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BIOGRAPHY & HISTORY.

*An Historical Account of the Life
and Trial of Nicholas Anthoine,
Burnt for Judaism, at Geneva,
1632.*

[From the Harleian Miscellany, 8vo.
iv. 168—176.]

Nicholas Anthoine was born of Popish parents, at Brieu, in Lorraine. His father took a particular care of his education, and sent him to the college of Luxemburg, where he studied five years. From thence he was removed to Pont-à-Mousson, Triers and Cologne; where he went on with his studies under the direction of the Jesuits, till he was about twenty years of age. Being returned to his father's, and disliking the Church of Rome, he repaired to Metz, and applied himself to M. Ferry, an eminent divine of that city, who instructed him in the Protestant religion, which he heartily embraced. From that time he professed himself a Protestant, and endeavoured to convert his relations to the reformed religion. From Metz, he was sent to Sedan, in order to study divinity; and from thence to Geneva, where he continued his theological studies. He applied himself, particularly, to the reading of the Old Testament; and finding

several difficulties in the New, which seemed to him unanswerable, he inwardly embraced the Jewish religion, about five or six years before his trial. His first doubts were occasioned, by his comparing the two genealogies of Jesus Christ, as they are related by St. Matthew and St. Luke; but when he came to examine the passages of the Old Testament, that are applied to the Messiah in the New, he proved so weak as to renounce his Christianity. And, as new notions of religion frequently make a greater impression than those wherein men have been bred up from their younger years, he grew so zealous for Judaism, that he resolved to make an open profession of it. Accordingly, he left Geneva, and returned to Metz, and immediately discovered his opinions to the Jews of that city, and desired to be admitted into their synagogue: but they refused him, for fear of bringing themselves into trouble; and advised him to go to the Jews of Amsterdam or Venice. Whereupon he resolved to take a journey to Venice, and earnestly intreated the Jews of that town to circumcise him. But he was again disappointed; for those Jews refused

to comply with his desire, and told him the Senate had forbid them to circumcise any body that was not born a Jew. Anthoine, longing to receive the seal of the Jewish covenant, went quickly to Padua, in hopes that the Jews of that place would be more favourable to him; but they gave him the same answer. The Jews of that city, and those of Venice, told him, that he might be saved, without making an outward profession of Judaism, provided he remained faithful to God in his heart. This made him resolve to return to Geneva, where he had more acquaintances than any where else. M. Diodati, minister and professor of that city, took him into his house, to be tutor to his children. He pretended to go on with his theological studies, and was for some time teacher of the first class. Afterwards he disputed for the chair of philosophy, but without any success. All that time he lived outwardly like a true Christian; for he confessed at his trial, that he had constantly received the communion; but, in private he lived and performed his devotions, like a Jew. At last, being poor, and weary of the condition he was in, and wanting a settlement, he desired a testimonial of the church of Geneva, which was granted him, and went to the Synod of Burgundy, held at Gex, in order to be admitted into the ministry. He was admitted according to custom, promising to follow the doctrine of the Old and New Testament, the discipline and confession of faith, of the reformed churches of France, &c. and was appointed minister of the church of Divonne, in the country of Gex.

He had not been long there, when the lord of that place perceived he never mentioned Jesus Christ in his prayers and sermons; that he took his text only out of the Old Testament, and applied to some other persons all the passages of the Old Testament, which the Christians understand of Jesus Christ. This raised great suspicions against him. When he came to hear of it, he was very much perplexed; and being naturally of a melancholy temper, he fell into a fit of madness, in the month of February, 1632, which was looked upon as a manifest judgment of God, because it happened the very next day after he had expounded the second Psalm, without applying it to our Saviour. He grew so distracted, that he moved upon his hands and feet in his chamber, publicly exclaimed against the Christian religion, and particularly in the presence of some ministers of Geneva, who went to see him. He horribly inveighed against the person of Christ, calling him an idol, &c. and saying that the New Testament was a mere fable. He called for a chaffing-dish full of burning coals, and told the divines, who were in his chamber, that he would put his hand into the fire, to maintain his doctrine, bidding them do the like for their Christ. His madness increased to such a degree, that he ran away in the night from those under whose custody he was, as far as the gates of Geneva, where he was found the next morning, half naked and lying in the dirt; and having pulled off his shoes in the name of the true God of Israel, he worshipped him, barefooted, prostrated on the ground, and blaspheming against Christ.

The magistrates of Geneva ordered him to be carried into an hospital, where the physicians took care of him, and he was visited by some divines. His mind was composed by degrees, and then he left off speaking injuriously of Christ and the Christian religion, but stoutly maintained Judaism. Being thus recovered from his madness, he was committed to jail, where he remained a considerable time before the magistrates took cognisance of that affair; being only visited by several divines, who used their utmost endeavours to make him sensible of the falsity of his doctrine, and the enormity of his conduct, and to bring him over to the Christian religion; but he persisted in his opinions. M. Ferry*, a minister of Metz, who, as I have said before, had converted Anthoine to the Protestant religion, hearing of the sad condition, and the great danger he was in, writ a letter about him, the 30th of March, to the ministers and professors of the church and academy of Geneva. It contains several particulars relating to the history of that unhappy man; and therefore, I think it necessary to insert it in this place, and I hope no curious reader will blame me for it.—The letter runs thus:—

“Gentlemen and most honoured Brethren,

“I beg your pardon for the fault I am going to commit, if you take it to be such; and, indeed, I do not pretend to represent any thing to you, but in order

* A large account of that eminent divine may be seen in the *Historical and Critical Dictionary*, lately published in English.

to submit it to your censure. I have heard, with an unspeakable grief, what has happened to that poor wretch, who is amongst you; and I beseech you to forgive my freedom in writing to you about it. I do not do it altogether without the request of others. Besides, one must not expect a call to preserve an unfortunate man, who runs himself into destruction; since God and nature, and our ancient acquaintance and friendship, may be a sufficient motive for me to do it. To which I add, that having been instrumental in bringing him to salvation, I think I have great reason to desire that he may not undo himself, and to endeavour with your leave to prevent it. I thank God, since he has thought fit to make him a new example of human frailty, that he has brought him amongst you, that you might prevent his doing mischief, and endeavour to reclaim him. I think, gentlemen, that mildness and patience will be the most proper means to succeed in it. I make no doubt that his illness proceeds from a black and deep melancholy, to which I always perceived he was very much inclined; especially after he had seduced a young man, whom he brought hither from Sedan, in hopes to get something by teaching him philosophy, and then he privately carried him farther, though I had earnestly desired him to send him back, and exhorted the young man to return to Sedan, which was M. Du Moulin's desire, to whom he had been recommended. From that time he could not bear the light, in any room of a gentleman's house, where I had placed him, being always uneasy, restless and silent.

Nay, he had much ado to express himself, and it was a hard matter to make him speak, though I earnestly desired him to be more free, and sent for him, and made him dine with me now and then, and took all possible care of him. Which we ascribed to the ill success he had in a Synod of the Isle of France, whither he had been sent with a testimonial and recommendation of the church and academy of Sedan, notwithstanding which, he did not appear sufficiently qualified for the ministry. After he had enticed away that young man, he writ several letters to me, wherein he expressed a great grief for it; and in all of them he used many words, which shewed his mind was very much dejected, being above all things sensible of the reproofs he had received for it. So that I thought myself obliged to write to him now and then, to clear his mind of those needless scruples, and of such an unreasonable and dangerous vexation, and to exhort him to apply himself to study with cheerfulness, and a resolution to do better for the time to come. It is, therefore, highly probable that his melancholy has been heightened by those cloudy thoughts, and likewise by the poverty and want of many things, into which he fell soon after, and whereof he complained to me in his letters, so far as to mention the temptations, under which his mind was almost ready to sink. To this, I may add, the nature of his studies bent upon the Old Testament, on which he writ to me, that he was drawing up a concordance. However, though those things were not the true cause of his illness, you know, gentlemen, that there is a sort of melancholy, in which the physicians acknowledge *Σελωττι*, which is neither a crime nor a divine punishment, but a great misfortune. Certainly, that which he lies under is very deplorable; but, gentlemen, I think I may say that, though nature is the instrument of God's providence, yet all accidents ought not to be looked upon as punishments, or signs of a wicked life, nor the madness of that poor wretch, as a formal chastisement for his error; there being so many reasons to believe that it proceeds from the disorder of the brain, and from melancholy. His madness seems to be only an exorbitant fit of melancholy, which being allayed by remedies, he appears now in his former state: and, though he errs only in the single point, for which he is prosecuted, there is no reason to infer from it, that he speaks in cold blood, and with a sound mind. For it is the property of that sort of melancholy, to have but one object, leaving the mind free in all other things, as you know better than I. There are some who speak upon any subject, with great learning and sedateness, and have but one grain of madness, which they discover only by intervals, to those who hit upon it. I am the more willing to compare that unfortunate man to them, because, in that very thing wherein he pretends to be wise, he appears most ridiculous; for he says what he would be ashamed of out of his fit, though he were no Christian; since he denies, as I hear, what the very Heathens and Jews acknowledge. And, therefore, it is not a heresy, but a blasphemy, which proceeds from a mind rather distempered than perverted. His

usual frights and horrors are, in my opinion, a certain sign of it; and there is no reason to ascribe them to a divine judgment, and to infer from thence that he is a reprobate. After all, gentlemen, it is certain he imposes upon you, when he tells you, that he believed, eight or ten years ago, what he believes now: for, since that time, he has not only given all manner of proofs of his Christianity, but also brought over to the Reformed religion his eldest brother, who lives honestly among us; and he has endeavoured to work the same effect upon his father, to whom he has writ many letters, several of which I have opened, wherein he expressed a great zeal, and a wonderful love for Jesus Christ and the Christian truths that are taught in our churches. And in order to bring over his relations to our religion, he writ to them, that he was ready to die for it, if God required it of him. Nay, when he was admitted into the ministry, he acquainted me with it, in a letter from Geneva, dated the twenty-ninth of November, being used to call me, as he did then, his dear ghostly father, whom God had been pleased to make use of, in order to bring him to the knowledge of the true religion. And he desired me to acquaint his relations with it, being fully resolved, for the future, to lead a better life and to perform his duty to the utmost of his power. And therefore, gentlemen and most honoured brethren, I think he ought not to be believed in what he says, during such a disorder of his mind; and I hope, that, if you allow him some time to recover from his phrenzy, as I understand you do, he will no longer blaspheme, and

God will give you comfort after your labour and patience. To that end, I wish none may have access to him, but such as are familiarly acquainted with him, or for whom he has a particular respect and veneration, and by whom he may be gently used; lest his mind be exasperated by too many visitants, or by an unseasonable, though just, severity.

“Gentlemen,—Give me leave to tell you, that it seems highly necessary, for the edification of the Church, that this affair should be managed with great prudence. If you make an example of him, it will doubtless prove extremely prejudicial. I entreat you to consider the great scandal it will occasion, far and near, and what might be said against the office and profession of a man converted from Popery, who has learned to judaize among us, in the most famous academies, conversing every day with several pastors. Besides, Judaism being no dangerous sect, it does not seem necessary to prevent the ill consequences of it by a public punishment; nay, perhaps every body would not approve of it. There are some extraordinary crimes, for which, when the guilty person is to be punished, it is not done in public; and the proceedings are suppressed, to clear the present age from such an infamy, and to leave no marks of it to posterity. However, there is no need of being too hasty in a thing, that may be done as well in time, and when a delay cannot be prejudicial, but rather useful. Servetus had a long time allowed him for his amendment, though he had dogmatised above twenty years in cold blood; and in several places, both by word of mouth and in written

and printed books, about things much more subtle and dangerous; and yet, gentlemen, you know the various discourses that were occasioned by his execution. I do not say this because I find fault with it; on the contrary, I think such pernicious errors could not be better suppressed than by committing the author to the flames. But this man cannot be compared to Servetus. I pray God to give him a better end. And I beseech you, gentlemen and most honoured brethren, not to grow weary in this work of your great charity, wherein he will direct you to use such remedies as are necessary to reclaim that unfortunate man, and to preserve the church from such an infamy. This is the design of this letter, which I humbly beseech you not to be offended with; otherwise I should be sorry to have writ it, excepting the wishes I have just now made, and my further prayers to God, that he would plentifully bless you and your holy labours, increase your church, and ever keep you under his protection. I beg of you the continuance of your benevolence, being, with great sincerity, gentlemen, your most humble, most obedient, and most affectionate servant,

“ FERRY.

“ *Metz, March 30, 1632.*”

M. Mestrezat, a learned divine, of the church of Paris, writ two letters to M. Chabrey, his brother-in-law, and minister of Geneva, wherein I find two passages that deserve likewise to be imparted to the public. M. Mestrezat thought Anthoine had been a monk. His first letter is dated from Paris, March 12, 1632.

“ I am troubled for you (says he, in that letter,) about your Anti-Trinitarian. The writings of our predecessors, *de puniendis hæreticis*, have not been very edifying, and prove very prejudicial to us, in the countries where the magistrates are our enemies. It is true, the enormity of that man, his blasphemies, his profession of Christianity, and his ministry, aggravate his crime. May God Almighty direct your magistrates in the matter! If every body had the same thoughts of monks as I have, none of them should ever be admitted into the holy ministry. I pray God to remove, by the efficacy of his word, the scandal occasioned by that profligate man, and to keep you under his protection.”

The second letter of M. Mestrezat is only dated March 30, 1632, but it was likewise written from Paris. The following passage is to be found in it:

“ As to what concerns your Jewish monk and revolted minister, the most judicious persons in this town wish he may be confined to a perpetual imprisonment, and not be allowed to see any body, but such as are qualified to reclaim him. They are very much afraid of the consequences of a public execution, lest it should be inferred from it, by our adversaries in these parts, that words spoken against the Pope (the pretended Vicar of Jesus Christ) or against the host of the mass, are likewise blasphemies against Christ, and ought to be punished in the same manner; for they talk in the same strain, and all supreme magistrates are judges of *consequences* in their jurisdiction.”

Whilst Nicholas Anthoine was a prisoner, he presented three petitions to the council. The first is dated March 11, 1632, and begins thus: "In the name of the great God of Heaven, who is the mighty God of Israel: his holy Name be blessed for ever. Amen." He beseeches the council to get some papers concerning his faith restored to him, which he had delivered to a divine, who asked for them in their name; that he may revise, correct and finish them, before any thing be inferred from them. And then he adds, *Enquirez vous de ma vie, &c.* that is, "Inquire into my life; I have always endeavoured to live in the fear of God and to seek and follow the right way to salvation. God discovers his secret to those who honour him. What I do is only to give an account of my faith, to the glory of God, and for the salvation of my soul. God knows my heart, and is a witness to my integrity and innocence. Do not draw innocent blood upon your heads, nor upon your families and your city; and God, in whose hands we all are, will bless you, if you love his holy ways. I beseech him with all my soul to bless you, and to touch your hearts, that you may be moved with pity and compassion towards me, the poor and afflicted servant of the Lord, &c."

Anthoine presented his second petition the next day, March 12, which I shall insert at length.

"In the name of the Lord, the God of Israel.

"Magnificent and most honoured Lords,

"What I am going to represent to you is, not with an intent to avoid death. According to God,

I do not deserve it; for I fear him, I love him and bless him, and will bless and worship his holy, glorious and adorable name, to my last breath. Nevertheless, according to your laws and belief, and what is commonly objected to me, you will think I justly deserve it. If God would be pleased to do it, he would shew his great wonders, by delivering me; not for my sake, who am a poor and miserable sinner, but to glorify his great and adorable name, and that all the earth might know, that he is the Almighty God, who reigns in the world. I invoke his holy name, and implore his grace and mercy. Whosoever puts his trust in the Lord shall never be ashamed. Why should we be afraid of men? God is above all, and nothing comes to pass without his permission.

"Magnificent and most honoured Lords.—Since two things are commonly objected to me, 1st. That I have strayed from the way to salvation. 2d. That, though I were in the right way to salvation, yet, having such a belief, I should not have embraced the office of minister, nor come into your city to give you offence;—by your leave, I shall endeavour to answer those two points in a few words.

"As to the first point, I believe I am in the way to truth and salvation, and shall persevere in it till I am shewn the contrary by good reasons, taken from the Old Testament. I worship one only God; I endeavour to follow the law, to the best of my power; I will fear, love and bless the holy name of God to the end of my life. As to the second point, your lordships must know, that the

people of Israel refused to admit me among them, and told me, that I might live every where, and among all nations, in the fear of God, without discovering my opinions. I have endured a thousand hardships in my way to Venice, and in that city, where I have been for some time in a very miserable condition; and I came away more afflicted still, and more miserable; nevertheless, I always put my trust in the Lord. I could not resolve to live among the Papists; for I had sworn to do it no more, having a great abhorrence for their idolatry. Besides, I was afraid of being charged with inconstancy. Nay, had I been discovered among them, they would have been more cruel to me than your lordships use to be towards those who are not accused of any crime, but only prosecuted for religion. I have embraced the ministry, because I thought I was sufficiently qualified for it, because I was far in years, because I was willing to keep house and perhaps to marry, in time; and I had no mind to discover myself at that time. How many are married, and perhaps have quite another belief than yours, and yet will not leave and forsake their children upon such an account? As for what is said, that I have scandalized you and your city by my strange proceedings, it was through a disordered mind. It is not I; I do not know who it was: God knows it; and therefore, I think, I deserve to be pardoned in that respect, since it was not I, but a terrible, dreadful, and supernatural power, as the whole town may witness, and nobody will be offended at it. Rather than come and surrender myself into your

hands, of my own motion, I had rather have fled to the remotest part of the world.

“Magnificent and most honoured Lords,—Have a care you do not draw innocent blood upon your heads and your families and city, by putting me to death; for perhaps you know not the wonders of God, the mighty God of Israel, and why he has so miraculously transported me into this town. If the beginning of it has been miraculous, perhaps the end will be more miraculous still. I shall never be ashamed, because the Lord is my trust and refuge. Let the holy name of the Lord, the great God of Israel, be for ever blessed and glorified by all men, and in all places!

“Magnificent and most honoured Lords,—If you think I deserve to be put to death, and if the Lord God is pleased it should be so, his will be done. If you release me, you will release an innocent soul, which fears the God of heaven. I pray God with all my heart, that he would be pleased to pour his most holy blessings upon you, and to move your hearts, if it be his good will; being, magnificent and most honoured Lords, your most humble servant and prisoner,

“N. ANTHOINE.

“*Geneva, March 12, 1632.*”

On the eleventh of April, Anthoine was brought to his trial, and besides several other things, which I have already mentioned, he declared that he was a Jew, beseeching God to grant him, that he might die for the Jewish religion; that he believed there had been such a man as Jesus Christ, but he knew not whether he had been crucified, that he did not

believe him to be God, nor the Son of God, nor the Messiah, since there is but one God, without any distinction of persons, and the time of the Messiah was not yet come; that he rejected the New Testament, because he found many contradictions in it, and because it did not agree with the Old; that he got himself admitted into the ministry, because the Jews told him he might outwardly profess any religion, without endangering his salvation, and because he wanted a livelihood; that when he took the usual oaths, it was with a mental reservation to what was true and reasonable; that, being so far engaged, he could not avoid reciting the apostle's creed and administering the communion; that he never pronounced distinctly the articles of the creed which concern our Saviour; that he took his texts out of the Psalms and the Prophet Isaiah; that the next day, after he had preached upon the second Psalm, without applying it to Jesus Christ, he fell into a fit of madness, as he was singing the seventy-fourth Psalm; that he was mad when he came to Geneva, and called Jesus Christ an idol, &c.; that it was true he had affirmed, that the passages of the Old Testament, quoted in the New, were strained, far-fetched, and wretchedly applied; that he had renounced his baptism and continued to do so.

Afterwards, they shewed him a paper, written with his own hand, but not subscribed by him, which contained these words: "I acknowledge and confess, that Jesus Christ crucified is the true God, Saviour and Redeemer of the whole world, and that he is the same

with the Father and the Holy Ghost, as to his essence, but distinct as to his person." His answer was: that he had been forced to write that confession; and he disowned the doctrine contained in it. Then the famous passage of Josephus, concerning Christ, was alleged against him; to which he made no answer. Being asked, whether he persisted to renounce his baptism, he said, he did. Being exhorted to confess, whether he had frequented the houses of ill fame at Venice, he answered, that he could make no such confession, and prayed God to discover his innocence; adding, that the most beautiful woman in the world would not have tempted him; and then, bending his head, he intreated God to take pity on him, &c. The first syndic alleged to him several passages of the Old Testament concerning Christ, and then the prisoner was re-committed.

On the sixteenth of April, he was brought again to the bar. His chief answers were,—That he had never dogmatized at Geneva; that when he gave the communion in his church at Divonne, he used these words, 'Remember the death of your Saviour; that he administered baptism, as other ministers did; that he was in the way to salvation, and fully resolved, with God's assistance, to die for the truth of his doctrine.

Whereupon the council condemned him, on the twentieth of April, to be strangled and burnt, and their sentence was executed on the same day. It imports, that Nicholas Anthoine, laying aside all fear of God, was guilty of apostacy and high treason towards God, having opposed the

holy Trinity, denied our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, blasphemed against his holy name, renounced his baptism to embrace Judaism and circumcision, and perjured himself. Which are great and horrid crimes, &c. The above-mentioned letter of Mr. Ferry had such an effect upon the ministers of Geneva, that they went in a body to the council and intreated the magistrates to put off his execution for some time; but it was to no purpose.

EXTRACTS FROM NEW PUBLICATIONS.

