Institute.*

the Preface to Robinson's Hist. of Baptism, and in p. 47—49 and various other parts of that important work.

"The state of every king consists more assuredly in the love of the subject towards their prince, than in the dread of laws made with rigorous pains; and laws made for the preservation of the commonwealth without great penalties are more often obeyed and kept, than laws made with extreme punishments."

I Mar. st. i. c. i.

"It is a melancholy truth, that among the variety of actions which men are daily liable to commit, no less than an hundred and sixty have been declared by act of Parliament to be felonies without benefit of clergy; or, in other words, to be worthy of instant death. So dreadful a list, instead of diminishing, increases the number of offenders. The injured, through compassion, will often forbear to prosecute: juries, through compassion, will sometimes forget their oaths, and either acquit the guilty or mitigate the nature of the offence: and judges, through compassion, will respite one half of the convicts, and recommend them to the royal mercy. Among so many chances of escaping, the needy and hardened offender overlooks the multitude that suffer; he boldly engages in some desperate attempt, to relieve his wants or supply his vices; and, if unexpectedly the hand of justice overtakes him, he deems himself peculiarly unfortunate, in falling at last a sacrifice to those laws, which long impunity has taught him to contemn."

Blackstone, B. iv. ch. i.

There is no one subject on which wise and good men are so generally agreed as on the propriety of reducing the criminal law of a state to the standard of justice; and almost every writer on the subject has pronounced the criminal law of England to be singularly imperfect, and to stand in great need of melioration. We shall therefore make no apology for bringing this topic into discussion: if indeed the facts we have to exhibit do not carry the reader's convictions along with us, apologies would be useless: though we shall not perhaps be much blamed even by those, if any there be, that think we err, when it is recol-

lected that we err with such men (not to allude to a bright constellation of living philanthropists,) as Sir Thomas More, Erasmus, Beccaria, Montesquieu, Johnson, Franklin, Blackstone, Paley, Pitt and Fox.

We ought, perhaps, to acknowledge that we were incited to enter upon this discussion by the perusal of Mr. Montagu's volumes, "On the Punishment of Death:" we shall be satisfied if we be reckoned amongst his feeblest coadjutors, in his labours of charity and mercy.

Our plan is to lay down Propositions relating to criminal law, and to adduce under each such authorized facts as prove, illustrate or enforce it. When any additional facts occur to us, we shall return to propositions which may have been already gone over; for this purpose the propositions will be numbered. We need not add that we rely upon our correspondents for assistance in the prosecution of our object.

Proposition I.

The frequency and number of Capital Punishments in England, degrade the English character in the eyes of Foreigners.

"When Mirabeau was in England, he asked a friend of mine with whom he was dining, if it were true that *twenty young men* had been hanged that morning, at Newgate? Upon being answered, that if the daily papers asserted it, there was no reason to doubt the assertion; he replied, with great warmth and surprize, 'The English are the most merciless people I ever heard or read of in my life.'

"It appears that Mirabeau was in England in 1785. In February

of that year, *Twenty* convicts were executed, at once, before Newgate; in *April, Nineteen*; and in the *November* following, *Eighteen* suffered death at the same place, besides others executed during the several months of that year, amounting in the whole to nearly *One Hundred*, many of them *young* persons, who fell a sacrifice to the severity of the penal statutes, in *London alone*—*not one of them under a charge of murder.*"

Wakefield's Life, v. i. p. 311.

"It is said by those who know Europe generally, that there are more thefts committed and punished annually in England, than in all the other nations put together. If this be so, there must be a cause or causes for such depravity in our common people. May not one be, the deficiency of justice and morality in our national government, manifested in our oppressive conduct to subjects and unjust wars on our neighbours?"

Dr. Franklin's Letter to B. Vaughn, Esq. March 14, 1785. Works. 8vo. ii. 445.

"England, contenting herself with the superior wisdom, humanity and justice of her laws in all respects but one, and too fond of *'the ancient order of things,'* has alone remained stationary. The nation, indeed, is fully sensible of the evil which attends a multitude of sanguinary laws, and the government itself begins to be alarmed with the magnitude of the mischief. Judge Blackstone was active in prosecuting a reform; and Lord Ashburton, it is said, was prevented by his death from bringing forward in Parliament a plan for that purpose."

Bradford's Enquiry into the Punishment of Death, p. 31.

Proposition II.

Severe laws restrain humane men from prosecuting offenders.

"Some years ago, an act was passed in Ireland, by which it was made a capital felony to cut down a tree by day or by night. A gentleman who dedicated much of his property, and most of his time, to agricultural improvements; who had planted much, and was much attached to his plantations, was the first to rejoice at this additional security to his property, and having, before the act passed, suffered much from these depredations, he again and again declared that in the event of detecting any offender, the law should be put in force. An occasion soon occurred. An offender was detected in the very act of destroying his plantations; and was committed for trial at the ensuing assizes. I well knew what my friend endured upon that occasion. I had the happiness of his friendship and the honour of his confidence: he was a man of the highest worth and of undaunted public spirit; he never relaxed in his resolution to enforce the law; he prepared to proceed and did proceed to the assize town; but there his fortitude at last failed: he declared that after the most agonizing deliberation, he could not reconcile to his notions of justice the propriety of being the cause of an untimely death of a fellow creature for having cut down a tree. My worthy friend afterwards stated to me, that, great as he considered the injury to society in suffering the criminal to escape with impunity, yet he could not be instrumental in procuring his condemnation, even though the crown might remit the punishment. Such was the mode in

which a man, far above the weaknesses likely in most cases to interfere, decided."

Sir J. Newport's Speech on Sir S. Romilly's Bill, May 2, 1810.

"It happened to me, my lords, about four or five years since, to leave my house in town for the purpose of going into the country. An old and faithful servant was left in care of it till my return. In about four or five days, I came to town again, and found, to my surprize, that my servant had fled during my absence, carrying off with her a considerable quantity of plate and other property. Now, my lords, there were many causes which operated with me to abstain from prosecuting this unfortunate woman. She was aged, and the course of nature had already marked her by many infirmities for a speedy but natural dissolution—she had been the dupe of a designing villain, who instigated her to the theft—she was friendless and she was poor. My lords, public duty pointed out the course I ought to take. I knew I ought immediately to go before a magistrate, who would have committed her for trial—I must have appeared in a court of justice, as the prosecutor against her, and have embittered my own life by the consciousness of having shortened her's. My lords, humanity triumphed over justice and public duty. I was constrained to turn loose upon the public an individual certainly deserving of punishment, because the law of the land gave me no opportunity of visiting her with a castigation short of death."

Earl of Suffolk's Speech in the House of Lords, May 30, 1810.

"Three times, let me confess, I have myself suffered the most

painful struggles between the sense of private and of public duties; and three times dreading the severity of our law, I have yielded to my humanity conspiring with my reason, when they forbid me without real necessity, to shed the blood even of the unrighteous. One of the offenders, after leaving my family ventured upon other crimes in other places—a second by my suggestion entered into the army. I have not been able to trace the conduct or the fate of the third—But under a deep conviction of my responsibility to the tribunal of heaven, I shall ever look back with approbation to my own forbearance."

Characters of Fox, by Philopatrius Varvicensis, ii. 402, 403.

"About five years since, the county of York was deeply interested in the trial of the father of a large family, who when living in the greatest respectability, was accused of highway robbery. The trial was in York Castle; the prosecutor was a youth of about 20 years of age, the son of a banker, and the prisoner a stout athletic man, of 50. The prosecutor had transacted his business as usual at the market-town; he had received several sums of money in the presence of the prisoner, had dined, and about 5 o'clock had set out on his return home: it was a fine evening in summer, and he rode gently on: in a solitary lane, he was overtaken by the prisoner, who seized him and demanded his pocket-book; in the first agony of surprize and fear, the prosecutor gave him a violent blow with his whip; but the prisoner, who was a very powerful man, dragged him from his horse, knelt down upon him and took from him his money

and account books. In this situation the prosecutor begged very earnestly for his life. As he laid under the prisoner, he watched his countenance and saw that he was much agitated; he desisted, rose, mounted his horse and rode away. It was then about 7 o'clock in the evening; but the young man was so much exhausted that he did not reach home till late at night. He immediately stated these circumstances; but the improbability of his having been robbed in open day-light on a road, and of his having lost various memorandums which a robber would scarcely have taken, excited some suspicion respecting the truth of this statement. As the jury were leaving the box, the young man who had been robbed, begged to be heard. He was so much agitated that he could scarcely speak; when he recovered himself, he said, 'I stand here to plead for your mercy, towards a man who listened to my voice, when I begged for mercy from him. If he could have been deaf to my cry, I should now be in my grave, and he in the bosom of a respectable family, with the wife who believed him virtuous, and the children who loved him. It has been proved to you that his connections, his character, his religious persuasion would have all united to shelter him from suspicion; it has also been proved that I was lame from my birth; that I am feeble; that I had exasperated him by a blow which almost fractured his skull, and that he knew I could identify him, but the kindness of his nature preponderated; it overcame the fear of disgrace, and he suffered me to depart that I might be the cause of his death. If you do not

pity his momentary lapse, if you do not respect his return to virtue, it would have been well for me that I had died. It is me that you will condemn; I shall be the victim of the law, and he gave me my life in vain.' He was frequently interrupted during this affecting appeal, by the tears of the jury and the general distress of the court; the prisoner was found guilty, and was executed. The story is well known in the county of York. The name is suppressed from respect to his friends."

Montagu, on the Punishment of Death, i. 6, 7.

Capital Punishments.

London,

SIR, Dec. 27, 1811.

I am glad that you have invited communications on the subject of Capital Punishments, and trust that your correspondents will not be backward in contributing, according to their means, to the cause of justice and humanity. Allow me to throw in, as my mite, the following observation; which I very lately heard from a Christian Teacher, in public.

"The severity of our penal code is attended with this evil; that the awful punishment of death being resorted to for crimes of comparatively small moment, no heavier punishment is left for crimes of the deepest die, with every accompaniment of atrocity. The several gradations of guilt are thus confounded in a dreadful equality of punishment; and he that treads the first step in iniquity, on finding that he is subject to the same fate as if he had proceeded to the last, rushes onwards in the career of violence with headlong desperation.—This whole metropolis is now agitated

with horror at some recent barbarities ; every one wishes that the perpetrators of these deeds of blood may be brought to condign punishment :—but it shocks one's sense of justice to reflect that on the same day on which the authors of such monstrous wickedness are obliged to pay the deserved forfeit of their lives, there may be put to death, under the sanction of the law, some inexperienced youth for writing down a false name, or some wretched female for coining the least valuable piece of our money !”

If these sentences strike you on reading, as they did me on hearing, you will I doubt not give them to the public.

ADJUTOR.

Criminal Law of Iceland.

[From Travels in Iceland. By Sir G. S. Mackenzie. 4to. pp. 318—321.]

The study of their own laws, as well as of the principles of law in general, has ever been a favourite pursuit among the Icelanders ; and both in ancient and modern times, a great number of writings connected with this subject, have appeared in the island. In consequence of this minute attention, all the laws of the country, both civil and criminal, are very distinctly defined ; and even among the inferior magistrates, are so well understood, that their execution is every where conducted with fidelity and exactness.

The punishments for theft, prescribed in the criminal law, are varied by the degree of the offence. In cases where the theft is of little importance, or the crime committed for the first time, the offender is whipped, in the presence of

only the judge and two witnesses. This punishment is allotted also to other trifling offences, when the poverty of the persons convicted makes it impossible for them to pay a pecuniary fine. In cases where petty thefts have been a second time committed, the criminal is usually sent to Copenhagen ; in the workhouse of which city he is confined for the term of three or five years, according to the degree of his guilt. Thefts of a more serious nature, as the breaking into churches or houses, or the stealing of horses, are punished either by public whipping, or by a sentence of perpetual confinement in the Copenhagen workhouse.* Where such thefts have been committed for the fourth time, or still more frequently, the punishment is confinement for life in the public prisons of Denmark. The operation of these more severe laws is, however, very seldom required : crimes of this description being by no means frequent among the natives of Iceland.

The only public prison in the island is that of Reikiavik, which was erected about fifty years ago. By a mistake, not unnatural in such a country as Iceland, this building has been rendered greatly more comfortable than the common habitations of the natives ; so that, were it not for the privation of liberty, the Iclander might well be content to exchange his own abode for one where his actu-

* In the workhouse at Copenhagen there are different sections, allotted to different classes of criminals. The men condemned to confinement there, are kept in a part of it called the *Rasp-huus*, where they are employed in rasping dyewoods ; an occupation considered very dangerous to the health.

al comforts are little inferior, and where he is exempted from many of the evils incident to his usual mode of life. Sheep-stealing is the most common offence, for which imprisonment here is adjudged; the term of confinement extending from two to five years, and a certain portion of daily labour being appointed for each prisoner. The crime of adultery, committed for the third time, is punished by a confinement of two years. At the time we visited Iceland, there were six people imprisoned in this place; but this is probably rather below the usual number.

