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Conference between the Ghosts of Henry the Eighth and Charles the First.

SIR, *May 28th*, 1813.

The late discovery of the corpse of Charles the First, which settles a point of history, as to the place of his interment, reminded me of a curious pamphlet, which has been long in my possession, and is, probably, one of the earliest dialogues of the dead, in the English language. It is thus entitled:—

A Messenger from the Dead, or Conference, full of stupendious horrour, heard distinctly, and by alternate voyces, by many at that time present. Between the Ghosts of Henry the Eighth and Charles the First of England, in Windsore Chappel, where they were both buried. In which the whole Series of the Divine Judgments, in those infortunate Ilands, is as it were by a Pencil from Heaven, most lively set forth from the first unto the last. 4to. 20 pp. 1658. To this title-page is prefixed a *print*, from a wood cut. On the ground, amidst scattered relics of mortality, is a *whole-length* skeleton. Above, in compartments, are two erect figures in winding sheets, each holding a lighted taper. These were, doubtless, designed to represent the ghostly speakers in this sepulchral conference. On the title-page, as a *vignette*, is a death's head, surrounded by wings and the motto, *spes addidit alas*, of which I do not perceive the application.

The *Conference* opens with this surly demand from Henry:—"Say! who art thou that presumest by a sacrilegious impiety to disturb the ashes of a king, which so many years have been at rest?" Charles, "in a softer, but most doleful, accent," now describes himself, as "that unhappy King of England, the undoubted heir of 62 monarchs, [according to Buchanan, 108] who did wear the royal crown twenty-two years, and longer." This declaration produces a sarcasm from Henry:—"What you a king! Did you ever wear a crown on your head, who have not a head on your shoulders?" Charles piteously replies, "I have not always wanted a head, my subjects, wo is me, did lately bereave me of it." p. 5. On Henry's enquiring "what heinous crime" had led "to so great a violence," Charles replies, "I know not well what;" and then, not supposed yet to be aware of his company, he declares his innocence, as to various vices, "of all which, Henry the Eighth, his predecessor, is condemned to be guilty by all the world." p. 6.

Charles thus accounts for the civil war which proved his destruction:—"My father being dead, strange rumours were spread of it. Not long afterwards, I married with the Daughter of France, and in the beginning of my reign made two unfortunate wars. A Parliament being called at Oxford, [1625] I lost the love of my people for dissolving it; at that instant when the Duke of Buckingham was questioned for having a hand in my father's death. At this I perceived that the people did repine, but I was too constant always to my own counsels, and although many parliaments were afterwards called, I dissolved them all. This inforced me to put unusual taxes upon my people, by which, and by the entertainment of the Queen Mother, of France, (a lady most extremely hated by the generality of the nation,) I wonderfully increased their evil opinion of me." p. 6. The Queen Mother was *Mary de Medicis*, widow of Henry the Fourth. That intriguing princess had been driven out of France, by the more successful intrigues of *Richelieu*, and the hatred of her son Louis the Thirteenth. She arrived in England in 1638, and remained "here about three years." Charles, according to *Oldmixon*, (Fol. p. 173), was accused of having "allowed her near 40,000 pounds a year, when *France* would not allow her a *livre*," and this when he "had other occasions enough for ship-money." Mary *de Medicis* largely experienced the mutability of fortune. During the long minority of her son, she had commanded the treasure amassed by her husband, and indulged her taste for magnificence. . . . Yet, during the last ten years of her life, except the interval passed in England, she appears to have been, even in necessitous circumstances. Thus writes one of her biographers:—*La reine se vit obligée de fuir à Bruxelles en* 1631. *Depuis ce moment, elle ne revit plus son fils, ni Paris, qu'elle avoit embelli de ce Palais superbe, appellé Luxembourgh, des aquéducs ignorés jusqu'à elle et de la promenade publique, qui porte encore le nom de la reine.—Quelle leçon et quelle consolation pour les malheureux? La veuve de Henri le Grand, la mere d'un Roi de France, la belle-mere de trois souverains, manque du nécessaire et meurt dans l'indigence.* (Nov. Dict. Hist. 1772. iv. 362.)

On hearing Charles's confession of his political indiscretions, Henry, like *Satan* metamorphosed into an angel of light, makes this just observation,—"*The greatest prejudice that can arrive unto a prince is the loss of his people's love.*" He instances in his "niece, Mary, Queen of Scotland," who "lost the affections of that nation, and amongst other things, suffered for that indiscretion, by the loss of her head in England." p. 6. To Henry's enquiry why Charles was not buried with the ancestors of whom he boasted, rather than "interrupt *his* peace at Windsor," Charles replies:—

"I dying did desire to be buried at West-Minster, but my stars which did shine but cloudily and obscurely on me, in my life, were as inauspicious to me at my death. I suffered many things grievous to relate. At West-Minster I received my fatal sentence, where my predecessors were accustomed to be crowned. At Saint James I was kept in custody, a place much beloved of me by reason of my childhood spent

there, and the innocent recreations of my youth. At Whitehall I was beheaded, the scaffold being erected before the doors of the court, and I passed through that place in which I was accustomed to be present at masks and shows; and at the entertainment of the ambassadors of foreign princes." p. 7.

Henry now declares himself more fully, and teaches his ghostly visitor that, besides some perversions of justice, with which he charges Charles, he is suffering a righteous retribution for the crimes of his predecessors. Charles, by no means, relishes this doctrine. On his asking, "Should a king suffer by his subjects?" Henry replies, "We deserve greater punishments, by committing greater offences. They offend against a mortal king, we, against a King immortal." p. 8. His enormities Henry thus enumerates:—"The spoiling of monastries, having overthrown 376, and with one edict taken away all their goods and lands, plundered and levelled to the ground about 1000 churches," taking "out of the church of Canterbury above two great chests, so full of gold and precious stones, that four men could hardly stir either of them." Henry adds, "After that I began to shew myself in my own colours, I was as greedy of blood as I was before of gold, and made a great slaughter of all ages, sexes and orders whatsoever, and for no other trespass than that they opposed my pleasure. Four queens that successively had been married to me, did lose their lives, either by the axe or by a grief as fatal as the axe. I proscribed two princesses, two cardinals:—I did put to death by the common hangman twelve eminent personages, twenty-two barons and knights, sixteen abbots and priors, seventy-seven priests and religious men and others of a lower rank almost not to be numbered." pp. 12, 13.

Charles, in his reference to the civil war, having mentioned "the Lord of Kimbolton," as soon as "King Henry had heard the name he fetched a deep sigh, and said, Ah! at Kimbolton, it was that the most excellent mirrour of her sex, and the example of all virtues, my first wife, Queen Katharine, died, whom I divorced from my bed, that I might bring into it Ann Bollen, an incontinent woman, whom, not long afterwards, being taken in adultery, I caused to be beheaded by the common hangman." Henry charges himself with having commanded the *Cæsarean* operation to be performed, in the case of his Queen Jane, "adding to the cruelty these barbarous and inhuman words,—that wives could more easily be found than children." I find Sir John Hayward, in "The Life and Reign of King Edward the Sixth," commenting on that peculiar circumstance of Edward's birth, though he brings no charge against Henry. Lord Herbert and Hume do not even mention the circumstance, and Burnet (H. R. ii. 1) controverts the whole account, on the authority of "original letters that are yet extant," which, however he does not appear to have seen.

The result of his story Henry is thus made to communicate;—"Not to speak of the torments which I do now endure; what pangs did I not feel within me while I was alive; being perpetually scourged with rods of knotted

steel by the three *beadles* of Avarice, Cruelty and Incontinency. Being abandoned by all, I died without the communion of the church, repeating oftentimes in my last hour these words *we have lost all.* Being dead, I had the same end as Ahab, and it is the more remarkable, because it was in the ruins of a religious house, for as my corps was on the way to be conveyed hither, the coffin of lead, in which it was put, did crack by chance, and opened. To soder which, a plumber being sent for, my corpse was set down in the said ruins of the house there. While the plumber was running from place to place, his dog, most greedily did lick the blood that issued from me; a revenge from God, for the effusion of so much blood which in my life-time I had spilled." p. 12 & 16. Lord Herbert gives no particulars of Henry's funeral, and this humiliating anecdote would scarcely have been preserved by a courtier. Yet he closes his *Life and Reign* of this prince, with a short but comprehensive sentence:—"To conclude, I wish I could leave him in his grave."

Lord Herbert remarks that Henry "had begun a fair monument at Windsor." He is made to say in this dialogue, "I commanded that a more sumptuous monument should be provided for me, than was ever raised for any of my predecessors, and as yet I have no monument at all, although of all the Kings of England, not one of them had three children that successively swayed the sceptre, but myself. But alas! I need not fear that I shall be ever lost in the memory of men. I have purchased to myself an everlasting name, by my enormous offences. All sorts of men do strive as it were in emulation, who shall hate me most. I am become justly odious to the Catholics, because I divided England from the communion of the Church of Rome. The Protestants hate me, because through all the course of my life I did pursue them with fire and sword.—All lettered men will evermore curse my memory, because I have utterly destroyed such excellent monuments of learning and antiquity that the Christian world, can hardly paralell. Finally, while I was alive most men hated me, all men feared me, no man loved me." pp. 15, 16.

To this Conference, *post funera virtus,* had been no unsuitable motto, for, besides the expressions of Henry's remorse, Charles is made to utter these good sentiments, "I would to God that flattery had never been heard of in the courts of princes. I would to God that I had never heard that we are above the law, and are to give an account to God only for what we have committed upon earth.—An incomparable scholar, and highly esteemed in the days of my father and Queen Elizabeth, hath left recorded, that 'God doth most for kings, and kings, again, do least for God.'" pp. 17 & 19.

Charles had admitted that by the "instigation" of *Laud*, he had shewn "more countenance to some practices of the Church of Rome," than either his father did or Elizabeth. On this Henry upbraids him with the folly of being *almost a Catholic*, adding, "it doth not suffice to sit down in the porch, unless you enter into the church," referring to "King Agrippa," of whom he says, "he is now howling with me in the kingdom of dark-

ness." p. 19. The reply of Charles thus closes the conference. "I have bled enough already. Think not to give new wounds unto me, by striking at me in my religion. What the sacred authority of the word of God and the light of my own conscience hath convinced me unto. What neither the frequent solicitations of foreign princes, nor the hourly importunity of my dearest wife, could dissuade me from. What, dying, I commanded my children to embrace, I shall never, after death, be induced to retract. In this resolution I do expect the day of a joyful resurrection, the morning air of which I do already feel refreshing me." p. 20.

Such is the best account I can send you of this royal Conference, some passages in which might deserve the attention of any prince, *had he ears to hear* them, *in Windsore Chappel*, or elsewhere. The author of this pamphlet I have no clue to discover, nor is the design of the publication, if it were at all political, to me apparent. At the end are eight Latin verses, addressed *In malevolos hujus narratiunculæ, obtrectatores.*

To these verses are annexed the signature, R. F. followed by this translation;—

Detractor, tear not with a dogged tooth
These leaves, nor yet upbraid them with untruth;
Though counterfeit the bark without be found,
Know that the tree within is good and sound:
And what's not obvious to the outward ear
More deep impressions in the mind doth bear.
Then tax me not, that poet like I faign,
This story to its speaker truth will gain.

Cromwell died, September 3rd, in the same year with the date of this pamphlet, but whether before the publication cannot be ascertained. I have found no hint at the Protector's government, nor praise or censure of the *Commonwealth*. Charles is, indeed, made to justify the war against him, and the value of kings appears to be only estimated by their services to the people. The author, evidently thought more favourably of the intentions, than of the conduct of Charles, whom he makes Henry describe as especially punished for *his* crimes, being in the *third generation*, though "the most innocent" of his successors. This, indeed, is the doctrine designed to be taught in this Conference. The writer could not, I think, have been a zealot for the Reformation, as he has left the reputation, of Anne Boleyn entirely undefended, and has degraded, though not unjustly, the character of Henry.

The contriver of this Conference was scarcely a republican, but rather a friend to a well-limited monarchy, ruling only by Parliaments. In religion, he was probably a Protestant, inclined to a compromise with Roman Catholics. It is remarkable that he has, except in two instances, always used that description, though *Papist*, as a term of reproach, was then so common. Is it possible that R. F. may have been an *Alexander Geddes*, of the seventeenth century?

VERMICULUS.

Miraculous Cures by the Corpse of St. Milburg.

SIR,

Among the errors which have obtained currency in modern times, in consequence of the de-

parture of men from the true Catholic faith, you must allow me to rank the opinion, that the age of miracles has gone by: and I doubt not but that all your *unprejudiced* readers will agree with me on this point before they have proceeded through many sentences of my letter.

We have been informed that on a late solemn occasion, when a certain august personage visited the mansions of the mouldering dead, chance directed his steps to the spot where lay deposited, in oblivious seclusion, the body of that holy and sainted martyr of blessed memory, King Charles the First. No remarkable appearance is stated to have distinguished his coffin from the others which tenanted the same chamber, and it was known only by the superscription:—but after removing the lid, such a wonder occurred, as ought to reduce to silence the tongue of every cavilling sceptic;—for when the physician in attendance, with all due reverence, raised the head of the royal sufferer, which his rebellious subjects had so wickedly severed from his body, a drop of his precious blood, which obstinate heretics might have thought the lapse of two centuries would have hardened into indissoluble crust, or amalgamated with its parent dust, dropped upon the hand that held the sacred relic! I do not know how many witnesses there were to this miracle, or whether there were any besides the physician and his royal master; but the fact was regularly announced in the public prints, and recorded with a plainness and *simplicity*, that can leave no doubt of its *truth*. Now, Sir, the miracle being thus proved, what I would next observe is, that we must not suppose such wonders are ever performed in vain; and from the analogy furnished me by the *well-authenticated* histories of the holy martyrs and confessors of former times which have been detailed by such able hands as Baronius, William of Malmsbury, Cressy and others of equal repute, wherein the merits of the saints, while living, and the virtues of their remains after their death, are faithfully set forth, I am induced to hope that some happy consequences will appear to have been effected on the bystanders, and particularly on one of them, by this wonderful event, and through the efficacy of the re-liquified blood of Saint Charles. No authorised account of any such beneficial effects has, indeed, been yet given to the public, but I take it for granted, we shall in due time be favoured with all the edifying particulars.