Penal Laws which aggrieve the Catholics of Ireland.

[The first Part of a Work on this subject, lately published in Dublin, has been put into our hands by a friend. It is a work of authority, as appears from the following Resolution of the last Catholic Aggregate Meeting, the Earl of Fingal in the Chair.

“Resolved,—That the most cordial gratitude of the Catholics of Ireland is due to the Author of the ‘Statement of the Penal Laws,’ lately published—a work in which we recognize all the accuracy of great legal knowledge, combined with the classic elegance of the scholar and the profound observation of the philosopher.”

We think it may serve the cause of religious freedom, if we give some account of the Irish Anti-Catholic code, and this we shall do in extracts, forming a summary of the “Statement.” The whole title of the volume is as follows: *A Statement of the Penal Laws which aggrieve the Catholics of Ireland; with Commentaries. In Two Parts. Part I. Dublin. H. Fitzpatrick. 1812. pp. 166.*

EDITOR.]

CATHOLICS.

This appellation is used throughout the following Statement, for the sake of brevity, not of controversy. The legislature has curiously varied in this particular. From the time of the introduction of the Protestant creed into Ireland (Temp. Elizabeth) to that of William 3d, the appellation used in the statutes appears to have been “persons in communion with the Church of Rome.” In

the commencement of the reign of William 3, viz. 1692, the Catholics were expelled from the Irish parliament. A hostile phraseology then appeared. “Papists, Popish People,” &c. are to be found in all statutes affecting the Catholics, from the 7 Will. 3. to the 32 Geo. 3. inclusive, and even later. The 33 Geo. 3. at length, styles them “Papists, or persons professing the Popish or Roman Catholic religion.”

However, the latest statute relating to the Catholics, 43 Geo. 3. ch. 30, drops the harsher names, and, by its title, denominates them “Roman Catholics.” This may, therefore, be taken to be their legal description at this day. The reproachful epithets of “Papist,” “Romanist,” “Romish,” “Popish,” &c. are no longer applied to them by any gentleman or scholar.

INTRODUCTION.

Whoever would rightly understand the actual state of Ireland, ought principally to inform himself of the peculiar condition of its Catholic Inhabitants.

In every point of view, they form a most important subject of inquiry and of serious reflection. Strength, industry, energy, and all the characteristic virtues which bestow value upon a people, are

theirs in an eminent degree. In numbers they have prodigiously increased; and they are continually increasing, beyond example in any other country. Already they compose the far greater part of the trading and manufacturing interests. The agricultural class, so powerful and influential throughout Ireland, is almost universally Catholic. They occupy the most valuable positions, whether for commercial or for military purposes; the boldest coasts, most navigable rivers, and most tenable passes; the most fertile districts, the richest supplies of forage, the readiest means of attack or defence. The geographical advantages of Ireland are well known. Cork, Waterford, Kerry, Galway, Mayo, &c. &c. all Catholic counties, attest the correctness of our assertions.

Numerically, the Catholics constitute full five-sixth parts of the Irish population; and, compared with the members of the Established Church, they are in the proportion of at least *ten to one*; a proportion, be it observed, rapidly advancing of late years. In every city, town and village, their numbers more or less preponderate. The open country is in their almost exclusive occupation. The gross population of Ireland, at this day, is moderately estimated, by the most competent judges, at five millions of inhabitants. Of this number we may, without exaggeration, state the Catholics as amounting to 4,200,000; that is, equal to one-half of the united population of England and Wales.

In fine, the Catholics are emphatically the *People of Ireland*. Such is the class of men, faithful, generous and deserving—suffering for the misfortunes of their

ancestors, yet nobly steadfast to their venerated religion. Such are the *people*, to whom the British laws deny liberty of conscience. Their sole crime is that of adhering fondly to the religion of their choice—of obeying the sacred dictates of private judgment: and this, not by overturning any established system, or by turbulent innovations, but by preserving, pure and inviolate, the holy doctrines handed down to them by their forefathers, confirmed by ages of suffering and calamity, and now consecrated to their love and respect by an historical identity with the honour and fair fame of Ireland, during nearly fourteen centuries.

For this crime, of worshipping their Creator in the form practised throughout the greater part of Christendom, the Catholics of Ireland are the prostrate victims of a teasing, intolerant code of laws; rendering them, in effect, almost “Aliens” in their native land.

STATEMENT, &c.

CHAP. I.

Of the Laws which peculiarly affect the Catholic Clergy, Catholic Houses of Worship, School-Houses, and other Charitable Foundations.

The Catholic clergy consist of 4 archbishops, 25 bishops, about 1100 parish priests, 800 curates, and between 200 and 300 regular clergy of various orders; amounting to a total number, exceeding 2000 clergymen, all incessantly employed in ministering to the spiritual wants of four millions of people. These are the peace-makers throughout every district, healing dissensions, reconciling differences, inculcating pure mo-

ality, confirming the good, reclaiming the sinful, soothing the sorrowful, earnestly diffusing all the blessings of fervent charity, and enforcing all the precepts of social affection. Their labours are incessant, and their very existence is a state of continual self-denial. No sentiment but that of religion, no support but the inward impulse of divine love, could sustain their marvellous and almost super-human exertions in fulfilling their sacred duties. Generous, bold and indefatigable, not to be deterred by distance, inclemency of weather, unseasonable hours, dread of contagion, or any other temporal obstacle, the Catholic priest flies to the bed of sickness at a moment's call, imparts the balm of hope to the dying penitent, alleviates his anguish with the sweetest and most benevolent assiduity, and piously assists in the precious office of rendering his last moments acceptable in the eyes of his Creator.

These are amongst the many services of the Catholic clergy, and their claims upon the respect of their flocks.

Yet such are the men against whom the jealousy of the legislature is in full vigour, and who are only noticed by the laws, for the purposes of reprehension and of penalty.

I. "If a Catholic clergyman happens, though inadvertently, to celebrate marriage between two Protestants, or between a Protestant and a Catholic (unless already married by a Protestant minister) he is liable by law to suffer death."

The first statute upon this subject was enacted in the year 1708.

It directs, that "If any Popish priest shall celebrate matrimony

between any two persons, knowing that they are, or either of them is, of the Protestant religion, he shall suffer the punishment of a Popish regular; (that is, to be transported, and to remain in gaol until transported, and punished as if for high treason, if he returns to Ireland. 9 Will. 3. c. 1.)

The next statute, enacted in 1710, adopts a singular rule of evidence, not very conformable to the dictates of ordinary justice.

It directs, that "Upon every prosecution of a Popish priest for the above-mentioned offence, it shall be presumed, allowed and concluded, to all intents and purposes, that the priest, so accused, did celebrate such marriage, knowing that one or both of the parties was or were of the Protestant religion.

"Unless he shall produce a certificate under the hand and seal of the minister of the parish where the parties resided, certifying that such person was not a Protestant at the time of the marriage."

The third statute, enacted in 1750, renders this offence punishable as a felony without benefit of clergy; and, consequently, the Catholic priest, upon conviction, is to suffer death.

And this too, although such marriages had been already pronounced to be null and void, by a statute enacted in 1746.

Such is the punishment, and such the facility of convicting a Catholic priest in Ireland, at this day, for an offence which the most cautious may commit (if an offence) through inadvertency or misinformation.

To expect that the Protestant minister, perhaps a non-resident,

shall certify that a party is *not* a Protestant, or any such negative fact, seems absurd enough. Besides, no obligation is imposed upon him, by penalty, for refusal or otherwise, to grant any certificate whatsoever.

But this Anti-Catholic code presents a tissue of absurdities. For instance, suppose a Protestant dissenter and a Catholic about to be married, the ceremony must be performed by three clergymen, as matters now stand.

1. The Dissenting minister.
2. The Protestant minister of the parish (without whose previous celebration the Catholic priest is forbidden to officiate.)
3. The Catholic priest.

The statute enacted in 1792, which permitted intermarriages between Protestants and Catholics, has continued the previous interdiction of Catholic priests celebrating such marriages.

And, in the statute enacted in 1793, professing to grant extensive relief to the Catholics, this subject forms one of the numerous exceptions which have been re-enacted, and thus frustrated the public expectation.

II. "Catholic priests are liable to imprisonment for refusing, upon being interrogated in courts of justice, to divulge the secrets of private confession, confided to them by their penitents."

In cases of trials in courts of justice, no distinction is permitted between the examinations of Catholic priests and those of other persons. The same extent of testimony is exacted from them, without any exception in favour of such evidence as may have come to their knowledge solely through the medium of private

confession. If a Catholic priest declines to yield such evidence, when required, he is treated as *contumacious, and as if actuated by no other motive than a contempt of the judicial authorities*; whilst, in reality, he is governed by a virtuous principle—that of preserving a sacred trust, and guarding inviolate the secrecy of a confession, made to him upon the very faith of that secrecy.

The late Lord Kilwarden, chief justice, committed to gaol a Catholic priest, the Rev. Mr. Gahan, for a contumacy of this nature. This occurred at the summer assizes of 1801, for the county of Meath, held at Trim, in the case of *Mrs. O'Brien v. the Trustees of Maynooth College*.

It should be considered, that the attempt to enforce this obedience would, if successful, defeat its object; because the secrets, sought to be extracted, will never be entrusted to the priest, if there ceases to be a moral certainty that they will be religiously preserved. The public confidence in the secrecy of private confessions being once extinguished, there will be an end of unreserved disclosures to the priest, and no information can be had from him who will have none to give. Thus, in fact, this rigorous proceeding is utterly unavailing to any public purpose and unprofitable to the general administration of justice. It merely involves the Bench in an ungracious and ineffectual struggle, in which the public voice will ever sustain the priest suffering in the cause of duty, honour and truth, and condemn the ill-timed and indiscreet exercise of summary jurisdiction. Certainly, it may be affirmed

with perfect confidence, that no Catholic priest in Ireland will be found to yield obedience in this respect, by betraying the sacred trust reposed in him. His conscientious belief is, that the sacrament of penance is of divine institution; that CONFESSION is one of its *essential parts*; that an *inviolable secrecy* attaches to the *sacramental confession*; that the confessor is bound to suffer death, rather than reveal (by word or sign, directly or indirectly) any *sin or crime*, or any circumstance attending them mentioned by the penitent in confession: yea, that the whole confession is to be buried in eternal oblivion, and that, according to the laws of the Catholic church, he would expose himself to degradation for life, as a punishment for the crime of violating such a trust, and forfeit eternal salvation hereafter. He would be immediately deposed from all his priestly functions, and consigned to universal abhorrence.

Here we feel pleasure in adverting to the sentiments of the late Lord Kenyon, chief justice of England, upon a case nearly similar to the present. A case having been cited before him, (the King v. Sparkes) where the prisoner, being a Catholic, had made a confession before a Protestant clergyman of the crime for which he was afterwards indicted, and that confession having been permitted to be given in evidence upon the trial, he was convicted and executed, Lord Kenyon instantly declared, with a generous disapprobation of such a proceeding, "That he would have paused before he admitted such evidence as had been there admitted."

In fact, the hardship thus inflicted upon the Catholic clergy might easily be alleviated, without offering any violence to established principles. The law has already provided for other cases, perfectly analogous to the present. For Quakers (who, from conscientious scruples, refuse to take any oaths) are permitted, in all civil cases, to make simple affirmation only; and such affirmation is rendered, by express statutes, of equal credit with the oath of another. Thus we see the rigid rule of evidence dispensed with, in order to accommodate persons who are governed by inviolable principles of a sacred nature.

Again, barristers and attornies may refuse, when examined in courts of justice, to answer any questions *tending to a disclosure of any confidence reposed in them by their clients*; nay, they are not permitted to answer such questions: this is the privilege of the clients, not theirs.

Surely, then, a similar protection is due to the Catholic clergy and people. Equal respect and tenderness ought, in justice and in courtesy, to be shewn towards their just scruples of conscience, so necessary to be entertained, so ancient and long established, and so obligatory upon every feeling of morality, honour, and religion.

III. "The Catholic clergy are liable to be punished, by civil action, for excommunicating unworthy members of their own communion."

The power of excommunication forms a subject, upon which very great pains have been taken of late years but fruitlessly, to excite odium against the Catholic clergy of Ireland. Lord

Redesdale, who had no intercourse with any Irish Catholics, or any means of obtaining correct information, confidently declared, in a great public assembly, that "Excommunication from the Catholic church is, in Ireland, not simply a separation from the body of the faithful, but, to all intents and purposes, an interdiction, *ab aqua et igni*: that no Catholic dares to administer a cup of cold water, or a crust of dry bread, or any other necessary sustenance to an excommunicated person: and that the offence which draws down this heavy sentence, is any friendly intercourse which a Catholic may be found to hold with Protestants."

All those assertions, we must distinctly say, are directly contrary to the fact.

The truth is, that this punishment, so much misrepresented, is actually limited to the "Separation of a Christian, leading a disorderly life, disgracing his profession, from the Christian congregation, and a banishment of such person from the church."

It amounts to neither more nor less than the removal of a member of any other religious society from that society, for disorderly and disgraceful conduct would amount to. There ensues no interdict against any other person communicating with the expelled member in *temporals*, except so far as such communion may extend to a wanton and contumacious encouragement and approbation of the conduct so punished. On the contrary, the Catholic discipline expressly declares several kinds of temporal communion to be wholly unaffected by excommunication. They are compressed, for brevity's

sake, in the following line:

"Utile; lex, humile, res ignorata, necesse."

These five heads of exception to the temporal consequences of excommunication are so comprehensive as to embrace every supposable temporal case: they are construed with great indulgence, and accepted with every latitude. The excommunicated person retains his claim to all the offices of charity, to relief in his necessities, to employment for his industry, to associate with others for all useful or necessary purposes, and to maintain the ordinary relations of society, as master, husband, father, soldier, trader, &c. &c.

As for excommunication of any person for associating with the expelled member, or even for encouraging and abetting him, we believe that no instance of the kind has occurred: at least, none with the sanction of any Catholic bishop in Ireland.

The Catholic clergy have been unjustly accused of pronouncing this sentence in light and frequent cases. Now, on the contrary, it is reserved as the punishment of crimes of gross enormity or turpitude. Only two instances of it have occurred during the last 24 years, in the populous archdiocese of Dublin, wherein, from the vicious habits of a great capital, the most numerous instances of the exercise of this power may naturally be supposed to have existed. During the preceding 17 years only two other instances of the like nature occurred. Yet none of the persons, so excommunicated, appear to have suffered any temporal injury from the sentence. They have continued in their respective trades and

occupations, have not been in any manner molested : and they have met their Catholic neighbours, and been dealt with as before.

So discreetly, too, is the exercise of this power limited, and so jealously is it watched, by the Catholic hierarchy, that, according to the discipline of the Catholic church in Ireland, no clergyman of the second order can issue an excommunication, without previously laying the case before the bishop of the diocese, and obtaining his sanction, for proceeding to this last of spiritual punishments.

IV. "The Catholic clergy are denied the permission (and sometimes even in Ireland) to perform the rites of their religion, for the Catholic soldiers and sailors."

V. "The Catholic clergy are unprotected by any law, prohibiting the disturbance of divine service, whilst celebrated by them."

VI. "The Catholic clergyman, bound by his vows to a life of celibacy, and generally in narrow circumstances, feels the harshness of being held liable to the payment of a modern tax, called *Bachelor's Tax*."

VII. "In various other instances, the Catholic clergy have reason to complain of the insult or injustice legally inflicted upon them.

1st. They are interdicted (as we shall see in the next article) from receiving any endowment or permanent provision, either for their own support, or for that of their houses of worship, &c.

2. They receive no public recompence for their arduous and unremitting attention in the performance of the necessary religious duties in hospitals, asylums, gaols, workhouses, and similar public establishments.

As for the *county gaols* of Ireland, a certain limited compensation, under special restrictions, has been recently, (by a statute, enacted in 1810,) provided for such Catholic clergymen as the respective grand juries may be pleased to nominate for the purpose of officiating as chaplains. But here too, from the ignorance of the framers, their neglecting or disdaining to consult the Catholic clergy, and the supercilious management of the entire transaction, this statute has fallen far short of its professed object. In some instances, it has proved even pernicious, by exciting discord between the grand jury and the Catholic bishop of the district. These mischiefs might have been avoided by timely caution and ordinary prudence in preparing this law.

3. Again, the Catholic priest is expected, in times of public disturbance, to perform the duties of the civil magistrate."

VIII. "The law forbids the permanent endowment of any Catholic clergyman, house of worship, school-house, or other pious or charitable foundation for Catholics."

[To be continued.]

MISCELLANEOUS COMMUNICATIONS.

On Creeds.

Southwark, March 4, 1812.

There is nothing, perhaps, that has served to impede Christianity, or arrest the progress of divine truth, more than the adoption of creeds.

Creeds are generally a compilation of doctrines, or speculative opinions, supposed to be drawn from the scriptures; and the mischief arising from them is, that they are suffered to take the place of the plain precepts of Christianity.

Men who were interested by sinister motives, and were well paid for supporting mysteries, have, for the most part compiled the creeds, that are generally swallowed by the world: they were frequently ingeniously wrought, and require much argument for their support; whereas, the precepts of Christianity are so plain, that a way-faring man, though a fool, may read, understand and practise them.

The New Testament alone, is acknowledged to contain the precepts of infallible truth. It is obvious, that all deductions made by fallible men are liable to error: this consideration alone, must shake the infallibility of any set of opinions deduced from the Scriptures.

The religion of a credite, consists in the belief of a belief, which generally fetters him to the observance of ceremonies, or leads him to place his dependence on his creed, or (as the technical phrase is,) on a saving faith.

When once the mind has got

into such a deplorable condition, as to think that a belief of any set of notions is necessary to salvation, there is no doctrine, however strange, that it may not receive, no practice, however wicked, that it dares not encounter. With such persons, the belief of their creed is the first and grand evidence of Christianity, and the practice, if not wholly laid aside, is accounted as a secondary consideration. They are led away by their systems all their lives, having but the twilight of Christianity, to guide their paths. If they write, it is to uphold their *system*; if they read the scriptures, it is to support their creed. If they speak, their breath is wasted in excommunicating others for not believing what they believe. They may be said to fall down and worship their creed, instead of their Creator. They look upon their brother, who is passing through the chequered scenes of life, with composure and serenity, living in the love of God and his neighbour, who, with Christian benevolence, is doing to others as he would have others do to him, continually shewing by his practice the sincerity of his faith in the precepts of Christianity, as little better than a Heathen, and with contempt exclaim,—Legalist! stand by, for I am holier than thou.

Who, think you, is most likely to receive the reward of well doing:—the servant who endeavours to tread in the footsteps of his master by the practice of Christian morals, who gives bread to the hungry, drink to the thirsty,

cloathing to the naked, consolation to the afflicted, relief to the distressed, who commiserates with the suffering, and, with chearfulness lightens the burden of his fellow mortals? or the credite, who places his dependance on his saving faith? Christians, place not your dependance on the doctrines even of Christianity, but be ye careful to practise its morals.

A WAYFARING MAN.

Mr. Clarke, on his "Sketches of Sentiment."

Newport, Isle of Wight,

SIR, 5th April, 1812.

The theory which I have lately advanced, in a little work, entitled *Sketches of Sentiment*, appears to me to have been very imperfectly understood, even by those who have paid some attention to it: so difficult is it to arrange our thoughts, and to adopt such language as will convey to the minds of others, those views with which we are ourselves impressed. It is not extraordinary that in the first attempt to explain a doctrine so abstruse as that of the *Divine nature*, I should have employed certain modes of expression, which were not the best fitted for the purpose, nor is it surprising, that many difficulties and objections should be started, which I had not sufficient foresight to anticipate. As the attainment of *truth* is my only aim, I have really felt obliged by animadversions, and thus publicly acknowledge myself deeply indebted in this respect to the author of a Reply to my Sketches, John Fullagar, Esq.

On some future occasion, when I may be in possession of all the

notice I have a right to expect, it is my intention to review the subject more carefully, and in whatever points it shall appear that I have advanced sentiments contrary to truth, I shall have great pleasure in renouncing them. In the mean time, Sir, I shall, with your permission, make a few slight observations relative to this important subject.

In the review of the Sketches, which was given in your Repository, [vol. vi. p. 557.] I am considered as advancing the doctrine of *Emanuel Swedenborg*, and by a cynical critic in the Monthly Review, I stand accused of "vamping up the old scheme of *Sabellius*." If it could be proved, that either of these assertions is correct, yet does it not *necessarily* follow that the opinion itself is erroneous, as the latter writer more than implies;—but, I apprehend, a very material difference subsists between my views, and those entertained by the two learned theologians.

The doctrine of Swedenborgianism, upon this subject, is, that there is a Trinity in the Godhead, consisting of the divine origin or principle,—the divine human,—and the divine proceeding: not as of three distinct persons, but as we see united and exhibited, in the body, soul and operation of man, in the one person of Jesus Christ; who therefore is the God of heaven, and alone to be worshipped; being Creator from eternity, Redeemer in time and Regenerator to eternity.*

Sabellius taught that there is but one person in the Godhead, that the Word and the Holy Spirit

* Adams's View of Religions.

are only virtues, emanations, or functions of the Deity; and he also held, that the Father of all things descended into the virgin, became a child, and was born of her as a son; and that having accomplished the mystery of our salvation, he diffused himself on the Apostles in tongues of fire, and was then denominated the Holy Ghost*.