Capital punishment, though strictly provided for by the laws in cases of murder, &c. is scarcely ever required among a people, gentle in all their dispositions, and possessing moral qualities of the most excellent description. Examples of this kind have been so very rare, that a few years ago, when a peasant was condemned to die for the murder of his wife, no one in the island could be induced to perform the office of executioner; and it was necessary to send the criminal over to Norway, that the sentence of the law might be carried into effect. The method prescribed for inflicting death, is that of taking off the head with an axe. In all cases where capital punishment or perpetual imprisonment have (*has*) been adjudged by the courts, the ratification of the King of Denmark is required, before the sentence can be acted upon.

By a law enacted a few years ago, it is provided that no Iceland-er, unless under an accusation which might subject him to capital punishment, or to imprisonment

for life, shall be kept in confinement before the time of his trial. When an individual is accused of any inferior crime, he is admonished by the Hreppstjore, in the presence of witnesses, not to leave the parish, in which he resides. If he infringes upon this obligation, and is afterwards apprehended, he remains under strict confinement, until judgment upon his case has been pronounced.

On a Passage in the "Edinburgh Review."

The *Edinburgh Review*, the most powerful of all our periodical publications, has at length taken up the cause of the Protestant Dissenters. In an essay, in the number [xxxvii, from p. 149 to 164] just published, an able writer gives a slight historical sketch of the penal laws to which Protestant Dissenters are subjected, specifies the present state of those laws, and then examines their utility for the preservation of the Established Church. The account of the penal laws is far from being complete; but it is sufficient to expose the absurdity and iniquity of intolerance in general, and the ingratitude of refusing full religious liberty to Protestant Dissenters in particular. Many excellent remarks are interspersed, on the inexpediency of persecution; whether by the actual infliction of corporal pain, by imprisonment, by pecuniary penalties, or by the deprivation of honours. There is one passage, however, so inconsistent with the spirit of the writer, and so fatal to his argument, that we cannot refrain from hazarding some animadversions upon it: in making them, we wish not to les-

sen the authority of the writer, but to remove what appears to us a blemish in a piece of reasoning, otherwise very masterly.

The passage to which we refer is as follows:—

"We begin with a perfect admission of the right of the legislature to exclude any description of men from civil offices in consequence of their religious opinions—provided they are satisfied that such an exclusion is essential to the general well-being of the community. The government has a right to do any thing that is for the good of the governed; and it is *possible* that a particular religious sect may be so notorious for dangerous political opinions, that their faith may be taken as a test, or mark, of their doctrines upon government. In the changes and chances of the world, Socinian doctrines may be firmly united to republican habits,—as dependence on the See of Rome may be combined with the love of despotism; and then it does not seem very unreasonable, that religious creeds, in themselves innocent and not the subject of punishment, should become so, from their accidental alliance with dangerous opinions upon subjects purely secular. Cases might be put, where it would be insanity in any government not to distinguish its enemies by any mark, religious, physical or moral, that chanced to present itself. It is quite idle, then, to argue this question as a question of general right." p. 154.

Now upon this we remark, *first*, that the broad admission with which the paragraph sets out, will justify any religious tyranny whatever. Persecutors have never perhaps been actuated by mere blood-

thirstiness; but, for the most part, by a regard to truth, according to their own conceptions of it; on the prevalence of which they have placed, in their imaginations, the welfare of the community. Allow governors to persecute only in the mildest way, i. e. by exclusion from civil offices, at the call of expediency, and the perpetuation of intolerance is secured: for a man must have more philosophy than is the usual lot of such as sit in the seat of government, not to believe that the opinions which he himself rejects are pernicious to society, and ought, by all possible means, to be discountenanced and repressed.

We object, *secondly*, to the unqualified doctrine of government having "a right to do any thing that is for the good of the governed;" it would, as appears to us, be nearer to the truth and more congenial to the spirit of the English constitution, to say that governors have a right to do any thing which the people, by whom they are made, have constituted and appointed them to do: though this latter proposition would still require some abatement, in order to its being strictly true; for there are powers which no sovereign authority can possess or confer, and amongst them we reckon first of all, that of hindering the Almighty from receiving the worship of his creatures. Government has not a right to waste the strength of the community upon the impracticable attempt to change the religious opinions of a part of it by force: in a word, no individual and no mass of individuals has a right to do what is morally wrong; which is undeniably done, in punishing a man for that to which he

is necessitated by his Creator, namely, following in his faith the convictions of his understanding.—"The good of the community," and the like terms, express only fallacious conditions: who is to judge of the common-weal? The legislature, the government, the magistrate; i. e. the very individual, or body whose right is under discussion. Provided the individual or body is *satisfied* that the proscription of a sect, obnoxious to such individual or body, is for general good, a right to persecute is thence at once acquired; which is a right to persecute in all cases, without exception—because, ignorant and intolerant men, such as have for the most part flourished in the high places of the state, have always been satisfied, or, which is the same thing to our argument, have always *professed themselves* satisfied, that the *exclusion* of some religious sect from civil rights was essential to the public safety.—There must, surely, be a flaw in the doctrine which pronounces the will of government to be the sole measure of right; especially in matters of religious preference and distinction, where the passions are usually up and in action. And there is the less chance of the will of government being in this case a just standard of the public weal; because government is so constituted, in consequence of religious distinctions, as, in fact, to represent, as far as relates to religion, only a part of the community. There is plausibility in the argument that the will of the community, fairly expressed, is an authority for a national establishment of religion: but suppose any sect excluded from the legislature, (as is the case with the Catholics,) or from

civil offices, (as is the case with both Catholic and Protestant Dissenters,) and with what propriety can the mere inclination of the legislature or of the government be urged as proof of a right to oppress a people with whom they have no sympathies and whom they have already deprived of a voice in the councils of the state and of all part in the execution of the laws; we say *mere inclination*, because, in fact, the doctrine we are combating amounts to the right of government to do with religious sects what they please.

Thirdly, We complain of the use of unphilosophical, illiberal language, when *opinions* are denominated *dangerous*. We know but of one case, in which they are attended with danger; and that is, when they are proscribed and persecuted. A variety of opinions is no more prejudicial to a state than a variety of faces; though if an act of Parliament were to pass, forbidding the appearance in public of long faces or round faces, disaffection and perhaps a rebellion might be the consequence.

What, in the name of common sense, is the community benefited or injured, whether A. B. believes 39 articles of faith, or 38; whether Y. Z. thinks the Divine Essence is better described by saying that it consists of three persons or of one only? A. B. may have held each number of articles, at different periods of his life, without being at all altered in his relations to society: Y. Z. may have been formerly an advocate for three persons, and may now retain only one, in his creed, without being a whit different as a fellow citizen and a subject. Would Howard have been a greater philanthropist, if he had said his

prayers in a church, instead of a meeting-house? Would Mr. Locke and Sir Isaac Newton have deserved better of their country, if they had vehemently admired the Athanasian Creed?

Opinions are only dangerous, it may be said, when they shock general prejudice, or militate against a creed enacted by the legislature: in this sense, then, the opinions of Protestant Dissenters in England, of Episcopalians in Scotland, of Roman Catholics in Ireland, of Protestants in Canada, are dangerous; in the same sense, the opinions of the Reformers of popery and of the first Christians were dangerous: but what more is meant by the danger in these cases, than the hazard to which the rising independence of the human mind puts spiritual usurpation, or to which even a state may bring itself, by opposing in certain junctures the progress of opinion? There is danger in running a mound across a stream; the banks will probably overflow and the neighbouring country be laid under water; but the evil is to be attributed to the mischievous industry which set itself in opposition to nature.

But, it is said, particular religious opinions may have an affinity to certain political opinions; and, though innocent in themselves, may become noxious by the combination. History, however, bears us out in saying that a theological creed will, in the different circumstances of its professors, coalesce with widely different political predilections. A sect under persecution is invariably opposed to the Court; its resentments overcoming, in some cases, its natural partialities. Why are the Roman Catholics of Ire-

land the most forward champions of freedom,—but because the Government have spurned them from them, and forced them to assume, in self-defence, an attitude of opposition? Why are the Presbyterians of Scotland, once so dreaded by the episcopal church of England, the tamest supporters of every successive administration, not excepting any one devoted equally to Toryism and "No Popery,"—but because Presbyterianism nestles and is fondled in the bosom of government? The Edinburgh Reviewers need not to be instructed in the recipe for curing faction.

Let it be granted, nevertheless, that certain theological creeds have a natural congeniality to some particular political theories; for instance, that Popery inclines to despotism, that Socinianism leans towards a commonwealth:—still, government can have no more right to prohibit and to attach penalties to the religious system, than it has to proscribe the political doctrine, by association with which alone it is confessed that it becomes pernicious; but what is the right in this case? Just nothing at all; it being a tyranny beyond any thing ever yet heard of, to convert an opinion in favour of this or that form of government into a crime.

From one singular expression of the Reviewer's, it may be gathered that his meaning, though indistinctly expressed, is, that particular forms of religion may be justly suppressed by the magistrate when united with seditious practices: but would it not be sufficient, for every wise and good purpose, to say that seditious practices may and ought in every instance to be curbed and put

down, in whatever company found, whether with the followers of John Calvin, of Socinus, of the Pretender or of Sacheverel? In connection with Socinianism, the Reviewer makes mention of *Republican habits*; by which he intends, we take for granted, not any particular mode of dress, not any precise cut of the hair, not any peculiar compellation with which Socinians greet each other, but attempts to reduce Republican theories to practice on British ground: now we see no reason why the disbelief of the Trinity should lead to a hatred of King, Lords and Commons: if the term were not too quaint, the Unitarians might be fitly called *Monarchists*, their constant endeavour being to assert, according to a favourite phrase with some of the Fathers, the absolute Monarchy of the Deity. No fact is known to us that bears the writer out in his suspicion of the likelihood of Socinianism being in union with treason: the public may lay aside all fears on this head; some of the Socinians are rich, and wish for no change at all, not even such an one as the Edinburgh Reviewers maintain to be the only preventive of a much worse change; some of them have attained the summit of their ambition, in rising to seats in corporations, up to which they have scrambled, with broken consciences, over the Lord's Table; and we believe a still larger number agree with the Quakers, in deprecating all violence, even as the instrument of reformation. But if, in spite of past history and present appearances, Socinians should become traitors, let them be punished, as the law has provided,

though not for their Socinianism but for their treason.

The suppression of the Romish Catholics is put as a contingent virtue in the government—for that sect may be infected with *the love of despotism*. It would be a novel spectacle if a government were to busy itself in hunting down this affection. No, no; there is no danger to the Roman Catholics from loving despotism,—unless it be despotism only a good way off. But this can be nothing else than a *jeu d'esprit* of the Reviewer's, who had somehow or other got into his mind the comic idea of a company of commissioners, appointed by the Houses of Lords and Commons, under sanction of the Court, to make inquisition after the love of arbitrary power, with a view to bring the possessors to punishment; and who could not persuade himself to drop it, till he had indulged the vision of Roman Catholics being whipped by their Protestant brethren into a sense of liberty.

We may put a case which will perhaps illustrate our argument on the *dangerousness of opinions*. We hold, in common with most of our countrymen, the immorality as well as illegality of bigamy, and think it justly punishable by the civil magistrate. But if another clergyman, following the example of Mr. Madan, should write a book in defence of a plurality of wives, not otherwise objectionable than in regard of this doctrine; we might lament that such a book should have been written, we might even fear its consequences, but we could not, consistently with our notions of right and our affection for freedom,

hold the author deserving of civil punishment. The writer, might however, go further, and put his theory into practice : in that case, we should deem him a fit object of the magistrate's care, and should feel satisfaction in his suffering the sentence of the law; but the criminal would suffer, in law and equity, not as the author of a book in favour of a plurality of wives, but as a convicted bigamist.

These remarks have scarcely left us room, *fourthly*, to notice the strange powers which the Reviewer requires government to exercise in some cases, over religious sects, under pain of being reputed insane. He allows a government to assume that some classes of society are, from their *opinions*, its enemies; and then they are, of necessity, to be *distinguished by any mark, religious, physical, or moral, that chances to present itself*. What is hereby intended, we really know not, except (what we can scarcely think,) that the holders of certain opinions are to be excommunicated as heretics [the *religious* mark], branded on the forehead, or deprived of an ear [the *physical* mark], and represented as wholly unfit for social faith, complaisance and charity [the *moral* mark]. We are inclined to impute to the reviewer rather no meaning than this: he appears to us betrayed into a want of sense, by a momentary condescension to intolerance, with which we have been long persuaded that the friends of liberty should stand in no other relation than that of antagonists: and so far from being persuaded by his reasoning, we rise from the examination of it with a renewed

conviction, that (altering a little his own statement,) it is quite idle to argue this question in any other way, than as a question of general, imprescriptable, inalienable right.