In the mean while, Sir, that those of your readers who may not be conversant in such matters, may know what kind of blessings they may *reasonably* expect from an occurrence so wonderful, I shall insert here an account of the discovery of the remains of another royal saint, though not a martyr, accompanied by a statement of the astonishing effects that were produced on the occasion. The history relates to St. Milburg, one of the "lillies of pure virginity," as Baronius beautifully calls them, "which adorned the Saxon churches in the seventh century." She was the eldest daughter of Merwald, King of Mercia, and abbess of a convent at Wenlock, in Shropshire, which she had herself founded. Though she

had been held in high veneration during her life-time, through some cause connected with the turbulence of the age, the place of her sepulture was forgotten, and remained unknown, till the year 1100, when it was accidentally discovered. The particulars of this fortunate event are given by William of Malmsbury, in a passage which I shall insert below*, and which Cressy, in his Church History, thus translates. "St. Milburga rests at Wenlock: In ancient times her memory was celebrated by the inhabitants, but after the coming in of the Normans, by reason that the place of her sepulcher was unknown, she became forgotten. But of late a convent of Cluny Monks having been established there, whilst they were busy in erecting the fabrick of a new church, a certain child, running earnestly over the pavement, the vault of her sepulcher brok under him, by which means the body of the holy virgin was discovered. Which being taken up, a most odoriferous vapour, as of a most precious balsam, perfumed the whole church: and such a world of miracles were wrought by her intercession, that wonderful multitudes flocked thither, both rich and poor, in so much, as there was scarce room in the open fields to receive them, so strong a faith they had to find remedy there for their maladies. Neither did they fail of their expectation, for none departed away without a cure, or at least a mitigation of their diseases, and particularly the *king's evil*, incurable by Physicians, was, through the merits of the holy virgin, healed perfectly in several persons." — *Cressy's Church History, lib.* xvii. *cap.* 18.

On referring to the original, your learned readers will perceive that the whole of this translation is very loose and paraphrastic, but I shall object to its accuracy only in one particular, where Cressy appears to me to have mistaken his author, and that is, in rendering *regius morbus, king's evil.* It is true, indeed, that Celsus has used the words to denote scrofula, which was called the king's-evil, from the mode of its cure, by the touch of a royal hand, as has been well related by the Historian of Lynn, with whose interesting account you have obliged your readers. [viii. 5. 91. 232.] But the slightest reflection must shew, that the historian meant to designate here, not a malady cured *by* royalty, for that would not in this instance have distinguished one complaint from the other, but some malady *of which* royalty *was cured.* It were greatly to be wished, that he had been more specific in describing

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* Milburga apud Weneloch requiescit, olim ab accolis nota, sed post adventum Normannorum, dum nescitur locus sepulchri, aliquandiu oblivioni data. Nuper vero adunato ibi conventu monachorum Cluniacensium, dum inchoata novi templi machina, quidam puer per pavimentum consitatus cursitaret, effracta mausolei fovea, propalam corpus virginis fecit: tunc balsamici odoris aura per ecclesiam spirante altius levatum tot miracula præbuit ut catervatim eo populorum undè confluerunt. Vix patuli campi capiebant agmina viatorum, dum æquis umbonibus dives et mendicus se agerent, cunctos in commune præcipitante fide. Nec cassum eventum res habuit, adeo ut nullus inde nisi extincta vel mitigata valetudine discederet, nonnullosq. REGIUS MORBUS, medicis sane incurabilis, per merita virginis relinqueret.—Williel. Malmesb. in Scriptores Re. An. post Bedam, Francof. 1601, page 89.

what this was: at present we have only to look for his meaning in the best interpretation that can be put upon his words. *Regius*, every school-boy knows, means *royal*, *kingly*, PRINCELY, for he finds these definitions of the word, in his Ainsworth, and the same high authority defines *morbus*, "any odd humour, unreasonable passion or vice:" hence *regius morbus* will be, any "odd humour, unreasonable passion, or vice," by which a prince or royal personage may be afflicted, and which may well be said to be "incurable by physicians." As then, Sir, the relics of a royal saint in former times wrought the cure of this evil, what may we not expect in the present day, from the relics of another royal saint, and martyr too, *should there unfortunately happen to be any evils of this description remaining among us to need the miraculous remedy!*

T. R.

A Misquotation.

SIR,

Having lately met with a Review of "A Short Statement of the Scripture Doctrine, respecting the Unity of God, by John Campbell," in a Magazine published at Edinburgh, under the title of the "Scripture Magazine," I was particularly struck with an extract which the reviewer professes to make from Mr. Aspland's correspondence with Mr. Webley. "After observing," says he, (No. 58, dated May 1, 1813. p. 121), "that Mr. Webley had adopted new objects of worship, he proceeds, 'If an angel from heaven were to preach to me the Trinity, the Deity of Christ, and the incapacity or unwillingness of the Almighty to pardon sin, without full satisfaction, I should, as I valued my soul, *hold his doctrine* ACCURSED.'"— After which he draws a parallel between Mr. Aspland and a Jew, who would not believe Moses, if he had declared Jesus of Nazareth to be the Messiah, and adds some other equally irrelevent remarks. But the reader of this quotation, and of the remarks which follow it, will do well, before he admits their applicability, to examine whether the quotation be fairly made, and, for this purpose he will turn to the Monthly Repository, vol. vii. p. 725, where, after observing, that "Divine teachings are claimed by men of almost all sentiments, by the followers of Joanna Southcot more than by Calvinists, and by them more than by his correspondent," Mr. Aspland proceeds, "This assumption, therefore, goes no way in a controversy; the *only* proper question in which is, *what is the doctrine of Jesus? His word is spirit.* He teaches that God is One; that he himself is not God but man, and that God is a Father, and always acts a fatherly part towards all his children; and" (then he professes) "if an angel from heaven were, *in spite of* THESE *divine teachings*, to preach to me the Trinity, the Deity of Christ, and the incapacity, or unwillingness, of God to pardon sin without full satisfaction, I should, as I valued my soul, hold his doctrine accursed."

Here we see that the reviewer has chosen to leave out the introductory part of the sentence, which was necessary to the right understanding of what he has chosen to lay before his readers. From the whole passage it clearly

appears that Mr. Aspland's first object was, to convince his correspondent, that the proper question to be examined is, "What is the revelation already given to all men, in the scriptures of truth, and to be learned from them by patient, attentive, impartial examination?" and not, "What new revelation any individual may expect to receive by an extraordinary divine teaching?" And then, after expressing his own full conviction, that these scriptures teach the absolute Unity of God, the proper humanity of Jesus Christ, and the placability of the Father of Mercies, he adds, (in language, I admit, which, though adopted from the Apostle Paul, I should not have chosen to use, because an angel from heaven never *could* contradict the clear doctrines of divine revelation,) "if an angel from heaven, *in spite of* THESE *divine teachings*," &c.—But the reviewer has thought it prudent to leave out this essential clause

The reviewer goes on to warn Mr. Aspland, and through him, no doubt, all *Socinians*, that "a man can understand nothing, except it be given him from above:" —a gift to which he, of course, lays claim.—Was it "given him *from above*," to *mis*understand and so grossly misrepresent an adversary, as he has done in the passage before us?

V. F.

Monuments for the Dead in Dissenting Places of Worship.

SIR,

Will you allow me, through the medium of your pages, to inquire whether it is, or ever has been customary to erect monuments or place tablets in memory of the dead, in Dissenting chapels. I have not seen any thing of the kind, in the few that I have had an opportunity of visiting, and I cannot help lamenting the deficiency. These tender remembrancers of our departed friends, can hardly fail to endear, and increase our veneration for, the place where they are presented to our view; and the contemplations which they are calculated to excite in our minds, must be favourable to the grand object for which such buildings are erected. There is something striking and sacred, even to strangers, in these memorials of those who *have been!* and I know not whether the habit of beholding such as must particularly interest them, might not be a check upon the unfeeling levity with which we see some young persons quitting, for a more showy and crowded scene, the place where their fathers worshiped.

That there is no burying-ground belonging to a chapel, appears to to me no objection, but rather to form an additional reason for a Dissenter upon principle, who is, in compliance with the common decencies of life, obliged to be laid in consecrated ground, and to have a service read over his remains, which declares him to die in a faith which he utterly rejects: all this seems to render it still more desirable that some memorial should attest the *truth*, on the spot where he was in the habit of supplicating the Most High, and where his family and friends still meet, for the same solemn purpose.

Whatever may have been the opinions of those reformers, who are said scarcely to have tolerated cleanliness in their places

of worship, I think Unitarians can have no objections to the species of ornament which I wish to recommend: if they have, I should feel obliged to any one who will state them, for the information of,

Sir,
Your constant reader,
M. H.

The Dissenting Minister's Complaint.

MR. EDITOR,

Feb. 1, 1813.

I flatter myself that, amongst other good offices which you are ready to do for the religious public, you are not unwilling to give your assistance towards removing the grievances of a body of men, who have, indeed, the meed of honour granted them, but rarely that of profit. To make the ground of my complaint understood, I will proceed, without farther preface, to inform you that I am the son of a Dissenting minister, descended in a direct line from one of the venerable company of martyrs, who, on the memorable day of St. Bartholomew, evinced the power of truth and the low value at which worldly honours and profits are held by those who seek a kingdom which cannot be moved. Strongly impressed by the importance of Christian principles and their value to give dignity to the character of man and eternity to his existence; and gratified by the services he fondly hoped he had rendered the world by a faithful avowal of them and by the uninterrupted esteem in which he had passed more than a quarter of a century, among a numerous, a devout and an affectionate people, the good man believed that he could not serve his son better than by bringing him up to his own profession, that he might advance the good cause and enjoy the like praise and gratification. Accordingly, I was kept at a grammar-school, till I attained my sixteenth year, and then was sent to a Dissenting college high in the public confidence, which had given to the world many learned and useful ministers. Some friends of my father, who valued him for the genuine integrity and excellence of his character, but thought him a man of but little worldly wisdom, proposed one and another scheme of future engagement for me, which promised greater advantages and offered a better prospect of opulence than did the favourite scheme of his pious meditations. But in his eye the honours and the riches of the world were of small account; and he entertained no more elevated hope for his much-loved child, than to see him usefully employed in the work of the ministry, and successful in bringing souls to Christ: and the summit of his ambition seemed to be that, when it should please God to remove him to a better world, his son might fill "the venerable place," which "his looks and his lips had adorned" for so many years; and continue to enjoy, for as long a period as himself, the affection and the blessing of that Christian circle to whom it was his prayer that he might remain faithful and useful, even unto death. The good man's prayer was heard. He preached till his dying day: and when at length he had resigned the solemn charge of the care of souls into the hand of the great Shepherd

and Bishop of them, it became the lot of his son to occupy his pulpit, and his task to tend the trees which he had planted, and water the seed which he had sown. It is with regret I add, not with the entire satisfaction that he enjoyed. I would speak with reverence of the office which I fill, and hope I shall not be charged with dishonouring it, when I make a comparison of it, with the situations in which other branches of my family are placed: I would speak with respect of the friends who venerated the father and, I believe, esteem the son; and I hope they will not be offended when I direct their consideration, and the consideration of Dissenting congregations in general, to a species of injustice, to which, I conceive, unintentionally no doubt, I am now exposed. I am aware that my lot is not a solitary one: I have many fellow-sufferers; and it is on their account as much as on my own that I am now induced to intrude upon your notice, and upon the notice of your readers, *the Dissenting Minister's Complaint.*

It has been seldom in the power of the parents of Dissenting ministers, to leave an independent fortune to their children. It has, therefore, usually happened that they have depended wholly upon their congregations for the means of supporting themselves and bringing up their families in the world. There was indeed a period, not very long ago, when it was practicable for them to do this with comfort and respectability. My father did so. His salary, and the salaries of other ministers, his friends, were adequate to the demands of the day. What he received fifty years ago was never less and often more than that which is paid to me at the present time: and a good custom prevailed in those days, which modern fashions have, unfortunately for us, done away; for scarcely a family in the place thought the accounts of the year closed as they should be, till an item was included amongst them of a useful present, either to their minister or to his wife and children. In those golden days, Mr. Editor, butcher's meat was three-pence per pound, bread not a penny, butter seldom higher than six-pence, and poultry and other articles of consumption of proportionate prices; which enabled my mother, who was a careful housekeeper, by the help of the substantial proofs of friendship which she received, not only to keep a well-covered table, and treat us with a good glass of home-made wine, but also to make a small saving at the end of the year, which she used to say would serve us on a rainy day. I hardly need tell you, that now the common necessaries of life are at triple the price I have stated, and that even our Christmas passes with but few tokens of the liberality of our friends.

I complain not, Sir, of any disrespect. I experience the same kindness that I always have experienced. The friendly salutation, the cordial shake of the hand, the tender inquiry after the health of my wife, and the apprehension least I should take cold on leaving their friendly roof on a winter's evening, are as rife as they were in the days of my father; and when I have been for a short time absent from home, my good friends seem much pleased, and congratulate them-

selves on my return. But I have long discovered that I could not go on upon the old plan, and must have some other means of keeping my family from want.

My worthy parent used to say, that a minister of the gospel ought to have no other employment than the care of his people; and should visit among them, and make himself well acquainted with the state of their minds, and their proficiency in Christian knowledge. I thought so too, and adopted this maxim of my father's, and continued for some years to act upon it; until I found that I could not live by visiting my friends, but must employ my time in gaining a little more money. And, although the education of youth is a task in which I was loth to engage, yet, as it was the only one which offered, any advantages, I intimated to my friends, the necessity of having recourse to it; and have, in consequence been debarred for several years from the pleasing and edifying conversations in which I had long been in the habit of indulging. In this I already feel a loss which my books and my family cannot compensate, even when I steal an occasional hour to devote to them. For, in truth, Sir, this cruel necessity of sacrificing the greater part of my time to teaching Latin rudiments and English grammar, has robbed me of the means I before enjoyed of making myself acquainted with men and the ways of the world; and of observing the influence of the temptations of life: it has stolen from me those sweet hours which I was once accustomed to spend, surrounded by my books, and conversing with them; or reviving, by the sight of the names lettered on the backs of them, those trains of thought which an Atterbury and a Clarke, a Locke and a Hartley, had first impressed upon my mind: and thus it has transformed me, from a student of nature and an observer of man, into a mere plodder in a day-school, in which the same dull round is daily gone through, my temper is soured by the perverse dispositions of my boys, and my best relief is to sit quietly down in the evening with my pipe and my cup of October. I am told that I am become more crabbed and hard to be pleased, since I have taken to school-keeping; and I am sometimes afraid it will have a tendency to make me view the human race through a false medium, and that the doleful lucubrations of Mr. Wilberforce will soon cease to be held by me in all the horror they now appear to deserve.

I hope, Sir, I am right in ascribing this sad change of my lot to necessity. The times are much harder than they were fifty years ago; and yet my worthy friends are so kind as to subscribe as much to the support of public worship as their fathers used to do before them. They have experienced many privations of the comforts of better times; yet have not reduced their offerings to the church: and the great rich men, who have sprung up in consequence of the change of system, act so handsomely by me as to subscribe as much as the old standards of the congregation. I have not a word to say of them in the way of blame. I only fear they forget, that, while they are obliged to give three times as much for the provisions of their tables, gospel food remains

at the old price; and that, while every trade and every profession besides is in the receipt of a much larger quantity of money, in consequence of the low state of the circulating medium, the Dissenting minister has not the means of enabling him to go with a fair balance of advantage into the market. Even our respectable congregations seem to think they do enough for their ministers if they raise them a little more than a hundred a year. But, Sir, the plainest deductions of arithmetic will shew them that this cannot be enough.