To me, there appears one grand and fundamental error in both these statements, as well as in almost every other, upon this important subject. All writers in their descriptions of Deity, attach to him both in thought and expression the idea of *personality*. Unitarians believe the Godhead to consist of *one* person. Trinitarians advocate *three*. The term person, however, according to all our notions of its meaning, never can be properly applied to the essential nature and being of God; because it cannot be used without implying a limited outline, and a confinement to one spot.—A *personal* Deity cannot be an *omnipresent*, omniscient Being!

I hold it to be incontrovertible, that a being who is in his very nature underived, infinite, eternal, omnipresent, and omniscient, can *never* be seen, known or understood by any thing but *itself*; because these are terms which represent to us qualities, which can only be conceived of and measured by that which is, in itself, infinite, eternal, &c. but every existence, except that of God, is derived, finite and confined, both in mental and corporeal powers; therefore is it obvious, that whatever belongs to the separate essential nature of

Deity, can *never* be comprehended by any being but himself!

What then may be known of God? I reply, the *effects* of the operation of the divine attributes and perfections. In creation and providence, we "look through nature up to nature's God." But it has pleased God to enlighten us still farther. By a providential series of cause and effect, he has instructed certain human beings in different ages of the world, and has endowed them with knowledge and power to instruct others. It cannot be denied, I think, that the Supreme operates upon the human mind, and to a far greater degree on some than on others; and, wherever, we see the exhibitions of moral goodness, we see something of the great Source from whence that goodness, originally, however remotely, flowed.

Now if we admit that the goodness, wisdom and love of God, are displayed in *good men*, sometimes in a very *high degree*,—is there any difficulty in supposing that in *Christ* this took place *completely* and entirely? or, in other words, that the power, wisdom and love of God were manifested in him without measure?

In this view of the subject, it is evident that I attach no kind of divinity to the mere nature of Jesus Christ, as the *Swedenborgians* seem to do;—neither can I for a moment admit with *Sabellius*, that the infinite, omnipresent, and eternal Father descended into the Virgin, and became a child, &c. All that was exhibited of Deity in the person of Jesus Christ, I conceive to have been the actual power, wisdom, and love of God, and these produced in a way by

* *Encyclopædia Brit.* art. Sabellians.

no means contrary to reason or experience.

Thus far, I believe, I have advanced nothing that will not be conceded by the liberal *Unitarian*; But how do I stand with regard to the *Trinitarian*?

Certainly, if my tenets are brought to the test of the doctrine of *three persons*, I can expect no favour; but so far as the *Divinity* of *Jesus Christ*, in the proper meaning and application of the term, is concerned, I see no reason why we should be at issue; for I believe that in him was displayed *all* that ever will be displayed of *Deity* to his creatures! The power, the wisdom and the love of the Supreme, may, indeed, and assuredly will, be exhibited in a more *effulgent and glorious* manner; but the magnificent accompaniments of ten thousand splendid suns, will still be *only accompaniments*, only the *effects* of the Divine operation, not the *Divinity* himself! And it will be the employment of *faith*, through them, to conceive of the wondrous perfections and attributes of the one invisible and incomprehensible JEHOVAH.

Under the human and created form of *Jesus Christ*, I perceive the Deity instructing his creatures, reconciling them to himself, and saving them from ruin. The mind of the Saviour, *Jesus Christ*, I believe to have been gradually formed by divine agency till it was completely filled with the knowledge and love of God himself. Constantly preserved, (and therefore entirely free,) from any admixture of error and sin, I regard the precepts which fell from his lips as the teachings of God

himself, the actions he performed, as those of Deity. He was a pure vehicle, prepared and preserved for the reception and display of the divine perfections and attributes, but still he was only a *vehicle*, a *created medium*, and when I worship him, I worship not the human nature, but the *one God*, whose glorious and gracious character and operations were and are resident in it.

In heaven, the same form, adorned with glorious splendour, but beaming with matchless love, will be, I apprehend, the eternal medium of our future worship. Still we shall not worship the resplendent glory, nor the benignant form, but we shall *through these*, adore and love an invisible and incomprehensible Being, whose perfections and attributes are thus graciously and condescendingly enshrined, in accommodation to our natures, and in order that our devotional feelings may be elevated to compleat ecstasy!

For the scriptural grounds of these views, I must refer to the work itself, and remain,

Sir,

With much respect,
Your friend and servant,
JAMES CLARKE.

Letters to a Student,
LETTER IV.

The preceding hints, my *Eugenius*, have been suggested not so much by an idea of their importance in themselves, though that be considerable, nor principally, as general rules of conduct; but particularly on account of their connection with the great object, to which the years you will spend

in the Academy, are to be devoted. It can scarcely be asked by you, what is that object? But should it be made a question by any youth, the answer is obtained by other questions, which not only point out this object, but intimate the moment of it. Why was the seminary into which you have entered founded? Why was it, with great exertions of generosity and zeal, raised to its present state? And why are your parents and friends desirous that you should spend some years of the prime of your life within its walls? But to engage you and your fellow academics in study. Study, be it remembered, is the great design for which you enlist as a collegiate. Study is to be the leading in a manner the sole object of your attention. It is to fill your time, to employ your thoughts, to rouse your emulation, to call forth all your powers. With study is the day to commence; with study is it to close.

How assiduous soever you be, there is no possibility of exhausting the subjects of enquiry before you; they are so various and extensive. Whatever be your peculiar genius and turn of mind, in that variety which will offer, you may be certain to meet what will suit and gratify it. Every science, indeed, calls for your attention; because every science has its peculiar advantages and uses. Your tutors, it may be presumed, in their introductory lectures to the subjects of their respective departments, will lay before you a view of the utility and application of those particular branches of knowledge, into which it is their province to initiate you.

The matter to be urged on you at present, is, that you should

neglect none. Some may be, as Dr. Jortin expresses it, relatively dry; but that they are for that reason to be despised and passed over, does not follow. It may be, in some degree, an useful discipline, to constrain the mind to bestow attention on them. This may be laid down as a certain principle, that you are not qualified to judge of the utility of a science, unless you had experience of its application and an acquaintance with its different connections with other branches of knowledge or the transactions of life; which your years and your situation as a pupil, imply you have not. But the utility of a science in itself, or its application in future life, is not the sole consideration by which you should judge of its importance and by which your attention to it should be governed. You may never, when your academical course is finished, be called on to carry it into practice or have any occasion to apply it, yet it may be highly useful to study it in the present period of your life; and as forming part of an academical course, it has a strong recommendation to your regard. It may give a peculiar exercise and play to your mental powers; strengthen, by exercise, your faculties; add to the stock of your ideas; and enlarge your views. The historian, poet and orator will furnish more pleasing reading and a constant source of entertainment in succeeding years: yet the mathematics, though you should never have an opportunity to apply them to astronomy, architecture or navigation, are essential to your improvement, to accustom you to clearness and precision in your ideas, and to a close way of rea-

soning. They are more serviceable and expedient, as a present course of study, now than they will be hereafter, because the volatility of youthful years, requires those studies which, like mathematics, are particularly suited to restrain and correct it: and the hastiness of that period demands the influence of those pursuits which will check it, and habituate the mind to pause, consider coolly, and wait for the conclusion. A desultory reading may be more agreeable, because more easy, but it is not so useful as the slow, regular and gradual progress of mathematical knowledge. The *Belles Lettres* may be more alluring and fascinating, but the mathematics are more necessary for you, because they exercise those powers to which you may not be inclined to give a full scope. The former address the fancy and taste, but these, the reason and understanding. When you shall have forgotten how to work the rules of Algebra, or to demonstrate the theorems of Euclid, you will still be conscious of a closeness in reasoning, and of an expectation of clearness and strength in arguing, which, were you to trace back to its original cause, you will have little reason to doubt, was derived from, or much aided by, the attention which you gave, in early life, to those sciences.

But among all the branches of learning that now invite your attention, none is to be preferred, as an object of unremitting study, to classical learning. With this has your education commenced, this has occupied the days spent at school; you enter into the academy to renew your acquisitions and to push your improvements in it; and the application of future

years to it, will not exhaust the resources of pleasure and information which it yields. You have as yet only tasted of the fountain; it sends forth a copious and constant stream, of which you may drink, without fear of drought or satiety. The style which characterises every author, and the idioms peculiar to every language, will ever give a novelty to this kind of reading. The writers of Greece and Rome are so various and numerous, that there is no reason to fear that you will grow weary with turning over the same work. Nor can you be at a loss to meet with an author, who may suit your peculiar genius, your present humour, or the particular object of your literary pursuits. Poets, orators, historians, philosophers, mathematicians and critics pass before you, and seek your acquaintance. You may now borrow the aid of one class to assist your deeper researches, and then unbend and amuse your mind, with the beautiful pages of another class.

To read English authors only, and to converse merely with translations, is not to read like a scholar; nor can the benefit, pleasure and honour, which is a scholar's portion, be the reward of it. The neglect of originals, it is to be suspected, proceeds too much from laziness. But that laziness is peculiarly blameable in an academic: because his powers are in their vigour, aid is at hand to facilitate his progress, and the drudgery, if any, has been surmounted at school. Now the path becomes more pleasant, difficulties are cleared away, the spirit of the author is felt, and taste begins to relish the beauties which were before unobserved. Classical learn-

ing has, hitherto, been rather an exercise of reflection and memory; it now becomes the employment and gratification of the imagination and genius: and as it connects itself with your other studies, you will now perceive its application and use. There is not a liberal profession which may not derive singular advantage from conversing with the Greek and Latin writers. They are peculiarly important to a divine, especially the former, as the books which contain the religion of Christ, are written in that language. The works of a Sykes and Jortin, of a Lardner and Farmer shew to what valuable purposes a Christian minister may improve his acquaintance with the authors of Greece and Rome. Not a question in theology can be discussed, nor a criticism on any passage of scripture be brought forward, but what proves the utility of this branch of knowledge to the divine. The advice which Horace gave to the Pisos applies here with the fullest force, and should be extended to the compositions of his own country:—

———*Vos exemplaria Græca
Nocturna versate manu, versate diurna.*

I am, &c.

Plan of a General Unitarian Association.

Warrington, July 1, 1812.

SIR,

Conceiving that a greater degree of Union than at present subsists between the different societies of Unitarian Christians, would most essentially promote the cause of Unitarianism, which I firmly believe to be the cause of the gospel, I beg leave, through the medium of your valuable Repository,

to call the attention of your readers to the consideration of this subject. I hope that this communication may lead to the adoption of some plan of united action, calculated to give increased effect to those exertions, which being, as they are at present, insulated, partial, and having no common direction, must be considerably weakened in their efficacy; but when combined and as it were concentrated in one common focus, must be proportionally energetic. Such a plan, if adopted, cannot fail, not only of exciting the zeal of Unitarians themselves, but of calling the attention of the Christian world at large to the consideration of the arguments urged in support of the Unitarian doctrine and thus of increasing the number of Unitarian Christians. With a view merely of bringing the subject into discussion, I submit the following plan to the consideration of your readers, hoping that it will be the means of calling forth some other plan, more suited to the purpose.

I am, Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

AN UNITARIAN LAYMAN.

The end proposed is *A General Association of all the Unitarian Societies, throughout England and Wales.*

THE PLAN.

1. *District Association.* — A number of neighbouring societies, willing to join the Association, to be united, so as to form a District Association, to be denominated by the town of most consequence in the district.

The minister, together with a lay delegate, chosen annually, to be deputed by each society, to a meeting of the district, to be held

four times in the year, at each place belonging to the district, alternately, and a sermon to be delivered on the occasion.

At the first quarterly meeting, a President and Secretary to be chosen annually out of the ministers of the district, and a Treasurer out of the lay delegates.

The friends of the cause, not delegates, to be admitted to the meeting, and allowed to deliver their opinions freely, on any question, but not to be entitled to vote.

At the conclusion of divine service, the business of the district to be entered upon, when the state of the different societies is to be laid before the meeting, and the pecuniary wants of particular societies taken into consideration and relieved, if advisable, out of the funds of the Association. Any case, requiring assistance, either of a pecuniary or of any other nature, not in the power of the Association to afford, may be referred to the consideration of the County Association mentioned below.

After the business is concluded, the ministers and other delegates to partake of an economical dinner at the expence of the Association; other friends of the cause, not delegates, to be admitted to the dinner at their own expence.

It is obvious that such a meeting must be of incalculable utility, and many plans might be there adopted to promote the cause; such, for instance, as the formation of new interests in the district, by preaching and by Unitarian tracts; the establishment of congregational libraries or of Sunday schools in each society of the district; or the institution of small tract libraries in different places, for the diffusion of religious

knowledge amongst the lower classes of society.

2. County Association. At the first quarterly District Meeting, a minister and layman to be deputed from each District to a County Meeting; and where the numbers in one county are small, two or more counties may be united in one Association.

The County Meeting to be held twice in the year, at one or other of the principal places of the county, alternately, and a sermon delivered on the occasion, when it would be proper to have a collection to be added to the funds of the Association.

At the first half-yearly meeting, a President, Secretary and Treasurer to be chosen, for the year ensuing.

After divine service, the business of the County Meeting to be entered upon, and the state of the different districts taken into consideration, together with any plans to promote the prosperity of the cause, such as supplying pecuniary aid to societies in want of it, or furnishing assistance in the formation of new societies, &c. which plans, if not then determined upon, may be transferred to the General Meeting, hereafter mentioned.

Where the funds of the Association are sufficient for the purpose, it would be advisable to employ a missionary in spreading the gospel throughout the county.

The Association to dine together after the business is transacted.

3. General Association. At the first half-yearly meeting of each County Association, a minister and a layman to be annually appointed, to attend a meeting of the General Association, which is to be held, once in each year, at

one or other of the largest towns in the kingdom alternately, and a sermon or sermons to be preached on the occasion, and a collection made in aid of the General Fund; and, after choosing a president, secretary and treasurer, the general business of the Association to be transacted, and the result to be printed in an Address to the body of Unitarians, and transmitted to the different county delegates, to be by them transmitted to the delegates of the district meeting, and by them communicated to each separate society.

The General Association would be of great utility in devising schemes for the support of decayed ministers, and for the relief of the widows, and for the education of the orphans of deceased ministers, as well as for the establishment of seminaries of ministerial education. They might also undertake the publishing of popular Unitarian books and tracts, and of lessons, according to the plan of Mr. Lancaster, which are much wanted for the use of Unitarian Sunday schools; and, by printing large impressions, might supply the Unitarian body with books, &c. at a cheap rate. They might also send missionaries to preach throughout the kingdom, by means of whom, and aided by the General Fund, new interests might be raised and the cause revived in those places where it has hitherto been declining for want of support.

4. General Committee.—A standing Committee to be chosen annually by the General Association, consisting of such of its members as reside in or near London, who are to carry into effect the deci-

sions, and to follow the instructions of the Association, and to watch over the interests of the body at large; with a power of calling an extraordinary general meeting upon any emergency, such, for instance, as an intended invasion of the religious rights of Dissenters in general, or of Unitarians in particular.

The expences of the respective delegates to be defrayed out of the funds of the Association to which they are deputed.

In order to form the necessary funds, each particular society entering into the Association, to have an annual sermon and a collection.

One-fourth of the money so collected to be reserved by the society for their own particular exertions; three-fourths to be transmitted to the district meeting, who are to transmit one-half to the county meeting, by whom the remaining one-fourth is to be transmitted to the General Association meeting: so that one-fourth will be appropriated to the funds of each society,—one-fourth to the funds of the district Association, one-fourth to the funds of the County Association, and the remaining one-fourth to the funds of the General Association.

It is probable that the funds might be considerably augmented by donations and bequests from opulent friends.

N. B. The object might be promoted by the exertions of the London Unitarian Fund Society and of their missionaries, who might transmit to each separate Society a printed copy of the plan deemed most eligible, and solicit their concurrence.

*Mr. Crabbe's Representation of
Universal Restoration.*

Maldon, June 8, 1812.

SIR,

Those who cannot "vindicate the ways of God to man," upon any views of the Divine government, short of *universal restoration*, will be glad to find the professors of that doctrine recognized among the sects of the country, and their opinions represented fairly. Under this impression, I send you the following lines, from Crabbe's Poem, called *The Borough*, which has just come in my way. They are, in Letter 4, entitled *Religious Sects*.

We have, it seems, who treat, and doubtless well,
Of a chastizing, not awarding, hell;
Who are assured that an offended God
Will cease to use the thunder and the red;
A soul on earth, by crime and folly stain'd,
When here corrected has improvement gain'd;
In other state still more improved to grow,
And nobler powers in happier worlds to know;
New strength to use in each divine employ,
And, more enjoying, looking more to joy.

The ingenious poet, however, appears rather to wish than believe the truth of this doctrine, for he adds,—

A pleasing vision! could we thus be sure
Polluted souls would be at length so pure;
The view is happy, we may think it just,
It may be true,—but who shall add, it must?
To the plain words and sense of sacred writ,
With all my heart, I rev'rently submit;
But where it leaves me doubtful, I'm afraid
To call conjecture to my reason's aid;

Thy thoughts, thy ways, great God I are
not as mine,
And to thy mercy I my soul resign.

The author of *The Borough*, perhaps, never paid a close attention to theology, beyond his subscribed creeds, as a clergyman of the Church of England. He might otherwise have discovered from the connected "sense of holy writ," that he hazarded no "conjecture," in believing that *God is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works*; a position which can scarcely be reconciled to any view of the Divine dispensations, which excludes the idea of *universal restoration*.

HOSPES.

Hopton Haynes.

SIR— June 25, 1812.

In the *New View of London*, 1708, (ii. 703.) I lately found the names of *Newton* and *Haynes* thus mentioned among the officers of the mint, at that period.

"Sir Isaac Newton, Kt. (that most celebrated mathematician,) is Master Worker.

"*Hopton Haynes*, Esq. Weigher and teller, &c."

This entry agrees with the statement in the Preface to the second edition of Haynes's *Scripture Account*. The *New View*, attributed to a writer of the name of *Hatton*, is considered as a work of authority.

Since the decease of the worthy relict of Mr. Michael Dodson, there has been added to the collection at Williams's library, a portrait of Hopton Haynes. Would not an engraving of this portrait, attached to a new edition of his, now very scarce work, be sufficiently desired by the *Unitarians* to cover the expence?

OTIOSUS.

Deity of the Holy Spirit.

Liverpool, June 18, 1812.

SIR,

In your Repository for March last (p. 149) a correspondent who signs himself M. H. puts some questions relating to the Holy Spirit. He asks, "why did Jesus Christ never offer up a single petition to this equal in Omnipotence," &c. ; and further remarks, that "in that most striking and comprehensive form of words which he delivered to us does he exclusively teach us to pray to the Father." Now, it is difficult to say, whether your correspondent is really ignorant what reply Trinitarians would make to this, or whether he supposes, that none of the few who may happen to see the Repository, will think it worth while to answer it, therefore expects to claim a victory as though it was unanswerable. I would refer your reader to two excellent books on this subject, viz. Dr. Owen's and Mr. Hurrion's, and advise him to read them : but lest he should think this doctrine has no advocates in the present day, I would make one or two observations. And first respecting the Lord's Prayer, which appears to me only suited to the Jewish state of the church. Every one who attentively considers the New Testament must observe, that our Lord acted as a Jew and attended all the Jewish feasts, rites and ceremonies ; and that the true nature and design of his kingdom and gospel were not revealed to his disciples until after his ascension, when the Holy Ghost came upon them : and, previous to this, prayer was offered up through the medium of the daily sacrifices, and not through him or in his

name ; that prayer, therefore, appears not to be intended for the Christian, but the Jewish state : had it been designed to be used when Christianity was established, how came Mark and John not to notice it in their Gospels ? as thereby those early Christians, who had only those gospels, would want this important form of prayer. And if you refer to the 16th chapter of John, our Lord, just before his sufferings tells his disciples, *Hitherto ye have asked nothing in my name ; and that whatsoever they should ask the Father in his name, he would give it them ;* evidently showing that prayer was to be offered in a different manner and through a different medium after his ascension, to what it had been during the Jewish polity. I have also said, that the disciples did not understand the nature of the gospel, or Christ's kingdom, until after his ascension, for we find, even after his resurrection, his disciples asked him, Acts i. 6. "*Wilt thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel ?*" This he tells them it was not for them to know, but that they should receive power after the Holy Ghost was come upon them. So that it does not appear, that every thing which our Lord and his disciples practised as Jews is to be a model for Christians.

But further. However M. H. may think of the Holy Spirit, he appears to have been a person of considerable importance during our Lord's stay on earth, who declares blasphemy against him to be an unpardonable sin : and he also appears to have been considered as of high importance after our Lord's ascension. When our Lord, according to his promise, sent him to carry on the gospel,

we find, Acts i. 8. that the Holy Ghost, was to come upon them. In verse 16, Peter, quoting a passage from the Psalms, says the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake it. Acts ii. 4. We read that the Apostles were filled with the *Holy Ghost*, which produced miraculous effects upon them. Acts xiii. 2. The Holy Ghost said, separate me Barnabas and Saul to the work whereunto I have called them: and Acts v. 3 and 4, of Ananias and Sapphira, it is said, that they lied to the *Holy Ghost*, and that they had not lied to men but unto God. Now who is this great person who is thus highly spoken of in scripture, and to whose influence such miraculous powers are ascribed? And, let it be remembered, this is a great person sent by Christ, after his ascension, and that he was somebody distinct from the Father; as the Apostles were sent forth to baptise persons on their embracing the gospel, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost?