That we may not, however, dismiss the reader with a different sentiment towards the reviewer from that which we ourselves feel, which is, upon the whole, one of high respect, we shall conclude this article with a further extract from the Review under consideration, in which the merits of the Protestant Dissenters are candidly allowed and liberally extolled.

"Last year, Lord Sidmouth made a light scratch in the epidermis of the Dissenting church. Of the extraordinary consequences, we were all witnesses; and yet there are persons who may think it possible to revive the execution of the Test Acts! If there are no such extravagant persons, why may not those laws be repealed? And never let it be forgotten, against what species of men they have been enacted—against men who have run greater risks, and with greater unanimity, to preserve the free government and constitution of this country, than any other set of men whatever. During the reign of Charles II. the small remains of liberty were chiefly preserved and cherished by them. They resisted with effect, the arbitrary designs of Charles and James II. when their own immediate interest, would have led them to an unconditional submission. They joined cordially in the Revolution, and exposed themselves to the resentment of a bigoted princess and an infatuated people, to secure the succession of the House of Hanover.

In two rebellions, the Dissenters, without the exception of a single individual, showed a steady attachment to the present government; and they have, at all times and seasons, (and when such praise was by no means due to the Church of England,) proved themselves the steady friends of that mild, moderate, and tolerant race of kings, by which we have been governed for the last century." pp. 163, 4.

A.

Sketch of English Protestant Persecution.—Letter I.

Jan. 1, 1812.

SIR,

As I perceive that you have inserted (vol. vi. p. 524.) my letter of May last*, at the close of which I proposed to offer you a Sketch of English Protestant Persecution, I shall now proceed to make a few selections from the too ample materials, which our history has afforded, on that melancholy subject. One who should confine his enquiries to the New Testament, would little suspect that Christians had allowed themselves to assume or encourage a civil controul over any man's religious, or even irreligious, profession. And while he heard re-echoed from every anti-papal community, "the Bible, the Bible alone, is the religion of Protestants," he might easily conclude that religious liberty, among such Protestants, had furnished no materials for history; on the best possible account, because it had

* As our correspondent's former letter merely proposed the series of communications, which the present Letter commences, we have entitled this article, Letter I. Ed.

been a right never disputed. But when this enquirer looked into the world, he would find a history even of the Protestant Church stained with the blood of persecution, and, like the prophet's roll, "written therein, lamentation and mourning and woe." This progress, or rather decline, of Protestants, from the claim of religious liberty to the practice of religious persecution, was well-described by an anonymous author, sixty years ago. I quote the following passage from, "The Reflector, representing human affairs, as they are, and may be improved." 8vo. 1750.

"Two hundred years ago, it was orthodoxy in Christendom to have no religion, but a blind obedience to the arbitrary constitutions and injunctions of the court of Rome, all enquiry being then looked upon as heresy or infidelity. But certain intrepid heroes arose to demolish this usurped authority, that oppressed and enslaved Europe, by power and craft. The foundation upon which they erected their battery was the *right of enquiry*; and the duty of every man to hear and examine before he believes and judges.

"The Romish clergy appealed to antiquity for the truth of their doctrine; but were shown that false doctrines may be ancient, they pretended, that religious disputes had long since been decided, after the exactest scrutiny; but were answered, that nobody has a right of determining for another, what the scripture delivers as articles of faith; and that whoever pretends to do it, puts himself in the place of the scripture. They alleged the scriptures were dark in many places, so that every one

could not discover the true meaning; and that the generality should be contented with the interpretation of those who understood the originals. It was replied, that all who understood the original languages did not agree in their interpretation, and that what one learned man called right, another called wrong. The Catholics pretended, if all were allowed the liberty of enquiring, numerous erroneous sects must needs be the consequence; but were told, it was better some errors should prevail, than men have no faith. For if the common people, before the Reformation, were ever questioned about their religion, they could only answer, they believed what their priests believed; that their priests believed what the church believed; and that the church had the same belief as the pope. But what faith the pope held they knew not. Few of them had ever seen the Bible, or heard it mentioned; insomuch, that many thought the New Testament a dangerous book, compiled by *Luther*. The arguments of the first Reformers being therefore found unanswerable, the Reformation had the good success which all the world knows.

“During the change, before things were settled, the Reformers continued to use the same arguments, which had already procured them so much advantage; but as soon as a few churches were founded, so as to dread no disturbing power, the reformed began to waver in their principles; and employed the same kind of arguments against others, who separated from them, as the *Romish* clergy had used against the original Reformers. This, however,

was done with circumspection in language, though not in fact; for they retained the old form of speech, that every man should search the scriptures; but with this reserve, that the discoveries and judgments made, must entirely agree with theirs; and that after a free and exact enquiry, all should subscribe articles settled by assemblies of divines. Which amounts to this: ‘You may believe what you find to be right; but nothing is right besides what we believe.’ Such liberty of enquiry is a treacherous compliment, that chains down the prisoner, and tells him he is free.”

(*Reflector*, 331—333.)

It is observed by Sir Thomas Browne, (*Rel. Med. Sect. 4.*) that “as there were many Reformers, so likewise many reformatations; every country proceeding in a particular way and method.” In England, according to a remark of the late Bishop Hurd, quoted in your 3d vol. (p. 530.) the Reformation advanced under the eye of the magistrate, which that prelate considered as no small advantage. It certainly had the advantage of preserving the English Reformers of the national church, from the inconsistency described by the anonymous author lately quoted; for I am not aware that they ever ventured to declare for the right of private judgment.

Henry the Eighth, the father of the Reformation in England, under whose eye it first advanced, though with an infant’s tottering steps, certainly designed nothing less than the admission of such a right. He acknowledged no liberty but that of indulging his own violent passions; and while he displaced

the pope in England, could scarcely be called a Protestant. Nor had he the excuse, poor as it is, of being an honest, but misguided, persecutor. *Whom he would, he slew; and whom he would, he kept alive;* rather as unbridled passions or a sanguinary policy directed, than as guided by an erroneous religious principle. His character is thus well drawn by Raleigh, in the Preface to his History of the World.

“If all the pictures and patterns of a merciless prince were lost in the world, they might all again be painted to the life, out of the story of this king. For how many servants did he advance in haste, but for what virtue, no man could suspect, and, with the change of his fancy, ruin again, no man knowing for what offence? To how many others of more desert, gave he abundant flowers, from whence to gather honey, and, in the end of harvest, burnt them in the hive? How many wives did he cut off, and cast off, as his fancy and affection changed? How many princes of the blood, whereof some of them, for age could hardly crawl towards the block, with a world of others of all degrees, of whom our common chronicles have kept the account, did he execute? Yea, in his very death-bed, and, when he was at the point to have given his account to God, for the abundance of blood already spilt, he imprisoned the Duke of Norfolk, the father, and executed the Earl of Surrey, the son: the one whose deservings he knew not how to value, having never omitted any thing that concerned his own honour and the king’s service; the other never having committed any thing worthy of his least displea-

sure: the one exceeding valiant and advised; the other no less valiant than learned, and of excellent hope.”

That such a “merciless prince” should have prepared the way, for the progress, now we trust accelerating, of Christian truth and charity, through this nation, must always be reckoned among the extraordinary works of Providence—

From seeming evil, still educing good.

Thus, as it is well expressed, in the inscription on a column at Ampthill, where Henry’s first injured Queen resided,

From Catharine’s wrongs, a nation’s bliss was spread;
And Luther’s light, from Henry’s lawless bed.

Yet “Luther’s light,” or rather the light of scripture, was permitted to be enjoyed only through *lattices* of a size and quality prescribed by the civil power. The Bible was regarded as a boon, graciously bestowed by the crown. From such premises, the conclusion was obvious, that for the use of this boon, an account should be rendered to the royal donor. Thus came in that specious pretender, a Magistrate affecting *the cure of souls*; till persecution, with her furies, like Milton’s *Sin* and *Death*, in the train of *Satan*,

Following his track, such was the will of heaven,

Pav’d after him a broad and beaten way.

This enormity is *adroitly* compressed by Blackstone, into a short plausible sentence: *Christianity is part of the laws of England.* (B. iv. ch. 4.) The learned commentator knew, though it did not suit him to admit, that, let Christian or anti-Christian faith, be enacted in any country, while “many men have many minds,” persecu-

tion must be the unavoidable consequence.

Henry the Eighth had been entitled by the pope, *Defender of the Faith*, a convertible term, which, as Lord Orford observed, has equally suited a popish or protestant, an episcopalian, or even a presbyterian, prince. Henry now added the title of *Supreme Head of the Church of England*; and was complimented by the Reformers, as *a man after God's own heart*, with gross flattery in a moral sense, however the expression may be providentially correct. I refer to a curious specimen of picture-writing, on the frontispiece of Cranmer's Bible, 1539, a splendid copy of which is preserved in the British Museum. An engraving of this frontispiece, is in Lewis's Complete History of English Translations of the Bible, 1739; from whence I copy his description, as the book is not now common, and it may serve to exemplify our Reformers' courtly notion of the Bible, as a grant from the crown to the people.

“On the top is a representation of the Almighty in the clouds of heaven, with both his hands stretched out, and two labels going from his mouth. On that going towards his right hand, are the following words, *Verbum quod egredietur de me, non revertetur ad me vacuum, sed faciet quaecunque volui*, Esa. lv. [11.] His left hand points to the king, who is represented kneeling at some distance, bare-headed, and his hands lifted up towards heaven, with his crown on the ground before him, and a label going out of his mouth. On the label which comes from the Almighty, is this text, *Inveni virum juxta cor meum, qui faciet*

omnes voluntates meas, Ac. xiii. [22.] to which answers that proceeding from the king, *Lucerna pedibus meis verbum tuum*, Psal. cxix [105.] Underneath the Almighty is the king again represented, sitting in his throne, with his arms before him at his feet. On his right hand stand two bishops bare-headed, and their mitres on the ground, in token, as it should seem of their acknowledgment of the king's supremacy. The king gives to the foremost a book shut, with these words on the cover, *VERBUM DEI*, and these words on a label, going out of his mouth, *Hæc precipe et doce*, Tit. ii. [15.] The Bishop receives it, bending his right knee. On the king's left hand stand several of the Lords temporal, to one of whom he delivers a book clasped, with *VERBUM DEI* on the cover of it, and the following words on one label, *A me constitutum est et decretum ut in universo imperio et regno meo tremiscant et paveant deum viventem*, Daniel vi. [26.] and on another label this text, *Quod justum est judicate, ita parvum audietis ut magnum*, Deut. primo. [17.] The nobleman receives the book, bending his left knee. Underneath the bishops, stands archbishop Cranmer, with his mitre on his head, and habited in his rochet or stole over it. Before him is one kneeling with a shaven crown, and habited in a surplice, to whom the Archbishop delivers a book clasped, with the words *VERBUM DEI*, on the cover of it, and saying to him these words, as they are in a label, coming out of his mouth, *Pascite quod in vobis est gregem Christi*, 1 Pet. v. [2.] Under the lord's temporal stands Lord Cromwel, the king's

vicegerent. His lordship is represented with his cap on, and a roll of paper in his right hand, and in his left, a book clasped, with VERBUM DEI on the cover of it, which he delivers to a nobleman, who receives it of him bareheaded, with these words, on a label going out of his mouth, *Diverte a malo et fac bonum, inquire pacem et sequere eam*, Psalmo xxxiiii. [14.] At the bottom, on the right hand, is represented a priest, with his square cap on, in a pulpit, preaching to a pretty large auditory of persons of all ranks and qualities, orders, sexes and ages, men, women, children, nobles, priests, soldiers, tradesmen and countrymen, who are represented, some standing, and others sitting on forms, and expressing themselves very thankful. Out of the preacher's mouth goes a label with these words, *Obsecro igitur primum omnium fieri obsecrationes orationes, postulationes, gratiarum actiones pro omnibus hominibus, pro regibus, &c.* 1 Tim. ii. [1. 2.] On the right side of the pulpit are the words VIVAT REX, and in labels coming from the people's and children's mouths, VIVAT REX, GOD SAVE THE KING, to express the great and universal joy and satisfaction which all the king's subjects, high

and low, great and little, had, and their thankfulness to the king, for his granting them this privilege of having and reading the holy scriptures, in their mother-tongue. On the left side, are represented prisoners looking out of the prison grates, and partaking of this great and common joy."—*Complete Hist.* 2d Ed. pp. 122—124.