Much do I wish that I could with prudence educate my son to the Christian ministry: it is my desire as much as it was my father's. But indeed, as his faithful friend, I am forbidden to think of it. And the present scarcity of well-educated ministers is likely still to increase, if some steps are not taken, by those who profess the Protestant Dissenting religion, to render the situation of their ministers more easy and more worth the acceptance of men of letters.

How fortunate is the case of the clergy of the Church! Their income, being derived from land, increases with the advance of the produce of the land; and, if our paper money should depreciate ten times more than it has, they are secure: because they will still receive their just proportion of the corn and the wine. But what is to become of us? Harder times are likely to make shorter salaries; and they will go on lessening, instead of advancing, as the price of every thing gets higher.

Let gentlemen, who live at their ease and roll in their carriages, (for some such there are still amongst us,) let manufacturers and tradesmen think as they will, or think not at all of the respectability and comfort of the ministers whose spiritual things they receive; they must soon abandon the religion which they profess to love, or have their pulpits filled by men, whose services will be irksome to them, or they must come forward in a more liberal, I will say in a more equitable, manner, and encourage the preacher to the performance of his duty, and parents to the learned education of their children for the Christian ministry, by giving more of their carnal things. Let them consider the actual price of the necessaries of life, and let them remember that a Christian minister, a man of character and of education, has a right to live in tolerable ease; and that he does not ask any thing unreasonable when he demands a stipend augmented according to the rise of the times. To such a pass is the injustice of some of our congregations now arrived, that I am acquainted with those who, because they subscribe among them a little more than two hundred a year, must, forsooth, divide that extraordinary sum between two ministers, and so keep them both in an honourable poverty! But what is that sum, what is double that sum, to compensate a man of sterling worth and distinguished abilities, and it is these they choose to engage, for the labour of his head and the price of his time. Would a physician, would an advocate think four hundred a year an equivalent for the serviees of his profession? And must a Christian divine have so low a value set on his capacity to do good, that, after a life of study in which he

has inhaled the fumes of the midnight lamp, and perhaps drawn disease into his vitals, and has ransacked and perplexed his brain in order to set in order the valuable truths of a religion which has the promise of this life and of that which is to come, he is to be thought paid by a paltry pittance, which will barely keep his children from starving and himself from a jail?

But what is the general fact? Stipends have in most places lowered, as every necessary of life has risen in price; and still our congregations require men of education and of character to entertain and to instruct them, while they are luxuriantly seated in their quilted pews on a Sabbath. The salaries of excisemen and of custom-house officers have been doubled, because they could not live without it. And, while a government, oppressed by an incalculable weight of debt, have found it necessary to increase the pay of those servants, without whom their pleasure could never be performed, we have even heard the illiberal, the base insinuation thrown out, by some who pretend to an esteem for the Christian ministry, that, "they pay enough," and that "their ministers are as well off as others of the community." I have known the man, if I may dignify him by the name of man, who has evinced such feelings, who, with a furious profession of love for the simple unadulterated doctrines of the gospel, has withdrawn his paltry guinea, because his minister *toiled* for the means of a respectable existence, and pleaded for an apology that he would not keep him in luxury; and I have also known one who could spend scores of pounds on the fashionable education of a daughter, but could not afford to continue a small subscription to the church of Christ. Can such folks and the like of them, love the gospel with its sacred doctrines? Can they wish to see them spread yet farther and more generally known in the world? Do they recollect that miraculous gifts ceased with the apostles, and that the Christian labourer is, according to every principle of common honesty, as much worthy of an adequate hire, as any other human being? Or must we, unawed by that spirit of liberality, to whose dictates it becomes us in most cases to submit, reply to them as Peter once replied to a worldly-minded professor:—"Away with thee and thy money! Thou hast neither part nor lot in this doctrine."—(*Acts* viii. 20.—*Wakefield's Translation.*)

Let professors consider whether their religion be worth any thing to them: if it be, it must be worth a great deal. And let them determine whether it be necessary for their pleasure, for their spiritual improvement, and for the general welfare of society, that a set of men be educated in a liberal manner to give them private counsel and public edification; and let them calculate the reasonable service, as they calculate the business of their manufactories, counting houses and shops; and they will acknowledge the complaint is not unfounded, which is made by their faithful servant,

Your constant Reader,

A PROTESTANT DISSENTER.

On the Decline of Presbyterian Congregations.

April 24, 1813.

MR. EDITOR,

Various opinions, professing to account for the decline of what have been usually, though erroneously, denominated Presbyterian congregations, have from time to time appeared in your valuable Repository. If the subject be not considered by yourself and your readers as already continued to a tiresome length, and you deem the following remarks worthy of the public eye, you have my permission to give them to the readers of the Monthly Repository. I have been induced to turn my thoughts to this subject, from a perusal of the two communications in your last number (pp. 183, 185); neither of which, in my humble opinion, points to the real cause of the lamented decline. Your correspondent, Mr. Henry Taylor, of Liverpool, attributes the decline to a want of attention in our public seminaries, in instructing the students designed for the ministry, in the arts of elocution. Now, I will join with Mr. T. in estimating to its full extent the utility of this branch of learning, in order to command attention and to give a powerful effect to the address of a public speaker. But I am not disposed to libel the understandings of the persons composing our congregations, by entertaining the idea that the charms of oratory, however alluring, are sufficiently powerful to overcome all predilection for particular sentiments and modes of worship. Nor can I assent to the opinion that a want of eloquence in our ministers has caused the decline Mr. T. laments. There have been, and still are, instances where our preachers have delivered their discourses in a popular and fascinating style of eloquence, to thinly scattered audiences, in whose ears have tingled sweetly the soft harmonious cadences of well-turned periods, flowing in a mellifluous softness from the lips of oratory; but which have left no permanent effects upon the heart or understanding.

I will also concur most heartily with "The Son of a Presbyterian minister," in lamenting the very limited and insufficient stipends, which in these expensive times, are raised for the support of an office, deserving to be placed in the most easy circumstances: but I fear the ministers of the gospel are not likely to have this cause, this just cause, of complaint removed, until those at the head of our national affairs become better Christians, and by pursuing the arts of peace instead of those of war, enable all ranks in society to feel less the pressure of taxation, of the high prices of the necessaries of life and of the decay of trade. There are, however, (and to their praise, be it said,) many individuals at this moment amongst those who have hitherto been styled Presbyterian ministers, whose connexions are the most respectable, and whose talents are equal, if not superior to those of any other sect, the established sect not excepted. These men have forsaken the riches, the splendour and the enjoyments which their talents and their connections might have secured to them in the pursuits of commerce, or the more lucrative professions, and, to their immortal glory, have entered themselves as the disciples and the ministers of

the humble Jesus, preferring his service to all which the world is able to bestow. It cannot therefore be for want of talents or an independent spirit in the ministry, that Presbyterian congregations have declined.

The decline which has hitherto been gradually, but evidently, taking place, may, I think, be traced to a very different and far less doubtful source, than any which have been as yet assigned. It must have been apparent to every superficial observer, that with the exception of a few instances, the great majority of our congregations have remained totally ignorant of Christian doctrines. Their ministers actuated by a groundless, and, I may add, an unworthy alarm, have abstained from touching upon those topics respecting which the Christian world is divided. Fearing that if they were to make known the result of their own most commendable inquiries into the doctrines taught by Christ and the apostles, they might incur the risk of offending the prejudices of those of their hearers, who have contented themselves with adopting the creed of their forefathers, without attempting to establish its importance by impartial examination; such ministers have cautiously, and, in their estimation, prudently, avoided to instruct their flock on subjects of high and momentous interest, and which would have added force and intrinsic value to the moral and devotional discourses upon which they have judged it better only to treat. Thus their people have had no peculiar principles to which they were attached, they have not felt any real value which any one system of Christianity bears over another. From these causes, any trifling circumstance of pique, of matrimonial connexion, or of fashion, has induced them to withdraw, and to join in public worship with any other sect of Christians; and in some cases, so little have they learned of the reasons for our dissent, they have joined themselves to the established church.

But, I rejoice to say, that a more auspicious day has at length dawned. The labours of those undaunted, enlightened and indefatigable servants of God, who are now no more, in conjunction with those truly apostolic ministers who are still pursuing a similar course, have removed the drowsy torpor and dispelled the infantine fears which have so long impeded the progress of the gospel and have suffered error to stalk with hideous and gigantic strides over so large a portion of the Christian world.

The manly avowals of those who are proclaiming the results of their laudable investigations, have raised a spirit of inquiry through the land. Our ministers are daily casting off their slavish fears, and their hearers, catching a spark of the same zeal, are informing themselves upon the real meaning of scripture. By such proceedings a bond of attachment is formed. They learn to reverence opinions formed upon mature examination, and the result of conviction, and are no longer liable to be seduced by less important attractions, or to be tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine.

I trust, therefore, that in our Unitarian societies, we shall not

have reason to lament the decline which has been so much regretted in Presbyterian congregations, but that notwithstanding the mass of misrepresentation and calumny by which we are assailed, our numbers will continue to increase. Nay, I am decidedly of opinion, that the very circumstance of Unitarianism being a sect every where spoken against, will be the means of spreading a Berean spirit through the whole Christian church, which will lead many from darkness to light, and who will be compelled by the honest convictions of their understandings to join our ranks. At all events our societies, be they numerous or otherwise, will be composed of persons who will be able to give a reason of the hope which is in them. I am, Sir,

A FRIEND TO THE CAUSE OF GENUINE CHRISTIANITY.

Articles of the Church, Calvinistic.

SIR, *Feb.* 17, 1813.

In Mr. Nichols's "Literary Anecdotes of the Eighteenth Century," (v. 359) are several letters from Dr. Richard Knight to Dr. Zachary Grey, a clergyman well known by his animadversions on Neal's "History of the Puritans," and his notes on Hudibras. In the following passage Dr. Knight expresses an opinion very opposite to that of a modern bishop of the same church, Dr. Prettyman Tomline. Dr. K. indeed agrees exactly with Toplady in his "Historic Proof."

"I cannot but be of Mr. Neal's opinion, as to our articles. The compilers of them were certainly Calvinists, and the seeming latitude in some of them is more owing to chance rather than any design in them to favour those of a contrary opinion. Till about the time of Archbishop Laud the clergy were universally so. I had once occasion to consult all our authors of any eminence within a large space of time, till about 1620, and did not meet with but very few that had not been thoroughly tinged with very narrow notions relating to predestination, free will, &c."

The *partial* adherence to Calvinism among the early as well as the late Nonconformists is thus described.

"I find among the Anabaptists, for a long period, there were some who opposed Calvinistical doctrines beyond any sect whatever, and they still continue so to do. The late ingenious Mr. Gale was pastor of a congregation in London, where they have always been great sticklers for the remonstrant prniciples. As far as I have observed, the Presbyterians are pretty lax as to the quinquarticular points, but the Independents otherwise; nay, Neal himself is not reckoned a Calvinist, at least not a strict one, by his own people."

This Letter is dated *Bluntsham, near St. Ives, March* 24, 1733-4. Dr. Knight was rector of Bluntsham. He is well known by his *Life of Dean Collett*, 1724, and the *Life of Erasmus*, 1726. The latter supplied *Jortin* with many biographical materials for his own Life of Erasmus. Dr. Knight died in 1746, aged 71, as appears by an inscription in *Bluntsham* Church.

SELECTOR.

Quaker Doctrine of the Trinity.

SIR, *May* 5, 1813.

Scarcely any thing manifests more plainly the latent, but growing, dissatisfaction with certain doctrines reputedly orthodox, among the thinking part of those who still profess to believe them, than the frequent attempts such persons make, to give them a more in-

viting aspect. These varying pictures are not only unlike each other, but have no real resemblance to the original doctrine of which they profess to be portraits. These modern sketches are of course denied by others to contain the leading features of those orthodox images, which they have been accustomed to worship, instead of the One only true God, as made known to us by Jesus Christ and his apostles.

Such appears to be the case with your correspondent A. B. who, in your last number, p. 307, under a profession of giving your readers "correct information" respecting "the belief of the Friends," has, in the commencement of his remarks, strangely, but I would hope inadvertently, misrepresented its object. He informs us that a paper inserted p. 110, of your present volume, is said to contain the "Quaker doctrine of the Trinity." Yet its title as there given is not so, either in form or substance, but "On the *Unity of the Godhead*, under the different *appellations* of Father, Son and Holy Spirit." And the paper itself retains nothing but the shadow of a modal Trinity, and that so faintly drawn, as not to conceal the Sabellian features underneath.

A. B. next tells us, that he believes "this paper is not to be found in any of their accredited authors."—Perhaps not.—It is, probably, however, "an original production," of an highly accredited member of the Society of Friends, who furnished your intelligent correspondent, N. C. with it, as an exposition of the faith of his brethren, at all events of his own. And it appears to me to be perfectly consonant to the doctrine of their most approved authors, as disavowing any distinction of persons in the Deity.

By substituting the editor's running title to the article in which the above paper is inserted, in the place of that prefixed to it by the writer, A. B. contrives to insinuate that the "doctrine of the Trinity" is esteemed by the Quakers, as an "important article of Christian faith."

How does this appear? Not by the paper A. B. objects to, as not having been written by an accredited author, nor by his extract from Sewel's History of the Quakers, especially if the context be considered, and the occasion on which this Confession of Faith was compiled and published, viz, "To manifest that their belief was *really orthodox, and agreeable with the holy scriptures.*"

Consistently with this object, its authors not only avoid all mention of the Trinity, but where they do not confine themselves to scriptural terms, they refer to the texts by which they supposed each tenet spoken of was supported. I may well add, that such a selection of texts as they referred to on this occasion, were never adduced in favour of the doctrine of the Trinity, upon any hypothesis. Yet among thirty or forty of these, there are two or three which are generally known by all competent judges to be corruptly rendered in the received version. These explanatory references to the authority of the text, A. B. omits. I give them as stating the doctrines in question, with greater precision and clearness, than the extracts he has made, can of themselves.

The texts intended by the writers to elucidate and support the first paragraph he has cited, are Heb. xii. 2. 1 Pet. i. 21. John xiv. 6. 1 Tim. ii. 5. The first of these texts represents "Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith," not as co-equal and co-eternal with God, the doctrine of the Trinity, but as enduring the cross, and despising the shame, on account of the joy that was set before him, and as being *therefore* exalted and rewarded, "at the right hand of the throne of God." The second inculcates the duty of the followers of Christ, "*by him* to believe *in God*, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory, that their faith and hope might be *in God*." No trace of a Trinity can I discover here. In the third text Jesus is described as saying concerning himself, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto *the Father*, but *by me*." This reference, I confess very naturally introduces the other text appealed to, which declares, with a precision and clearness that cannot well be exceeded, that "there is *one God*, and one Mediator between *God* and men, *the man Christ Jesus*."

The second paragraph may indicate a leaning towards the Sabellian hypothesis, but it contains not a word like the doctrine of the Trinity, although the noted corrupt text, 1 John v. 7, is referred to. The early Quakers, however, I may observe, could find no such doctrine even there.