If then, those who are called Trinitarians and worship one God, in the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, happen to take the scriptures of the New Testament as being plain matters of fact, related by plain honest men, miraculously inspired by the Holy Ghost, and should understand them in that light which the language in common acceptance conveys, and literally as it is written; how can they be to blame? and who is to prove that the New Testament does not mean literally what is written in it? We have been taught that the truths of religion are so plain, that a man that runs may read and understand: and when the Apostles have solemnly declared,

that they have not followed cunningly devised fables, those who call themselves Unitarians must not wonder, if those called Trinitarians will not, upon their mere *ipse dixit*, believe one half the New Testament to be figure and the other half fable.

A hint more, and I conclude. Will M. H. say why the writers of the New Testament, so uniformly, when speaking generally of the Divine Being, call him *God*; and when speaking of Jesus Christ, in connection with him, they use the relative term *Father*, or *God the Father*: and if Christ and the Holy Ghost are not God, why is baptism administered in the names of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, and not in the names of God and Christ and the Holy Ghost; and why does the Apostle Paul, in the close of his Second Epistle to the Corinthians, close with *the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, &c.*? Why does Peter, 1st Epistle, chap. i. verse 2. mention God the Father, the Spirit and Jesus Christ as distinct persons all uniting in blessing the elect?

H. M.

Sketch of English Protestant Persecution. Letter V.

SIR, June 21, 1812.

I ought to have mentioned in my last letter how the reformer of Geneva, not long before the proceedings against *Joan Bocher*, had contributed to increase the ardour of English Protestant persecution, under the influence of that anti-christian spirit which at length urged him to the atrocious deed against *Servetus*. Among the epistles of *Calvin* is one to the

Protector Somerset, dated October 22, 1548. He tells the Duke that he has been informed respecting two sorts of troublesome people in England. One called *Gospellers*; the other party smitten with the old superstition. He recommends to the Protector that both feel the weight of a severe correction and have the magistrate's sword drawn upon them. *Gladio ultore coerceri quem tibi tradidit Dominus.*

Calvin had no occasion thus to *spur the speedy*. The year 1550, memorable in the history of the English Protestant Church for the burning of Joan Bocher, was also employed in the infliction of more tedious, though probably, in many instances, not less fatal severities, on the score of religion.

Strype (*Ecc. Mem.* ii. 236) relates, from the manuscripts of Fox, that "sectaries appeared now in Kent and Essex," chiefly at Bocking and Feversham, who "held the opinions of the Anabaptists and Pelagians." Those in Kent went over to their brethren in Essex "to instruct and join with them." Strype names eleven of their principal adherents and four of their teachers, one of whom was *Humphrey Middleton*, whose story will soon engage our attention. Among their "sayings and tenets" were the following:

"That the doctrine of Predestination was meeter for devils than for Christian men: that children were not born in original sin: that there was no man so chosen but he might damn himself, neither any man so reprobate but that he might keep God's commandments and be saved: that learned men were the cause of great errors: that to play at any manner of game for money is sin and the work of

the flesh. Divers of them were taken up and found sureties for their appearance, and were at length brought into the ecclesiastical courts." Strype adds, (p. 237) "Besides these sectaries, there was information sent to the court in June this year of another sort in Essex, but they as it seems, more harmless, namely certain that came together on other days beside Sundays and holidays to hear sermons, who had preachers that then preached to them, and that, for all I perceive, was all their fault; for I do not find any false doctrine or sedition laid to their charge."

I know not whether in such a connection this instance of mere religious restraint may be thought worthy of notice. Though it would now be very justly called persecution, yet probably it never excited even a question among our Protestant reformers, amidst the sanguinary projects which engaged their attention. The following paper, issued by the council, in consequence of the *Information* mentioned by Strype, may however be worthy of preservation, as a testimony to that desire of religious instruction which had been excited by the events and the preachers of that age in a populace of whom scarcely any were able to read the scriptures for themselves. This paper I copy from Wilkins' *Council Mag. Brit.* iv. 62.

"The council's letter to the bishop of London against weekly lectures, with the bishop of London's letter for the execution of it to the Archdeacon of Colchester. *Ex. Reg. Bonner. Fol. 28b.*

"After our right hearty commendations unto your lordship.

Being advertised from the Lord Chancellor, that divers preachers within your diocese in the county of Essex, do preach, as well the work days as the holy days, whereas some inconveniences may grow. Thinking not convenient that the preachers should have liberty so to do, because at this present it may increase the people's idleness, who of themselves are so much disposed to it, as all the ways that may be devised are little enough to draw them to work. We therefore pray you to take order that they preach the holy days only, as they have been accustomed to do. And the work days to use those prayers that are prescribed unto them. Thus we bid your good Lordship most heartily farewell. From Greenwich, the 23d of June 1550, your loving friends, E. Somerset, &c."

There follows a letter from Ridley to the Archdeacon of Colchester signed *Nicol. London*, dated 25th of June, 1550, charging the preachers in the king's highness's name, that "from henceforth they do not preach but only upon Sundays and holy days, and none other days, except it be at any burial or marriage!"

We now return to contemplate persecution in its proper form, undisguised by any pretences of political expediency.

The friend who vainly expostulated with Rogers (p. 366) had conjectured that the attention excited by the execution of a heretic was calculated to increase heresy. Such now appears to have been the case. The Council deemed it necessary at the commencement of the following year to issue a new commission which is found in Rymer's *Fœdera*. (xv.

251.) This commission is dated Jan. 18, 1551. Its title and general terms are like the former; both, as a well informed friend lately remarked to me, being copied from the judicial forms of the English Papal Church. The variations of this second commission consist in the notice of some probably new heresies called *libertinorum errores*, and a special injunction to the commissioners to reclaim or punish certain impugnors of the established service thus described. *Librum nostrum vulgo appellatum, The Booke of the Common Prayer and Administration of the Sacraments and other Rites and Ceremonies of the Church after the use of the Church of England, aut divina officia in eodem expressa et inserta continententes, spernentes, adversantes, sive obloquentes.* To the former Commissioners is added Sir John Cheke, described as the King's Tutor.

These commissioners were not idle. They soon found another victim to follow Joan Bocher to the stake, though on an opposite ground of heresy. Fox (*Com.* p. 202) describes their reputed errors as directly contrasted. "*Germanus de divina Christi essentia; altera de humanitate.*" The story of this second and the last recorded martyrdom, during the reign of Edward, so far as I have been able to collect it, is as follows.

Strype, (*Ec. Mem.* ii. 78) places at the year 1547, the "Beginning of the Stranger's Church at Canterbury." About that time arrived in England Peter Martyr, and among other learned divines accompanying him, Bernardinus Ochinus, an Antitrinitarian according to Sandius, though pr-

bably then on the reserve as to his un-orthodox opinions. It appears also from Rymer's *Fœd.* (xv. 242) that the Church of the Augustine Friars in London was granted, 24 July, 1550, to the Germans, John a Lasco, a Polish nobleman, being the first minister and superintendant. Such were, no doubt, the persons designed by Strype, (*Cran.* p. 234) who "fled over hither to escape the persecutions that were in those times very violently set on foot in their respective countries, and to enjoy the liberty of their consciences and the free profession of their religion." *The King's Letters Patent to John a Lasco and the German Congregation*, as preserved by Burnett, (ii. Rec. 185) not only express compassion for expatriated foreigners, but declare his zeal to preserve in its original liberty the church which he had contributed to deliver from the tyranny of the Pope.

To these foreigners a considerable latitude was permitted as to forms. This appears from a complaint of Burnett, (ii. 146) that "A Lasco did not carry himself with that decency which became a stranger who was so kindly received; for he wrote against the orders of this church, both in the matter of the habits, and about the posture in the sacrament, being for sitting rather than kneeling." A later historian, Mr. Carte, (iii. 254) is larger upon this point. He says, "John a Lasco had been educated in Poland, a country overrun with Arians and Socinians, who, denying the divinity of our Saviour, treated him in a manner as their equal by sitting with him at his table, and publishing a book, maintained the practice of sitting

at the holy communion, contrary to the laudable usage and express direction of the Church of England."

This church of the strangers, zealous against a heresy which they had not themselves entertained, perhaps grateful for the license allowed them, but certainly forgetful of those claims to christian liberty under which they had sought a refuge in England, now proceeded to excommunicate one of their number. That this persecuted church presently became abettors of persecution, and performed the first act of the tragedy we are about to witness, appears clearly from the following entry in King Edward's Journal. "1551, April 7. A certain *Arrian*, of the strangers, a Dutch Man, being excommunicated by the congregation of his countrymen, was, after long disputation, condemned to the fire."

This Unitarian, here called an Arian, more probably agreed in sentiment with L. Socinus, who, as appears by your volume V. p. 170, was also about this time in England. The stranger's name was George Van Parris, a native or inhabitant of Mentz, called by Fox a German, (*Germanus Moguntinus*) which was then synonymous with Dutchman. Fox also hints at his having been one of John a Lasco's congregation. In the present age it would scarcely deserve praise, but be only an avoidance of just reproach, to do justice to the moral character of a theological opponent. Yet in the age of Fox it was singularly liberal to commemorate the virtues of a man whose principles he must have abhorred. Of George Van Parris, Fox declares that his countrymen

had nothing of which to accuse him but his opinions. They admitted that his life was pure and blameless. He adds, I wish such a man had not embraced such an opinion, or that his life might have been spared and he had been left to the divine mercy, had it so pleased the governors of the Church. *Vitæ alioqui integræ et inculpatae a suis dicebatur contrariis. Utinam talis vita aut in eam non incidisset opinionem: aut aliter ea quam morte illi potuisset eximi, vitamque divinæ gratiæ relinquere, si ita visum esset ecclesiæ proceribus.*

The judicial proceedings against George Van Parris were held at Lambeth, April 6, 1551, before Cranmer, Ridley, Coverdale, bishop of Exeter, and six other commissioners. (Wilkins C. M. B. iv. 44.) The prisoner is called a German of the parts of Flanders, now residing in the city of London, in the capacity of a surgeon. *Chirurgicus, natione Teuthonicus, videlicet de partibus Flandriæ infra civitatem Londinensem commorans.* Fox describes him as quite illiterate, ignorant, I apprehend, of every language but his own, and therefore needing an interpreter, an office supplied by Bishop Coverdale, one of his judges, who was a German. *Rudis erat is prorsus literarum atque doctrinæ expers. Porro ne sermonis quidem illius gnarus, in quo condemnatus est. Unde quum per se non potuit, per interpretem respondere episcopum Exoniens. cogebatur.* That surgeons in that age were directly the reverse, in point of education, to what they are at present, may appear from a passage in Lord Herbert's Henry the Eighth. In 1531 it required a statute to raise such persons,

among others, above the rank of mere labourers. "It was declared that the said strangers, being bakers, brewers, chirurgeons, and scriveners, were exempted from certain penal statutes, and not taken to be handicrafts-men."

Through his interpreter, the prisoner declares "that he believeth that God the Father is only God, and that Christ is not very God, is none heresy; and being by like interpretation declared to him that it is a heresy; and being asked whether he will retract and abjure the same opinion, he saith, no." After disputes and discussions, *disceptationes et discussiones* with the prisoner, the commissioners, as in the case of Joan Bocher, invoking the name of Christ, and enduring grief of heart, he is at length declared an obstinate heretic according to the sentence of the greater excommunication, delivered over to the secular power and committed to the custody of Guy Wade, keeper of the prison called the "Coultry" in the city of London. Then follows a petition to the King, for the execution of the prisoner, describing him as a child of the devil and enemy of all righteousness, *quidam iniquitatis diabolicæ alumnus et filius.* They pray for the king's protection of the church against the corruption of such an infectious member, *contra tam putridum membrum.*

These inconsistent, misguided Christians and professed reformers, who knew not what spirit they were of, had again afforded them space for repentance and motives to a review of their proceedings. Fox relates, though he does not say whether before or after the sentence, that a relation of George Van Parris, a man of rank at

Mentz, by letters to Cranmer, interceded for the safety of his kinsman. His wife also, (he means I apprehend the wife of the prisoner.) implored his life. *Herum habebat Moguntinum quemdam, virum nobilem, qui scriptis ad Cant. literis in Angliam magnopere pro illius salute deprecatus est. Idem et ab uxore etiam illius factitatum, si precibus impetrari vita potuisset.* No interference could avail; for George Van Parris was burnt in Smithfield, April 24th, 1551. Fox, attached to the character of Cranmer, and writing just after his friend's martyrdom, endeavours to charge upon the imperious influence of Northumberland cruelties, so inconsistent with the natural mildness of the archbishop. Fox's words are these: *Sed ingenio mitissimus Cant. qui et ipse, ut post dicemus, exustus est, non tam in eo naturam suam, quam ducis Northumbriæ imperium secutus dicebatur.* I must leave this conjecture as I found it, not having met with a confirmation of the rumour in any other writer. The Duke of Northumberland was a wily, though at length an outwitted politician, whose religious profession was at the command of his ambition. Such a man might have served some interest, or perhaps covered some other design by persecuting a small minority of dissidents from the church now established. Yet, as to Cranmer and Ridley, however amiable they might be as men, as theologians it will scarcely be disputed that they were genuine persecutors, and, without any foreign influence, capable of any severities connected with that character.

Respecting this martyrdom of George Van Parris, the following record is in Fabian's Chronicle. "1551. This year was a Dutchman brent in Smithfield for holding the opinion of the Arians."

Stow in his Annals, (p. 605) gives this notice, "An Arian burnt, 1551, the 24th April. George of Paris, a Dutchman, was burnt in Smithfield for Arianisme."

Burnett, (ii. 106.) after mentioning the case of Joan Bocher, adds, "To end all this matter at once: two years after this one *George Van Pare*, a Dutchman, being accused for saying that God the Father was only God, and that Christ was not very God, he was dealt with long to abjure, but would not. So on the sixth of April, 1551, he was condemned in the same manner that Joan of Kent was; and on the 25th of April was burnt in Smithfield. He suffered with great constancy of mind, and kissed the stake and faggots that were to burn him. Of this *Pare* I find a popish writer saying, that he was a man of most wonderful strict life; that he used not to eat above once in two days; and before he did eat would lie some time in his devotion prostrate on the ground. All this they made use of to lessen the credit of those who had suffered formerly; for it was said they saw now that men of harmless lives might be put to death for heresy, by the confession of the reformers themselves. And in all the books published in Queen Mary's days, justifying her severity against the Protestants, these instances were always made use of; and no part of Cranmer's life exposed him

more than this did. It was said he had consented both to Lambert's and Anne Askew's death, in the former reign, who both suffered for opinions, which he himself held now: and he had now procured the death of these two persons; and when he was brought to suffer himself, afterwards, it was called a just retaliation on him. One thing was certain, that what he did in this matter, flowed from no cruelty of temper in him, no man being further from that black disposition of mind; but it was truly the effect of those principles by which he governed himself."

Such were the life and death of George Van Parris, according to Fox, the second and last martyr, sacrificed at the stake, to the misguided zeal of Cranmer and his associates. Should Fox be here correct, the passage I formerly quoted from Latimer (p. 305.) must refer to *executions*, during *the reign of Henry*.

The next year, 1552, gave completion to a learned work, called, according to Burnett, (ii. 186.) *A Reformation of the Ecclesiastical Laws*. Several eminent churchmen were appointed to this service, though "*Cranmer* did the whole work almost himself." It "was digested, and cast into 51 titles," and "prepared by February this year." Burnett gives a large account of this work, upon which he bestows unqualified approbation. Yet he calmly tells us, "the first title was of the Trinity and the Catholic Faith; in which those who denied the Christian religion were to suffer death and the loss of their goods." This is rather obscure, though I apprehend the Trinity, the Catholic faith, and

the Christian religion were deemed synonymous. To the penalty of of Death was now added the confiscation of goods, or in plain language, the *beggary* of a surviving family. Such were the *tender mercies* of English Protestant persecution, and thus rapidly had Cranmer proceeded to *make havoc* of those whom he deemed *heretics*, during his short career of power.

Nor was Ridley, at this time, inactive. I find him now again, especially preparing to *worry* the obnoxious Anabaptists. In Concil. Mag. Brit. (iv. 61.) are preserved the Bishop of London's "Articles of Enquiry for his Diocese, the 6th year of Edward." 1552. Among the articles are the the following:—

"Whether any of the Anabaptist sect, or other, use notoriously any unlawful or private conventicles, wherein they do use doctrine or administration of sacraments, separating themselves from the rest of the parish.

"Whether any speaketh against baptism of infants."

Strype (p. 365.) mentions, during this year, 1552, a commission to Cranmer, for enquiring after Anabaptists and Arians, in Kent. Probably, this was the same transaction which he describes in his Mem. Cranm. (p. 291.) Sep. 27, as "a Letter from the Council to Cranmer, to examine a sect newly sprung up in Kent." Strype had just before quoted the following passage, from a Preface to the *Jewel of Joy*, by Thomas Becon, Cranmer's chaplain.

"What wicked and ungodly opinions are there sown now a-days, of the *Anabaptists*, *David-eans*, *Libertines*, and such other pestilent sects in the hearts of the people, unto the great disquietness

of Christ's Church, moving rather unto sedition than unto pure religion, unto heresy than unto things godly."

Among these reputed heretics was, probably, Humphrey Middleton, whom I mentioned at the beginning of this letter. His story will form an interesting conclusion to this period of English Protestant persecution, and is the last of my obligations to the *Commentarii* of Fox. After describing the intercourse between Rogers and his friend, quoted (p. 365.) the historian adds the following passage, according to Mr. Peirce's translation. As it is short I shall subjoin the original.

"Much such another instance is reported concerning one *Humphrey Middleton*, (who was afterwards burnt in Queen Mary's days) that when he, with some others, had been kept prisoners, in the last year of King Edward, by the archbishop, and had been dreadfully teased by him, and the rest in commission with him, and were now just upon being condemned in open court, he said to him: 'Well, reverend Sir, pass what sentence you think fit upon us; but that you may not say you was not forewarned, I testify that your own turn will be next.' And accordingly, it came to pass; for a little while after, King Edward died; upon which they were set at liberty, and the bishops cast into prison."—Peirce's *Vindic.* (p. 35.)

Nec absimile quiddam de Humfrido Middletono, qui postea sub Maria exustus est narratur, qui cum aliis quibusdam concaptivis, anno regis Edouardi ultimo, in carcere retentus à Cantuariensi, gravèturque ab cæterisque disqui-

sitoribus exagitatus, in publico judicio jam condemnandum essent, dixisse fertur: age, inquit, ó reverende, statuas in nos licebit in præsentia, quod libet. Id autem ne dicas tibi non prædictum, denuncio tuas dehinc vices fore proximas. Nec fefellit eventus. Paucos enim post dies consequuta regis Edouardi mors, ipsis quidem à carcere demissionem, episcopis verò vincula ac carceres conciliavit. (Com. p. 202.)

Mr. Peirce evidently supposes that Cranmer and his associate Commissioners were prevented only by the sudden extinction of their power, from procuring the death of Middleton and his fellow prisoners, who had probably been now, for three years, suffering under ecclesiastical persecution. Nor is the supposition unfounded. There is no trace, during this reign, of any alternative, in the case of heresy, but recantation or the stake; exactly after the manner of Pagan persecution, which enjoined incense on the established altar, or *to the lions*. Thus drove on these misguided Reformers, while their influence was rapidly declining with the decaying health of Edward. English Protestant persecution may be not unaptly compared to the *devil of the Revelation*, who is described as *having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time*.

Edward died, July 6th, 1553, in his sixteenth year. Considering how the ignorant spirit of his age, might have tempted him to stain a longer reign with a large effusion of Christian blood, we may suitably apply to his short, but exemplary life, the language of an eastern sage. "He pleased God and was beloved of him; so that

speedily was he taken away, lest that wickedness should alter his understanding, or deceit beguile his soul."

Humphrey Middleton, whom Fox described as narrowly escaping this Protestant persecution, was burnt at Canterbury about 1555, the second year of Mary. (Clarke's *Martyr*. p. 145.) His persecutors were brought to the stake, the same year; not unjustly, admitting the principle, which in the exercise of power they had unhappily established. Suffering was then dealt out to the reformers according to the *measure* by which they had *meted* to others, though, considering their numbers, and some cruel aggravations, it may be said, in their case, to have been "pressed down, shaken together and running over."

Here I am glad to relieve you, Mr. Editor, your readers, and myself, by closing this first period of English Protestant persecution, the only period during which it appears in its genuine form. I am ready to believe that the Protestant church-governors in Edward's reign, like many of the Papal, in the reign of Mary, and probably that queen herself, verily thought with Paul, that they ought to do many things against those who would not conform to their faith. I trust, that acting thus ignorantly, like him, they obtained mercy. When the Protestant church was again established, on the death of Mary, the spirit of persecution, under Elizabeth and her successors, became gradually blended with state-craft and church-craft, the jealousy of politicians and the ambition of priests.

Whether I may have leisure or resolution, to attempt the disentanglement of a subject so com-

plicated, I know not. I cannot, however, close this letter, without noticing an assertion, from no inconsiderable authority, which, if historically correct, would render nugatory every document I have produced in these letters, or could bring forward in a continuation of them, and the fairest conclusions drawn from such premises. I refer to a passage in the Archbishop of Canterbury's speech, on Lord Sidmouth's Bill, as I have it before me, among papers lately circulated, on Religious Toleration. The Archbishop, to several just and highly liberal remarks, is reported to have added, *Coercion has never been the practice of the English established Church, nor do I believe it ever will**.