I have not been able to transcribe this passage, without recollecting a remark, by Mrs. Macaulay, on a later period of our history, that "priests were instructed to teach speculative despotism, and graft on religious affections, systems of civil tyranny." This pretended mediator between God and the people, was yet capricious as a Moorish Emperor, and would have burned translators and readers of the Bible, or enjoined its perusal, just according to the humour of the moment. I excuse myself from following Henry through the bloody eccentricities of his latter years. The Protestant sufferers being *orthodox*, have had justice done to their memories by their pious and learned martyr-ologist; and, indeed, the proper æra of English Protestant persecution, scarcely commences till the infantile reign of Edward, which shall be the subject of my next letter

R. G. S.

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

No. CV.

Lord Clarendon's Prophecy concerning Spain.

"It cannot be denied, that Philip (King of Spain) by this means (the Inquisition) hath to

this day preserved those his dominions from entertaining any thing that was not before known or generally believed by them; but it is as true, that from that time, and only by the settling that terrible

judicatory, (which admits not the mention of any thing that is new in any other science as well as divinity, nor the natural doubts or discourses which cannot but arise amongst learned men,) the acuteness and vigour of that nation is so totally decayed and their spirits broken, and inclinations diverted to more pernicious licences, that too many of that class of men, who should preserve and improve knowledge, are upon the matter become illiterate; and the spirit and courage, which was natural to that people, and made them as eminent for many noble attempts and achievements as any other nation of the world, is much degenerated and broken. *It is very probable; however, that since their pristine appetite of honour and glory is not like to be extinguished, they will at some time, when it shall please God to give them an active and enterprizing King, shake off their modern sloth and luxury, and those shackles with which the faculties of their mind are restrained and imprisoned, as well as their bodies in perpetual danger and captivity: and they will then discern that the true safety and security of a Church and State consists in the wisdom, knowledge and virtue of a people, that can discern and distinguish between truth and error, and suppress the one, or at least expel the poison of it, by the power of the other; supported by laws constituted upon the foundation of prudence and justice, more than by a stupid resignation of the understanding to old dictates, and by a sottish affectation of ignorance in those things which are the proper objects for the disquisition of the soul of man."*

Religion and Policy. 8vo. 1811. i. 373—374.

No. CVI.

Conventicle.

Conventicle means a *meeting-house*, and is so used by Blackstone; but it signifies as much a meeting-house for Church-men as for Dissenters. Latimer, in the title to one of his sermons before King Edward, calls the Chapel-Royal "a meeting-place."

Literally, a *Conventicle* is a *small meeting of persons*; in which sense, how many parish churches may bear the denomination! To the assembled thousands of the Tabernacle, Tottenham-Court-Chapel, Spa Fields, Zion Chapel and Surry Chapel, it cannot be applied, except by ignorance and folly.

A secondary sense of *Conventicle* is an *unlawful meeting*, in which sense, a meeting of Peers for the sake of influencing a County election is a *Conventicle*; a meeting of Country Justices for the sake of suppressing an opposition newspaper is a *Conventicle*; a meeting of Staff Officers to address compliments to a Commander in Chief, degraded by the Legislature, is a *Conventicle*; a meeting of Rural Esquires for deep gambling, is a *Conventicle*: but a meeting of Protestant Dissenters in a building registered according to law, to hear a minister pray and preach, who is qualified according to law, is not a *Conventicle*, but an *Established Church*. To such a meeting the term is never applied, but by such as have it in their heart, though, thank God! not in their power, to disperse it. The use of it is verbal intolerance, lingual but, happily, toothless persecution; barking where the Law prevents biting.

So late as the 4th century, Am-

mianus Marcellinus, a pagan writer, calls a Christian Church at Cologne, a *Conventicle* (conventiculum ritus Christiani). Protestant Dissenters need not therefore to refuse this vulgar reproach; their enemies may, if they please, enjoy the reputation of a Heathen spirit.

No. CVII.

“*Mahumetan Story*.”

“The Mahumetans,” says *Bolde*, (Pref. to *Meditations concerning Death*), “have a story which Christians may make a good use of, viz. That in the days of Jesus, three men in a Journey happened to find a treasure, but being very hungry, sent one of the number to buy provision; he consulted how to get the treasure to himself, and determined to poison the meat: the other two agreed to share the treasure between them, and to kill the third man as soon as he returned: this they did, and presently after they died of the poisoned meat. Jesus, passing by with his disciples, said, This is the condition of this world—See what the love of it hath brought these men to! Wo be to him that looks for any other usage from it.”

No. CVIII.

“*Common Sense*” and “*Plain Truth*.”

Thomas Paine, who in his “*Age of Reason*,” has ridiculed the description of the Bible as the Word of God, appears to have had other sentiments, twenty years before. In his “*Common Sense*,” published at Philadelphia in 1776, and which greatly contributed to the declaration of American Inde-

pendence, he thus answers an objector to his scheme of democratic government.

“But where, say some, is the King of America? I’ll tell you, Friend, he reigns above.—Yet that we may not appear to be defective even in earthly honours, let a day be solemnly set apart for proclaiming the charter; let it be brought forth placed on the divine law, the word of God; let a crown be placed thereon, by which the world may know that so far we approve of monarchy, that in America the law is king. For as in absolute governments the king is law, so in free countries the law *ought* to be king;—But lest any ill use should afterwards arise, let the crown, at the conclusion of the ceremony, be demolished and scattered among the people whose right it is.” “*Com. Sense*.” Lond. 1776. p. 28.

“*Common Sense*,” was answered in America by “*Plain Truth*,” which was republished with it here, and contains the strength of the arguments against Independence. “*Plain Truth*,” concludes with the following political prediction, which an age of freedom and national improvement has happily falsified.

“Volumes were insufficient to describe the horror, misery and desolation awaiting the people at large, in the syren form of American Independence. In short, I affirm that it would be the most excellent policy in those who wish for true liberty, to submit, by an advantageous reconciliation, to the authority of Great Britain.—Independence and slavery are synonymous terms.” “*Plain Truth*.” p. 36.

REVIEW.

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

ART. I. *A Comparative View of the Two New Systems of Education for the Infant Poor; in a Charge delivered to the Clergy of the Officialty of the Dean and Chapter of Durham, 1811. By the Rev. R. G. Bowyer, LL. B. Prebendary of Durham, and Official.* London. Rivingtons. 8vo. pp. 18 1811.

ART. II. *A Vindication of Dr. Bell's System of Tuition, in a Series of Letters. By Herbert Marsh, D. D. F. R. S. Margaret Professor of Divinity, in Cambridge.* London, Rivingtons, 8vo. pp. 32. 1811.

In our views of the nature and importance of education, we agree, for the most part, with Mr. Bowyer: and we fear that numbers of indigent children are destitute of its blessings. We doubt, nevertheless, whether the evil is such as to call for a remedy which "must owe its general efficacy to the sanction and support of the legislature:" (p. 7.) nor can we approve of the intimation that the object might perhaps be best accomplished by "vesting a large discretionary power in the hands of persons whose residence and employments give them a competent knowledge of local peculiarities and exigencies." (ib.) To make education the business of the state, is neither requisite nor advisable: facts shew that the efforts of individuals and of voluntary societies, at the same time that they are safer, are likely to be far more useful; and we confess that, as Britons and

Protestants, we deprecate the day when this "large discretionary power" shall be entrusted to gentlemen in the commission of the peace or in holy orders.

That Dr. Bell is "a most respectable presbyter" of the English church, we are neither able nor inclined to question. As little are we disposed to conceal or colour the fact that Mr. Lancaster is "a professed dissenter." (8). It is not with the men, but with their comparative exertions, that we are now concerned.

"The Madras system," says Mr. Bowyer, (ib.) "was read, talked of with wonder and praise; but the relation of it was soon laid aside, and almost forgotten. The men of the world had all of them something else to do."

And is it not strange, beyond belief, that if the established clergy, whom, however, he will hardly include under "the men of the world," were then aware of the Madras system being particularly calculated for the service of the hierarchy, they did not bring it into public use? Either they had no such persuasion, or they were criminally remiss, in disregarding their convictions. Will the Official of Durham also inform us, why, in the mean time, numbers of "the men of the world" were eager to patronize the Lancastrian plan of education?

"From this general apathy," he remarks, "two or three individuals must be excepted; and one of them had the merit of first putting the plan in practice in England, and of exhibiting its powerful operation in a suburb of the metropolis; on which account, and for

the additions which he made to it, he claimed the title of inventor, and soon collected a very great number of children of both sexes, who received most important benefit from his instruction." (ib.)

The Prebendary's eulogium on Mr. Lancaster, will not be suspected of flowing from a partial pen. Yet he ought further to have excepted from the apathy which he laments, the multitude of persons, of every rank and name, who countenanced this most deserving man. Upon the points *originally* at issue between the friends of his plan and those of Dr. Bell's, our readers will find their advantage in consulting what has been written by Sir Thomas Bernard, on the one side, and by Mr. Joseph Fox and the Edinburgh reviewers, on the other.

Ib. and 9. "But objections having arisen from the circumstance of his [Mr. Lancaster] being a professed dissenter, and from disapprobation of some of the additions which he had made to the original system, Dr. Bell was at last prevailed upon to quit his retirement, and to organize some large schools, in strict conformity to his own tried plan; and from that time forward he has practically displayed its advantages, and with indefatigable zeal and unbounded generosity, he has devoted his time, his labour and his fortune, to this most important object."

Mr. Bowyer will permit us to ask, what was the interval between Dr. Bell's retiring to his benefice in Dorsetshire, and his quitting it, in order "to organize some large schools?" When was his scheme first *tried* in England? How long was it before certain ministers and members of the church discovered, or thought they discovered, in Mr. Lancaster's system an hostility to our civil and ecclesiastical establishments? In the answers which

these questions receive, every thing of importance in this controversy is involved. We suspect either the sincerity or the justness of accusations preferred at a late and singular period; a period when our revered Monarch, the generous patron of the Lancastrian plan, is unhappily, in a situation which forbids him to hear and silence the clamours virtually raised against his patriotism, munificence and discernment.

10, 11, 12. Some remarks follow upon the supreme moment and necessity of communicating religious instruction to the young. Few objects are dearer to our hearts. However, if Mr. Bowyer proposes to contrast the two systems in this respect, his argument, sound as it may be in the abstract, is needless and impertinent.

Were we to judge of the Lancastrian system from the conversation or the writings of its opponents, we should infer that it does not provide for any kind or degree of instruction in religion. Such are the extent and inveteracy of this prejudice, that in a well edited diurnal print, (*the Globe* of Dec. 19th, 1811.) the Madras system is represented as combining all the simplicity and economy of Mr. Lancaster's, while it "embraces, in addition, the religious principle of education." On reading such language, we are tempted to ask, is the Bible, or is it not, the religion of Protestants? In the Lancastrian schools, without exception, the pupils are taught to read from the Bible, and in some the church catechism is also used. If, moreover, the value of religious instruction can be estimated by its efficacy, we may take high ground in our recom-

mendation of what Mr. Lancaster imparts; none of the young persons educated in his seminaries having been charged with a criminal offence in any of our courts of justice.

13. After observing that the expence of furnishing the means of religious instruction, is very trifling in the schools of Dr. Bell, Mr. Bowyer proceeds in the following strain,

“This brings me to the consideration of one of the additions to, or rather alterations of, the original system upon which the person above alluded to, rests his claim to the merit of invention. And the real and undeniable merit of his having first presented this most useful method of teaching to the ocular observation of this country, by his early, laborious and extensive practice of it, gives him so fair a title to the gratitude and esteem of the public that I enter with great reluctance, on a statement which must imply a censure on any part of his proceedings; but the danger with which, in my view of them, they menace our church establishment, lays me under an imperious necessity of communicating to you, as its appointed guardians and watchmen, the nature and cause of such my apprehensions.”

Irrational fear magnifies its object: persons under its influence are seldom distinct in their perceptions or conclusive in their reasonings; and it is for his readers to say, whether this be not our author's situation?

For what however is Mr. Lancaster censured? Whence the apprehended danger? Why truly, the founder of the Borough Road school employs reading cards and tables, and saves the expence of binding and stitching! Therefore, “we must at once renounce all expositions of the church catechism, and all tracts of a similar length.”—14, 15.

To this novel and not very per-

spicuous objection, we oppose the single fact that Mr. Lancaster's press furnished one of the schools in the metropolis with *the church catechism, printed after the manner of his own cards*. Now, plainly, what is done in one instance, may be done in all: and they who require this catechism to be exclusively taught, may thus engraft it on the system of Lancaster, with the same facility as on Dr. Bell's. So unfounded are Mr. Bowyer's fears and insinuations! He appears indeed, to be as ignorant of this part of his subject as he is inaccurate in another; since to the semicircles in the Lancastrian Schools he assigns a diameter of nine or ten feet, instead of one of less than half that length.