The authors of this Confession of Faith, refer to Rom. i. 3, 4. and to Mat. i. 23, to explain the contents of the third paragraph. But these texts are as far from containing any thing like the doctrine of the Trinity, as any of the foregoing. The three next paragraphs in this Confession of Faith, A. B. passes over in silence, annexing an incorrect copy of that which follows. In this, the writers of it, on behalf of the early Quakers, express their belief in "the gospel of *the* grace *of God*." A. B. drops the three words in italics, and calls it "the gospel of grace," without saying, as our primitive confessors did, openly and explicitly, whence it was derived; that is, from the Father. And in proof of this tenet, they refer to Mat. xxviii. 19, a text which enjoins the duty of teaching all nations the doctrines of Christ, from the consideration that all the powers he possessed were *given* unto him.

In the next paragraph, these early Quakers confess their belief, that Jesus Christ "is the author of their living faith, in the power and goodness of God, as *manifest* in his Son," speaking in the present tense. This profession of their faith, does not seem altogether to please A. B. who represents them as having spoken in the past tense, "as manifested in his Son," as if they had been there, speaking of the person of Jesus Christ while on earth, as being in and of himself, "true God and perfect man." Yet it is evident, when this error is rectified, that they were in part speaking, whether correctly or otherwise, concerning the doctrine of divine influence on the human mind.

One of the texts to which they refer us on this occasion, is 1 Tim. ii. 5. This text describes, as we have just seen, God as one being, and the one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus, as another. The others,

John i. 1, 2, 1 John v. 20, and Rom. ix. v. say nothing approaching the doctrine of the Trinity, although they have been thought to favour the indwelling or Sabellian scheme.

The last paragraph, selected by A. B. from this Confession of faith, speaks, it is true, of divine honour and worship, being due to the Son of God, and that he is to be prayed unto, and his name called upon as the primitive Christians did, because of the glorious union of the Father and the Son. But the texts referred to, John v. 23, Heb. i. 6. 1 Cor. i. 2, Acts vii. 59, and John x. 30, are insufficient to authorize our addressing prayers to Christ, as the second person in the Trinity, as those who profess that doctrine frequently do. And these early Quakers themselves seem to have recollected before they completed this sentence, that prayer and praise to be really acceptable, should be offered up to God, in and through his dear Son," and that to such prayers only could a gracious answer be reasonably expected.

I will subjoin the paragraph which follows the last of those selected by A. B. in order to give your readers more full, definite and correct information of the belief of the Friends, as expressed in this document, than he has chosen to exhibit, concerning the person of Christ. As to the "Quaker doctrine of the Trinity," I much doubt the propriety of at all using the phrase, except it be to shew how far the Society have been from recognizing that tenet as an article of its faith. "We sincerely confess and believe," say they,

"That Christ's body that was crucified was not the Godhead, yet by the power of God was raised from the dead; and that the same Christ that was therein crucified, ascended into heaven and glory,* is not questioned by us. His flesh saw no corruption†, it did not corrupt, but yet doubtless his body was changed into a more glorious‡ and heavenly condition, than 'twas in, when subject to divers sufferings on earth, but how and what manner of change it met withal, after 'twas raised from the dead; so as to become such a glorious body (as 'tis declared to be), is too wonderful for mortals to conceive, apprehend or pry into (and more fit for angels to see); the scripture is silent therein, as to the manner thereof, and we are not curious to enquire or dispute it; nor do we esteem it necessary to make ourselves wise above‖ what is written, as to the manner or condition of Christ's glorious body, as in heaven, no more than to enquire how Christ appeared in divers manners or forms§ or how he came in among his disciples, the doors being shut¶ or how he vanished out of their sight, after he was risen. However we have cause to believe his body, as in heaven, is changed into a most glorious condition, far transcending what 'twas in on earth, otherwise how should our low body be changed, so as to be made like unto his glorious body**; for when he was on earth, and attended with sufferings, he was said to be like unto us in all things, sin only excepted;†† which may not be so said of him as now in a state of glory, as he prayed for,‡‡ otherwise where would be the change, both in him and in us?—Fol. edit. p. 644.

Such a comparison as the foregoing, scriptural as it is, could hardly have been made by any consistent Trinitarian, but it is perfectly consonant with the pure Unitarian doctrine, as it is also with the concluding paragraph of this Confession of Faith, which was given forth to clear the Society of Friends, from the aspersions of George Keith, who had recently

* Luke xxiv. 26. † Ps. xvi. 10. Acts ii. 31, and xiii. 35, 37. ‡ Phil. iii. 21. ‖ 1 Cor. iv. 6. § Mark xvi. 12. John xx. 15. ¶ John xx. 19. Luke xxiv. 36, 37, and xxiv. 31. ** Phil iii. 21. †† Heb. ii. 17, and iv. 15. ‡‡ John xvii. 5.

been ordained a clergyman of the Church of England, after having been for many years a zealous and eminent preacher among the people called Quakers. The writers of this paper, speaking of the great day of judgment, when *the Son of Man* cometh in his glory, say, "that this most glorious *heavenly man*, and *his brethren* that have been so much contemned and set at nought, should be thus exalted over their enemies and persecutors, in glory and triumph, *is a righteous thing with God*; and that they that suffer with him should appear with him in glory and dignity, when he *thus* appears at last:—God having appointed a day wherein he will judge the world in righteousness, by *that man* whom *he hath ordained.*" Ibid, p. 648.

Hence it appears that these primitive Quakers contemplated Christ, even at the day of judgment, as *a heavenly man*, and his followers as *his brethren*, alike acting under the righteous government of God.

The above confession of faith was signed by George Whitehead, Ambrose Rigg, William Fallowfield, James Park, Charles Marshall, John Bowater, John Vaughton and William Bingley, most, if not all of whom were approved ministers in the Society, some of whose discourses and prayers, taken in short-hand, are still extant, and afford strong evidence, that their faith and worship was decidedly Unitarian.

I fear trespassing too far on the patience of your readers, or I would annex hereto another Confession of Faith, which was presented to the Parliament in 1693, for the purpose of clearing the Quakers from a charge of having imbibed "some Socinian notions," but as this accusation, and *the manner of repelling it*, may require some serious notice, I must defer it for the present, and will now only express my fervent wish for the prevalence of our common Christianity in its genuine purity, without those sectarian mixtures, which have hitherto so much debased its spirit and limited its benefits.

I am, Your's, sincerely,
PHILEMON.

Mr. Fordham on the Clerical Character.

Sandon, May 1, 1813.

SIR,

The ostensible object of your Repository is the discovery and extension of moral truth, and, as a means to this noble end, you wisely recommend whatever tends to awaken and interest the mind of man, and to excite unrestrained investigation, fearless of consequences, or rather, conscious that the solidity of truth will bear the severest scrutiny. This is to do honour at once to truth and the God of truth. That we are all very ignorant of the extent of divine wisdom, ought to be admitted, and the more we know, the more, perhaps, shall be convinced of this aphorism. "When Euripho, the physician, was asked, Who was his teacher? he replied, Time. And the maxim of Solon was this:

With equal pace my years and learning go;
Knowledge but proves how little yet I know."

Agreeably to the spirit of your work, I have extracted from an eminent writer, the following passage, for the consideration of those who are willing to bow down their

heads before the divine statue of truth. The writer attempts to show, that the different professions are conditions or situations of human life which are essentially immoral in their bias and tendencies. After observing upon the sort of character which the study of law and physic is likely to entail upon its professors, he proceeds to the divine.

"A clergyman is a man educated for a certain profession; and having been so educated, he cannot, without much inconvenience, exchange it for another. This is a circumstance indeed to which his pursuit is exposed, in common with every other walk of human life; but the evil that results to him has its peculiar aggravations. It is the singularity of his office, that his duties principally consist in the inculcating certain opinions. These duties cannot properly be discharged without a life of study. It is surely a strange and anomalous species of existence, where a man's days are to be spent in study, with this condition annexed, that he must abstain from enquiry. This is incompatible with any thing that deserves the name of enquiry. He that really enquires, can by no means foresee in what conclusions his enquiry shall terminate."

But, if he enquires, he will, perhaps, arrive at sceptical conclusions, respecting his former sentiments, in spite of the bias impressed by pecuniary considerations and the fear of losing his friends. "In *this case*, he must determine either to play a solemn farce of hypocrisy, or to maintain his integrity at the expence of an obscure and solitary existence." This, Mr. Editor, is a situation which no moral agent ought to be placed in. It is equally injurious to the progress of truth, and the virtue of man. Here is a situation which nips the disposition to free enquiry in its bud. But if we dare inquire and determine to be sincere, we do it at the hazzard of losing our subsistence and the solace of our friends.

"The infidelity however of a clergyman, is, perhaps, a rare circumstance. It frequently happens that he lives in the midst of evidence and is insensible to it. He is in daily contemplation of contradictions, and finds them consistent. He reads stories the most fabulous and absurd with the profoundest reverence. He receives a system with the most perfect satisfaction, which a reflecting savage would infallibly scoff at, for its grossness and impertinence. His thoughts are under such perfect discipline, that not a doubt ventures to intrude itself.

"Another disadvantage, incident to the profession, is the appearance of sanctity. His sanctity does not arise immediately from spiritual motives and the sentiments of the heart; it is a certain exterior which he finds himself compelled to preserve. His devotion is not the result of devout feelings; he is obliged equally to affect them, when he experiences them the least. Hence there is something formal, constrained and artificial in the manners of a clergyman.

"A third disadvantageous circumstance arises from his situation as a guide and teacher to others. He harangues his auditory at stated periods, and no one is allowed to contradict him. He pronounces the prayers of the congregation, and seems to act the Me-

+ alas! this is but too true, & shows the fatal effects of an early prostitution of the understanding

diator between the Creator and his creatures. He is placed as a champion to resist the encroachment of heresy and infidelity. He warns his flock against innovation and intrepidity of thinking. The adversary is silent before him. With other men I may argue; but, if I attempt to discuss a subject freely and impartially with him, it is construed a personal insult. Thus the circumstances of every day tend to confirm in him a dogmatical, imperious, illiberal and intolerant character."

I will not make any further rewarks upon these extracts, but leave them to the cool and dispassionate consideration of those sincere minds, who feel an interest in the progressive improvement, the virtue and happiness of all classes of men.

"I am a man; and nothing is indifferent to me, that concerns the human kind."

"Let us go on to perfection."

Your's, &c.

G. G. FORDHAM.

On the Necessity of preaching against Political Immoralities.

"To give religion her unbridled scope."
COWPER.

SIR,

It has frequently occurred to me as a highly interesting and useful subject of enquiry, how far the ministers of religion are justified in so seldom entering upon the discussion of matters connected with politics in their discourses from the pulpit. I am aware that it has become fashionable to attach a degree of odium to those preachers, who venture, even by allusion, to meddle with our national affairs: but seeing the influence maintained over private morals by the examples and conduct of public life, it appears to me that no apostle of Jesus can be worthy of his calling, who, to avoid that odium, neglects so important a part of his duty.

It is not by any means my intention to call in question the propriety of the zeal manifested, among the sects, to disseminate the peculiar creeds which they severally profess; on the contrary, I am ready to acknowledge, that it is laudable to endeavour to impress others with a conviction of what we ourselves conceive to be important truths. But, I believe, it will now be pretty generally admitted that the *differences* of Christians are of infinitely less moment than their *agreements*; that the doctrines of transubstantiation, of original sin and of the pre-existence or divinity of Christ, (doctrines which may for ever continue to be maintained and disputed,) are unworthy to be placed on a level with those simple, yet grand and indisputable principles, which teach us to regulate our passions, to judge our fellow-men with candour, and on all occasions, "to do unto others as we would that they should do unto us." Now, while many preachers devote more than enough of the time of themselves and their hearers to controversial disputation, I know of none who, according to my judgment, enlarges sufficiently on these principles or, (which I think of still greater importance,) gives a sufficient latitude to the application of them.

Nor let it be supposed that I wish to see the pulpit used to promote the views of a political party; far from it; this would only tend to degrade the institution and, in many cases, to justify what it was erected to con-

demn. I am solicitous that the clergy should free themselves from attachment to party; that they should, indeed, be the ministers of Christ; and as such, that they should not withhold the censure due to those who violate his precepts, *to whatever party they may belong.* And this appears to me to be more incumbent on them, because I apprehend that many persons form their principles of political and private morals, on very different grounds: no one entertaining any value for character will gravely defend a neighbour in the breach of an ordinary precept; but say that it is the duty of our rulers *to do justly* and *to love mercy*, and we are presently told that "it may be very well *in theory*," or, "how can they, when they have such a *monster* to contend with?" Let the Christian preacher inform his congregation, whether such instructions were given to adorn our theory, or to mend our practice; and whether *we* are allowed to suspend their application, because others live in the violation of them!

"But," it will be said, "great delicacy must be felt with respect to a variety of topics, on which politicians are divided in opinion; and much difficulty would be found so to handle many of them, as to avoid an imputation of party-spirit." The Bible, I reply, is not the creature of modern statesmen; in preaching its doctrines you cannot, therefore, be *fairly* chargeable with party views; and as to imputations which the uncandid may cast upon you, they cannot be taken into the account, by Christian divines:—indeed many of you have already proved your disregard of them, by the spirit with which you maintain your obnoxious controversies. Now I do not understand why a delicacy which you overlook for the sake of *disputed articles of belief*, should be held in so much reverence, when you are called upon, by the daily open and abominable departures from moral principles, in themselves undisputed and universally acknowledged, to be of fundamental importance.

But you are anxious to promote the spread of your several tenets,—that your hearers should be well-grounded in their religious opinions; and here we come back to the point from whence we started, that our disagreements are of less consequence than our agreements, opinions about which we differ than principles on which we are all agreed: and, recollect, that without these principles, no one scheme about which you are so solicitous, is complete; nor can it produce its intended effect, unless they are, as far as possible, acted upon implicitly. It may be a very good maxim for an honest statesman, that

> "When vice prevails and impious men bear sway,
> "The post of honour is a private station,"

but I apprehend that a leader in the Christian warfare, should seek his post where vice most prevails, for if *he* shuts his eyes to the vices of a court, or to the growing corruptions of a state, what is to counteract them? What is to prevent them, under the combined patronage of rank and fashion, wealth and power, from insinuating themselves into the manners and habits even of your own flocks? Nay, has not this already taken place? and mean-while,

have not your fears for their moral good, given way to fears of alarming popular prejudice, of injuring your theological disputations, or, perhaps, of being called "political parsons?"

I shall probably be answered, "this is scarcely a fair representation of the case; for though we certainly do not often refer to political occurrences, we frequently deliver discourses on practical morality, and on the dangerous consequences of vice: and having laid down the rules, it is for every individual to apply them for himself."