I know not how to account for this unfounded assertion, but by supposing that the speaker, full of his own ideas of what a church ought to be, entirely forgot what his own church had proved herself, at least through several ages. It is indeed far better for the public interest, that a primate, whose office arms him with so much vexatious power, should thus consign to oblivion, the deeds of too many of his Protestant predecessors, some of them perpetrated in his own palace, than that he should, by recognizing them, be inclined to imitate, in any degree, such evil examples. R. G. S.

Further Remarks on the Calvinistic Doctrine of Atonement.

SIR, July 6, 1812.

It seems necessary for me to take some notice of the animadversions of your correspondents, *Vicinus* and *A Calvinist*, (see

* See our last No. p. 379.—ED.

pages 297 and 299) on my account of a conversation on Catholic emancipation. They charge me with misrepresenting the Calvinistic doctrine. If I have done this, it has been unintentionally; but I am not yet convinced that my statement of it is erroneous. Your correspondents take for granted that I intended my remark as applicable to the whole body of Calvinists; but I only stated it as applicable to the person I was conversing with at the time. *Vicinus* acknowledges there may be some who reason in the manner I have described: and though he will not admit them to be proper Calvinists, but calls them Antinomians, they certainly think and call themselves Calvinists, yea, the only proper Calvinists; and many, who are not of their party, think them the most consistent Calvinists. It might be well for your correspondent to inform the world what proper Calvinism is. As he will not admit the statement given of it by Gill and Brine, is there not reason to think he will object to it as stated by Calvin himself, and its most distinguished advocates, until the modern refiners of it began to reduce it to a new form and, retaining the name, and, nominally, all the old doctrines, to present it to the world in an altered and improved edition? It is pleasing to observe that persons of learning and liberality, while they professedly retain the old creed, are, by their new definitions and explanations of it, perhaps unintentionally and imperceptibly to themselves, undermining its most offensive articles, and preparing the way for more rational and liberal sentiments. As your correspondents charge

my statement with falsehood, to make good the charge, even so far as themselves and their own improved views of the system are concerned, they are required to give a direct answer to the following questions. 1. Do they admit or deny that sinners are pardoned, and freed from all the penal consequences of sin, on the ground of what Christ did and suffered for them, independently of their becoming virtuous characters? It is granted, they suppose, they will become virtuous as a necessary consequence of their justification; but that is not the point now in question. 2. Do they assert or deny that the sinner is made righteous, stands righteous in the sight of God, and is placed in a safe state, on the ground of the righteousness of another being imputed to him, prior to his becoming personally righteous, and that his personal righteousness is entirely consequent upon the former? 3. Do they maintain or deny, that the sinner, simply by believing that Christ made atonement for his sins, and was righteous in his stead, or by the belief of either of these points singly, is freed from guilt and the fear of punishment, so as to feel himself in a safe state in the sight of God? It alters not these positions, however much it may guard them from abuse, to say that personal righteousness will naturally and necessarily follow, as the effect of true faith, and that unless good works follow, the faith is not genuine but useless. A pious Calvinist could not retain the doctrine he believes, unless he thought it to have a good moral tendency: nor could a pious Catholic retain the doctrines of his church,

if he thought their tendency immoral. The latter, undoubtedly, as well as the former, thinks the interests of holiness consistent with his creed and all his proceedings in religion: and I am very far from questioning the piety of either serious Catholics or Calvinists. I think if your correspondents will candidly re-peruse my paper, they may perceive that I argued with my travelling companion simply on his own ground; and that what I said was to the purpose, in talking with him, appeared from his making no further reply. I meant not to apply what I said, to the whole body of Calvinists, many of whom I very highly esteem, but only to those who reason as he did: and knowing that many persons object to the emancipation of the Catholics, on the same ground, I thought it might not be useless to send an account of the conversation to your valuable Repository.

AN OLD CORRESPONDENT.

Theological Queries.

SIR, June 30, 1812.

As it is a part of your plan to promote theological disquisition, I have sent you the following queries: perhaps some of your learned correspondents will have the goodness to solve them. Is not doing and permitting, when predicated of an omnipotent and omniscient Being, precisely the same thing? Are not all events the effects of his immediate operation? Does not God, in the words of the prophet, "form light and create darkness, make peace and create evil?" Is not this the doctrine of the Church of England, as contained in her articles and Liturgy?

for not to multiply quotations, I shall only mention the Collect for the 9th Sunday after Trinity,—
"Grant, O Lord, the assistance of thy holy spirit, that we always think and do what is right, &c." If these things are so, what is become of free agency?

An Inquirer after Truth.

On Reading the Scriptures in Public Worship.

SIR, July 2, 1812.

It has long been my wish, and, in some measure, my hope, that some person better qualified than myself to occupy your pages would call your attention and that of your readers to a matter which appears to me to be worthy of it in a very important degree: I mean the custom which prevails in some, perhaps in most, Unitarian Chapels, of occasionally, and not unfrequently omitting the reading of the Scriptures: a custom, which, doubtless, has very much contributed to the notion entertained by many orthodox Christians, that Unitarians do not believe in, or that they lightly esteem the scriptures. In combating this notion, very lately, in a very serious person, I was on the point of adducing the argument of the public reading of them as an essential part of Unitarian worship; when I checked myself on reflecting how possible it was for that person to have occasionally attended at some chapels which I have attended at, without hearing any more of the scriptures than the text; although on the same occasion much time has been occupied in a long desultory extempore prayer, chiefly composed of detached and trite repetitions which might well have been spared, with

advantage to the attention and devotion of the hearers. I do not mean, however, to say that all extempore praying comes under the above description; on the contrary, I have listened with edification and delight to some honourable exceptions to it; but the objection applies more strongly and more frequently, as far as my experience has gone, to that mode; and, as a natural consequence, I prefer such as are precomposed. I can hardly flatter myself that this will be read without offence by some to whom it applies; but this consideration shall not any longer deter me from offering it to you, relying on your professed impartiality for its admission into your Repository, the utility of which will, in my opinion, receive an additional proof by it.

I am, Sir,

AN UNITARIAN CHRISTIAN.

A curious Check on a Banker.

SIR,

A few days ago the following check upon a banker passed through my hands, and as such

checks are not common, it may amuse your readers to read the following copy of it.

“Messrs. Coutts and Co.

Pay to the Rev. F. Stone, (who was deprived of his living for not believing in the supernatural conception of the Virgin Mary) or bearer, twenty pounds.”

It is not merely to gratify the curiosity of your readers that I have sent you the above; for I hope it may induce many who do not believe in the supernatural conception, to consider the case of the poor clergyman, who has fallen a victim to his honesty and the ignorance and want of charity of his opponents. A similar check will be received and faithfully appropriated to the use of Mr. Stone, if sent to Messrs. Brown, Cobb, and Co. Bankers, Lombard Street. Hoping to hear that such communications have been made, and that you may have the opportunity of recording them,

I remain, &c.

ORTHODOX.

TOLERATION ACT.

Mr. Wyvill's Petition. (Presented by Mr. Whitbread during the present Session; with nearly 10,000 Signatures.)

To the Honourable the COMMONS OF GREAT BRITAIN in Parliament assembled.

The humble Petition of the undersigned being Protestants dissenting from the Church of England,

or,

(Protestant Christians.)

SHEWETH,

That it is the duty of all men to examine as diligently as may be in their power the doctrines of religion, and, after such diligent examination, to adopt and to profess what may appear to them to be the truth; and that, in the performance of that duty, men ought not to be obstructed, or discouraged, or otherwise tempted to act hypocritically, by any law, tendency,

ing to bias them in the course of such examination of the doctrines of religion, by subjecting them, in the case of their dissenting from the doctrines of any established church, to suffer death by burning, or otherwise, or to suffer any corporal or pecuniary punishment, or to be injured in their reputation by any disability more or less disgraceful.

That your Petitioners acknowledge, with high satisfaction, that, in the present reign, considerable progress has been made towards the full restoration of the rights of conscience, by the wisdom of parliament and the benignity of the king, rescinding various laws, in whole or in part, which were violations of those rights; yet, since other penal laws, not less injurious to those rights remain unrepealed, since some of these laws subject to corporal punishments or pecuniary penalties, others, as in the case of the Test Laws, passed in the reign of Charles II. subject to disgrace, disability, and privation of civil rights, persons whose only offence it is, that, in conformity with their duty, they have examined the doctrines of religion, and by such examination have been induced to embrace and to profess religious opinions different from the doctrines of the established church: Your Petitioners feel it to be their duty humbly, but earnestly, to remonstrate against the longer continuance of any of these intolerant laws, and they do, in conformity with the premises, expressly petition this Honourable House, that every such unjust law may be repealed, and the Rights of Conscience may thus be restored to all the subjects of this United Kingdom, And

your Petitioners humbly beg leave to add, that this request, as it appears to them, is grounded on the most evident considerations of justice; and they trust that the compliance of the state would yet conciliate the affection of millions of our aggrieved fellow subjects, and unite them for ever to the interest of the empire. Under each of these aspects their request claims, and they hope will be found to deserve, the assent of this Honourable House, as they are statesmen, anxious for the safety of their country, and as they are moralists determined to act impartially on the rules of justice. But, when your Petitioners consider farther, that every attempt to influence men in their choice and profession of religion by penal laws, whether corrupt or compulsive in their operation, is contrary to the spirit of the gospel, and forbidden by its plainest precepts in numerous passages, they hope it may be allowed them more particularly, and with all possible earnestness, to intreat the members of this Honourable House to renounce the whole system of persecution, the long accumulation of ages of barbarism and discord, and to free an almost countless multitude of injured individuals from the temptation of ensnaring tests and the more oppressive severities of our compulsive intolerance, by the success of such salutary councils, at once restoring concord and safety to the empire, and freeing the national church from that just reproach of retaining the support which persecuting laws may be supposed to bestow, but which Christianity condemns, and would disdain to accept.

Mr Belsham's Notes on the Toleration Act, attached to his Fast Sermon, Feb. 5, 1812.

No statute was ever drawn up with greater caution and precision than the Toleration Act. The design of it is to protect lay-dissenters, dissenting ministers and dissenting places of worship from the penalties of the law. The first clause protects lay-dissenters, upon condition of taking certain oaths and making certain declarations, *which oaths and declaration the justices of peace, at the general sessions of the peace, are hereby REQUIRED to tender and administer, &c.* The last clause protects places of worship, upon condition of their being certified to the bishop, or the archdeacon, or the justices of the peace, and registered in the court or recorded at the sessions, "*the register or clerk of the peace whereof respectively is hereby REQUIRED, to register the same and to give certificate thereof, &c.*" The seventh clause, which protects ministers and teachers of all descriptions, whether ordained or not, and whether connected with congregations or not, (for the most comprehensive expressions are used, so as to leave no doubt in the mind of those who are well informed concerning the nonconformists of that age,) obliges them likewise to take the same oaths and make the same declaration as the laity, and in the same court: but with this remarkable and very important difference of expression, *viz. which court is hereby IMPOWERED to administer the same.*" Thus leaving it to the discretion of the court whether the oath should be administered or not. I once thought that this expression was inadvertent: but upon recon-

sideration, I am clearly convinced that it was intentional. In a statute, the object of which was so novel, and of such high importance, in which every expression must have been maturely weighed, it is a moral impossibility that such an inaccuracy should have escaped the sagacity of Lord Somers, the framer of this famous Bill. And no doubt that great statesman and profound lawyer had his reasons for this alteration in the phraseology. Enlarged and liberal as his sentiments are known to have been, and ardent as was his zeal in the cause of civil and religious liberty, he was at the same time a warm friend to the constitution in church and state. And he could recollect the time when both were overturned and laid prostrate by the prevalence of sectarian principles and parties. In the very heart of a law, therefore, which was intended for the protection of nonconformists he retained this secret check, that if ever the time should again occur when the numbers or the power of the nonconformists should excite alarm, they might learn that their legal protection was not so complete, nor their power so great as they might apprehend. How far this measure, dictated by policy, was consonant to justice, is not my present business to inquire.

If it should be asked, how the nonconformists of that day permitted the Bill to pass, with this important flaw in its constitution? the answer is not difficult. They knew the general tenor and design of the law, and were so overjoyed at the recovery of their liberty, that not being lawyers they did not nicely scrutinize the terms. If it is said that their

simplicity was duped, I can only answer that it were to be wished that this example were singular in its kind. But in fact no practical inconvenience was intended by the learned framer of the Bill, nor has any such inconvenience been felt till very lately. For more than a hundred years the statute was acted upon as if it had been imperative. Every candidate for the ministry was admitted to qualify, and every qualified minister was regarded as intitled to all the immunities of the Bill. The abominable abuses of this qualification under Lord Sidmouth's administration, when many qualified for no purpose but to escape the militia laws, first induced the magistrates to inquire into the extent of the toleration: and the rapid increase of Methodism created an alarm which has led to a discovery which has in fact intirely annulled and abrogated the Toleration Act, so far as it relates to nonconformist ministers, for a toleration which depends upon the discretion of the magistrates is no legal toleration at all.

Nothing can be more extraordinary than the supposition that this new interpretation of the Toleration Act is authorized and intended by the act itself. The great Lord Somers who framed the bill, and the legislature which passed it, and the nonconformists who were contented with it, must all have laboured under a strange bereavement of intellect for the moment, if it had been enacted that the candidates for legal protection should be actually settled with congregations before they were legally authorized to preach at

all. But no such absurd requisition disgraces this famous *statute*.

The seventh clause of the Act extends its protection to all nonconformist ministers and candidates for the minstry of every description who comply with its requisitions. "No person dissenting from the Church of England in holy orders," i. e. clergymen who have quitted the church, "or pretended holy orders," i. e. Presbyterians, Independents, &c. "or pretending to holy orders," i. e. candidates for the ministry, "nor any preacher," whether connected with a congregation or otherwise, "or teacher of any congregation of Dissenting Protestants, that shall make and subscribe the declaration aforesaid, &c. shall be liable to any of the pains and penalties, &c."

The tenth clause of the Act confers immunities but limits those immunities to ministers connected with congregations. It repeats the same description of persons which are enumerated in the seventh clause, with the exception of persons pretending to holy orders or candidates for the ministry, who of course could not be entitled to the benefits. The expressions are remarkably precise and clear: viz. "And be it further enacted, that every teacher or preacher in holy orders, or pretended holy orders, that is a minister, preacher, or teacher of a congregation, &c. shall be exempted from serving upon any jury, &c." Nothing can be more intelligible, distinct, or consistent than the intentions of the act. Lord Somers having, as he thought, by the introduction of the word *impowered* laid in a sufficient caveat to secure the constitution, was willing that the rest

of the bill should be constructed with all the latitude which the Dissenters could desire.

The noble framer of the bill therefore and the legislature which passed it stand acquitted of the charge of imposing the inconsistent conditions which are now required. But that the magistrates of the present day under the shelter of the word impowered, are authorized by law to demand these conditions or any other which they may think expedient previously to their administering the required oaths cannot, I think, be justly denied. It is from this discretionary authority, which completely annuls the Toleration Act, that the nonconformists now justly, anxiously, and unanimously seek legislative relief.

The temporalities of the church can never be in danger, so long as they are protected by power and fashion. Even the multiplication of sectaries bodes no evil to the establishment, if they are left to themselves without being molested for their opinions. For in the first place they are too much divided amongst themselves, and too hostile to each other to conspire against the church. And, in the second place, the controversy concerning church discipline, forms of prayer, ceremonies, &c. is almost at rest: the great thing with religionists of the present day is to hear what they call the gospel: if the doctrine is evangelical and approved, the hearers regard it as of little consequence whether the place of assembly is consecrated or unconsecrated, whether the officiating minister reads forms or prays extempore, whether he wears a surplice or a coloured coat.

And no persons now think of contending for the obsolete doctrines of divine right, either of episcopacy, presbyterianism or independency. This is a great step gained in the progress of moderation. If any thing could bring the church into danger it would be the petty persecutions which have of late been exercised upon nonconformists of various descriptions. It is a fact, attested by all history, that persecution, where it does not proceed to extermination, always promotes the persecuted cause. The disposition shewn to deny privileges to bodies of men who think themselves entitled to them, or to deprive them of what they have long enjoyed, excites irritation and hostility where it did not before exist, and combines parties who before had no connexion with each other. And this, if any thing, might bring the church into real danger. If the object be to fill the churches, the doors must be opened to the popular preachers, whose loose but familiar and moving addresses will always attract the multitude far more than the elegant, polished, argumentative, or moral compositions of men of taste, education and learning. But if the friends of the Church of England would place her upon a rock from which she could never be removed, they must reform the church herself, by discarding a system of speculative theology, which was the product of a rude and barbarous age, and which in these times of abounding light and knowledge no well-informed person will undertake to defend, by substituting, agreeably to the prayer of the petitioning clergy forty years ago, subscription to the scriptures for subscription to the articles, and

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by adopting a Liturgy reformed upon the plan of the celebrated Dr. Samuel Clarke, the rector of St. James's, in which all religious worship shall be addressed to the Father alone. What a glorious æra would this be for the national church! What a happy day to numbers of her most enlightened and virtuous sons, who are now bending in anguish under a yoke of bondage. Then, indeed, would the Church of England identify herself with the church of Christ, "without spot or wrinkle or any such thing," nor will she then be afraid of distributing Bibles without note or comment.—But I forbear. And if any are disposed to cavil at the liberty which has been taken to suggest improvements in a church of which the author is not within the pale, he must shelter himself under the example of those eminent members of the established church, who have lately manifested such generous zeal to raise the character and to promote the respectability of the nonconformist clergy.

Lord Stanhope's Speech on the Second Reading of his Bill.

The order of the day having been read,

EARL STANHOPE rose to move the second reading of his Bill for preventing the Imposition of Disabilities upon Persons on account of Religious Opinions, or the Exercise of their religion. His lordship stated, that his Bill did not touch the Test or Corporation Acts, or what was called Catholic emancipation; the object of it merely being to prevent persons from incurring any disability on account of their religious opinions,

with a proviso to prevent religious opinions from being made the stalking horse for exciting disorder. Referring to what had been said on a former evening by a noble earl (Liverpool), that no man ought to be molested on account of mere religious opinion, he entirely concurred in that sentiment, and trusted he should have the noble earl's support. The noble earl had also objected in the former, that the whole of the intended measure was not brought forward. In this case the whole of the intended measure was brought forward, and he trusted that no shifts or devices would be attempted to defeat it. The noble earl had also said, that a Protestant establishment was the best, because the best calculated to give an enlarged and liberal toleration. He (Earl Stanhope) gloried in being a Protestant. The right of private judgment, and consequently the most liberal toleration to all religious opinions, being the essence of that religion. The difference between the Catholic and Protestant was, that the former contended that God had not only given a book of revealed religion, but had also given a church to interpret that book, and that no other interpretation but the interpretation of that church was right; the Protestant contended for the unlimited right of private judgment. The unlimited right of private judgment in matters of religion, was what he was contending for, and it was the object of his bill to authorize by law. His lordship proceeded to quote several old statutes, for the purpose of shewing the absurdity and injustice of the provisions formerly made for restraining religious opinions, amongst others,

enacting that persons not going to church for a month, should forfeit 20*l.* and find security for good behaviour for a year, but that the penalty, though tendered might be refused, and the party forfeit one third of his lands, tenements and hereditaments. At the present moment it was physically impossible for a large proportion of his majesty's subjects to go to church, for it appeared from the diocesan returns, printed by order of the house, that 4,000,000 of persons in England had not the means of attending church, there being that number more than all the churches could contain. This bill, he contended was peculiarly called for, inasmuch as it appeared by the same returns, that whilst the number of places of worship of the Established Church in England, were 2533, those of the Dissenters were 3454, thus proving that the majority of the people were non-conformists; and taking into the account the church of Scotland, to which the greater part of the inhabitants of that country belonged, and the Catholics of Ireland, forming a large majority of the population of that country, it was evident that a very large majority of the population of England, Scotland and Ireland were nonconformists. He trusted, therefore, that he should not hear one argument against this bill used on former occasions, that the majority ought to bind the minority in matters of religion. Proceeding in the quotation of old statutes, his lordship dwelt much upon the injustice and oppression of those enactments, the object of which, to compel persons under a heavy penalty to attend church on Sundays and holidays, and not merely this, but persons were rendered liable to a penalty of 10*l.* for every servant in their house that did not go to church, for every visitor also, and for the servant of every visitor. After quoting several other enactments in various old statutes, enforcing still more oppressively the other provisions on the same subject, he proceeded to adduce a variety of instances of absurd enactments in old statutes, amongst others some in the reign of Elizabeth, that certain kinds of fish should be eaten on particular days, and that the fish should be all eaten before tasting meat, without fraud or cozenage. It was also enacted, that flesh should not be eaten on particular days without a licence. In the reign of James the First, it was enacted that no person should entertain evil spirits, or feed them with fish, flesh or vegetables. Another curious enactment was, that a man should be deemed guilty of bigamy who married two wives, or one widow. Another enactment instanced was, to prevent women from leaving this country, because they were popishly inclined. His lordship also dwelt much upon the subject of excommunication, instancing a variety of enactments and canons of church, respecting it, for the purpose of shewing their absurdity and injustice. He thought that the repeal of the enactments he had mentioned would do no good, whilst the power of the Ecclesiastical Court remained with respect to excommunication. He related an anecdote of a noble lord, going to an eminent painter to desire him to paint a fool, and the manner proposed was this, to paint a man getting over a park paling set with tenter-hooks, whilst an open

gate was near him, by which he might have entered. He would propose to paint a rank idiot in the following manner; to represent him getting over a park paling set with tenter hooks, while before him was a wall fifty feet high, which he could not get over, and on one side an open gate, by which he might enter without difficulty and avoid the wall. Now what he meant by this was, that the paling set with tenter-hooks was the statutes he had quoted, the high wall was the ecclesiastical jurisdiction, and the open gate was his bill, containing a short enactment declaring the liberty of religious opinion. The subject of uniformity, his lordship illustrated by an anecdote of the chapel clock with four faces, in Vere Street, near Cavendish Square, which on passing one day he looked up to, to observe the hour, and observed, that on one of the faces it was five o'clock; but having an angular view, he saw that the second face pointed at a quarter past five: thinking this very odd, he looked at the third face, and found that to point at half-past five: this was odder still, he looked at the fourth face, and found it was three-quarters past five. Adverting to a variety of enactments respecting the Book of Common Prayer, his lordship observed upon the differences that existed in the copies of that book, as published by the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, stating that they amounted to 4000 and odd. He quoted an opinion of Lord Mansfield, delivered in giving judgment in an appeal in that House, stating that conscience was not amenable to human law, or controulable by human tribunals, and urged this in support of his

bill, the object of which was, to give liberty of conscience, and the right of private judgment in matters of religion, without interruption.