1b. But contemplating Mr. Lancaster as a dissenter,—and

“The very head and front of his offending

Hath this extent, no more!”—

—“here,” exclaims the Official, “new difficulties and dangers arise.” Accordingly, having described the situation and duty of dissenters in respect of the education of their own children, he complains of those members of the established church, who “would voluntarily send the children of the poor by hundreds to be educated by dissenters, or at least under the effectual controul of a dissenter.” (16).

In his statement he is right, but faulty in his conclusion. When churchmen and dissenters unite in a scheme of general benevolence, without compromising their several tenets, it is unjust to say that the children of the poor are educated by dissenters.

17. “It seems,” observes Mr. Bowyer, “we are to suffer the children of

parents belonging to all sects (for our establishment is only treated as one of them) to be admitted promiscuously, &c."

We repeat that we wish such words* as *sects* and *sectaries* to be disused by Protestants. The members of the church should know, however, that if they apply them to dissenters, they may be reminded by dissenters of being themselves a *sect* from popery.

He, afterwards, makes particular mention of Unitarians. Why he distinguishes them, we presume not to conjecture; except it be from his persuasion that no class of Protestants are more conspicuous for bringing their characteristic opinions to the test of the Bible. Perhaps, in the spirit of one of the orators in the council of Trent, he fears that in proportion as the Sacred Volume is read without the Liturgy, Unitarian sentiments will advance.†

So little does he himself adopt the reasoning, the principles and the spirit of Protestantism, that his concluding observations in this paragraph are in substance, and almost verbally, the same with those of one of the ablest of the modern champions of the papal claims.‡

Thus much for Mr. Bowyer. We add a few words concerning Professor Marsh's *Vindication*.

* One of these is *conventicle*, the original meaning of which may be seen in Tertullian's Apology: ch. 3. and in Bp. Taylor's Preface to his Life of Christ, § 34; while the modern application of it is well exposed in Dr. Rees's Address, &c. affixed to the second volume of his very admirable Sermons. [M. Repos. vol. v. pp. 85, 137, 193.]

† F. Paolo's Hist. Con. Trid. 163. (2d. ed.)

‡ Milner's Consecration Sermon, at Birmingham, pp. 15, 29, 34, &c. [M. Repos. vol. iii. p. 518, &c.]

The controversy respecting Dr. Bell and Mr. Lancaster, has turned upon four points,—Who is the inventor of the improved system of instruction? Which plan is preferable for simplicity, economy and effect? Which is better applicable to the uses and wants of the established church? and—Does Dr. Bell plead, or does he not, for affording to the children of the poor the means of a thoroughly useful education?

On the last of these subjects the Professor here employs himself. Mr. Lancaster, in a letter printed in a London newspaper, had charged Dr. Bell with proscribing writing and arithmetic to the children of the lower classes. There is certainly a sentence to this effect in the third edition of the *Elements of Tuition*, which, however, is considerably modified in a subsequent impression; though it is still very far from unexceptionable. Now Dr. Marsh heavily complains of Mr. Lancaster for not quoting the amended passage.

Alas! We suspect that Mr. Lancaster is not quite so conversant with *various editions* as Dr. Marsh. No doubt, he would have done well to pause, and ask, whether the author of the *Elements*, &c. retained, without any qualification, the obnoxious sentiment? On the other hand, Dr. Bell would hardly have conceded so much as he still does to the prejudices of some of the members of his church, had his own better judgment and feelings been his guides. After all, the general merits of the case cannot be affected by any personal altercation.

The wisdom and the duty of teaching writing and arithmetic to

the poor, are excellently represented by Professor Marsh (14, 15). For the rest, there is nothing in his pamphlet that should detain our readers and ourselves. It contains, indeed, like his Discourse, many assertions without proof; and we perceive that he uses political rather than religious motives to accomplish his design. The cry of danger to the state he repeatedly sounds. Yet Archbishop Secker might have taught him that “whenever religion comes to be spoken of merely as an instrument of policy, it will no longer be so much as that:”* and he might have learnt from observation that the Dissenters are among the most peaceable and industrious subjects of the realm.

The leading members of the hierarchy, have, at length, formed a national society for the instruction of the children of the poor in the principles of the established church. Whatever we think of the time, the manner and the reasons of the undertaking, in the diffusion of the advantages of education we ardently rejoice. The rival systems will now be practically at issue: the public will soon have ocular proof which is the simpler, the more economical and efficient. Zeal will be animated: vigilance will be increased. But we anticipate a still happier and more important result of the experiment. As we believe that the Bible can make men wise unto salvation, so we doubt not that the religion of the Bible—the religion of *Christians* and *Protestants*—will be ultimately promoted even by measures apparently inauspicious to its interests. N.

ART. III. *Conferences between the Danish Christian Missionaries, resident at Tranquebar, and the Heathen Natives of Hindostan, now first rendered into English from the Original Manuscript, by an Officer in the Service of the Honourable East India Company.* 12mo. pp. 212. Johnson and Co. 1812.

This is a religious romance, designed to explode orthodox Christianity. We doubt the moral propriety of this mode of warfare, which may be employed as well against revealed religion itself as against any corruption of it; and which in this instance, however designed, seems to us to militate against the Christian faith. We cannot deny to the author or authors of the work before us the praise of ingenuity, but we are restrained from higher commendation by an authority to which we are accustomed to bow: “If a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully.”†

ART. IV. *Christian Liberty. A Sermon, preached at St. Mary's, before His Royal Highness the Duke of Gloucester (Chancellor of the University) and the University of Cambridge, at the Installation, June 30th, 1811. By Samuel Butler, D.D. Late Fellow of St. John's College, Cambridge, and Head Master of Shrewsbury School.* 12mo. pp. 129. Longman and Co.

An able sermon we expected from the author and the occasion; but we have been agreeably surprised on finding in Dr. Butler's

* Sermons, vol. iii. p. 5.
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† 2 Tim. ii. 5.

discourse so bold an assertion of religious liberty. This eminent scholar seems to have a clear insight into the free constitution of Christianity. He is equally the enemy of superstition and of intolerance, and his principal object is the resistance of the inquisitorial spirit and oppressive tendency of Methodism. In his Notes, he declares himself an advocate for the Catholic claims, subject to the proposed *Veto*.

The publication will, no doubt, be extensively read and make considerable impression, in the upper classes of society; but what chance has a five-shilling sermon, with learned notes, of reaching that

great mass of people whom the preacher wishes to reclaim? The instructors of the Methodists understand human nature better than their opponents: they address the multitude by means of small, and often gratuitous, publications and familiar extempore preaching; and while the Church of England and other rational sects content themselves with well-written volumes and decently-read sermons, they must ever wage an unequal war. The people are the prize for which all parties are contending, but they will be won by those only that make their suit to their plain understandings and unrefined affections.

POETRY.

Sonnet to Joseph Lancaster.

Right onward Lancaster, in that bold track
 And true, which thou hast chosen, go, my friend,
 Undaunted, instant, heedless of the pack,
 The pampered curs that on thy steps attend,
 In snarling insolence. And may'st thou move,
 Supported by the still small voice within,
 That spake of duty, truth and christian love,
 And bade thee first thy glorious task begin:
 For thou hast loosed the floodgates on mankind
 Of a new dawn to hope and feeling dear.
 And who shall check the swelling stream of mind,
 Or curb the tide of knowledge thundering near?
 Blest be thy labours, may their sphere increase;
 And knowledge travel through the world with Peace.

vo₃

J. B. A.

Hamstead,

Dec. 1811.

INTELLIGENCE.

Extracts from Mr. Wright's Journal of his Missionary Tour in Scotland, 1812.

This Journey employed Mr. Wright 103 days, being commenced June the 24th, and terminated October the 4th: during which, he travelled about 1200 miles, and preached 74 times, besides holding many meetings for conference on theological subjects. In going down, he preached once at Peterborough, and two Sundays at Chester, Mr. Lyons being absent on his Mission in Wales: and in returning, he preached once in York. He spent 80 days in Scotland, and preached 68 times in that country. The following is the account he gives of the places he visited.

Lanerkshire. In this county Unitarianism is making considerable progress, and there is good reason to hope that the endeavours of our friends to promote it, by the circulation of books and the establishment of small libraries in different places, will be successful. I visited the following places in this county.

1. *Glasgow.* In this city Unitarianism may be considered as firmly established. Its progress has been rapid, its advocates are numerous, and well-informed. I preached here 19 times. We had always very good, generally large and deeply attentive audiences. Our largest congregations were estimated at 7 or 800 persons. I had opportunity of bringing before them a considerable variety of subjects, and availed myself of it. I found not only our own

friends, but other persons disposed to attend to the most free discussion of theological subjects. I was expected and desired to preach much on controversial points, as many strangers would come expecting to hear such points stated and argued. On my arrival in Glasgow, I found two societies, and two places open for Unitarian worship. The one is the 'Trades' Hall, which is very large and elegant. Our friends give 50*l.* per annum for the use of it on Lord's Days only. In this I always preached on the Sunday. The other is Provan's Hall; in this I preached on week day evenings; it was not opened on the Lord's Day while I was there, nor has it been re-opened since I left. Both the congregations attended the same place during my stay; and I hope their re-union will become permanent, as they all think highly of, and are much attached to Mr. J. Yates and his ministry. Before I left this city this able and zealous young minister had commenced his labours with much prospect of success. It gave me high pleasure to see so respectable a congregation formed at Glasgow, by the assistance of our missionaries, and so suitable a minister placed, for one year at least, among them. From this circumstance much good to the cause may be anticipated; and I hope Mr. Yates's success will be such as to render his residence in that populous city permanent.

The last Sunday I spent in Glasgow, I shall deem one of the

best days of my life. At eight in the morning we met at the public baths, where I baptized several persons, and delivered an address on the occasion. In the forenoon, Mr. Yates preached an excellent sermon preparatory to the Lord's Supper being administered in the afternoon; at the close of it the Lord's table was declared free. In the afternoon, I preached the Annual Sermon for the Scotch Unitarian Fund, which was numerously attended. Then again the declaration of the freedom of the Lord's Table was publicly made. Then the Lord's Supper was administered. By the request of Mr. Yates, I presided at it. We had about 150 who united in it, and I suppose about 250 spectators, who stayed after the public service to witness our proceedings. This was a great triumph of Christian liberality over bigotry and narrow plans of discipline; we rejoiced greatly in seeing it effected. In the evening, we had a fellowship meeting, which was numerously attended, and conducted with much zeal and Christian affection. This meeting was attended by friends from different parts of the country.

2. *Pollickshaws.* Here I preached once, in the town-hall, to a small congregation.

I will give a more particular account, in order, of one week spent in this county, as a specimen of the manner in which my time was spent in the West of Scotland. The Fund Committee at Glasgow had deputed one of the brethren, who was excellently suited to the purpose, to go a circuit with me at their expence. We set out on the *Monday*, had conversation, on religious topics, with several per-

sons in the course of the day, and arrived about 4 o'clock in the afternoon at the new town of *Wishaw*.

3. *Wishaw.* Here I preached on the *Monday* evening, in a stone quarry, to about three hundred persons, who were very attentive; a large party followed us to our inn, for books, which we distributed among them. We knew no person in this town prior to our arrival. Several spent the evening with us. We found them quite dissatisfied with the popular system; consequently they had ceased a regular attendance on public worship. They were open to conviction and athirst for information, which they received with evident joy. We advised them to form a small library for their mutual benefit, and to meet with each other for reading, conversation, &c. We gave them some books to begin their library. An intercourse is opened between them and some of the brethren at Glasgow. On the *Tuesday* morning we proceeded to

4. *Carluke.* Here I preached in the evening to about 500 people, who were remarkably attentive. A chamber window was taken out at the inn, and I stood in the opening this made and addressed the congregation who were in the street. After the preaching, about 40 persons spent a long evening with us in the free discussion of religious doctrines. In *Carluke*, there are a number of well-informed and zealous Unitarians, and if they had not the pure and simple gospel in the parish Kirk, there would be a congregation of Unitarian Dissenters in this place. No where have I found so small a village as *Carluke* that contains so many well-informed and judicious Christians; this is in no small de-

gree owing to the labours of their aged and worthy minister Dr. Scott. At *Carlisle* the Unitarians have established a library. On the *Wednesday* we proceeded to

5. *Lanerk*. This is the county town. Here we found a few Unitarians, and others favourable to the cause. I preached in the evening on the Castle-hill; we had about 500 hearers, who were very attentive. Afterwards a large party spent the evening with us at our inn, and we had much interesting conversation. Several times I was called from the company to converse with persons in a separate room, who would not join a large party, but wanted to ask me questions in a more private way, and hear some passages of scripture explained. I answered as speedily as I could, and then returned to the more public discussion. We advised the friends to the cause at *Lanerk* to establish a library, and some books were sent from *Glasgow* for them to begin with. On the *Thursday* we crossed to

6. *Strathaven*. Here we had no previous acquaintance with any person. I preached in an open place by the side of the street, to about 300 people, who heard with the most serious attention. A party followed us to the inn, we had much conversation with them; we found one already an Unitarian, and others favourable to the doctrine. We sent them some books. On *Friday* we came back to

7. *Hamilton*. Here I preached in a garden to about 150 attentive hearers. We had a party together afterwards and conversation on several theological subjects. There are several Unitarians at *Hamilton*; we advised them to meet regularly

together to worship the One God, and edify one another, also to form a library, both which they gave us reason to think they would do. On the *Saturday* we returned to *Glasgow*, where I preached in the evening. I have given this detailed account of one week as a specimen; it would render my account too voluminous to be as particular in describing every part of this journey. I can hardly express how much I was indebted to Mr. Plenderleith, the zealous friend who attended me in this little circuit, for his ready and able assistance in the conversations we had, and in procuring congregations.