But will individuals make such applications for themselves? It unfortunately too often happens, that mere rules, naked principles, are not understood, or more correctly speaking, they are not felt, they do not excite. A lecturer on natural philosophy lays it down as a principle, that water will always find its level, but he does not stop here; he illustrates, he applies his principle experimentally to practice, he thus makes it understood, and indelibly fixes it in the remembrance. It is equally necessary for the preacher to illustrate the principles which he would inculcate by examples from life. Let us try this on the ground I am contending for. We must be honest and just;—and in all our dealings. Now suppose this applied to a duty which as citizens we are frequently called upon to perform;—we are on the eve of an election; and the preacher tells his flock that their franchise is given to them as a public trust, which they must discharge, as they conscientiously believe to be most for the public good,—that they are not to be influenced by any consideration of private advantage; or they cannot be honest and just to their country. In giving ear to this, would they be less open to admonitions on other matters? Could any harm result?

"And would you have us to degrade the house of prayer into a political club-room?" No, Reverend Sir, but I would have you to elevate your flock to the rank of men; I would have you teach them that they are not, during an election, to set at defiance the principles which at other times they profess to act upon.

"But we should injure the cause of religion, were we to meddle with such subjects." *Injure* the cause of religion! If it be the end of religion to reform the morals and to mend the heart, I ask, how it can be injured by your endeavouring to put a stop to practices, the effect of which is to corrupt the morals and to debase the heart?

"We should be thought to travel out of the line of our professional duty, and to take upon ourselves a business more properly appertaining to the legislature." But the legislature may not chuse to interfere; and is no effort to be made? Will you still withhold your exertions lest you injure the cause of religion? You will scarcely persuade yourselves that the cause of religion can be served by your remaining passive observers of the growth of this evil. Unless it be broadly maintained that public life is without the pale of religion, that politics and morality are unconnected, nay, that they are wholly at variance, I do not see on what principle those who have devoted themselves to the service of Christ, can regard the vices of

the political pandemonium as sacred from reprehension. How large a proportion of human misery may we ascribe to the vices and crimes of statesmen! But the misery, which is the necessary effect of those vices and crimes, is not the only evil they produce. Let it be recollected, that statesmen are men of consequence, and that their example has a proportionate influence on all ranks of society. One publicly jeers at "old morality;" another denominates by the gentle epithet "misfortune," what we have heretofore considered as a base and scandalous crime; another contends for a principle, which is founded in injustice, as essential to the existence of our national honour. Each is suffered to pass without reproof, the ministers of religion are silent, and those who are not guarded by a strong and watchful principle, are left to infer, that such language, proceeding from such high authority, must be allowable *at least*.

In further illustration of my argument, I will cite a case not dissimilar from one which no long time since actually occurred. A personage of high rank and of great influence in the state, is the habitual slave of the meanest vices. A political writer, desirous of rousing him to a sense of his public duties, censures his course of life, in plain terms, and, in consequence, is visited by an information *ex officio*. The counsel for the prosecution describes the enormity of the libel; the counsel for the defendant appeals to notorious facts in justification of his client; the judge, the impartial judge, delivers a charge to the jury; without offering a single observation in extenuation of the defendant, he palliates the facts adduced in the defence, by suppositions which *might* make them venial; and he concludes that the writing in question must be a libel, because it is calculated to bring the personage referred to into contempt. When such doctrine is promulgated from the seat of authority, by a grave oracle of the law, where, I ask in the name of the persecuted authors of Christianity, where are the preachers of the gospel? Will they hold forth a similar shield for iniquity? Will they tell us that it is a greater offence to censure the vicious than to be guilty of the vice? that the censure, and not the vice, is calculated to bring into contempt? I protest, I know of no doctrine more detestable, none which has done, and is doing, more flagrant injustice, none which strikes so directly at the root of morality, none therefore which so loudly calls for the animadversion of our moral and religious instructors, who ought to bear in constant remembrance, that from their congregations may be selected the juries to whom such doctrine is addressed.

The maxim, that the pulpit has nothing to do with politics must, in a country, where the church and the state are so closely united, convey in the very terms a contradiction, which is frequently manifested in fact. The church, says the Guardian, "is the best handle imaginable for politicians to make use of for managing the loves and hatreds of mankind;" accordingly, we have our fast days and thanksgiving days specially appointed: the proclamations, indeed, tell us "to humble ourselves before Almighty God;" but what is the language of a large majority of preachers? Is it not calculated

to keep alive the spirit of national animosity, to foster our prejudices, and to excite indignation at the conduct of our enemies, rather than penitence and humiliation for our own? And can it be maintained, that this is consistent with the character of Christian divines? It is assuredly their business to counteract such feelings, to teach us to love our enemies, and thus to promote the great object of their master, "peace on earth, good-will towards men."

If to maintain from the pulpit certain general principles were sufficient to keep in check the disposition to violate them, we should at least not have to complain of the indecency in profligacy, which is not only practised by political characters, but defended by their partizans. Charge my lord A. or Mr. B. with any act of corruption, you are answered neither by a denial nor by an acknowledgment of the offence; but by a retort on my Lord this, or on Mr. that, the supposed idol of the accuser. Can any thing more clearly evince the necessity for an interference *not now exercised* to rescue us from the trammels of party, from an attachment to men which exists in the very teeth of principle? And where are we to look for such interference? Where, if not to those persons who have voluntarily undertaken to promulgate the Christian religion?

On you then, the disciples of Jesus, I now solemnly call! Cease I beseech you to act under the influence of a prejudice by which your sphere of usefulness is so materially abridged. Ask yourselves, fearlessly and in the spirit of candour, if this duty belongs not to the calling you have chosen. Be the faithful apostles of Christ. EXTEND THE INFLUENCE OF HIS RELIGION;—connect it with the consideration of our national concerns, by a due application of his precepts to our national practice. Exhort us *daily, while it is called to-day, lest any of us be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin;* and while you proclaim that in *every* station and on *all* occasions, the principles of Christian morality are the best guide for our conduct, teach us, that if, as a nation, we countenance our public servants in the neglect of them, it will be in vain for us to look for an exemption from those evils which we may learn from the history of mankind have, sooner or later, uniformly fallen on the people who have permitted their rulers without remonstrance to pursue a career of iniquity.

A LAY DISSENTER.

Mr. Belsham's Reply to the Rev. H. Horsley.—Letter IV.

Essex House, June 15, 1813.

SIR,

The author of the Calm Inquiry has represented Bishop Horsley as borrowing nearly the whole account of his church of orthodox Hebrews at Ælia, from Mosheim's book, *de rebus Christianorum, ante Constantinum,* without sufficiently acknowledging the obligation. The bishop indeed allows, Lett. vii. § 5. that he had "first learned from Mosheim how to rate the testimony of Origen;" but as to all the other circumstances, as though he had acquired the knowledge of them, from his own previous investigation, he only says, "ALL this, I affirm with the less hesitation, being *sup-*

ported by the authority of Mosheim."

And in this attempt to pass off as his own, what he had borrowed from Mosheim, the bishop might possibly have been successful, had not Dr. Priestley, (who not being in possession of the Ante-Constantine History, had consulted only Mosheim's general Ecclesiastical History, and had not found there all the facts asserted by the bishop) directly charged him with *falsifying history*, and thus compelled the learned prelate in his own defence to reveal the whole truth.

This clear and distinct state of facts, not greatly to the credit of the renowned *giant in controversy*, naturally rouses the indignation of the pious prebendary of St. Asaph, who, in his usual manner, and with his usual success, attempts to vindicate the character of his right-reverend progenitor from having been a plagiary from Mosheim.

But first of all he begins, p. 570, with a frank avowal that he really knows nothing of the matter, and, consequently, that his testimony in the case is of no value. Hear the venerable prebendary's own words:—"I can only say it was not bishop Horsley's practice to put implicit confidence in any uninspired testimony: but, *I cannot affirm as an unquestionable truth, that on this occasion he did not deviate from his usual practice.*" This is very modest: and it is the more to be commended, because if the reverend gentleman had made the affirmation alluded to, it must be directly in the teeth of the bishop's own express confession, extorted, indeed, from him most reluctantly, in order to repel the heavier charge of having forged the history himself. "If Dr. Priestley had consulted Mosheim," says the wounded prelate, (Tracts in Reply, C. 2.) "he must know that these were Mosheim's assertions before they were mine." And, "He must know that I have added no circumstance to Mosheim's account, but what every man must add in his own imagination." So then it appears as clear as light, that the whole of the bishop's edifying history of the church at Ælia was borrowed from Mosheim, excepting a few necessary additions from his own imagination.

This frank and candid declaration of the bishop, however, by no means satisfies the worthy prebendary, who sets all his wits and all his logic at work, to prove that his right reverend parent is mistaken, and that he really did not copy from Mosheim, though he assures his readers that he did.

His first argument is, (p. 578.) that "the bishop doesnot infer from the facts stated by Sulpitius and Epiphanius, every thing which Mosheim inferred from them." But as the learned prelate was never accused of transcribing all that Mosheim wrote, this observation is irrelevant to the question.

"But what detection had the bishop to dread?" cries the reverend prebendary, "he expressly declared that Mosheim first pointed out to him the ground over which he afterwards travelled."—True. The bishop did make this acknowledgment. But, observe, it was only in self-defence: and after he had been accused of falsifying history and defaming the dead: then, indeed the bishop admits that he had followed the footsteps of Mosheim. And most grievously did the right reverend prelate rue, that he had ever listened to the advice

of the learned Chancellor of Gottingen: for when he began actually to travel the road to which he was directed, he in vain sought for the objects which he was told that he would meet with, and was compelled to strike into a new and unbeaten path in which he bewildered himself in laborious and unsuccessful wandering, in search after that which was not to be found, and which did not even exist.

But though all this appears most evidently on the face of the bishop's own narration, his worthy descendant with the most edifying zeal for his father's credit denies it altogether: and with all the confidence of one who expects to be believed, he thus sums up his state of the case.

"In confirmation of the inferences drawn from the narrative of Sulpitius Severus, Bishop Horsley appeals to the same passage in the writings of Epiphanius, to which Mosheim had appealed before him. But he does what Mosheim did not do. He analyses that passage: vindicates it against the cavils of Dr. Priestley: shows the full force of the evidence which Epiphanius, in conjunction with Sulpitius, affords for the existence of a church of Hebrew Christians at Ælia: and the testimony of these two ancient authors he confirms by the testimony of Orosius and Jerome, to neither of whom Mosheim had made any appeal. He was not therefore a mere humble and ignorant plagiary of the German historian: but surely his inferences from the united testimony of three or four ancient authors cannot be entitled to the less regard for their being nearly the same, which other men, of such learning as Mosheim and Cave, had drawn before him" Horsley's Tracts, App. p. 580.

Very plausible indeed! We here find that the learned prelate, like Mosheim, takes Sulpitius for his text: compares and criticises Epiphanius: from the stores of his own erudition annexes the authority of Orosius and Jerome, and the inferences from this critical and original inquiry, by the greatest possible good fortune, turn out to be precisely, or at least nearly, the same with those which other men, of such learning as Mosheim and Cave, had drawn before him. And be it observed, that, according to the principles of episcopal logic, the "argument is not the worse for wanting truth, if the opponent is not sufficiently informed to detect the falsehood." Who then will presume, after this, to charge Bishop Horsley with plagiarism? One circumstance, however, is surprising: that the reverend prebendary does not, after the laudable example of his learned progenitor, enter a timely caveat against chronological cavils. But possibly he might think that the bishop's success in this manœuvre did not warrant a similar experiment. And probably the reverend prebendary judged the precaution needless, being pretty secure that the majority of his good-natured readers, particularly those whom it was most his wish, and perhaps his interest, to please, would, with great complaisance, take every thing for granted.

There are, however, some troublesome people in the world who are not so easily satisfied, and who have acquired a disagreeable habit of sifting matters thoroughly. Such critics will observe, that the bishop

in his first publication, Lett. vii. § 5. assumes a very lofty tone. "I take a bold step." "I tax the veracity of this Origen." "The fact is so,"—and "I am supported by the authority of Mosheim." But after having been challenged to produce his authorities, and accused of having falsified history, the learned prelate recedes from this high-flown language, this confidence of boasting, and in a very subdued tone, expressive of bitter mortification, he confesses, "they were Mosheim's assertions before they were mine: I added nothing but what every one must add to help out a broken story." Tracts, *ubi supra*. And instead of boasting, as the reverend prebendary does for him, of his own original researches and conclusions, all that the learned prelate now professes to do, is to clear himself of the imputation of "RELATING UPON MOSHEIM'S AUTHORITY WHAT MOSHEIM RELATED UPON NONE:" and "to state the principles which determined him TO ABIDE BY MOSHEIM'S ACCOUNT." Tracts, p. 407.

The truth is, that the learned prelate having inadvertently rested upon Mosheim's authority, where he thought himself quite safe, and having brought forward his history of the church at Ælia with much ostentation and confidence, after having been charged with forging the facts, found it necessary in vindication of his own character, to examine carefully into Mosheim's authorities, which, to his great dismay, he soon finds utterly incompetent to bear out his assertions. The passage from Sulpitius is admitted to be inadequate: and the reference to Epiphanius had no more relation to a church at Ælia than to a church at Canterbury. The learned prelate being thus grievously disappointed in Mosheim's authorities, is constrained to look out for others. And having first produced a sentence from Orosius, which, though represented by the reverend prebendary as a confirmation of Mosheim, the bishop himself prudently allows "to be a feather in the scale," he places his finger upon a passage from Jerome, upon which he chuses to rest the main stress of his argument: but which was never cited for this purpose before, nor ever will be again.

Of this curious passage, and of the argument founded upon it, some further notice will be taken in a succeeding letter. In the mean time enough has been said to vindicate the reviewer of the controversy in the Calm Inquiry, in having stated that the bishop, in his narrative of the "orthodox church at Ælia," borrowed the circumstances from Mosheim, without proper acknowledgment, and to help out the story, had mixed a little from his own imagination. All this the bishop freely acknowledges, though under the idea of vindicating his father's fame, it is contradicted by his son. But the judicious reader, whatever respect he may think due to the filial piety of the prebendary, will doubtless govern his judgment by the authority of the bishop.

The reverend prebendary takes great umbrage that the author of the Calm Inquiry should represent the bishop as *ignorantly* propagating a gross calumny upon the spotless character of Origen. Would he then wish to have it understood that his sainted progenitor gave currency to what he at the same

time knew to be a calumny? What could the bishop's bitterest enemy report more to his discredit? But the pious ecclesiastic insinuates that the Calm Inquirer stigmatizes Bishop Horsley as ignorant *upon every question*, as a weak, pitiful, illiterate man. If the reverend writer really believes this to be the design of the Calm Inquirer, his intellect is to be pitied. If he knows that no such assertion or insinuation is contained in the work which he has honoured with his animadversions, whatever may be thought of the bishop, it is evident that the prebendary, at least, steers perfectly clear of the imputation of being the *ignorant* propagator of calumny.