His lordship avowed himself a decided enemy to toleration, because it implied that certain individuals were permitted, as a matter of favour and sufferance, to worship their Creator in the way they deemed proper. It acknowledged the right of those who granted toleration to be, if they pleased, at any time intolerant. For this reason he had always condemned and hated the statutes of the 29th Charles II. and the 1st. Will. and Mary, ch. 15. because they were called Toleration Acts: in his lordship's opinion, what was called toleration, only rivitted the chains of religious slavery. One Mr. William Smith had lately been dabbling in these matters, but not with much success: he proposed by his bill a completely new system, according to which licences were to be granted, not only to a man to preach, but old women were not even allowed to say their prayers without it—people were not to be allowed to exercise their natural rights, without permission from Mr. W. Smith. The quantity of licences required would be innumerable, and it would have been a great improvement of the scheme, if Mr. Vansittart had thought of making it a very fruitful source of revenue, by imposing a stamp duty of 5s. or 10s. on every licence: the produce would be incalculable; almost as much as the tax proposed by a learned but humorous bishop, who said that he could point out to government a mode of raising a very large sum of money. Of

course all the ministers were eager to be let into so advantageous a secret, thinking that they personally should be relieved of some of the burdens they were in common compelled to sustain: but the reverse was the fact, and they were not a little disappointed, and it drew down their faces to an enormous length, when the prelate informed them that he suggested a duty upon adultery and fornication [laughter]. His lordship would not detain the House longer, although the question was of the greatest importance. He conjured the Right Reverend prelates well to weigh the subject, divested of those prejudices which they naturally cast into the scale; he addressed them not only on behalf of the Dissenters, but on behalf of the Protestant religion. And for the Dissenters he might address them in the eloquent words of St. Paul, when before Agrippa,—"Would to God that not only those, but all who hear me, were not only almost but altogether such a one as I am,—*except these bonds.*" His lordship expressed his gratitude to Heaven, that there was now some prospect that "these bonds" would be broken. Be the consequences what they might, he would be one of the first to attempt their destruction.

The question was then put, that the Bill be read a second time. A division took place, when the numbers were,

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The Bill was accordingly thrown out. On re-entering the House we found

Lord Holland upon his legs.—He begged to ask the noble Earl opposite (Liverpool) whether by

rejecting the Bill brought in by Earl Stanhope, he meant it to be understood that nothing would be done by government with regard to the disabilities under which the dissenters laboured? If so, he should feel it to be his duty, however unequal to the task, to submit to the House some proposition upon the subject.

The Earl of Liverpool replied, that he felt not the least difficulty in informing the noble baron, "that he was thoroughly convinced that some alteration of the existing laws is absolutely necessary, and he would add, that the subject had most seriously occupied the attention of the cabinet, and of himself individually. Every person at all acquainted with the subject, would be aware that many difficulties were to be overcome, but his Lordship hoped in the course of a few days (although he by no means could pledge himself) to bring forward a bill to apply a remedy to the evils now complained of."

Lord Holland observed, that whatever objections he might feel to some of the details of the measure just dismissed, yet no bill to be proposed by the noble earl, would satisfy his mind unless it were founded on the same principle.

Protest on the Rejection of Lord Stanhope's Bill, in the House of Lords, on Friday, July 30.

Because the toleration hitherto granted to Dissenters by law is incomplete, amounting to nothing more than a partial and conditional exemption from penalties and persecutions, whereas the bill now rejected, by recognizing the right

of private judgment in matters of conscience, would have placed religious liberty on its only true and legitimate basis.

VASSAL HOLLAND.
STANHOPE.
NORFOLK.
LANSDOWNE.

Letters of Mr. W. Smith and Lord Stanhope.

To the Editor of the Morning Chronicle.

SIR,

In the account of Lord Stanhope's speech, given in your paper of this morning, I observe so very extraordinary an attack made on me, in so very extraordinary a manner too, by name, in a place where I could neither reply, nor even elsewhere regularly notice what was there said, that I cannot but hope that your reporter has been incorrect; as otherwise I am unavoidably reduced to the necessity of doubting the decorum, the accuracy, and the candour of the noble Lord.—I am, Sir,

Your obedient humble servant,
W. SMITH.

Park Street, Westminster,
July 4, 1812.

To the Editor of the Morning Chronicle.

SIR,

In consequence of a strange letter, signed "W. SMITH, and dated Park Street, Westminster, July 4th, 1812," which has appeared in the Morning Chronicle of the 6th instant, I deem it quite necessary to interrogate a little that gentleman before the public. Mr. William Smith, so interrogated, shall no longer have to say, (as he has stated in his printed letter) that he can "neither reply," nor "regularly notice" my propositions.

As a warm, zealous, and sincere friend of religious liberty, it

is my duty towards those millions of clients, whose just and sacred cause I have voluntarily espoused, to expose to their particular notice every attempt, either to maintain the foul and execrable cause of intolerance, or to support the no less despicable system of mere toleration. Liberty, duly recognized, in matters of religion, breaks the people's chains; but, toleration (which always necessarily implies a *right* to be intolerant) tends to rivet them.

I have now to ask this Mr. William Smith a few plain and honest questions; and to which questions the public will expect clear and distinct answers.

First, let me ask him, What *the future system of laws* would have been, supposing that his intended bill had actually passed?

I mean by that question, What would have been those laws, if carried into execution, which his project would have left *unrepealed*?

Secondly, to come with him to closer quarters still, I will ask him, Whether any Methodists, or Protestant Dissenters, or any Nonconformists, either men or women, could, notwithstanding the passing of *his Bill*, go to any meeting-house legally, and without fear of punishment, till after such men or such women respectively, shall have *travelled* to the General Sessions of the Peace, in order, in open court, to qualify themselves, even to hear at a meeting-house a discourse about religion, or to say their prayers there publicly, supposing them to be so inclined?

Thirdly, The expence attending the carrying the *Forkshire freeholders only* to the place of poll, at the last general election,

being estimated at one hundred thousand pounds, I will ask Mr. William Smith, Whether the travelling expences of the *whole body* of the male and female nonconformists of the county of York alone, which would be incurred for the purpose of obeying the law, would not amount to two millions of money, or to some other enormous sum, independently of the loss of their valuable time?—And let him recollect, that time is the poor man's property; and that depriving him of it wantonly is in fact, robbing him of his estate.

Fourthly, Does Mr. William Smith, who affects in his letter such mighty respect for "*decorum*," deem it either decent or decorous, that the female part of the community, of all ages, should be stuck up in open court, in presence of a grave bench of laical and clerical justices, and a gazing public, to take oaths, and to make declarations, *before* those females are to be by law permitted to attend a place of worship, and to offer up to the Deity either their thanksgivings or their prayers?

Fifthly, I will now ask him, Whether any man (and what man by name) except himself, has since the commencement of this nineteenth century, ventured to propose to the ministers of the crown, either the revival or the continuance of laws of such unbounded absurdity, so contemptible in principle, so repugnant to every sound notion of religious liberty, and in practice so infinitely oppressive?

If Mr. Smith shall not chuse to answer these pointed questions, the nonconformists of all denominations will supply the proper an-

swers themselves. But if Mr. Smith shall insist that his project is a *wise* one, this grand question between him and me may be submitted to the decision, either of the liberal and enlightened public at large, or to that of the worthy citizens of Norwich in particular.

STANHOPE.

Berners-street, July 8th, 1812.

Mr. W. Smith's Reply to Lord Stanhope.

To the Editor of the Morning Chronicle.

SIR,

Some of my friends have expressed their surprise, that I should have taken any public notice of the attack which Lord Stanhope made on me in the House of Lords, and in deference to their opinion I will confess, that, had the knowledge of what his lordship then said been confined to the walls of Parliament, I should have thought any defence of myself unnecessary: but I think these gentlemen under-rate his lordship's power, on his 'vantage ground. The introducer of a liberal proposition naturally and justly meets with a favourable reception from the public: nor is a peer of the realm supposed to prefer grave charges on insufficient foundations.—Thus I reasoned last Saturday; and the same reasons induce me again to trespass on you, and to request the public attention to this answer to his lordship's letter and questions of Thursday last.—My note his lordship calls "*strange*." Why? That I should not be disposed to pass wholly unnoticed, so direct and fierce an attack, and from such a quarter, be himself, at least, ought not to think strange.

Was it then "the manner," or "the substance" of my letter which excited his lordship's astonishment? By not taking for granted the accuracy of the reporter, I afforded the speaker an opportunity of correcting, or disavowing any error or misstatement. Did this forbearance create surprise? Or, did it seem strange to him that this charge, so unusually made, should strike me as indecorous, when I do not find that even his own ingenuity can suggest any other defence of it than the gratuitous imagination of my being the advocate for "sticking up" females of all ages in open court to "take oaths before they say their prayers?" If this, Sir, were as true of me as it is otherwise, even then, as an argument, how relevant would it be, and how conclusive! But I am also reduced to doubt the noble lord's accuracy and candour;—whether in this I shall be entirely singular, let those who may have the fortitude to read this letter through, determine. His lordship in his speech asserted, that "one Mr. W. Smith," (whom he knew, pretty intimately, full five-and-twenty years ago), "had lately been dabbling in the matter on which he was speaking, but (sarcastically) not with much success." How fortunate, and how disinterested is Lord Stanhope in his selection of the criterion of merit, for any proposed legislative enactment! Success! In the names, Sir, of that crowd of his own abortive offspring, (numbers of which, in my opinion, deserved a better fate) I protest against it. Could they but rise and speak, how would they deprecate the standard by which he so mercilessly subjects them! I protest;—

"This Mr. W. S. proposed by his Bill a completely new system, by which no man was to preach, no old woman to say her prayers in a dissenting place of worship, without a licence, and from him!" But for the kind information of the noble lord himself, I should have been as much at a loss as any other human being to have formed the slightest conjecture as to the meaning of this. Let the public learn the fact and admire.

After several communications with Mr. Perceval in the course of the last spring, on some inconveniences and hardships to which the Dissenters were subjected, the main object of which was to obtain the repeal of the primary evil, the Conventicle Act; Mr. P. said, he was ready to accede to our wishes, so far as "to place the Toleration Act, unquestionably, *in law*, on the footing of the generally accustomed practice; with one or two other minor concessions; and desired that we would state the manner in which we should think "these objects might best be accomplished, laying aside for the present all matters on which we might differ, and going on together till we should be *obliged* to separate." To this proposal, protesting against it as incomplete, we agreed, and heads for a Bill were accordingly sketched out by a professional man, on this principle,—avowedly short of our wishes and claims, but not creating any new system, only establishing and confirming the most liberal construction of the old one; not requiring any licence, but for the express purpose of preventing magistrates from changing qualifications into licences, (terms, of which the noble lord must know

the difference, however he has confounded them). This sketch, with perhaps some few alterations, was submitted to another body to be compared with one they had prepared, to decide which was preferable, or whether they might be amalgamated with advantage; but it was never entirely settled, was never shewn to the minister, (to my knowledge at least) nor was ever determined on as a measure to be brought forward. If the noble lord can impugn this statement in any one point, material to his argument, let him; if he has any other ground for his charge against me, let him produce it; if neither, let the charge of "proposing," "by a Bill," "a new system," "of establishing a new universal necessity for licences," (I omit the "from him," as a figure of speech, though it was not inserted for nothing) let this, I say, be compared with "an unfinished sketch," introducing *no new system*, but endeavouring to correct the inconveniences of the old one, "and particularly *destroying as far as possible the very idea of a licence*," and, surely, "he who runs may read." I am ashamed, Mr. Editor, of having so long trespassed on your paper, and the patience of your readers; but I hope that this explanation, if tedious in itself, will enable me the sooner to dispatch the noble lord's very pointed interrogations. His first question, as lucidly explained by himself, is, "What would have been those laws, if carried into execution, which his, (i. e. my) project would have left unrepealed." My answer is, those laws, if carried into execution, would have been the same laws as if not carried into execu-

tion. I answer also, that *my project* was to leave as few as possible of the obnoxious laws unrepealed. His second and third queries apply to the first clause of the Toleration Act, not to any system or wish of mine;—the obligation to take the oaths which it contains had better be repealed, and probably might have been, if it had not been long disregarded and almost forgotten. His lordship's fourth interrogatory states a bare possibility, and, practically, affects nobody. To the fifth, I shall only reply by asking, what must be thought of a disputant who imputes to his antagonist "a proposal for the continuance of unbounded absurdities, contemptible principles, and infinite oppressions," *because* he endeavours, in the way which approves itself to his judgment as most effectual, to destroy and abolish as many of those absurdities, follies and oppressions, as his power and opportunities enable him to cope with. The truth is, that Lord S. has been saying a great deal, and I have been endeavouring to do as much as I could. I quarrel not with him for his saying; on the contrary, I very generally agree with the principles and proposed enactments of his Bill; but I knew it could not pass, and said so to many who were fascinated with its theoretic beauty, which much enraged some of them, and may possibly have caused the present ebullition of the noble lord's spleen, which I can assign to no other immediate cause. I object to the word toleration, and the doctrine implied in it, as much as he can do, for the same reason too, and have long since declared that opinion in Parliament, as appears

citly as himself; but I will not refuse to accept a real and attainable good, because there is something yet better which I cannot yet obtain: and for so acting, should it at this heated moment appear criminal to his lordship, I can quote authority to which he may perhaps defer,—his own. On the 19th May, 1789, his lordship first made that excellent speech which he repeated last week; and, on the day when his motion was rejected, told the House, “that if the bishops would not let him remove the rubbish by cart loads, he would do it by wheelbarrows; nay, even by spadefulls;”—a most laudable determination; meaning, of course, by this classic and beautiful metaphor, that he would attempt to perform by degrees the task which he could not at once accomplish. And what else, or what less, do I say? I know but of one difference, in this point, between us, that I begin at the comparatively easy end, he prefers the impracticable one. Only one word more.—If it be necessary, for the sake of maintaining principles, to attempt all at once; if nothing may be postponed for expediency—how came his lordship in this, “his last best work,” his panacea for all religious ills, his grand eradicator of all intolerance;—how came he, I say, to omit, (not to forget) to repeal the Test and Corporation Acts? Are not these disabilities on account of religion? Are not they at war with some just and sound principles of his and mine? Do not Dissenters complain of, and suffer more from them, than all the women young and old of the county of York, or the whole kingdom, ever did suffer or will

suffer, either in reality or imagination, from being “stuck up” to take oaths? and if these more substantial evils may be permitted to exist a little longer, unmolested by this sturdy and unyielding champion of principle, by what rule of candour, on what principle of fairness, justice or common sense, am I to be held out as forfeiting all the credit I may have acquired on this subject during a whole political life, as honest, as independent, as consistent and as long too as his lordship’s, because, forsooth, I have yielded to a necessity of the same kind with that before which his inflexible nature has been compelled to bow. I have now done. His lordship may answer this or not, as he may please; nothing will induce me to prolong the warfare. I have no ambition for the last word in any sense but the epigrammatical one addressed to Colley Cibber:

Your endless rejoinder’s not always the strongest,
For that’s the last word, which will last, Sir, the longest.

I am, Sir,

Your obliged humble servant,

WILLIAM SMITH.

Park Street, Westminster,

July 11, 1812.

P. S. To his lordship’s kind and friendly hint about Norwich, I can only say, that if he will be good enough to print his own very pointed interrogatories, with this reply, adding any rejoinder he may think fit, I will not quarrel with him for that neither.

Lord Stanhope's Second Letter.
To the Editor of the Morning Chronicle.

SIR,

I rejoice that I have brought before the public the consideration

of the miserable project of Mr. William Smith. In my letter of the 8th instant, I asked him, "What *the future system of laws* would have been, supposing that his intended Bill had actually passed?" And, in his letter of confession, (for I must so consider it) to the Editor of the *Morning Chronicle*, dated July 11th, he does not venture to deny the perfect accuracy of my pointed questions respecting *the state* in which his abominable project would have left the laws about religion. For he does not even assert, that "non-conformists, either men or women, could, notwithstanding the passing of *his bill*, go to any meeting-house legally, and without fear of punishment, till after such men or such women respectively shall have travelled to the general sessions of the peace, in order, in open court, to qualify themselves." Nor does he attempt to deny the enormous expences that this would wantonly have occasioned to them, independently of the loss of their valuable time.

My fourth question was as follows: "Does Mr. William Smith, who affects in his letter such mighty respect for *decorum*, deem it either decent or decorous, that the female part of the community, of all ages, should be stuck up in open court, in presence of a grave bench of laical and clerical justices, and a gazing public, to take oaths, and to make declarations *before* those females are, by law, to be permitted to attend a place of worship, and to offer up to the Deity either their thanksgivings or their prayers?" And he does not deny that that would be the fact as to the law; but he observes, that my 4th interrogatory states

a bare possibility." What is it that Mr. Smith means by "*a bare possibility*?" Let me ask him, Whether it would, or would not, have been in the power, not only of every clerical justice, but also of every bigoted, priest-ridden, or malignant common informer, so to have enforced the statute law? And let me then ask him, Whether that *abject state* were such a situation as the Methodists, the Dissenters, and the non-conformists ought, by law, to be left in, by Mr. William Smith, who obscurely tells us of the magnificent feats which he has been endeavouring to do for the Dissenters? If such were the wretched result of all his doings; then my sayings (as he terms them) were surely a great deal better; for I have proclaimed it to the world, in the preamble to my Bill, these two grand principles; namely, 1st, that "*liberty of conscience is an unalienable right of all mankind, and which ought ever to be held most sacred*;" and 2dly, that "*a man can only enjoy a thing lawfully, when no man lawfully can hinder his enjoying it*."

I have just been reading, in the 12th chapter of St. Luke, that "there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known. Therefore, whatever ye have spoken in darkness shall be heard in the light; and that which ye have spoken in the ear in closets shall be proclaimed on the house-tops."

I will now ask Mr. William Smith, (however unwilling he may be to continue with me this discussion,) Whether he does, or does not, know that it is a common report, long since current, that he encouraged Lord Sidmouth to

bring in his bill of the last session? If that be not the case, might it not be expedient (as Mr. William Smith is such a famous advocate for expediency) for him to call upon Lord Sidmouth publicly, just to state to the country what the *exact fact* was upon that subject?

I will also ask him, When Lord Liverpool sent to the Dissenters, and also to the Methodists, to call upon his lordship, and to meet Mr. William Smith, whether they did not respectively accept of his lordship's invitation, and whether they did not also *decline positively* to meet Mr. William Smith? And I must now ask him, Whether such refusal, even to meet him at the Earl of Liverpool's, did proceed, or could proceed, from any very marked approbation which they respectively bestowed on the miserable measure of this present Member for Norwich, whose sentiments upon this topic may, peradventure, not exactly agree with those of his truly respectable constituents?

Since I am now about asking questions, I may as well perhaps ask a few more. Pray what body of Dissenters have delegated to Mr. Smith the power of negotiating away, with the late Mr. Percival, with the present Lord Liverpool, or with any other minister of the crown, their natural and unalienable rights to perfect religious liberty? Have the Dissenters in the country chosen him as their negotiator? If he shall answer in the negative; does he then speak the particular sentiments of the Dissenters in and about the metropolis?

The copy of the admirable petition presented by Lord Holland

to the House of Lords, from a great number of the "Protestant Dissenting ministers of the three denominations, residing in and about the cities of London and Westminster," lies now before me. That petition shews, "That your petitioners, conceiving the right of worshipping God according to the dictates of their own consciences to be derived from the Author of their Being, and confirmed by the Founder of the Christian faith, and therefore not to be subject to the controul of human authority, cannot but regard with deep concern those statutes which restrain and limit the exercise of this right, and impose conditions and penalties that seem to them as unjust in their principle, as they are injurious to the vital interests of true religion." And that petition prays, "*That every remaining penal statute, which extends its operations to the province of religion may be repealed.*"—Will it be now pretended that Mr. Smith has been acting in unison with those worthy ministers of religion? Or will it be contended that the Dissenters in that district, who are laymen, have less correct opinions upon this subject than their clergy, and more conformable to the conceptions of Mr. William Smith?