Before I quit the subject of *Lanerkshire*, it will be proper to mention the exertions of the brethren at *Glasgow* for the promotion of the cause in their own and the neighbouring counties. The library they have established in their own city, is in a good state and has been of much use. It is hoped it will be still further improved, and its usefulness much extended by the assistance of Mr. Yates. From this library they have sent parcels of Unitarian books to a number of public libraries in different parts of the country, which have been well received. They made my preaching known before I arrived by public advertisement, and printed bills which were posted in different parts of the town. The week before I went the above circuit they sent out bills by the common carriers, to be posted in the different towns which I had to visit, and where it was intended for me to preach.

Renfrewshire. Next to *Lanerkshire*, Unitarianism has made most progress in the county of *Renfrew*;

and there is a good prospect of its further spread and success. I preached at the following places in this county.

1. *Paisley*. In this town there is a society of liberal, judicious and well-informed Unitarians. I preached 12 discourses in *Paisley*. We had always good and frequently very crowded congregations. Our largest audiences were supposed to consist of 4 or 500 people. The last *Sunday* I preached here, it was said some hundreds of people went away because they could not get into the place of meeting, nor near enough the door to hear any thing. Many of our own friends deprived themselves of the pleasure of hearing in the evening to make room for strangers. The society has established a library. No where have I met with Christians better informed, more simple-hearted, more liberal in their sentiments, or who discover more Christian affection than our friends at *Paisley*. In no part of the island have I found persons who possess so much varied information, urbanity of manners, and even taste, in the same class in society, as many I have the pleasure of knowing in *Paisley*.

2. *Kilburchan*. Here I preached twice; we had very good and attentive audiences. Our place of meeting was a large room. There are several well-informed Unitarians in this village, and they have lately established a book society. I hope they will soon hold a meeting among themselves, as they are 5 miles from *Paisley*.

3. *The Brigg of Johnston*. This is a new and populous village, about 4 miles from *Paisley*. Here I preached once. We had a good congregation.

4. *Renfrew*, the county town. Here I preached in a large hall, and had a respectable audience. To the above places I was attended by several friends from *Paisley*.

5. *Port-Glasgow*. Here are a few Unitarians. I preached in the Freemasons' Hall, to a small, but attentive audience.

6. *Greenock*. Here I preached in the Gardeners' Hall, to a small but very serious congregation. One Unitarian family which resided in this town is removed to *America*, and one remaining.

Ayrshire. Had certain ministers in this county, now many years since, imitated the conduct of the venerable Lindsey, and not hesitated in the day of trial, they would have greatly promoted the Unitarian cause: their want of firmness, and of a fearless avowal of their sentiments at every risk, spread timidity around them, and there is reason to think there are Unitarians in *Ayrshire* who will not avow themselves. I preached at the following places.

1. *Dalry*. Here are a number of well-informed and zealous Unitarians, who have assisted in forming a respectable library, in which are many Unitarian books. I preached once, in a public hall, to an attentive audience. It is much to be wished our friends at *Dalry* would hold regular meetings among themselves; they are able to edify one another, and bear by their conduct a practical testimony to the worship of the One and Only God.

2. *Kilwinning*. Here I preached in a hall, to an attentive congregation. Our friends in this town meet regularly to worship the One God, and edify themselves, though their number is small.

On the whole, the cause of Unitarianism is advancing in the West of Scotland, and there is a good prospect of its growing success.

[To be concluded in our next Number.]

*Proposals for building a Chapel in Glasgow, for conducting Public Worship on Unitarian Principles.**

The characteristic features of the Institution, to which the attention of the public is here solicited, will be these:

1. That every aid and encouragement will be given to *Free Inquiry* on religious subjects;

2. That prayer and adoration will be addressed, in the name of *Jesus Christ*, solely to the *One True God*.

3. That repentance and reformation of manners, piety to God, benevolence to man, and a strict abstinence from every sinful passion and indulgence will be enforced as the only means of obtaining happiness in this life and in that which is to come.

The supreme importance of these principles will, it is hoped, incline all who perceive their close connection with the welfare of individuals, and the general improvement of society, to support, according to their ability, a house of prayer, in which they may worship the Father in spirit and in truth; in which pure and elevated devotion may spring from their knowledge and contemplation of the character of their Maker in all its majesty and loveliness; where they may meet with kind and friendly assistance in the calm, dispassionate and unbiassed investigation of sacred truth; and where they may be incited to do honour to their Christian profession, and to accomplish the great ends of their being, by growing perpetually in conformity to the image of their Saviour, and in fitness for the presence of their God.

To accomplish this object, the following plan has been proposed:

I. The money for building the chapel shall be raised by Subscriptions and by Donations.

* We have great pleasure in laying this plan before our readers; and gladly offer our work as the medium of communications and subscriptions, in furtherance of the object of the Glasgow Unitarian Church. Ed.

II. Every Subscriber shall receive annually 5 per cent. interest for his money; but no Subscriber under £25 shall be eligible as a manager, nor shall Subscribers under £5 be entitled to vote at elections.

III. Donations shall be the property of the Glasgow Unitarian Church, and shall be applied to the building of the Chapel.

IV. The management of all affairs relating to the Chapel shall be vested in a Preses, a Treasurer, and five other Managers; two of whom shall go out of office annually by rotation, and their places shall be supplied by a new election. Those going out may be re-elected.

V. There shall be a general meeting of the Subscribers annually, when the managers shall produce a statement of their receipts and disbursements, and report proceedings; at which meeting the election of managers shall take place.

VI. All profits arising from the letting of the seats, &c. shall be the property of the church, whose object it shall be to pay back to the subscribers what they have borrowed, as soon as possible, so that the chapel may in the course of time become their property, unencumbered with debt; but should the church ever be unable to pay the interest due, the managers shall be authorized to dispose of the chapel so as to discharge the debt.

VII. The right to the ground on which the chapel may be built, shall be taken in name of the managers for the time being, and their successors in office, for behoof of the church; and all other investitures of the funds of the church shall be taken in the same terms.

VIII. Subscriptions may either be paid at the time of subscribing, or one fourth then, and the remaining three-fourths by equal instalments, at the date of three, six, or nine months.

IX. Should any alteration be found necessary in these rules, the proposed alteration must be laid before a general meeting of the subscribers, and if sanctioned by a majority of two-thirds of the meeting, it shall be equally obligatory with the above.

Unitarianism in America.

From one of the ministers of the Philadelphia Unitarian Society, we have been recently favoured with accounts of the growth of Unitarianism in the United

States, which we are happy to extract into our work: they relate to the state of religion at Boston, and to the design of erecting a church at Philadelphia, sacred to The One God.

The following extract is from a letter dated, "Philadelphia, Sept. 28, 1811.

"Having this summer made an excursion to *Boston*, perhaps a few particulars relative to the state of religious information there may not be unacceptable. I shall proceed therefore, without farther preface, to give you this information. There is only one place of worship at Boston which is *avowedly* Unitarian, viz. King's Chapel, originally an Episcopal Church, and still so in regard to the mode of worship, except that the service has been freed from every thing relative to the trinity, atonement, &c. A new and improved Liturgy was published a few months ago, which is now used instead of the former one. The ministers are, Mr. Freeman, a most excellent man, and Mr. Cary, a young gentleman of superior talents and great respectability. To see the harmony and kindness which subsists between these ministers is truly delightful, and the congregation is not deficient in paying them every proper mark of respect. For years after Mr. Freeman's settlement, the other ministers, with few exceptions, regarded him with considerable shyness, on account of his supposed heterodoxy, and because he had not had *clerical* ordination—but now, and for a considerable time past, these prejudices have given way; while the weight of his talents and great goodness of his heart have rendered him the object of high and general esteem.* Mr. Carey was not ordained in any other way than by Mr. Freeman laying his hand on his head, merely in the name of the congregation. No minister was called to assist. Of late years, there has been a remarkable change in the congregational churches at Boston. Of this description, there are 9; 8 of which are supplied by ministers differing more or less on various topics, but all living in great harmony with each other and with Messrs. Freeman and Carey, with whom they occasionally exchange pulpits, reading the King's Chapel service, when they preach there, and on the other hand, Messrs.

* A few days ago, Mr. Freeman had the degree of *D. D.* from Harvard University.

F. and C. when in a congregational pulpit, conduct the prayers after the congregational mode. In most of the congregational churches, Belknap's collection is used. Mr. Buckminster uses Tate and Brady's, and a selection compiled by himself. Ere long, Belknap's book must be discarded, for all the 8 ministers alluded to are anti-calvinistic and anti-trinitarian. The mode of preaching which prevails among them is rational and instructive. The congregations are made up of no inconsiderable proportion of literary and professional men; for, in New England, great attention is paid to public worship. To stay habitually at home, would be deemed disreputable. The churches, generally speaking, are supplied with organs. Every minister is considered as a minister of the town generally, and as the friend of his own hearers in particular. The ministers of Boston and its vicinity hold meetings at each other's houses in rotation once every fortnight, for the examination of candidates, and for friendly advice and social intercourse; at these meetings you may see Unitarians, Arians and Trinitarians, indiscriminately—as also at the weekly Thursday morning Lecture, which is preached by orthodox and heterodox men alternately. I heard two of these, one by Mr. Carey, quite an Unitarian discourse; the other, by a Mr. Codman, in the true style of an old puritan. By the bye, Dr. Osgood, whose sermon was animadverted on in the *Monthly Repository*, vol. v. 606 is a high Calvinist; of a warm and affectionate temper and of great liberality and candour on theological subjects. His sympathies are with the *Anti-Calvinists*, and if any of his own folks show any thing like bigotry,—Dr. O. is their champion. He is therefore a great favourite with the Boston ministers. As to *politics*, they all think alike. The preaching of political sermons has long been customary in New England—I mean on week-days—they have election sermons, artillery sermons, &c. &c.—The Presbyterians of the middle states, finding that so many of the congregational churches had departed from the old faith, erected a fine new church at Boston to promote *revivals*. It is supplied by one Dr. Griffin, who had been extremely popular in New Jersey; but he has *settled down at Boston*. The church is deeply in debt; half the pews are yet to let, and the good man himself, by not returning

the civilities paid him by the other ministers when he first came to Boston, is now neglected not only by them, but by their hearers, and he has to stand his ground, and plead the cause of orthodoxy against eight of the congregationalists, besides the King's Chapel ministers.—While at Boston I had every opportunity of seeing with my own eyes. The different ministers were remarkably frank and friendly, and high as the character of Boston has always stood for hospitality, what I experienced far exceeded my expectations, much as they had been raised. There are in Boston 2 Episcopal, 4 Baptist, 2 Methodist, 1 Universalist, 1 Catholic, 1 Friends', 1 Sandemanian, and 1 Black Church, as also a place called the Travelling Preachers' Society: these are in addition to Mr. Freeman's and the 9 congregational churches.—It was peculiarly pleasing to me, while at Boston, to find the congregational ministers, as well as Messrs. Freeman and Cary much interested in the welfare and permanency of our little society, and since my return, I have had the pleasure of hearing from some of them—Messrs. Thacker and Cary had this spring been at Philadelphia, and each of them gave us a sermon. Mr. T. is a worthy and valuable young man, but, alas! his health is very precarious. He succeeded Dr. Kirkland, who had been elected President of Harvard University. Mr T. gave so good an account of us, that Mr. Cary, who had occasion to go to New York, came to Philadelphia on purpose to spend a Sunday with us; and these occurrences paved the way for my journey. It was my wish to have been only a hearer, while at Boston; but although I declared myself a layman, yet a minister according to our constitution, i. e. as respects our flock, I had to officiate twice. Had I the pleasure of a personal interview, I could say much respecting Boston; and especially as to the correct manners of the people and the excellent spirit of the ministers. Had your correspondent known Dr. O. personally, however he might have disliked *his* politics, or the introduction of *any* politics into the *pulpit*, he would have extenuated matters a little. I mean, he would have accompanied his criticisms with unequivocal acknowledgements of the Doctor's worthiness."