The Calm Inquirer, in his review of the controversy, assigns as a reason why Dr. Priestley did not consult the book to which bishop Horsley referred, that Mosheim's Ante-Constantine History was a book "not very commonly to be met with in England:" and likewise that the bishop who had borrowed from Mosheim without sufficiently acknowledging the obligation, "might presume upon security from detection by the scarcity of the book."

Here Mr. Prebendary triumphs. He thinks he holds the reviewer fast: and he is determined to give him no quarter. He recurs to the subject again and again in order to blazon the reviewer's ignorance and his own superior knowledge. "Mr. B. says he, p. 571, represents a very common book as not easily to be met with in England." And again, p. 578, "the bishop must be very ignorant indeed, if he presumed on the scarcity of Mosheim's Book." And what proof does the venerable prebendary bring of his broad assertion? Why, truly, that the Ante-Constantine History was found in the Libraries of no less than two clergymen in Scotland. It should seem that in the estimation of this worthy divine of the English church no book but what is very common indeed can possibly find its way into the library of a clergyman of the Scottish establishment. The prebendary's clerical friends in the vicinity of Dundee will no doubt duly appreciate the politeness of the "stranger that is within their gates."

In the mean time allowing that this book was so common in Scotland, in the year 1812, that it might be picked up from a stall at Edinburgh or Dundee, and might even be found in a Presbyterian minister's library, it is not easy for those who are not so profoundly skilled as the reverend prebendary "in Aristotelian and Baconian logic," nor yet gifted with second-sight, to discover, how this proves that the same book must have been very common in England in the year 1787. The premises and the conclusion are at some distance from each other. And that the book is not at present very common in London is evident from the testimony of Mr. Vidal, who is now favouring the public with a translation of Mosheim's Ante-Constantine History; and who in his preface assigns this among other reasons for his undertaking. viz. "that the book had become EXCEEDINGLY SCARCE, insomuch, that although it was not unfrequently sought after with the most eager assiduity, a copy was rarely to be procured even for any price."

How profoundly ignorant then

must Bishop Horsley have been to presume upon the scarcity of Mosheim's book! And how very cautious ought gentlemen to be lest in their great zeal to proclaim the ignorance of others, they should unfortunately expose their own!

I am, &c.
T. BELSHAM.

JOHN MILTON.

Unus patronus bonæ causæ satis est.
EPISCOPIUS.

No. XXVI.

Petitioning.

Petitioning, in better English, is no more than requesting or requiring; and men require not favours only, but their due; and that not only from superiors, but from equals and inferiors also. The noblest Romans, when they stood for that which was a kind of regal honour, the consulship, were wont in a submissive manner, to go about, and beg that highest dignity of the meanest Plebeians, naming them man by man; which in their tongue was called Petitio Consulatus. And the parliament of England petitioned the king, not because all of them were inferior to him, but because he was inferior to any one of them, which they did of civil custom, and for fashion's sake, more than of duty; for by plain law (cited before,) the parliament is his superior.

No. XXVII.

Plain Writing and Preaching.

Having the scripture, so copious and so plain, we have all that can be properly called true strength and nerve; the rest would be but pomp and incumbrance. Pomp and ostentation of reading is admired among the vulgar; but doubtless in matters of religion he is learnedest who is plainest.

No. XXVIII.

Paul.

If he himself appealed to Cæsar, it was to judge his innocence, not his religion.

XXIX.

Protestant Persecution the worst of all.

How many persecutions then, imprisonments, banishments, penalties and stripes; how much bloodshed have the forcers of conscience to answer for, and Protestants rather than Papists! For the Papist, judging by his principles, punishes them who believe not as the Church believes, though against the scripture: but the Protestant, teaching every one to believe the scripture, though against the Church, counts heretical, and persecutes against his own principles, them who in any particular so believe as he in general teaches them; them who most honour and believe divine scripture, but not against it any human interpretation, though universal; them who interpret scripture only to themselves, which by his own position, none but they to themselves can interpret: them who use the scripture no otherwise by his own doctrine to their edification, than he himself uses it to their punishing; and so whom his doctrine acknowledges a true be-

liever, his discipline persecutes as a heretic. The Papist exacts our belief as to the church due above scripture; and by the church, which is the whole people of God, understands the Pope, the general councils, prelatical only, and the surnamed Fathers; but the forcing Protestant, though he deny such belief to any church whatsoever, yet takes it to himself and his teachers, of far less authority than to be called the church, and above scripture believed; which renders his practice both contrary to his belief, and far worse than that belief which he condemns in the Papist. By all which well considered, the more he professes to be a true Protestant, the more he hath to answer for his persecuting than a Papist. No protestant therefore, of what sect soever, following Scripture only, which is the common sect wherein they all agree, and the granted rule of every man's conscience to himself, ought, by the common doctrine of Protestants, to be forced or molested for religion.

XXX.

Mr. Prynn.

A late hot querist for tithes, whom ye may know, by his wits lying ever beside him in the margin, to be ever beside his wits in the text; a fierce reformer once, now rankled with a contrary heat.

XXXI.

Reformation.

'Tis not denied, but gladly confessed, we are to send our thanks and vows to heaven, louder than most of nations, for that great measure of truth which we enjoy, especially in those main points between us and the Pope, with his appertinences the prelates; but he who thinks we are to pitch our tent here, and have attained the utmost prospect of Reformation that the mortal glass wherein we contemplate can shew us, till we come to *beatific* vision, that man by this very opinion declares that he is yet far short of the truth.

Now once again by all concurrence of signs, and by the general instinct of holy and devout men, as they daily and solemnly express their thoughts, God is decreeing to begin some new and great period in his church, even to the reforming of reformation itself.

For when God shakes a kingdom, with strong and healthful commotions, to a general reforming, it is not untrue that many sectaries and false teachers are then busiest in seducing; but yet more true it is, that God then raises to his own work men of rare abilities and more than common industry, not only to look back and revise what hath bin taught heretofore, but to gain furder and go on, some new enlightened steps in the discovery of truth. For such is the order of God's enlightening his church, to dispense and deal out by degrees his beam, so as our earthly eyes may best sustain it.

XXXII.

Reason.

I hold reason to be the best arbitrator, and *the law of law itself.*

It were a mad law that would subject reason to superiority of place.

XXXIII.

Sectaries.

I never knew that time in Eng-

land, when men of truest religion were not counted *sectaries*: but wisdom now, valor, justice, constancy, prudence united and embodied to defend religion and our liberties, both by word and deed, against tyranny, is counted schism and faction. Thus in a graceless age things of highest praise and imitation under a right name, to make them infamous and hateful to the people are miscalled.

XXXIV.
Selden.

That all this is true, whoso desires to know at large with least pains, and expects not over-long rehearsals of that which is by others already so judiciously gathered, let him hasten to be acquainted with that noble volum written by our learned *Selden*, *Of the Law of Nature and Nations*, a work more useful and more worthy to be perused by whosoever studies to be a great man in wisdom, equity and justice, than all those *decretals and sumless sums*, which the *Pontifical clerks* have doted on, ever since that unfortunate mother famously sinned thrice, and died impenitent of her bringing into the world those two misbegotten infants, and for ever infants, *Lombard* and *Gratian*, him the compiler of Canon iniquity, t'other the *Tubal Cain* of scholastick sophistry, whose overspreading barbarism hath not only infused their own bastardy upon the fruitfullest part of humane learning, not only dissipated and dejected the clear light of nature in us and of nations, but hath tainted also the fountains of divine doctrine, and rendered the pure and solid law of God unbeneficial to us by their calumnious dunceries. (Works I. 324.)

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

No. CXXIV.
Pope Innocent XI.

It is well known that this Pontiff favoured the revolution in England, 1688, and was the friend of William III. On this account, at the congress of 1690, the English minister joined with the others in making a solemn declaration, in which they protest before God, that their intentions were, never to make peace with Lewis XIV. until he had made reparation to the Holy See, for whatever he had acted against it, and until he had annulled all those infamous proceedings against the Holy Father *Innocent*.

It was a common saying among the non-jurors of that time, that the Pope was one of the *Innocent* causes of the revolution.

No. CXXV.
Quakers.

The Quakers in Ireland, says Mr. Wakefield, in his "Account of Ireland," just published, (Vol. II. p. 809.) are in number about 6000; in England, 22,000. For this enumeration he gives the authority of Mr. Thomas Shilitoe. He adds a curious reflection, *What a body of morality, benevolence, wealth, and useful citizens; their wisdom is exemplified by their having neither priest, lawyer or warriar.*

CXXVI.
Motive for learning the Catechism.

Mr. John Hales relates the fol-

lowing anecdote in one of his letters to Sir Dudley Carleton, from the Synod of Dort. The question of catechising was in agitation.

"Doubtless," he says, in the letter of 19—29 November, 1618, "the most effectual way of all the rest to bring young persons to learn their catechism, was that which was related by one of the Helvetian deputies. For he told us, that in his country the manner was, that all young persons that meant to marry, were to repair, both he and she, unto their minister, a little before they meant to marry, and by him to be examined how well they had conned their catechism: If they had not done it perfectly to his mind, he had power to defer their marriage till they had better learned their lessons.

"I was much affected," he adds, "to this course, when I heard it; and I thought that doubtless it was a speedy way to make all young persons, excepting myself, and two or three more that mean not over hastily to marry, to be skilful in their catechism. The synod shall be ill advised if they make no use of it."

Works, Glasg. ed. 1765, Vol. III. Lett. p. 19.

CXXVII.

Miserable State of the Arabs.

When Dr. Clarke, the Cambridge traveller, was at Nazareth, some of the Arabs came to converse with him and his party, who were surprised to hear them speak Italian, in which language they had been early instructed by the friars of the convent. Their conversation was full of complaints against the rapacious tyranny of their governors. One of them said, "Beggars in England are happier and better than we poor Arabs." "*Why better?* "said one of the party. "*Happier,*" replied the Arab who had made the observation, "*in a good government: better, because they will not endure a bad one.*"

CXXVIII.

Fishers of men.

There is a pleasant story told of him, who, from a fisherman, was made Archbishop and then Pope. While Archbishop, it was his custom every day, after dinner, to have a fishing net spread upon his table, by way of a memento, as he was used to say, of the meanness of his original. This farcical ostentation of humility was what, in those days, contributed not a little to the increase of his reputation. Soon after his exaltation to St. Peter's chair, one of his intimates was taking notice to him, one day, when dinner was over, of the tables not being decked as usual. "Peace," answered the holy father, "when the fish is caught, there is no occasion for the net."

No. CXXIX.

Royal Bounty.

The following is an extract from an authentic M.S. relative to the private expences of Edward II:—

"Item.—The 11th. day of March, paid to James de St. Albans, the King's painter, who danced before the king on a table, and made him laugh heartily, being a gift by the king's own hands, in aid of him, his wife and children, 1l. 1s."

BIBLICAL CRITICISM.

Observations on Mr. Wakefield's Translation of Acts xx. 28.

Vir bonus nec indoctus fuit—criticus non fuit, neque esse potuit, utpote neque—neque judicio satis ad eam rem instructus. Thirlby's Dedicat. to Justin Martyr, apud Porson's Letters to Travis. P. 274. Note.

I have, for some time, hesitated whether the above character of *Dr. Grabe* should stand in front of the following observations on Mr. WAKEFIELD'S translation of Acts xx. 28, and on the *note* by which he justifies it. I have ventured, at last, to adopt it with two omissions; one of which refers to Dr. Grabe's acquaintance with the writings of the fathers, and is therefore irrelevant to the *learning* of Mr. Wakefield; and the other, consisting of the word *ingenio* only, the insertion of which would deny to Wakefield that which no considerate person would have the hardihood to call in question. As it now stands, it does justice to the *learning* of the late Fellow of Jesus College, Cambridge, while it disputes his claim to critical acumen and *judgment*. My opinion on such a subject is of little value. But I submit the following *proof* to the learned reader, without apprehension. It is founded on a single passage, but might be extended to no inconsiderable portion of the critical labours of the same author.

However, had not the interest of truth and pure christianity been, in my view, materially concerned in this discussion, my respect for the memory of this illustrious man would have prevented me from offering you the following remarks.

Often have I read over the note on Acts xx. 28, at the end of Wakefield's translation of the N. T. and every time, I think, with increased astonishment. I refer to the *text* which he has adopted, the *translation* which he has furnished, and the *justification* of both which the note contains.

I. The text adopted is the common one, the last part of which only deserves our consideration: ποιμαινειν την εκκλησιάν του θεου, ην περιεποιησατο δια του ιδιου αιματος. I believe that there is not now a shadow of a doubt of the incorrectness of this reading. It has been decidedly rejected by Griesbach, and the true reading has been substituted, for reasons that overwhelm all remaining uncertainty, given in his long note on the place, which I wish to see rendered into English, and published at large in your valuable Miscellany. Griesbach's reading, and I will venture to say the true reading, is, την εκκλησιαν του κυριου ην περιεποιησατο, &c. Even Mr. Wakefield, who adopts the common reading, was embarrassed, as we shall soon see, by the extraordinary expression, (του ιδιου αιματος,) his own blood, as applied to (του θεου) God. We might have expected, therefore, that he would have been led by that embarrassment to adopt a reading, (του κυριου) which is supported by abundant authority, and attended with no difficulty whatever. No, against so much evidence as Griesbach has produced,

which could not, I think, fail to satisfy the English reader, if your publication should furnish the English version of the *note*, as above recommended, he has even angrily clung to the common reading, and had recourse to a translation of the verse, which is not a little extraordinary, and opposed by every principle of just criticism and sound reasoning.

The first reason for adopting the common *reading*, which, Mr. Wakefield says, induced him to change a former opinion respecting it, is, that "it is the reading of the Æthiopic version whose authority is with him irresistible on this occasion: See note xvi. 7." The note referred to gives no reason for this great reverence for the Æthiopic version, as might have been expected, but contains the affirmation that "the *united* authority of the Vulgate, Syriac, Æthiopic, and Coptic versions is, to Mr. Wakefield, irresistible;" with this addition that "the reader may see *something* to this purpose in his Enquiry, &c. p. 36 and 220." Really this is almost too ludicrous to be for a moment the subject of a thought. But we may not do amiss to say a word or two on this marvellous Æthiopic version whose authority is so irresistible: and to avoid all danger of reprehension, the authority of Porson, *haud ulli secundus*, are offered to the reader, which are at page 179 of his Letters to Travis. He observes that the origin of the Æthiopic version is very doubtful; it may have been made from the Coptic; it may have been deduced from Greek manuscripts: nothing is certain. Then, all editions of it are imperfect, and one accurately given from Æthiopic manuscripts is greatly wanted. Whatever, therefore, may be the merit of this version, in general, it can stand for very little, alone, as authority for a particular reading.