Are the tories, or the bishops, Mr. Smith's new allies? He, as yet, disclaims their alliance and support; and they disclaim him also.—Are the whigs those persons who agree with him? The sublime protest written by Lord Holland, in consequence of the rejection of my Bill, which protest is signed by the Duke of Norfolk and by the Marquis of Lansdowne, as well as by Lord Holland and myself; the direct vote

given likewise for my Bill by the Marquis of Douglas, and by the Earls of Oxford, Carnarvon, Moira, Barnley, and Donoughmore; the support, by pairing off, given to my enlarged principle, by the Duke of Bedford, the Earls of Rosslyn and Lauderdale, and others; the kind and particular apology made to me by Earl Grey, by Lord Erskine, and by many others, for not having voted with me, on account of the *unexpected* early hour at which the division took place; leave Mr. Smith without any very great expectation of whig support, in favour of his narrow plan of *toleration*, as contradistinguished from *religious liberty*.

The first Act of *Toleration*, that is to say, the first instance of the haughty condescension of intolerance, is the noted act of the 29th of Charles the Second, chapter the 9th, for abolishing the *writ to burn heretics*. But, by the 2d section of that Act, the ecclesiastical jurisdiction is expressly reserved in all cases *not extending to death*.—The next Act of *Toleration*, which is that of the 1st William and Mary, chapter 18, merely professes, in its preamble, to give *some ease to scrupulous consciences*; and as it thus promises but very little, no more than little was of course to be expected. And, although the degree of *forbearance* was greater, the principle of it (founded on mere expediency) was the same.

Mr. William Smith thinks proper to stoop, in order to pick up from the kennel the rotting carcass of *Toleration*; I tell him openly and distinctly that I will not condescend to follow his example. The unalienable right to

perfect liberty in matters of religion has been given to all the human race by the DEITY himself. Who, therefore, upon earth, ought to presume to limit, or curtail it? But the vile idea of *toleration* (and Mr. Smith's famous bill scarcely affords even the *basest toleration*) originated, in the darkest ages, in the lawless usurpation of infallible dominion over conscience, and is worthy of hell itself.

STANHOPE.

Berners Street, July 18th, 1812.

The New Toleration Act*.

Abstract of the Bill to Repeal certain Acts and Amend other Acts relating to Religious Worship and Assemblies, and Persons teaching or preaching therein.

The preamble sets forth, that it is expedient that certain Acts of Parliament made in the reign of his late Majesty King Charles the Second, relating to non-conformists and conventicles, should be repealed, and that the laws relating to certain congregations and assemblies for religious worship, and persons teaching, preaching or officiating therein, and resorting thereto, should be amended.

Clause 1.—17 Car. II. c. 2. 22 Car. II. c. 1. to be repealed.

2. All places of religious worship to be certified and registered.

3. Preachers in, and persons resorting to religious assemblies, registered under this act, exempt from same penalties as persons taking oaths under the statutes of William.

4. Oath and declarations to be taken by all preachers, &c. when thereto required by a magistrate.

* The entire Bill, as it shall be finally passed, in our next.

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5. No person to be compelled to go more than — — miles.

6. Any person may require a justice of peace to administer the oaths, &c. under this Act.

7. Justice shall give the parties a certificate of having made such oath.

8. Certain fee to be paid, and certificate conclusive evidence.

9. Teachers having taken the

oaths, &c. exempt from offices, and from the militia.

10. Penalty on falsely pretending to be a preacher, and producing false certificate.

11. Doors of religious assemblies not to be bolted or barred.

12. Enacts a penalty on disturbing religious assemblies.

13. Saving the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the church.

INTELLIGENCE.

Annual Meeting of the Warwickshire Unitarian Tract Society.

The Annual Meeting of the UNITARIAN TRACT SOCIETY for WARWICKSHIRE and the NEIGHBOURING COUNTIES, was holden at Evesham on Wednesday the 17th of June, according to notice. There was service on the preceding evening, the devotional part of which was conducted by Dr. Toulmin, and the Rev John Kentish delivered, with great animation, a very able discourse, to a full and attentive congregation, from Colossians i. 15. *Who is the image of the invisible God.* Mr. Kentish, observing that the character, the image of the invisible God, was a decisive proof that the person to whom it was applied, could not be the very Being of whom he was the image, shewed the various instances in which this was truly descriptive of Jesus Christ: viz. on account of his great power, by which he manifested the power of God;—on account of the virtues of his character, especially in the benevolence of it, as he was the revealer of the will of God, the medium of his grace to men, his representative on earth, and the Judge of the world.

The Rev. Richard Fry, of Coseley, Staffordshire, preached the sermon before the Society, on Wednesday morning, from 1 John, iv. 14. *And we have seen and do testify, that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world.* The Rev. I. H. Bransby, of Dudley, read the scriptures and took the devotional part of the service. Mr. Fry, from the words

of the apostle, took occasion to shew at large, that the person sent must be distinct from, and inferior to him that sent him. That we owe all the blessings derived from Christ's labours and ministry, to the free and unpurchased love of his Father and our Father, of his God and our God, who sent and commissioned his Son to reveal his will, and execute the counsels of his wisdom and grace to mankind. He explained, upon Unitarian principles, the various scriptural expressions respecting the sufferings, death and blood of Christ, and how, by these means, as well as by his instructions and example, he was entitled to the glorious character of the Saviour of the world. At the conclusion the most proper means of spreading the cause of pure Christianity, were mentioned, and the duty of all Unitarians to exert their abilities and influence to promote their views of gospel truth, was enforced with earnestness. The sermon, at the request of those members of the Society who heard it, will be published, and will add to the number of useful sermons on the subject of Unitarianism. It was heard with attention, and will be read with profit.

On the evening of the same day there was service at 7 o'clock. The Rev. Timothy Davis, of Coventry, read the scriptures, and offered up the prayer before sermon, and Dr. Toulmin preached, from Heb. iii. 1. *Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the holy calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Jesus Christ.* The Dr. introduced his subject, by alluding to the preceding

discourses, and proposed a practical improvement of the whole, by explaining and inculcating the religious regards due to Jesus Christ, on the ground of his character and offices; previously observing that they rose from the Divine commission under which he acted, and terminated in the glory and honour of God the Father, from whom he received all his powers, and whose counsels of love and grace he executed. These religious regards were stated to consist in obedience to his precepts, in the imitation of his example, in cherishing sentiments of love and gratitude towards him, in an attachment to his cause and zeal in promoting it, in a prevailing view to him, as the minister of the divine mercy, in all the acts of religious worship, and in entertaining the expectation of his second coming. The venerable Dr's. attractive simplicity, and truly Christian and devotional strains through the whole of his discourse, especially towards the close of it, excited great interest in the audience, if the writer may judge from his own feelings, and the fixed attention of all around him. Thus the conclusion of this Anniversary was highly pleasing, for, as strongly expressed by one of his hearers, the good Dr. "introduced us to heaven."

After the morning service the business of the Society was transacted, and there was an addition of several new members. The ministers and members dined together, and the afternoon was spent in agreeable conversation on the general interests of religion. Dr. Toulmin, not without emotion, gave a short history of the rise and progress of Unitarian Tract Societies, which are now so extensively established; and the account was received with marked attention and pleasure by the company.

Exeter, June 19th, 1812.

Annual Meeting of the Western Unitarian Book Society.

The Annual Meeting of the WESTERN UNITARIAN SOCIETY "for the diffusion of Christian Knowledge, by the distribution of Books," was held on Wednesday, June 17th, at Bridport in Dorsetshire, in the chapel of the Rev. Thomas Home. Notwithstanding the showery state of the weather, many friends to this important and good cause assembled from the neighbouring towns and vil-

lages. Fifteen ministers were present, and a most respectable and attentive auditory. The morning service was introduced by the Rev. Joseph Hunter, of Bath, who offered up the introductory prayer, and read the 111st Psalm, and the 2nd chapter of the Acts of the Apostles. The general prayer was given by the Rev. Michael Maurice, of Lowestoffe, in Suffolk, and the Rev. Robert Aspland, of Hackney, delivered a discourse upon that great Protestant principle, "the right of private judgment in religious matters;" clearly showing, that the fullest liberty of thinking, speaking and writing ought to be allowed, not only to the various sects of Christians, but also to sceptics, and even to the opposers of the Christian faith: the text was Romans xiv. 5. "Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind." The hymns were read by the Rev. Thomas Madge, of Norwich. After the morning service the Society met for business. The Rev. Edmund Batchelor, of Sidmouth, was called to the chair: the minutes of the meeting held at Exeter, the preceding year, were read by the Secretary, the Rev. John Rowe, of Bristol, and confirmed:—other business was then transacted:—the meeting for next year appointed to be held at Taunton, and the Rev. Joseph Hunter fixed upon as the preacher: More than twenty new members were admitted, and together with the old members who were present, and some visiting friends, partook of an economical dinner. Fifty-five persons sat down to table, and after the cloth was removed, a great deal of interesting conversation, relative to the objects and plan of the Society took place; several useful hints were thrown out, and much future good may be expected from the exertions that will be made, if they, in any tolerable degree, correspond with the ardour and unanimity with which all present appeared to be animated.

In the evening service the Rev. Robert Aspland prayed; the hymns were given out by the Rev. Henry Davies, of Taunton, and the Rev. Thomas Madge delivered a truly scriptural illustration of the words of the Apostle Paul, which occur in the Epistle to the Ephesians, ii. 8, 9. "For by grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast." The main object of this discourse was, to show that the human race, though not saved by

dispensably necessary as a qualification for happiness, are indebted for salvation, not to the "merits of Christ," a phrase no where to be found in scripture, nor to any other *merits*, but solely to the free mercy or *favour* of Almighty God. This service, as well as the preceding, was well attended. Christian unanimity, charity and cheerfulness pervaded the whole of this happy day, and the friends of pure, uncorrupted, scriptural Christianity may congratulate themselves upon the encreasing success of their labours.

The following evening, Jude 18, at a lecture, the Rev. Samuel Fawcett, of Yeovil, conducted the devotional part of the service, and the Rev. Robert Aspland addressed a considerable auditory from that part of Paul's speech before Felix, which is found Acts xxiv 15, 16. "And have hope towards God, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust; and herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men." In meetings like these, attended from proper motives, and conducted in a truly liberal and candid spirit, the social nature of Christianity is exemplified, the power of religious principles invigorated, the bond of affection between all sincere enquirers after truth, rendered more firm, and that "refreshment from the presence of the Lord" experienced, which is the solace and joy of the devout soul. May these "fruits of the spirit" be multiplied in our churches, and more and more acted upon in the lives of individual professors!!

Southern Unitarian Society.

The Anniversary Meeting of the SOUTHERN UNITARIAN SOCIETY, took place at Chichester, on the first of July.

The morning and evening services were well attended; the former was opened by the Rev. J. W. Morris, after which, the Rev. W. Hughes delivered an excellent discourse from John i. 18, from which words he took occasion to shew, that the ascription of the titles and attributes of Deity to Christ, formed no ground for the belief that he was a Divine Being. As the sermon will probably be printed, it is not here necessary to enlarge upon its design. In the evening the Rev. R. Scott began the service, and the Rev. R. Wright preached, from

Matthew xix. 17, on the goodness of God.

It having been reported to the Society, that the Unitarian cause, at Brighton, was apparently flourishing, and that a place had recently been purchased by its patrons, in which to perform public worship; it was agreed that the next general meeting of the society should be holden at that place, when the Rev. J. W. Fox is expected to preach.

The members of the Society were gratified in finding that whilst from the changes incident to human affairs, some names were obliged to be erased from the list of subscribers, new members were obtained to fill the vacant places.

A present of books was voted to the Unitarian Fund, and to the Welch Unitarian Society.

After dinner the following toasts, among others, were drank:—

Joseph Lancaster, whom the Chairman described as an able coadjutor in the cause of truth,—as the more knowledge is diffused, the more must truth prevail.

The *York Academy* was proposed by W. Cooke, Esq. as a seminary which had produced many able and enlightened defenders of true Christianity.

The Secretary, adverting to a custom which formerly prevailed in the Society, of drinking, in silence, *the memory of Dr. Priestley*, suggested the propriety of classing with it the names of *Wakefield* and *Lindsey*. He considered these three men were nearly equal in talent: equally ready to brave the storms of adversity, in defence of what they deemed the truth, and of having equally contributed to the support and spread of the Unitarian cause. And in rising to return thanks, when his health was drank, he took occasion to press upon the company the necessity of adding exertions to wishes, for the furtherance of the object for which the Society had then met: and particularly insisted on the useful tendency of the MONTHLY REPOSITORY. He characterised this publication as the only work devoted to the Unitarian doctrine, as the only one open to free enquiry, and of course not only worthy of support, but that it would be a dishonour to the friends of civil and religious liberty if it were not extensively supported, and concluded by giving as a toast, *The Monthly Repository*, and may it receive such support from the friends of free enquiry, and particularly from Unitarians, as shall afford

ample satisfaction to the Editor, and reflect honour upon themselves.

Manchester New College, removed to York.

On Wednesday and Thursday, the 24th and 25th of June, the Annual Examination was held in the presence of Samuel Shore, Esq. Samuel Shore, jun. Esq. President, Robert Driffield, George Strutt, T. B. W. Sanderson, Samuel Philips, Esqrs. Messrs. Robert Kay, George Hampson, G. W. Wood, Treasurer, and T. H. Robinson, Secretary, and the Rev. Messrs. Astley, Davies, Dean, Hawkes, Higginson, Kentish, Lee, Roberds, Severn, Yates and Turner, Visitor; who were, throughout the whole, highly gratified with the proficiency made by the students under the able direction of their tutors. The examination commenced each day at nine, and continued, with a short intermission for refreshment, till half-past five: the several classes being carefully led through the subjects which had come before them in the course of their studies, during the preceding session, by a series of questions concerning the nature of which they had not the slightest previous information; and by the reading of passages, chosen at the moment, from the Greek and Roman classics, and from the originals of the several books composing the sacred volumes: the whole interspersed with orations, critical discourses and sermons, by all the students, except those in their first year, on subjects chosen by themselves, and none of them corrected, or even seen, by any of their tutors, previous to their delivery*.—If it were fair

* Mr. Wallace, on the different Effects of Arguments on the Judgment, as a Ground of Candour, and mutual Forbearance; Mr. Howse, on the Character of Richieu; Mr. Holland, an Examination of Hume's Essay on Miracles; Mr. Brettell, on the Divine Authority of Moses; Mr. Strutt, on the Advantages of the Study of Natural History; Mr. Cook, on Liberty of Conscience; Mr. Bakewell, on the Causes which tended to infuse a Spirit of Freedom in the British Constitution, and an opposite Spirit into that of France; Mr. Ashton, on the Destruction of the Canaanites; Mr. Sanderson, on the State of the World at the Coming

to specify, where the whole was so creditable, it might be said that the students of the fourth year afforded particular satisfaction, by the clear and unembarrassed manner in which they went through their long examination on the sources and rules of Biblical Criticism, and the practical exemplifications which they gave of each, out of the several books of the Old Testament, with the original language and contents of which they shewed themselves to have attained a degree of acquaintance, which could scarcely have been expected at so early a period; but which afforded a pleasing earnest of their being well-prepared for entering on the study of the more perfect dispensation of the gospel in the ensuing session.

The examination closed, as usual, with an address from the Visitor, which, at the request of the gentlemen present, is sent for insertion in the Monthly Repository.

"Gentlemen, I now come to discharge my part, which I am happy to say continues to be to myself a highly pleasing part of this day's business. In the name of this assembly I congratulate your tutors, as well as yourselves on the result of this long and satisfactory examination. We, each of us, have it now in our power to attest to our several friends the excellent state of this institution; for students who are able to give so good an account of the course of study in which they have been engaged, and to exhibit such pleasing specimens of their talents for composition, on subjects connected with it, must have been very carefully instructed: and it is a high satisfaction that we can carry with us the further report, that its discipline continues to be no less commendable than its proficiency.—If this should have been promoted, in any degree, by the more collegiate form in which you have this year resided, it will be a gratifying circumstance to those

of Christ; Mr. Lewis, on the Evidences of the Resurrection of Christ; Mr. Manley, a Sermon on Christian Union, from John xvii. 20, 21. Mr. George Kenrick, on the Christian Sabbath, from Gen. ii. 2, 3, Mr. Henry Turner, on the Sanctions of the Mosaic Law, from Exod. xix. 3—8. and Mr. Hutton on the Duty and Benefit of Searching the Scriptures, from John v. 39.

who have, in so handsome a manner, effected the purchase of the academical buildings; and may stimulate others to contribute their aid towards the liquidation of the debt which yet remains upon them. In the mean time it has created a pleasing difficulty with regard to the adjudication of the prizes; the report of good and orderly conduct, having been found so general, that in this respect, for want of prizes for you all, we must request that you will accept in general our testimony of high approbation, which will operate as an effectual encouragement to your perseverance. As a selection, however, must be made, I am commissioned to deliver the first prize for diligence, regularity and proficiency to Mr. Samuel Robinson, of Woodlands near Manchester, the second to Mr. Benjamin Mardon of E. eter, and to present a testimony of approbation, equal in value to the third prize, to each of the three following gentlemen — Mr. Lewis, of South Wales. Mr. Holland, of Manchester, and Mr. Smith, of Westminster. The eminence of the two latter, in their respective pursuits, may seem to have entitled them to a higher prize; but their superior attainments, previous to their entrance into this institution, though greatly to their credit, and carrying in itself its own reward, were not to be taken into consideration, in calculating the proficiency of the present year.

“It has been usual, on these occasions, to address a few words of advice to our young friends who are to leave us; particularly to those who are entering on the important office of public religious instructors. As none of this class are expected this year to dissolve their connection with the College, I wish to take the opportunity of addressing a few words more particularly to those young gentlemen, who are designed for some or other of the departments of civil and active life. It is a great advantage, my young friends, which you possess, over your predecessors in former ages, that you have the opportunity of a much more enlarged and liberal education. Formerly none but the clergy, or, at most, the learned professions, were considered as having any occasion for learning, and if others offered themselves for instruction, they were obliged to submit to the plan of scholastic discipline, traced out for the former classes. But of late it has been justly thought that

youth might properly be led to those studies which might fit them for civil life. In addition to the rudiments of the dead languages, and the elements of mathematical science, history, ethics and jurisprudence, the maxims of political economy, the useful application of natural history and philosophy, to agriculture, the arts and manufactures, these, with various other subjects of obvious use and importance, began to be introduced, particularly into that seminary of which several of us entertain a grateful recollection, and of which this is the direct successor, by that excellent person* who has thrown light on almost every subject of human enquiry but who has, more especially, contributed to free from corruption the important doctrines of the Christian revelation: and his example has been followed, more or less, by several of our Universities.

“You, my young friends, have been enjoying, in these respects, such advantages as this institution could afford you; and your improvement of them we have had a satisfactory opportunity of witnessing. Those of you who return to us will return, I persuade myself, with a full determination to avail yourselves of the further opportunities which it will be in our power to offer. Those of you who leave us will persevere, I trust, in those habits and courses of study which you have here begun, so far as your respective circumstances will admit. For I hope you will keep it always in mind, that you will still continue to have much to learn, beyond what your tutors have here been able to teach you. You will remember, that “schools and colleges are not the only places of education.”† You will find “the world itself to be the greatest theatre of instruction; and you will continue to learn by acting in it. If we have only succeeded in inspiring you with a love of truth, and the sense of virtue and public spirit, you will be “ready to every good work,” as you shall be called to it. You will discharge the relative and social duties, as members of families and of civil society; and, at the same time, you will not forget that you are members of the larger society of mankind, and should therefore feel an interest in whatever respects truth

* Priestley on Education, p. 185—230.

† Priestley's Sermon at Hackney, p. 61

liberty or general happiness. You will probably have a variety of duties to perform: some of you will be called on to act a part in commercial and civil life; some, perhaps, in a still more extended sphere. It is of great importance that you should be qualified to act your parts well: for in times so eventful as the present, (and those which follow are not likely to be less so,) a favourable issue of things very greatly depends upon the principles and conduct of those who are to be the actors. If you here imbibe a Christianity of an enlarged and liberal form, you will have an infallible guide in every emergency; having been duly instructed in its evidences, you will be in less danger of being laughed, or scoffed, or persecuted out of it; having learned its genuine principles, you will be grateful for them, and steadily attached to them; you will securely depend upon the providence and government of such a Being as it represents the Father of mercies to be; you will be furnished with precepts ready for application to every circumstance and event, with an example of spotless purity, invincible integrity, and unlimited benevolence, and with motives beyond all others, animating you to an excellent and honourable conduct.

"But in order to maintain the proper influence of this most excellent gift of God upon your memory, let me recommend it to you to be particularly careful that you continue to observe a regular attendance and devout behaviour in regard to public worship. Your conduct in this respect is of great importance, not only to yourselves, but to society. It may be thought that those who are engaged in the service of the sanctuary are obliged in decency to respect its ordinances. But, as you have lately heard it ably and convincingly argued, the obligation is not confined to them; it is for you also to "search the scriptures," and profess the truths which you find in them: and if you also shew by your conduct, that you consider yourselves under an equal obligation to attend to the duties which they inculcate,—by no means neglecting the *instrumental* duties,—you will not only secure your own happiness, but you will adorn the religion which you profess, and the stations in life which you may be called to fill; and you will contribute most effectually to promote among

others that general regard to virtue and religion, which is the best security for the well-being of society.

"It has given us the highest pleasure to observe, that those of you who, on this occasion, have exhibited specimens of your proficiency in composition, have, in general, chosen such subjects as shew that you have paid great attention to the evidences of natural and revealed religion; and to learn, that during your residence here, you have duly and respectfully attended the services both of family and public worship. We trust that we may take this for a sufficient security, that in the spirit with which your fellow-student has so well pleaded the cause of the Christian Sabbath, you will carry with you into the world those principles and habits which you have here been forming, and in this, and every other instance, do honour to the institution in which you have been educated."