This account of our correspondent's is corroborated by extracts of letters from

America, inserted by Mr. Grundy, as a note to his sermon, at the opening of the New Chapel, Liverpool; to which we refer our readers. (See pp. 26, 27.)

The extract which follows is from a letter dated "Philadelphia, Nov. 22, 1811."

"You have heard of our humble progress, of the manner in which our little flock was collected again after a suspension of our worship for more than 5 years, and generally of every thing of consequence in relation to us which has since occurred. No doubt, it will be matter of pleasing surprise to learn that we have engaged a suitable lot of ground on which we intend, as soon as possible, to erect a church for the worship of the One True God, the Father. Our own members and contributors do not much exceed 30 persons, and a considerable proportion of these are persons whose support arises from the labour of their hands. Our own folks, however, who are unanimous in the measure, have done their best; and it is with no small degree of satisfaction and gratitude that I have to add, that we have been favoured with the names of a good number of persons of opinions very dissimilar to ours, who have kindly lent us their aid. This is a pleasing omen; yet it must not be concealed that there are those who, vaunting themselves on their orthodox creed, scruple not to hold us up as infidels in disguise, and use all their influence to excite and perpetuate prejudices against us. This is our situation, but unanimous among ourselves, satisfied with the grounds of our hope towards God and encouraged by the liberality and courtesousness of many who belong to other persuasions, we mean to proceed.—The place in which we now meet is incommodious; besides we have no certainty of obtaining the use of it much longer, the landlord having already declined renewing the lease. The smallness of our present scale precludes all expectation of getting a minister, according to the common acceptance of the term. My two coadjutors are advanced in life; we have no prospect of any young person stepping forward to supply our places, and therefore unless we now make some effort to give permanence and strength to our society, its utter extinction may be reasonably expected.—We have concluded to erect an octagonal building, 50 feet each way, except where the form of the building

renders it necessary that it should be narrower. A bell and an organ will be given us: we have obtained subscriptions for about 1200 sterling, and hope to raise more ere long. Our whole expence will not be less than 5000 dollars and probably more. We shall study to combine economy, convenience and neatness. This is the first attempt that has ever been made in the United States to build a house for Unitarian worship; and probably among the numerous readers of your Repository there may be some who will cheerfully embrace the opportunity now afforded of aiding a cause which is here in its infancy, and struggling with numerous difficulties. I therefore leave it to you to make use of the present communication, or of any part thereof, as you may deem most expedient, and I write with the greater freedom, because we who at present officiate have declared our determination to accept of no compensation, and to continue our services so long as may be necessary. I have only to add, that our attendance appears to be increasing since the New Church was projected. We find it necessary to consult the public taste in the style of the building; for it is well known that nothing is so injurious as the appearance of penury."

New Chapel, Lynn, Norfolk.

On Sunday, January 5, 1812, a new and commodious place of worship, called Salem Chapel, was opened for divine service at Lynn, in Norfolk. The Rev.

J. Evans, of Worship Street, London, preached in the morning, from Ezek. vi. 13; and in the evening from John iii. 16. Mr. Finch, minister of the place, preached in the afternoon, from Luke ii. 14.

The congregation was numerous, respectable and attentive throughout all the services, and in the afternoon and evening especially the chapel was crowded, and numbers went away who could not be accommodated. Liberal collections were made at the close of each service towards the expence incurred by the building, and the friends who have undertaken the cause entertain the most pleasing hopes of permanent success. As the whole of the pews are already engaged, it is expected, that the chapel must soon be enlarged by the addition of galleries, and it is therefore hoped that the friends of Scriptural Christianity, when solicited, will cheerfully contribute towards it their pecuniary aid.

On Wednesday evening, Mr. Evans preached again at Salem Chapel to an equally crowded and attentive audience, from Genesis xlv. 24. At the request of the friends likewise, Mr. Evans agreed to publish the sermon that was preached on the Sunday morning, as a memorial of that event, from which it is hoped that lasting good will result.—Should any of our readers wish to be further acquainted with the circumstances which gave rise to this new cause, they are referred to Mr. Finch's Sermon and Narrative recently published, and reviewed in our last volume. [Vol. vi. p. 679, 680.]

MONTHLY RETROSPECT OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS ;

OR,

The Christian's Survey of the Political World.

We have already apprised our readers [vol. vi, p. 700.] that the exertions of Dr. Marsh, at St. Paul's, had not been without an effect; and as he had roused the church, it was not likely that he would rest upon his arms. A *National Institution*, as it has been falsely called, has been formed, and, as Dr. Marsh is so candid in his writings, we trust that he will join with us in reprobating this very improper title. The institution for educating the people in the principles of the es-

tablished sect is an institution of a small body of men in this kingdom; for this sect is a small body, and daily growing less; though we confess that it abounds in the rich, and the great, and the noble. In power and influence it stands by far the highest of any sect; but these are not the tests by which we estimate a church of Christ. We know of no political rights on which a church of Christ can boast: yet, if the established sect wishes to be considered as a political institution

we rejoice that men, like Dr. Marsh, will proclaim, "that dissenters of every description should, for conscience' sake, be tolerated." Toleration, in the mouth of a Christian, is a strange word: if we could not tolerate our brethren, how should we be disciples of a master who has given a decided mark by which his followers should be known, namely, that they should love one another. We will not only tolerate Dr. Marsh, but we assure him, that we will not envy him any wealth or honour, which his sect can confer upon him; we will applaud him in all liberal proceedings; we will never be displeased with any fair and honourable means which he employs for the support of his cause.—Dr. Marsh has attacked the liberal mode of education introduced by *Mr. Lancaster*, and adopted in many parts of the kingdom; and he cannot be content unless the doctrine of his sect is tacked to it. Another object of attack has presented itself to his imagination, and he has commenced his warfare in another field. The *University of Cambridge* has a correspondence with all England, and a subject discussed in its senate cannot fail to become generally known in every part of the country. On this account, Dr. Marsh has very prudently addressed the members of the Senate, and, in a Letter, called upon them to examine the nature and views of the *Bible Society*, lately established in the metropolis, and supported with great success by voluntary subscriptions from both dissenters and members of the established sect.—The complaint against the Bible Society, is of a similar nature with that against the *Launceston schools*. The Bible Society distributes only bibles, whereas there are two very extensive Societies in the established sect which distribute not only bibles, but the common-prayer books and other books written on the principles of the sect. Of these societies, one amounts to about five thousand members, no one being admitted into it, as Dr. Marsh informs the University, without testimony of his attachment to the constitution in sect and state; but he very candidly states, that the Bible Society is much more numerous, but it consists of the sectmen and dissenters indiscriminately; and equality of power and interest between the two parties is the avowed

basis on which this modern society is built. In this constitutional equality, there is evident danger, the Doctor contends, that the pre-eminence of the established sect should be gradually forgotten, and finally lost. He exhorts the sect to consider, whether it is prudent to augment the power of such a society, by throwing into its scale the weight of the establishment. He suggests, that his sect can have no guarantee, that other objects, inimical to it, will not, in time, be associated with the main object. He argues, that the constitution of the modern Bible Society gives an importance to the dissenting interest, which otherwise it never would have obtained. And he contends, that, if the members of his sect injure, or even neglect to support it, small will be the compensation by the distribution of bibles in foreign parts. If this sect, the doctor modestly observes, professes christianity in its purest form, its downfall will be an irreparable loss not to this nation only, but to the whole world: and we will put another *if* to this learned doctor; if your sect does not profess christianity in its purest form, Dr. Marsh cannot be better employed than by using his endeavours to bring it to the standard of the scriptures.—The doctor's Letter to the University has produced a donation to the old societies, and excited a considerable sensation, which tended, however, to the benefit of the Bible Society. A very large body of men, both in the established sect and out of it, begin to be sensible, that Christianity was not made for this or that sect and to be merely a political engine. They are convinced that Christ died not for this or that people, but for the whole human race, and that it is the duty of every Christian to extend the influence of our beloved Saviour to the utmost of his power. With respect to the three societies, as far as they are willing to promote gospel truths, we wish them all well; we wish them God speed, in the name of the Lord. But we have something to say against them all. What makes you so tenacious of the English Translation? Why is it, that when such great improvements have been made in scripture criticism, when manuscripts have been examined, and so pure a text has been given to the public, both of the Hebrew and the Greek scriptures, why is

it that ye will not take advantage of these improvements, and give to the English reader a translation worthy of the original? Be assured that this will be an object of contention worthy of yourselves, namely, to strive not merely to increase your influence by distributing books, but to shew yourselves worthy of the Christian name, by making those books as perfect as in your power. There is no want of learning in the sect established, and we know no man better qualified than Dr. Marsh to co-operate with other members of the two Universities, whom we could easily point out, in giving to the public a translation of the scriptures, that should do honour to the increased scriptural learning now in this country.—Dr. Marsh, in his Letter, continues in his usual strain of error, in connecting his sect with the state, and lamenting, “that religious discussion is, in consequence of our mixed constitution, closely connected with political discussion. Religious dissention,” he tells us, “becomes, in this country, a political evil.” We can tell him of a country, where no religious dissention was allowed; and every one, who knows any thing of the state of Spain, must see, that religious dissention is a blessing, compared with that peace which the tortures of the Inquisition gave to the sect established in that unhappy country. So far from religious dissention being the political evil that the doctor esteems it to be, we believe that there would not be the least harm whatever in it, but rather much good, if the state gave no preference to either of the contending parties. We will never allow this false position of Dr. Marsh to pass current. It may do very well for the phlegm of the literati of Germany, who look upon the scriptures as an object of mere criticism, like Virgil or Horace, who bow to the religion of the state, whatever it may be, and who would, if they had lived in the time of Christ and the Apostles, have considered them as a set of pestilent and seditious fellows, fit only for the coercion of the magistrate. In this island, owing to religious dissention, there are many, praised be God! who more highly estimate sacred truths, and who look upon them as intended not merely to enlighten the mind, but to purify the heart.—The Institution for Education, formed by several members of the established sect, has received great encouragement in the two Universities, and

elsewhere; and the amount of the subscriptions to it has been very considerable. The committee for its management has advertised an account of some meeting in which the majority present were bishops, and the number of persons not in orders was very small. They elected a secretary, and passed resolutions of business the chief of which is the establishment of corresponding societies in different parts of the kingdom. This latter measure is not only useful, but absolutely necessary, since, as the children are to be educated in the doctrines of the established sect, there should be some method by which it may be ascertained that no other doctrines are taught. This will be secured by a constant correspondence between the primary and the minor committees: and as in the primary committee is a number of bishops a sufficient degree of attention is paid to this part of the Institution. In a very populous place a meeting has been held, in which the institution has been approved of. At Manchester it has been resolved to found schools on Dr. Bell’s plan, and to concur in the views of the institution. We trust that there is in that place a school on the Lancastrian plan, that the experiment may be fairly made, where are so many good judges of the subject under controversy. At the same time, our friends will not be inattentive to this interesting topic, but endeavour to apply the merits of either system to the education of their own children—When the judgments of God are on the earth, the people learn righteousness; they are led to examine more diligently their ways. The education of the lower classes is of great importance; but, in the present state of our country, there is a very large class of the community to whom a sense of religion is peculiarly necessary. This is the *army*. What an awful image does military array, without any principle, hold out to the world! Every attempt to instil religion among military men is praiseworthy, and we read with satisfaction the circular of the Duke of York on the appointment of Chaplains, with an improvement of rank and increase of duty, notwithstanding the allusion in it to the increase of sectaries, who are not of the established sect. [M. Repos. Vol. vi. p. 735.] When we recollect, however, the number of Roman Catholics, Methodists, Dissenters, and members of the Scotch sects in the army, we cannot but think,

that an appropriate military service might have been laid down, that should not shock either party. Time only will shew how far the new system will answer the intended purpose. The chaplain is to have the rank of major; and we should not be sorry to hear that he sat on courts martial, and attended the execution of every military sentence. In his attendance on the hospitals, he will have a good opportunity of witnessing the effect of severe floggings, and on this interesting topic, his observations may be of great utility.—Several occurrences have excited in the general mind very unpleasing sensations. Some atrocious murders have been committed, attended with such horror in the execution of them, as seems entirely foreign to the English character. The most diligent search has been made after the murderers; but when we consider the sentiments expressed on these few murders, the horror that they have excited in every generous mind we are at a loss to account for the apathy on the myriads that fall a sacrifice to war. Would to God, that the same horror was felt universally on the slaughter of a fellow creature, whether in the field of battle, or by the midnight assassin. But the time is not arrived for man to possess these feelings, the most honourable to human nature; it will be long before the Kingdom of the Prince of Peace is established.—A fraud by a Member of Parliament, and the commitment to prison and the condemnation of the culprit, have afforded much conversation. We have also had a melancholy instance how learning may be prostituted. In the prologue to the *Westminster Play*, was the basest adulation of the Duke of York that ever met the public eye: the unhappy occurrences which led to his disgrace were represented as base acts, in which he had no concern; and he was extolled as a most virtuous character. If the masters of Westminster have such an opinion of morality, what are we to expect from the rising generation!—The King's illness has come to a crisis, even in the opinion of the physicians. They have been examined before the Privy Council and the Parliament; and their answers to numerous interrogations have been published. From the answers may be gathered, that they entertain very slight hopes of a recovery; and they said enough for the Minister to express the necessity there now was for