But this Æthiopic version appears to give *no countenance whatever* to the reading contended for. From want of acquaintance with the Æthiopic language, I am forced to trust here to foreign authority; and to Wakefield himself. Griesbach says distinctly, "Ethiops habet vocabulum quo semper utitur, sive θεος in græca veritate legatur, sive κυριος: neutri igitur lectioni favet." *The Æthiopic version has the word which it always employs, whether* θεος, *God, or* κυριος, *Lord, be read in the Greek verity (Text): Therefore it favours neither.* What says Mr. Wakefield to this? Gentle reader, these are his words: "which is infamously false." I wish I could drop a tear on the words that could blot them out for ever! But what reason does he give for this *mild* contradiction? "On the contrary, *as far as my recollection will carry me*, (This is criticism!) this translation (the Æthiopic) NEVER employs the word here introduced, but to signify the SUPREME GOD ALONE. See Castell's Lexicon in the word בָּרַךְ." Most certainly, this assertion is good for nothing; it rests on the *recollection* of Mr. Wakefield, which may be safely doubted when it is brought to contradict the positive assertion of Griesbach. It may be even seriously doubted if it is not founded on Mr. Wakefield's *ignorance* on the very point which he has so peremptorily decided. I think myself fairly justified in consider-

ing Griesbach, *and* Wakefield, under *these circumstances*, as evidence that the Æthiopic version furnishes *no support whatever* to the common reading.

His next reason for retaining the common printed reading is not a little curious: It is, "the variation between the Syriac and Coptic versions." In the note on Acts xvi. 7, this critic had affirmed that the *united* authority of the Syriac, Æthiopic, and Coptic versions is to him irresistible. Now, the *variation* of two of them, if not of the three, becomes equally irresistible. I would allow something to their *agreement*, if the suspicion be not founded that their authority is one and single, and that it is, at all events, but a slight authority, whether single or double or treble. But from their *variation* I should draw a very opposite conclusion from that which Mr. Wakefield has deduced. I should conclude that the original Greek employed a word which might naturally give rise to the variation, which the word, κυριος, Lord, would easily have done, but the word Θεος, God, surely *never* could. This will appear more obviously from the nature of the variation pleaded. "The former, (the Syriac version) has *the church* OF THE MESSIAH, and the latter, (the Coptic) *the church of the* LORD." If κυριος had been the Greek of the copies which these translators used, this variation is indubitably accounted for: but Θεος could never have been in their text, at least not in the text of the former, if indeed they both made their translation from the Greek, which may be questioned. But what says Mr. Wakefield? "This want of uniformity excites in me a strong suspicion of interpolation, in consequence of the peculiar sentiments of the translators, or the authors of those manuscripts which they followed." Can such a critic be justly allowed the praise of judgment? What is the natural inference? Not surely that those translators or authors had delicate Unitarian consciences which induced them to reject such a word as Θεος, and to adopt such an inoffensive and choice word as κυριος. No proof whatever can be given of such a bias on the minds of these *ancient* translators, whatever might be said of *modern*, ungodly text-corrupters. This variation would have shewn, at one glance, to the eye of a true critic, what was the probable text from which they translated this passage. They cannot be said to vary, one from the other, more than might be expected when the same original was to be rendered into two independent languages. They both vary from the R. T. but the *greater* variation, *the Messiah*, gives all possible weight to the inference that Θεος was *not* the text used, and when compared together, both almost irresistibly prove that the reading *was* κυριος.

Such were the reasons that had sufficient power to command the mind of Mr. Wakefield: reasons, in one instance not founded in any thing but mistake, if not ignorance; and, in the other instance, totally demolished by the very premises on which they stand. To settle a text, let us no longer recur to the *judgment* or critical sagacity of Mr. Wakefield, whatever we may think of his ability to render the text which he may

have preferred and adopted. His *reasons*, in this case, have now, it is hoped, been carried on the wings of the wind to the Limbo described by Milton, and the arguments of Griesbach may, as yet, be pronounced *irresistible*. Such has ever been the fate of interpolations and corruptions of the New Testament, which pious zeal has contrived for the defence of the orthodox faith. Wit and learning and sagacity have proved feeble associates. What must be their fate when they are deserted by learning and judgment and sagacity and even good manners and every thing but what would raise a blush on the countenance of the veriest Tyro in literature?

2. The *translation* of a corrupt text is of small consequence. But this of Mr. Wakefield deserves some consideration, because it may be demonstrated to be unwarranted by the *reasons* pleaded in its behalf, and because it furnishes a curious clue to the origin of his predilection in favour of the Greek reading which he has adopted. I refer now to the last words of the verse, του ιδιου αιματος, which are rendered, *his own son*. Here Mr. W. begins to feel embarrassment, in consequence of his adoption of the reading (Θεος) God, before. The church of God which he has purchased with *his own blood!* He says very truly, "as this expression would answer no good purpose, and would unavoidably lead those unacquainted with the *phraseology* of those languages, (meaning, I suppose, the vernacular languages) into erroneous doctrines, and impious conceptions of the Deity, I could not justify myself in employing it in this place." To this puzzle has Mr. W. been reduced by resolving to read Θεος in his text.

Well, to prevent error and impiety, the words, του ιδιου αιματος must be rendered, not his *own blood*, but his *own son*. It is always laudable to endeavour to stop the floodgates of erroneous doctrines, and impious conceptions of the Deity. But let it be done by *pious* means and *unerring* implements. Of pious fraud no one can suspect G. W. But I fear he has been here sadly led astray by a too pious devotion to a misguided fancy.

3. The quotations used from the scriptures to prove that *blood* means *man*, are worse than trifling. They are contemptible. What we want is to see that *his own*, or *God's* blood, means *man*. Alas! in what a day of *criticism* are we born!

The quotations from classic authors and from a scholiast, shew little but that Mr. W. had read them, and could produce them. They are either just as apposite as those from the scriptures, and prove that blood sometimes stands for man, or they prove much more than Mr. W. would wish them to do, viz, that the blood of a God partakes of the divinity from which it is derived. They would, in fact, demonstrate that the blood, or Son, of a God is *not* a man.

How careful Mr. W. was, lest impious conceptions of the Deity should be deduced from the expression, *God's own blood*, in *these* languages, we have already seen; it led him to render it, *God's own Son*. But did it never occur to him that, if in Greek αιμα or (could he have found such an expression, which he has not) αιμα του θεου, was an accepted mode of describ-

ing those who had their natural descent from the gods, the same idea would be attached to it, when applied to Jesus Christ? All the instances produced in this note suggest a *natural* descent or affinity, and the blood of the gods were uniformly either *demi-gods*, or naturally entitled to immortality, and to a right to join the celestial feast. In all *those* instances, also, *αιμα*, blood, would admit of a *literal*, or almost literal, as well as a metaphorical sense, and a heathen could not be shocked with the language, in reference to the pretended offspring of their divinities, that *the blood of Jove or Apollo flowed in their veins.* I dare not with common decency, apply this to Jesus Christ, or ask an obvious question, which but to ask would offend the ears of all Christians, heterodox and orthodox.

Both these parties are equally concerned in this discussion. Indeed, it might not have occurred to the Doctors Davies, to the Henleys, and Bowyers, from whom Mr. W. confesses that he borrowed this curious idea, that it would offend the delicacy of orthodoxy itself to admit the consequences naturally flowing from the phrase *αιμα του θεου* never, in fact, occurring, in any of the authorities adduced. But as the expression appeared to countenance a favourite dogma, they may be pardoned for not being duly impressed by the consequences of their own admission. Something they seem to have apprehended, when they softened the inadmissible terms into the less offensive one of *God's own Son.* Our wonder, with respect to *them*, though, at first almost irrepressible, ceases when we consider how their conduct may be accounted for. They might love the object of their attachment more than they feared any evil arising from the means employed to promote it.

But what can be said of G. W.? Here is not an atom of sound reason in favour of his *text.* Here is not a grain of authority for his *translation.* He saw the danger and inexplicable perplexity that arose from his text, which reduced him to the subterfuge of glossing it over, by an unjustifiable rendering. All his preconceived notions might naturally lead him to prefer the only true and rational text: and yet he loses his temper with Griesbach, and hazards his reputation as a critic, beyond the most temerarious visionary that has met my notice. How can we account for all this? Culpable motives cannot be attributed to Mr. Wakefield. Alas! the motto to this paper, I believe, gives the true solution. G. W. wanted judgment; G. W. was no critic. On this account, fancy took the lead, and hurried him and his learning through all the bogs and quagmires of affectation, conceit and eccentricity. For the sake of the prettiness and glare of the wretched conundrum, *the Son of God*, by magic extracted from *το αιμα ιδιον του θεου*, he has given to the world a specimen of the most wretched foolery under the name of criticism that has ever disgraced a scholar.

Of G. W. I have the utmost veneration. His probity was incorruptible. His learning it is not for me to attempt to appreciate. With the *man*, however, I am not concerned in this paper, of whom I could say nothing but that which is great and good. Of his taste and sagacity and judgment, I have spoken freely, and leave to the

reader to judge with what success. My object is *truth*, which I feared might suffer from the false conclusions and reasonings, if such they be, of such a man as Mr. Wakefield.

A learned friend has suggested that the true Greek reading may be αυτου and neither θεου nor κυριου. To this the abruptness with which *his* church is introduced, would be no objection, as by *him*, would be instantly understood Jesus Christ, whom it was not necessary formally to mention by name, to persons whose minds continually dwelled on him. Examples of this might be quoted. But whether such a reading could be established for text, I confess, is with me a doubt. Perhaps the gentleman alluded to may find leisure and inclination to enrich your magazine with a discussion of the subject.

PRIMITIVUS.

An early Christian Church at Rome.

April 30th, 1813.

SIR,

My former observations on the Epistle to the Romans,* were designed to illustrate the internal evidence of its genuineness. In conjunction with Paley's remarks, in the Horæ Paulinæ, and with the external testimony, they have long since satisfied me that it could not be one of the letters which, a considerable time before the end of the second century, were forged and circulated in an apostle's name. Subsequent inquiry has added to the strength of my conviction: and I am now more fully persuaded that the statements and inferences of Mr. Evanson cannot be sustained. However, as it is nothing uncommon for different minds to be differently affected by the same reasoning, I am neither astonished nor mortified at finding that I have failed to remove the doubts of your correspondent* *O*.

Whatever has the appearance of argument in Mr. Evanson's short critique on this Epistle, I have already noticed. For I cannot call *that* an "objection," and still less "his most capital objection," which is a mere assumption, which rests on the erroneous principle that *a writer's silence concerning a fact, amounts, of necessity, to a denial of its existence.*

From the history of the Acts of the Apostles "it is *evident*," says the author of the Dissonance, &c. "that when Paul arrived at Rome, for the first time, in the reign of Nero, there was no Christian church there."† This language is at least unqualified: yet Mr. E. instantly descends to lower ground; for he adds, "as indeed it is not at all *probable* there should have been."

Now, we simply learn from the account given by Luke of Paul's situation and labours at Rome that, soon after his arrival in this city, he *called together* the principal *Jews*, and informed them of the reason of his being sent thither as a prisoner, that, on a day fixed by themselves, he discoursed to them, with various success, on the evidences of Christianity, and that he dwelt, two whole years, in his own hired house, where he, without molestation, preached the gospel

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* Vol. vii. 696—699.

* Vol. viii. 193—195. † 2nd ed. 308.

to all who were willing to be his hearers.*

I ask, Sir, what in this narrative makes it *evident* that there was not now a Christian church at Rome?

It is perfectly understood that Luke's object, in drawing up his second history, was not to present the world with a compleat relation of the travels, labours and sufferings of Paul, but only to exhibit sufficient evidence of this apostle's faithfulness, zeal and courage in his ministry, and to shew, *generally*, in what manner and to what extent Christianity was published in its earliest age.† There are facts of which he takes no notice,‡ yet by an acquaintance with which curiosity would have been gratified. Shall we infer then from his omissions that, where he is silent, he means to intimate either a doubt or a contradiction? No history could stand the test of such criticism, which would go indeed to the overthrow of all human testimony: and a comparison of what Luke has said, and of what he has *not* said, with Paul's Epistles, will establish at once the credibility of the narrative and the genuineness of the letters.

Attentive readers of this book, will be sensible of the author's solicitude to represent the labours of the apostles in the first instance for the conversion of the *Jews* and afterwards of the Gentiles. In conformity with his practice, he enlarges, in his concluding chapter, on the pains employed by Paul for subduing the prejudices of his countrymen resident in Rome. Their answer implies their knowledge of the existence and the unpopularity of Christians: *nor is it at all* improbable that they gained this knowledge from what they had seen and heard in the city where they lived.

Two opposite opinions have been delivered in respect of the state of Christianity at Rome in the apostolic age. Some writers imagine that converts were extremely numerous there: others, that there were scarcely any, or, at best, that they were few and inconsiderable. The truth, I believe, is, they were flourishing in point of faith and virtue,* without constituting either a large or an affluent body. Nothing more is signified by the Epistle. Their knowledge and their goodness were their most honourable distinction. It was a distinction which, as we may conclude from similar cases in modern times, could not be unknown to their fellow professors of the gospel in distant regions: it was, in fact, a subject of notoriety, "throughout the whole world," that is, as every fair critic will interpret the phrase, the whole *Christian* world. But it was not likely to attract the attention of the mass of the citizens, and much less that of the imperial court.

"*It is not at all probable*," according to Mr. E. that there should have been a Christian church at Rome in the reign of Nero, "because Paul was the apostle particularly chosen and delegated for that purpose, and he accordingly first preached the gospel to the distant Gentiles, as recorded in the

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* Acts xxviii. 16.

† Benson on the Epistles, vol. i. 570. Note.

‡ Lardner's Works, vol. vi. 145—156.

* Rom. i. 8, xv. 14.

Acts. What! Did *he* first preach Christianity to "the distant Gentiles" of Parthia and Media and Persia?* Or would "the strangers of Rome," on their return from the ever memorable festival of Pentecost, be silent on "the wonderful works of God?" Would they forbear to publish them? Or could they publish them without effect? The propriety of Paul's designation, as *Apostle of the Gentiles*, is sufficiently vindicated by the fact of his being commissioned more immediately to the Gentiles. It might be within the plan of Providence that the members of the church at Rome should be unable to rank themselves exclusively under the banners of either Paul or Cephas. If that church was rather watered than planted by an apostle, the most prominent claim of the Roman pontiff cannot be supported.

Your correspondent, Sir, who states what he terms the "most capital objection" of Mr. E. with more than Mr. E's perspicuity and force, is pleased to say, "There is not a hint given of his [Paul's] finding any Christian church in Rome, nor of his receiving the least attention or kindness from any Christian brethren in that city." Now, in answer, let me remark that the apostle *chose* to call together the chief of the *Jews*, by whom, in the language of his historian, are meant the unbelieving part of his countrymen, and that they were called together, for the purpose of his informing them that he had "committed nothing against the people or customs of their fathers:" information which it was not requisite to communicate to those of the inhabitants of Rome who already professed Christianity. To assert that "Paul did not receive the least attention or kindness from any Christian brethren in that city," is to beg the question. I have assigned a reason* for considering *the brethren* who went as far as Appii Forum, to meet the apostle and his companions, as *Christian* brethren. Of the validity of that reason I am satisfied: nor am I unwilling to rely upon it as decisive of the controversy.