The whole was concluded, as usual, with a short devotional exercise, and the Committee adjourned to dinner at Ettridge's; where much interesting conversation took place on the business of the two days.—A minister from one of the midland counties, who had now for the first time attended, expressed a wish that every congregation in the kingdom, interested in the successful education of ministers on enlarged and liberal principles, would send a deputy to the Annual Examination; he was convinced that nothing more would be needful to insure the effectual support of the institution.—Several additional applications having been made for the admission of students on the foundation, and some apprehension having been expressed, that the interest on the debt on the newly purchased buildings, together with the annual instalments for its gradual liquidation, might cramp the exertions of the Committee in this way, at a period when they were likely to be so much called for, a conversation took place, on the very handsome conduct of several subscribers to the loan, and the Secretary reported at the close of the meeting, that twelve gentlemen had agreed to give up their respective sums to the Permanent Fund, on condition of an Address being drawn up and circulated among the friends of the institution; which was immediately prepared accordingly, and ordered to be printed.

There have this year been twenty-one students, of whom thirteen have been for the ministry. The number of divinity students in the ensuing session is expected to be, at least, fifteen; and the whole number between twenty and thirty.

V. F.

Address of the Quakers to the Prince Regent, from the London Gazette, June 20, 1812.

To George Augustus, Prince Regent of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland.

May it please the Prince,

Seeing that in consequence of the lamented affliction of our beloved sovereign thy father, thou art called to the high office of administering the regal government of this country, we his dutiful subjects, the religious Society of Friends, are desirous of representing to thee a subject, in which we believe the welfare of our country is deeply concerned.

It is now many years since war has been spreading its desolation over great part of the civilized world; and as we believe it to be an evil, from which the spirit of the gospel of Christ would wholly deliver the nations of the earth, we humbly petition thee to use the royal prerogative, now placed in thy hands, to take such early measures for the putting a period to this dreadful state of devastation, as we trust the wisdom of thy councils, as they seek for divine direction, will be enabled to discover.

Impressed with a grateful sense of the religious privileges we enjoy under the present government, we submit this highly important cause of suffering humanity, which is peculiarly near to our hearts, to thy most serious consideration; that thus thou may'st become an honoured instrument in the hand of the Almighty, in promoting his gracious designs respecting the inhabitants of the earth.

Signed in, by order, and on behalf of the Yearly Meeting of the said people, held in London, this 29th day of the 5th month 1812, by

JOHN WILKINSON,

Clerk to the Meeting this year.

To which address his Royal Highness was pleased to return the following most gracious answer:

"I am deeply sensible of the calamities which necessarily attend a state of war.

"It would, therefore, be most grateful to my feelings, to observe such a change in the views and conduct of the enemy as would admit of the cessation of hostilities, consistently with a just regard to the important interests which have been committed to my charge, and which it is my indispensable duty to maintain.

"I reflect with great satisfaction on the religious privileges secured to you by the wisdom and benevolence of the laws, and you may rest assured of my constant protection."

The Epistle from the Yearly Meeting, held in London, by Adjournments from the 20th of the 5th Month, to the 30th of the same, inclusive, 1812.

To the Quarterly and Monthly Meetings of Friends, in Great Britain, Ireland, and elsewhere.

DEAR FRIENDS,

Being permitted at the present time to investigate the state of our religious society, and participating together in that love, which, we believe, takes its origin in the boundless mercy of God through Christ our Holy Redeemer, through *Him* who died for us, and who ever liveth to make intercession for us, we have found this love to extend to you our brethren. We have considered your situation, whether in your larger or smaller meetings; and as we have again been impressed with the belief, that in renewing the written salutation of our love, we shall be found in the way of our duty; we have desired to be directed to impart to you such information and counsel as may tend to your increase in the fear of the Lord, and in the consolations of his presence.

Seeing therefore the infinite value of love, that indispensable qualification of a true disciple, we are desirous of pressing it on every individual, to examine impartially how far he feels it to flourish in his own mind, and to influence all his actions, thus inducing others to follow him, as he is endeavouring to follow Christ. And we believe that nothing will be so favourable to the preservation of this holy disposition as humility of heart, a temper in which we constantly see ourselves unworthy

of the least of the Lord's mercies, and dependant only on his compassion for our final acceptance. Seeing also that no awakened mind can be without a view to a better and an enduring state, and that no one knows how soon he may be called to put off mutability; let us bear in perpetual recollection that, in the state to which we aspire, there is nothing but eternal love, joy, and adoration, in the presence of Him through whose love we were first awakened.

In contemplating this copious subject, though we are not apprehensive of more symptoms of deficiency than in former years, we feel disposed afresh to encourage friends to be prompt in undertaking, and prudent in executing, the blessed office of peace-maker. And we believe the patient endeavours of faithful friends will be generally crowned with success, in proportion as their own minds are seeking to Jesus, for assistance in performing an office on which he has pronounced his blessing; and in endeavouring to lead the minds of any contending persons, to a sense of the absolute necessity for all true disciples to live in peace one with another, and to forgive one another, even as God, for Christ's sake, has forgiven them.

Before we quit the subject of Christian love, let us remind you that no limit of name can bound its influence. In this instance of almost unprecedented pressure on some of the poorer classes of our countrymen, we deem it particularly desirable, that our dear friends every where should not be backward in examining into their distresses; but liberal in contributing a due proportion of relief. Many are allowed to have temporal possessions sufficient to do this with comparative ease. Let these therefore remember that they are but stewards, and let them seek to be good and faithful stewards. And it is probable that others, not equally abounding in the good things of this life, may find that in using moderation in their own expenditure, they may have wherewith to supply the wants of others, and to make the heart of the poor man sing for joy. O, the blessing of clothing the naked and feeding the hungry! who would not desire to be entitled to a share in it?

Moderation in personal and domestic expense, every way becomes the followers of a lowly-hearted Saviour. We are therefore engaged to press it upon our

young friends just setting out in life, to beware of needless expence in the furniture of their houses, and in their general domestic habits. Even those who think their property may entitle them to abundance or to elegance, by indulging in costly habits are setting but an ill example to those of more contracted means; and as we are but too apt to copy that which coincides with our natural disposition, our want of circumspection may prove an excitement to extravagance in others, and prompt them to use exertions for supporting an appearance, which may divert them from the true business of life—the daily study to be approved in the sight of God.

And, dear youth, in general, especially you whose period of life may not be so advanced as that of those whom we have just addressed, even you who have left, or are about to leave, the protection of a parent, and to enter into the busy scenes of life; some of you, probably, in populous towns, far different from the retirement of your paternal abodes: we beseech you to guard against the new temptations which may now assail you. Oppose the first incitement to any liberty inconsistent with your principles, and be willing to seek the society of experienced friends in the places where you may be situated, and to receive their admonition with meekness and attention. Never forget that the season of early youth is a season of peculiar danger; and if you grow up under this sense, you will from time to time be led to cry for preservation to Him, who has said (and his words are Amen for ever,) "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."

The usual accounts of sufferings, brought in this year, chiefly for tithes and those called church rates, and for military demands, amount to thirteen thousand, six hundred and forty-five pounds. Five young men have been imprisoned for refusing to serve in the local militia. Besides these and other accounts which we have received from our several Quarterly Meetings, we have an epistle from Ireland, and one from each of the Yearly Meetings on the American continent. The Yearly Meetings of our American brethren seem vigilant in their attention to the support of our testimonies, and to purposes of general benevolence. The education of our youth still forms a part of the concern of the Yearly Meeting of Penn—

sylvania; which has also, together with those of Maryland and New York, continued to care for the native inhabitants of the wilderness; and those of Carolina, Virginia and Maryland, testify in their epistles, their unremitting concern for the state of the enslaved Africans in their land. Although in our country, as well as in theirs, the infamous traffic with Africa in slaves has been abolished by law, we desire friends not to forget that slavery still exists within the British empire, and to suffer their sympathy still to flow towards its oppressed victims.

Thus, dear friends, we trust we may say that both abroad and at home, the Lord is influencing his servants to remain on the watch. Though the subjects of our concern may be somewhat various, it is still pleasant to reflect, that all are aiming at the same object, and all looking to the same Lord for his gracious assistance. Having the same faith, and being baptized with the same baptism, even those plunges into exercise and conflict which wash us from confidence in our own exertions; how can it be otherwise than that we should rely, as we have just hinted, on the same Lord? May this unity of travail encourage us all to abide steadfast in our allegiance to him, that in due season we may reap the unfading reward of his holy peace.

Having touched on some of the subjects which have warmed our hearts in desire that we may be built up a spiritual house, we entreat you to consider that it is by means of individual exertions, under the direction of the omnipotent Master-builder, that the work is to be effected to his praise. Be vigilant, therefore, we beseech you; be constant, when cases require it, in faithful and tender admonition. Neglect in this point gives countenance to defects and increases them, whilst the faithful admonisher may hope to partake of the reward of those who "turn many to righteousness;" who, saith the prophet, "shall shine as the stars for ever and ever."

Now, dear friends, in conclusion, let us observe, that love, Christian love, is the parent of every virtue: it restrains our immoderate gratification of personal indulgence; it expands our hearts to every class of society, and to every modification of the human species; it makes us

prompt to lend a hand of help to such as may stray from the path of safety; it leads to universal benevolence; and as it is the origin of every good work, so through the grace of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, it will be the reward of a life passed in his service, in its native region, the realm of unmixed love, with him for ever. Amen.

Signed in and on behalf of the meeting, by

JOHN WILKINSON,

Clerk to the Meeting this year.

Catholic Aggregate Meeting.

Dublin, July 2.

EARL FINGAL in the Chair.

The Aggregate Meeting of this day was more numerously attended than any preceding assemblage of the depositaries of the wealth and power of the Catholics of Ireland. At one o'clock the Earl of Fingal took the chair, amidst the enthusiastic applause of his countrymen.

Mr. M'Donnell, seconded by Counselor O'Connell, proposed that the Petition should be read—it was accordingly read, and it appeared to be a transcript of the Petition *mutatis mutandis* of the Dissenters of England to Parliament for universal religious freedom.

Dublin, July 2.

We had just written to the close of the preceding article, when we received information, from the best authority, that the Catholics of Ireland, with that nobleness of mind and of action which has hitherto distinguished them, and with all the liberality and wisdom worthy men acting for a great and generous people, had resolved to sink the question of Catholic emancipation, and "to petition upon the principle of the Dissenters for the removal of all disabilities!" We have not time or room now fully to express our approbation of this enlightened policy on the part of our Catholic fellow-subjects; it goes to a sincere, a complete union of all sects and parties—to that Christian and constitutional union, before which no intrigue no cabal, no *witchery* can stand, before which *Bigotry* must melt into an "empty nothing," and intolerance become dumb for ever.—(*Dublin Evening Post*)

MONTHLY RETROSPECT OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS ;

OR,

The Christian's Survey of the Political World.

The Bill of Earl Stanhope has received the fate we expected, but the proposal of it has not been unattended with good. It could not be imagined, that a bill of so extensive a nature, so contrary to the strange prejudices that have been cherished for upwards of a century, and one so agreeable to sound sense, true Christianity and liberal philosophy should be immediately entertained, and received with universal approbation. Suffice it, that the opposers could not bring any solid arguments against it; that they could not deny, that the statute book contained laws on the subject of religion, which at this time of day no one could propose to the legislature. The Earl also made such an exposition of the absurdities in the statute book, that it is not likely that any one hereafter will act upon them or speak in their defence. This is the way in which truth gradually advances in the world. She is persecuted by ancestors, goaded on by an interested priesthood: this creates discussion: by degrees the points of contention lose their interest: at last the descendants wonder how their forefathers could suffer themselves to be worried, and worry each other on account of some stupid nonsense, invented by stupid churchmen, and defended by the sophistry of those, who thought that the people ought to be kept in ignorance to be the more easily duped by priestcraft.

The rejection of the bill gave birth to the following admirable protest of enlightened nobles who declare, that "the toleration hitherto granted to Dissenters by law is incomplete, amounting to nothing more than a partial and conditional exemption from penalties and persecutions; whereas the bill now rejected, by recognising the rights of private judgment in matters of conscience, would have placed religious liberty on its only true and legitimate basis." This admirable protest is signed by Lord Holland, Earl Stanhope, Marquis of Lansdowne, and the Duke of Norfolk, and thus a record is fixed in the House of Lords, which may serve as a land-mark in future attempts: and many more must be made before men professing to be Christians grant that liberty to their brethren, which cannot be denied but by the injury of those who deny it, and a multitude of others claim to be the disciples of him.

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who laid it down as a fundamental law, that we should not do to our neighbour what we do not wish to be done to ourselves.

The introduction of this bill gave rise to an extraordinary correspondence between Mr. Smith, one of the members for Norwich, and Earl Stanhope. The latter had in his opening speech made some allusions to the conduct of the former, who is connected with the body of Dissenters, under the name of the Deputies of the Three Denominations, and representing him as entertaining very imperfect views of toleration. In consequence Mr. Smith wrote a letter in the public papers, representing this part of the speech as deficient in decorum, and not giving him an opportunity of reply. To this the Earl replied, by asking Mr. Smith some questions, and he in his answer stated, that a communication had been made with Mr. Perceval in the spring, chiefly on the subject of the Conventicle Act, and in consequence, a bill was sketched to remedy the inconveniences that had arisen from some late interpretations of that act and the Toleration Act in several counties: and the bill would have left remaining on our statute book those absurdities which it was the intention of the Earl's bill to remove. The Earl rejoined, and triumphed on the acknowledgment that Mr. Smith's attempts were so confined, and in the grand principles maintained in his bill: namely, 1st, Liberty of conscience is an unalienable right of all mankind, and which ought ever to be held most sacred. 2nd, A man can only enjoy a thing lawfully, when no man lawfully can hinder his enjoying it.

Both parties, we are convinced, wish equally well to religious liberty, but they may differ in the paths each choose to obtain it. We are inclined to prefer the mode pursued by Lord Stanhope, which comprehends and unites all bodies dissenting from the church, and all in the church, who are affected equally with Dissenters by its ridiculous enactments. Every day adds vigour to the general principle, but the parties, contending for objects affecting only a few persons, have quite as much difficulty in obtaining their petty advantages, as if they had aimed at more general good. If instead of aiming each sect for itself, all will join in the general principle, do

siring nothing for itself which it would not grant to others; religious liberty will, we believe, be obtained, after a few struggles, to the general joy of all parties, in which we include a very great majority of the established church.

But Lord Stanhope in his last letter questions Mr. Smith very closely upon another point, on which we have long expected some enquiry, though we had not the least idea from what quarter it would come. It is generally understood that Lord Sidmouth complains of having been misled by certain Dissenters, who gave him, some of them spontaneously, their advice upon the subject of his bill, and led him to believe that they carried great weight with, and represented truly the feelings of the Dissenters. This report Lord Stanhope brings very pointedly home to Mr. Smith, asking him, "whether he does or does not know that it is a current report that he, Mr. Smith, encouraged Lord Sidmouth to bring in his bill of the last session? Whether the Dissenters and Methodists did not decline, positively, to meet Mr. Smith afterwards, upon Lord Liverpool's invitation?" The fact is, that certain Dissenters were much too officious upon this occasion, and gave themselves a credit, to which they were by no means entitled. They affected to speak for the whole body of Dissenters, without considering how little weight they really possessed in that body. It is not easy, we are happy to say, for any man to carry great weight with the Dissenters; for the body is not so manageable as the church; it will think for itself, and to know their thoughts, an acquaintance with a few gentlemen is not sufficient. The Dissenters are divided into bodies, of which that of the Methodists is now by far the most numerous; whilst that of the Presbyterians is dwindling to nothing. The mixed class, consisting of those who are Dissenters in town and Churchmen in the country, we ascribe to another class; for inasmuch as they cannot bear their testimony to dissent among their ordinary neighbours, we may generally look upon their conduct to be very slight with the meeting-house and their children, naturally forgetting it, with all their professions that body which affords greater resources to the fashionable and the opulent.

The bill of Lord Stanhope, though not successful, has been of use. Administration itself has brought in a bill, and we are credibly informed, that the minister, in which Lord Stanhope's speech was conveyed in the House of Commons, pressed the importance of many changes into

this bill, which otherwise might have found their way into it. Every thing now it was certain would be more accurately examined, and though there might be some solicitude not to grant too much, still the administration would not be willing to introduce any thing, which should expose it to the well-merited censures of the thinking and enlightened, whose eyes are now every where opened to this subject. We shall be curious to see the changes introduced, but look forward to the advocates for Catholic emancipation and Mr. Wyvill's Petition for some effectual good to be operated in the next sessions. The bill of administration has passed the Commons.

The Catholic question stands upon very good grounds, for the House of Commons has determined to take it up early in the next sessions, and to grant every thing which is not incompatible with the Protestant interest. In the House of Lords, the question against the Catholics was carried by a majority of only one. The ministers were divided upon this question, which is not to be considered, according to the vulgar phrase, as a government question, that is in other words, each member of Parliament is to exercise his own judgment upon the question, acting according to his own views, and each member of the Exchequer will do the same. This implies, that in other questions the members of the House of Commons do not exercise their own judgment, but are led by some influence, whether of government or of any other person, and this distinction ought to be clearly ascertained, and each member marked by the character which belongs to him, and each question, by the support which it receives. We should then form a true estimate of every division. Thus if there were seven honest and independent members on one side, and six on the other, we might be convinced, that there was some ground for difference of opinion, which it would become us to examine. But as to the numbers on either side, who are not honest and independent, they should be considered as nothing, though their speeches may throw great light upon the subject, and be of use to the honest and independent mind.

The honest and independent members of Parliament will in the recess have an opportunity of examining the Catholic question in all its bearings, and in ascertaining whether a party is formed by the Protestant interest. But is not the object to establish a sect, either in England or Scotland, which both together

and in filling the members of the established sect in Ireland, do not form a majority of the Protestants of this kingdom. Whether they deserve the name of Protestants, who belong to the sects called the Church or the Kirk, may justly be doubted; and the Dissenters will do well to examine what is their claim to this title. The word Protestant is derived indeed from some prince and nobles of Germany, protesting in a diet against the power of the Pope, but it is of little consequence to protest against the power of one man, in matters of religion, if they set up another power equally obnoxious, and equally contrary to the allegiance we owe to our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Popery is bad enough when adorned with all the magnificence of St. Peter's; it is worse when it presses you down in a meeting house, whose minister, differing from the sects of Rome and England, has the insolence to call himself orthodox, and to send every one to eternal perdition, who does not subscribe to the traditions which he received from his mother, nurse and tutor.

We are concerned to state that the troubles of the manufacturing counties have not completely subsided, yet it may be doubted whether they called for any new laws upon this subject. An inquiry took place in both Houses by secret committees, who had the inspection of papers delivered to them by government in sealed bags, and on their report, after some discussion, a bill was passed, increasing the power of the magistrates in the disturbed counties. It is probable that the return of employment may set aside the necessity of using these powers, and the faults themselves must be considered as a temporary effluence, not as a settled system of disaffection to the constitution and government of the country.

An extraordinary duel disgraces the account of our last month; it is stated to have been between a general officer and another gentleman on the subject of a dance called the Waltz, which two persons in the fashionable world are endeavouring to introduce into this country. This is a common dance in Germany, a dance that English travellers used to look on with disgust, and they would have been shocked at the idea of their wives or sisters exhibiting themselves in so indecent a manner. It is in fact a dance very improper for a modest woman, and we trust that it will long be considered to be the lower classes, whatever countenance it receives from those in higher life, who do not sufficiently reflect on the danger that will re-

sult to themselves or their children, by undermining the morality of the country. It is not a subject however for a duel, and commending the gentleman for expressing his abhorrence of this dance in proper terms, we lament his want of courage in suffering himself to be called out into the field upon such an occasion. Death did not ensue to either party, but dreadful must have been the reflection of the challenger, if he had added to the folly of vindicating an immodest dance, the murder of a man, for standing up in defence of true order and decorum.

Duels are every day growing more and more out of fashion, and we congratulate the age, that the character of the duelist ceases to be honourable. War, however, stands its ground, and all eyes are turned to the new theatre, where the match is unequal between the big Bon of Europe and his competitor. Buonaparte has been sufficiently often on the stage, to establish his character, and to give him a distinguished rank among the prize fighters of the world. His talents in the art cannot be doubted, and the Vistula and the Memel have witnessed the activity and the vigour of his power. It is not necessary to examine in detail the reasons that have brought on this war. They are given in state papers published by Buonaparte at the head of his armies. The Emperor of Russia would not be subservient to all his views, and he was to be humbled. For this purpose troops were marched from all directions to the Vistula, and laws are to be divulged to the semi-barbarians of the north, by the mouth of the cannon.

When his army had crossed the Vistula, Buonaparte, who had been feasting on the road with his subject kings, was seen at the head of them. They were instantly marched on, and by one of his prompt and judicious measures were passed over the Memel on three bridges, the Russian Emperor being to the right of him at the distance of only thirty leagues. The movements of the French have been given in three bulletins, and curiosity is anxious for the arrival of the next, to confirm or confute the plans of politicians on the campaign. It will be seen, whether hundreds of leagues have been laid waste by the Russians themselves to impede the progress of Buonaparte, or whether he has not got into the rear of the Russians, and compelled them to a battle or their discomfiture. An ambassador from Buonaparte to Petersburg, who is not clear that he arrives at that city, who will not dare to open his credentials before its conqueror.