an arrangement, to which they have proceeded in parliament. As to the mere medical opinion, it does not seem that it was of much importance, and the opinion of the public was not at all affected by it. For, after the length of time that the patient had been affected, the number of attacks he had suffered, his age, and his blindness, where could be found a single independent and disinterested man, who could think it safe to the kingdom, or proper for the individual, that he should return again to the cares of royalty?—The Irish are in patient suspense for their great cause, the *Emancipation of the Catholics*, in which the Protestants now take a very active part. All their meetings concur in praising the conduct of the general committee at Dublin, and expecting from it the best results. A strange story of a conspiracy has appeared, but it is most likely to originate with the enemies of the Catholics. The principals of the latter body took the earliest opportunity of giving information to government, which received their intelligence with unaccountable apathy. It serves, however, to shew the little credit to be paid to those inflammatory papers, attributed to the Catholics, of which, we apprehend, the far greater part is to be attributed to a very different origin.—The Parliament was opened by a speech from the Regent, delivered by commissioners, in which was nothing remarkable; and an echo of it was passed in the House of Lords, as an address, without a division. In the House of Commons, the usual routine did not take place; for Sir Francis Burdett, as a true representative of the people, opened the debate upon the speech by a view of the state of the country, in which he pointed out a number of things, particularly the state of the representation, that required examination and reform. The substance of his speech he embodied in an address, which he moved to be presented to the Prince Regent: and in this he was seconded by his colleague, the other representative for Westminster [Lord Cochrane,] and his address was then read from the chair. When this had been done, the gentleman designed by the ministers to move an address got up, and taking very little notice of what Sir Francis had said, or of his address, moved, as an amendment, the address that was previously prepared, and which was, in fact, an echo of the speech. In

this he was seconded, as usual, by the other gentleman fixed on for this purpose. A very slight debate ensued. Mr. *Whitbread* would not support Sir Francis, though he agreed in the greater part of his address; and Mr. *Ponsonby* disapproved of the manner in which the subjects were brought forward; and on a division, there appeared only one for Sir Francis Burdett's motion, besides the two tellers, the mover and the seconder of the motion. The gentleman's name is *Cuthbert*; and his name ought not to be forgotten, as to be singular in a good cause is far better than to follow the leader in the beaten track of servility. Nothing, indeed, can be more contemptible than the fashion of an address coming from the ministerial side of the house; and we thank Sir Francis Burdett for interrupting this silly practice, and standing up for the people, and speaking the language of the people.—Mr. *Creevey* distinguished himself in the following nights, by his observations on the *Droits of the Admiralty*, the four and a half per cents. in Granada, and sinecure places and pensions, held by members of Parliament, or those who had been members. But he was not successful in his endeavours, any more than Mr. *Brougham*, who brought the subject of the *Droits of the Admiralty* before the house, in a very long and laboured speech, in which the whole subject was developed, with great clearness, accuracy and precision. The doctrine, however, of the king's personal claim to these droits, was much weakened by this debate; and it seemed to be pretty generally recognized, that they were subject to the controul of parliament.—The *Establishment of the King and Prince Regent* occasioned much less debate than the importance of the matter seemed to require, and the plan was brought forward in a very confused manner by Mr. *Perceval*. An increase of expenditure to the nation, not a diminution, was held out. But if this minister introduced but weakly this important subject, another was much more unfortunate, for after giving notice of a motion in consequence of the dreadful murders and horrid atrocities, committed in the metropolis, and expatiating on them in glowing colours, he ended by proposing a committee to enquire into the nightly watch of the metropolis. This brought up Sir *Samuel Romilly*, who stated, in a manly and energetic speech, the neces-

sity of probing the wound more deeply, of going to the root of the evil, of enquiring into the causes of the increase and the atrocity of crimes, of the effects of imprisonments in the hulks, and the whole nature of our criminal laws. Mr. *Sheridan*, also, in a strain of wit, for which he is particularly celebrated, turned into complete ridicule the poor Secretary's speech, and the negligence of his duty, as first officer of the police of the kingdom. The whole House was moved by the flagrant necessity of the case and the impotency of the measure proposed by government, and it was resolved unanimously, that a committee should be, and a committee accordingly was, appointed, to examine into the whole state of the police. Sir *F. Burdett*, who is one of the committee, moved afterwards, for an account of the police officers and their qualifications.—The thanks of the country are due to Lord *Folkstone*, for bringing a very important subject before Parliament, the state of the *Ecclesiastical Courts*. The immediate cause was the case of a poor ignorant girl, thrown into prison under pretence of contumacy, after having been excommunicated. The girl was a minor, and the offence was trifling, calling a woman by a bad name. His Lordship gave a history of these courts, and produced several instances of oppression under them, finishing by a motion for an enquiry into the nature of their jurisdiction. Sir *W. Scott* entered into a laboured defence of them, such as might be expected from a judge in them, and such as a grand inquisitor would plead in support of the inquisition; but he expressed a wish, that some other sentence might be substituted for that of excommunication. Sir *S. Romilly* explained to the house what excommunication was, and the state of the poor girl under it, who had uttered an expression, coarse indeed, but most probably true. He was happy, however, to hear excommunication so reprobated, and trusted that great good would result from it, by a bill to put an end to such a sentence. Sir *S.* corrected Sir *W. Scott* on the power of imprisonment in the ecclesiastical courts, since they enjoy it mediately, though not immediately, the temporal court always imprisoning upon their application. Sir *John Nichol*, another spiritual judge, allowed that excommunication ought to be abolished. After a few more speeches,

in which the ecclesiastical courts met with the reprobation they deserve, and Sir W. Scott promising to bring in a bill to abolish excommunication, Lord Folkstone withdrew his motion, and the case of the poor woman was to be brought up on a future day. We trust that Lord Folkstone and Sir Samuel Romilly will keep their eye upon this question; and readers who wish to know the nature of ecclesiastical courts, should consult the narrative of the persecution of *Hippolyto Joseph da Costa Pereira Furtado de Mendonca*, with the bye-laws of the Inquisition at Lisbon, just published. It teaches us, that the Inquisition is far from being abolished in Portugal, as the case took place within these ten years, and a comparison between the laws of the Inquisition and those of our courts, will shew the curious manner, in which Protestantism has steered its vessel, between the horrid tortures of St. Dominick on the one hand, and true Christian liberty on the other.—Abroad, the state of affairs has not much varied. Reports are strong of approaching peace between the *Turks* and *Russians*. The misfortunes of the vizir have had a serious effect upon the politics of the falling empire, and the abominable wickedness of the government, in the horrible massacre of the Mamlucks at Cairo, has far from produced the effects its contrivers expected. The expedition against the *Wachabites* moves on slowly; so that the *Turks*, exposed to inroads in three quarters of their dominions, are little likely to free themselves from the difficulties of their situation.—The *United States of America* hold a language far from pleasing to the lovers of peace, but we prefer this language to the horrors of war. It is better that the malignant passions should evaporate in the war of words, than in the actions of Cain. They speak with great severity, and too much truth, on the conduct of the contending parties in Europe, but we hoped, that the follies and wickedness of the Old, would be a warning to the New World, not to pursue the same crooked train of policy. In other respects, the *United States* seem to

be very successful, and to have sufficient room for exertion. Their population increases rapidly, their agriculture improves; and manufactures are making a more rapid progress than is desirable. All they can wish is to let the turbulence of the wicked spirits in Europe go by, and to endure their wrongs for a time, rather than involve themselves in a war, which must tend to the injury of their morals and their freedom.—Their neighbours, the *Mexicans*, are far from tranquillity. The pompous language of its viceroy does not secure peace in the interior, and his boasted success has done little more than give him the controul over the capital, in which he is almost besieged. The *Mexicans* are following the plan of the Spaniards in the mother country, and forming *guerillas* or war-bands in every part, which render extremely difficult all intercourse between the viceroy and the extremity of the province. Every thing wears the appearance of final independence; and in the *Caraccas* and *Buenos Ayres*, it is almost all but acknowledged. In short, Spanish America is more and more likely to withdraw itself from the European yoke. As to *Spain* and *Portugal*, they go on in nearly the same state. The English are at their ease in Portugal—the *guerillas* are harrassing the French in Spain—the Cortez at Cadiz is doing nothing—difficulties have arisen between the English and the government there; there is a perfect want of a commanding energy; and the French are continually increasing their influence and territory. Valentia is however not yet taken. It is invested on all sides, and very little prospect appears of its being relieved.—In *India*, the British arms have been very successful. The island of *Java*, as far as it was possessed by the French, has submitted, and the troops were made prisoners of war. *Batavia* is a rich prize, and the French are now excluded from every port to the east of the Cape of Good Hope. In such a situation, it becomes us more and more to read the prophecies on Tyre, in the Old Testament, that we may not fall into the same condemnation.

NOTICES.

A Proclamation has appeared, directing the observance of a GENERAL FAST in England and Ireland, on Wed-

nesday, the 5th of February, and in Scotland, on Thursday the sixth.

Mrs. MARGARET HALE, Author of known or supposed author, and the time the "*Portraiture of Methodism*," is preparing for the Press, *A Portraiture of the Roman Catholic Religion*. (See the *Wrapper*.)

The Rev. **THEOPHILUS BROWNE**, Editor of the "*Selections from the Old and New Testaments*," is preparing, as a Sequel to the above, a work which will comprise every part of the *Apocryphal Writings*, the meaning of which is instructive and important, with such corrections of the common version as the Greek and Latin originals will authorise, accompanied with Notes, explanatory and practical, and an account of each book, its

The **HULSEAN PRIZE**, in the University of Cambridge, for the last year, has been adjudged to Francis Cunningham, Esq. Fellow Commoner of Queen's College.—Subject—"A Dissertation on the Books of Origen against Celsus, with a view to illustrate the argument, and to point out the evidence they afford to the truth of Christianity." The following is the subject for the Hulsean prize for the present year:—"An Inquiry into the Religious Knowledge which the Heathen Philosophers derived from the Jewish Scriptures."

CORRESPONDENCE.

We are sorry that in the first Number of our present Volume, we have to announce the death of **MRS. LINDSEY**, the widow of the late reverend and venerable Theophilus Lindsey, of Essex Street. Of this interesting and excellent woman, some account may have been looked for in our preceding pages: we had prepared for insertion in them a short obituary, chiefly taken from the *Morning Chronicle*, which however, we have found ourselves unable to bring within our prescribed limits: the omission will, we trust, be amply supplied in our ensuing Number.

Various other articles (of Review, Obituary and Intelligence,) have been excluded from the present No. from the same cause. We particularly regret our inability to report the proceedings of the **ROMAN CATHOLICS IN IRELAND**, especially at the Dinner which they gave in Dublin to the Friends of Religious Liberty; where, by nobles and gentlemen, soldiers and lawyers, Catholics and Protestants, Presbyterians and Quakers, there were asserted the most enlarged and generous sentiments on the Rights of Conscience, worthy of the most enlightened assembly in the most liberal age and country of the world. We may, perhaps, hereafter, recur to this subject; but in the mean time, we have great pleasure in referring our readers to the **DISSENTER**, a Weekly Newspaper, which seems to make a point of recording all proceedings, bearing upon the question of Religious Liberty: we can with the more propriety recommend this well-written and promising paper, as we are totally unacquainted with its projectors, proprietors and conductors: we were not amongst those who augured well of the publication from its title, but while it perseveres in the course which it has begun, we deem it fairly entitled to the support of the friends of Christian freedom.

We acknowledge, as desired, the receipt of the following subscriptions to the **UNITARIAN FUND**:—

Mrs. A. Hughes, Hanwood, near Shrewsbury, ann.	3	3
Mrs. Warter, Cruck Meole, near Shrewsbury, ann.	1	1

Jan. 30.—On arriving at the conclusion of our present Number, we find ourselves obliged to exclude more of the articles prepared for it, than we had apprehended: we regret particularly, the omission of a paper on the *Toleration Acts*; a subject which some recent proceedings of the inferior courts, and some decisions of the higher, have rendered of fearful importance to Protestant Dissenters, we pledge ourselves to take it up in the next Number, and to pursue it, if necessary, through the Volume.