There is a passage in the Second Epistle to Timothy (iv. 16), which I have sometimes thought more favourable to Mr. Evanson's conclusion respecting the letter to the Romans, than any on which he has insisted:—"at my first answer, no man stood with me, but all men forsook me." That the believers in Rome, of whose excellent qualities Paul elsewhere speaks with so much pleasure, should desert their friend and teacher in the day of trial, might appear not a little improbable. The difficulty vanished on my recollecting that when our Divine Master was arrested, "all the disciples *forsook* him and fled."

I am, Mr. Editor,

Yours, &c. N.

On the Genuineness of the Epistle to the Romans.

May 6th, 1813.

Mr. Editor,

The objections which one of your correspondents has brought against the genuineness of the Epistle to the Romans, (in page 193 of your present volume) seem to me to admit of a very satisfactory answer. Indeed, they have

* Acts ii.

* Vol. vii. 698.

been very sufficiently answered, in common with those which Mr. Evanson made to several other parts of the New Testament, by Dr. Priestley, in his Letters to a Young Man. However, as this work may not be in the hands of many of your readers, I hope you will admit a few observations which have occurred to me from an attentive comparison of the history, as detailed in the Acts, with the Epistle, and which, I think, will tend to confirm and illustrate the genuineness of both.

Before I consider the main objection which Mr. Evanson has brought against this Epistle, I will take notice of several others, from which it will easily appear how superficial an attention he had paid to the subject.

1. Mr. Evanson says, in page 307 of his Dissonance, "In Romans xv. 5, we ascertain the time of Paul's writing this Epistle to be, when he was going to Jerusalem with the contributions for the poor Christians of that city, that is, in the reign of Claudius; and he says, that when he has performed that good office, he will come, by way of Rome, to Spain. Now, whoever has read with proper attention the history of Paul's travels in the Acts of the Apostles, must be convinced that Paul never had the least idea of travelling into Spain, and that he did not go to Rome, till, by the partiality of Festus to his persecutors, *he was constrained to appeal unto Cæsar.*"

Upon this I observe, 1st, that before we can be *convinced* that Paul never had the least idea of travelling into Spain, we must be convinced that that apostle never formed an intention which his brief historian has not recorded in the Acts. Again, if Mr. Evanson means to have it inferred, from Paul's being taken to Rome by force, that he had not previously formed the intention of visiting that city, we must appeal to Acts xix. 21. "Paul purposed in his spirit, when he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia, to go to Jerusalem, saying, "After I have been there, I must see Rome also." —From the passage just quoted, we may easily deduce a mark of time which will shew, that in the date which Mr. Evanson has given to the Epistle to the Romans, there is an error of at least three years. He says that "it is ascertained to be written when Paul was going to Jerusalem with contributions, &c. *that is, in the reign of Claudius.*" Now, Paul could not form the intention of going to Rome, mentioned (Acts xix. 21), until he heard of the death of Claudius, by whose decree all Jews were forbidden to come to Rome. But his journey to Jerusalem, with the contributions, described in Acts xx. could not possibly take place, according to the calculation of Lardner and others, earlier than three years after this time, that is, three years after the death of Claudius.

2. "I cannot forbear," says Mr. Evanson, "remarking farther, the inconsistency of this writer (which, indeed, must generally be discernable in all falsifiers), in making Paul personally acquainted with so long a list of members of the church at Rome, where he had never been, amongst whom we find the names of Aquila and Priscilla; of whom Luke tells us, that *about, or rather before*, the pretended date of this Epistle,

they had left Rome, being Jews, in obedience to an edict of Claudius."

"Rather before!" Yes, as much as seven years before: for Paul met with Aquila and Priscilla, lately come from Italy, in his first visit to Corinth, in the year 51 (see Lardner vi. p. 280), and the period to which Mr. Evanson ascribes the Epistle, is proved from the Acts, or from other Epistles, to be in the spring of the year 58. There is, surely, in this interval, time enough for a pretty long residence of these exemplary Christians at Ephesus, (whither they accompanied Paul, Acts, xviii. 18,) and a subsequent return to Rome, before Paul wrote this Epistle. It is certainly very conceivable, that Aquila and Priscilla, having been forced to leave Rome suddenly, might have reasons for returning to it, as soon as the death of Claudius permitted them. Now he died October 13, A. D. 54. I wonder it did not occur to Mr. Evanson, that the writer of this Epistle, (supposing it to be spurious,) must have been a bungler indeed, if he fell into the palpable and manifest absurdity of making Paul personally acquainted with persons whom he had never seen; and representing Paul as desirous to go to Rome, at the very time when it was not safe for any Jew to be in Rome. The reason why Paul might be acquainted with many persons at Rome, without having been there, will appear when we answer

The 3d objection of Mr. Evanson to this Epistle, which seems to have much weight with your correspondent. I shall give it in Mr. Evanson's own words. "From the history in the Acts, it is evident that when Paul arrived at Rome for the first time, in the reign of Nero, there was no Christian Church there, as, indeed, it is not at all probable there should have been, because Paul was the Apostle particularly chosen and delegated for that purpose, and he accordingly first preached the gospel to the distant Gentiles, as recorded in the Acts. From the same history there is every reason to believe, that the gospel had never been preached beyond the limits of Asia, till Paul was, in a vision, admonished to go into Macedonia, and from thence into Greece; yet Paul is made to write this epistle to the Christian converts at Rome, whilst he was preaching the gospel at Corinth. Who then was that other apostle to the Gentiles, who so far preceded Paul, as already to have reached Rome, and to have founded a church there, early enough for its being 'spoken of throughout the whole world,' when Paul, in the execution of the commission miraculously given to him by Christ himself, had advanced no farther than Macedonia and Greece? Besides, from the last chapter of Acts it appears, incontestably, that they were not Christians but Jews, who met Paul at Appii Forum, that his first step, when he arrived at Rome, was to call the Jews resident there, and exculpate himself for having appealed to the Emperor, that those Jews, far from knowing the gospel to have been already preached and received at Rome, declared themselves totally ignorant concerning it, except that it was every where spoken against, and were desirous to be informed of its doctrines by him, which after he had done, upon their disagreeing and leaving him he said, '*Be it known* to you that

the salvation of God is sent (that is, the gospel is to be preached) to the Gentiles, and that they will hear it.' Whereas, according to this epistle, it must have *been known* already to the Jews of Rome, that the gospel *had been* preached to the Gentiles of that city, and that they *had received* it."

There is, I allow, an apparent contradiction between the epistle and the xxviiith chapter of Acts; which if a real one, would shew the writer of the epistle to be a clumsy forger; but if it vanishes on a more accurate examination, it becomes a striking, because, evidently, an undesigned coincidence. I have no doubt that the gospel had never been preached at Rome by any apostle or apostolic person till Paul arrived there a prisoner. Neither does the epistle make any such assertion; indeed, we may conclude the contrary from the language which it uses. In the xvth chapter, 19th and 20th verses, Paul says, "From Jerusalem, and round about to Illyricum, I have preached the gospel of Christ, earnestly striving, however, to preach the gospel in this manner, not where Christ was named, lest I should build upon another man's foundation." "On which account, having often been hindered, I have had a great desire for these many years to come to you."

It may not be immediately apparent, how under these circumstances there could be a Christian church at Rome. This "falsifier of the second century" seems to have laid himself open very unnecessarily to objections. He seems to have little concern to explain away difficulties, and throws in circumstances which tend only to perplex his readers. But let us examine the matter a little; perhaps he is not such a *fool* as we take him for.

We know that the Jews, even when Jerusalem was existing and Judea inhabited by them, had always a great deal of that wandering spirit which now distinguishes them. By the history in the Acts we find that they had synagogues in almost every town of Asia Minor and Greece, and probably of Italy. The spirit of their character, if not of their institutions, inclined them to commerce and trade, which amongst the Romans were accounted mean and servile occupations; the Jews were therefore the merchants and tradesmen of the whole civilized world. It may easily be conceived how numerous a body of Jews there must have been at Rome. So respectable a body were they, that various edicts were made in favour of the Jewish people; and so wealthy were they that an edict was issued on purpose to regulate and protect the offerings sent by them to Jerusalem. It is probable that the wealth and property of the Jews of Rome was greater than that of Jerusalem. And the Jewish population at Rome must have borne some considerable proportion to the ordinary population at Jerusalem.—These two great cities were the foci of that large tract of countries through which this eccentric people were scattered; and they continually drew to themselves a large proportion of the whole Jewish population. From this constant resort to Jerusalem for religious, to Rome for mercantile purposes, it is evident, that many Jews of Rome might be converted

to Christianity, without any Apostle having ever visited them; and that these might very naturally unite and form a church at Rome, without attracting the attention of the great body of Jews at Rome, who remained unbelieving. But we are able to account for a church at Rome at this period, and for Paul's acquaintance with individuals belonging to it, in a still more satisfactory manner. The edict of Claudius, by which all Jews were banished from Rome, caused a very extraordinary resort of Jews, settled in that city, to every other part of the empire. Those who were "chief Jews," (See Acts xxviii. 17,) and had connections and rank in Jerusalem would of course resort thither, and would very probably never hear more of Christianity than that it was a "sect every where spoken against." But those who had been engaged in an active trade, and who depended upon manufactures, &c. for their livelihood, would of course settle in other mercantile cities, of which none were more considerable than those of *Corinth* and *Ephesus*. The edict was enacted it is thought (See Lardner VI. 282.) on January 24th. A. D. 51. and Claudius died Oct. 13th. A. D. 54. The news of his death might reach Greece, and many might return to Rome, early in the year 55. Many might stay several years, and return to Rome in the year 57. Now Paul preached in Corinth during part of the year 51, the whole of 52, and part of 53. After going to Jerusalem he returned to Ephesus at the latter end of the year 53, and continued there the whole of the years 54 and 55, and to the Pentecost of 56. The return to Rome of persons who had been forced to leave it suddenly is so probable that it needs no proof. And that Paul should in the course of this time convert as many of these fugitives as are mentioned in Rom. xvi. is likewise very probable; nothing more so. It is likewise altogether probable that as no Apostle had ever preached the gospel at Rome before Paul came there, and the gifts of the Christian converts were not very considerable, (Rom. i. 2.) they might not be very conspicuous in their Christian profession, that is, they might not attract much attention from their unbelieving brethren; and that the compliment which Paul pays to their faith (Rom. i. 8.) referred only to the frequent good reports which Christians travelling from Rome into Greece gave of their steadfastness, which was the more meritorious, and drew this praise from the urbanity of the apostle, because it was maintained without any of the encouragement which the presence and gifts of an apostle would afford. The suppositions which I have made require that the church at Rome at this time should be chiefly composed of Jews; and the structure of the epistle favours this idea; because it is throughout a skilful apology to believing Jews for the admission of Gentiles to the privileges of the gospel. Having now prepared the way I come to consider the passage in Acts xxviii. 11—29. Mr. Evanson asserts positively that those who met Paul at Appii Forum were not Christians. But let any one examine the passage and it must incontestably appear that they were. For if the unbelieving Jews knew no-

thing of the matter, and must be called together by Paul on his coming to Rome, they could not know when to meet him at Appii Forum; nor would they have given themselves that trouble if they had known; but particularly, they could not have comforted Paul, or inspired him with courage, see 15th verse; but rather would have increased his affliction by their unbelief. It was after three days, spent doubtless in pleasing intercourse with 'those brethren' who had already shewn him so kind an attention, that he called the "*chief of the Jews* together." Not Aquila and Priscilla, the tent makers, with their household, nor any of those pious but probably humble persons, who had been his converts at Corinth and Ephesus; but the *chief men*, the doctors, and rulers of synagogues, the men of rank and authority. Paul does not address them as ignorant of the claims of Jesus, nor does their answer imply such ignorance; with great candour they declare that they have heard nothing to his disadvantage, and desire to hear the doctrine of the gospel fully explained, for that they know little more than that every where it is spoken against. Upon their separating themselves from him, however, he tells them that he will not hesitate to preach to the Gentiles of Rome, who were, not many of them, converted, before this period, to Christianity.

I have been the more particular upon this subject, because if I have clearly proved the perfect consistency of the history with the epistle, we have not only the natural strength of that evidence of the genuineness of the epistle, but also a striking testimony to the truth of both, from the air of independence and originality which appears in each of them; so that having very different forms, they are still united together by the eternal bond of truth.

T. H.

REVIEW.

Still pleas'd to praise, yet not afraid to blame.—POPE.

Sermons on Important Subjects, by Owen Manning, B. D. Late Prebendary of Lincoln, &c. in two Vols. octavo. pp. 375 and 294. Rivingtons. 1812.

The author of these sermons was born at Mears Ashby, in Northamptonshire. He was educated at Queen's College, Cambridge, where he took his several degrees of B. A. in 1740: M. A. in 1744: S. T. B. in 1753. While at Cambridge, he had the small pox, and was supposed to have died of that fatal disease. His body was actually laid out for interment, when his father looking stedfastly on the countenance thought he perceived signs of life. Proper means for recovery were used with success; the young man was restored to his family and friends, and became an ornament and benefactor to society. In 1763, he was presented, by Dr. Green, dean of Salisbury, to the vicarage of Godalming, in Surrey, and in 1769,

to the rectory of Peper Hara, by the dowager Lady Middleton, and her son the viscount. To the literature of his own country Mr. Manning performed a most acceptable task, by completing the Saxon Dictionary begun by his friend Mr. Lye. This dictionary, the labour of 30 years, was published under the patronage of a handsome subscription, in 2 vols. folio, in 1772. To this Mr. Manning prefixed an account of the rise and progress of the work, in an elegant Latin preface, accompanying it also with a grammar of the Saxon and Gothic languages. In an appendix are subjoined fragments of Ulphilas's version of the epistle to the Romans, sundry Saxon charters, a Sermon on Antichrist, a Fragment of the Saxon Chronicle, and other instruments. Mr. Manning was author of the "History and Antiquities of the County of Surrey," and of several sermons which, with others, have been lately published in two volumes; and of these we are now to give a brief account.

These sermons, we are told, were left, by the author, for publication, "in the hope of counteracting certain doctrines which appeared to be gaining ground in these kingdoms." They are twenty-four in number, and on various important subjects, such as The Advantages of, and Rules for, Reading the Scriptures:—Salvation to Good Men under every Dispensation:—On Regeneration:—Election;—Justification;—Religious Melancholy;—The Jewish and Christian Sabbaths;—Coming to Christ;—The Mercy and Works of God, &c.

From this enumeration, which does not embrace half the topics treated of in the volumes before us, the reader will easily perceive that they are amply sufficient to give full scope to the preacher's talents and zeal in displaying the true christian doctrines. He had, it appears, ever been anxious to lead the people entrusted to his care to a rational knowledge of the perfections of their Maker, as they are set forth in the Old and New Testament: that they might look to, and worship him as the God and Father of all men; as being no respecter of persons, but the rewarder of all who sincerely endeavour to obey his commands. He considered what have been called (falsely called) the peculiar doctrines of the Christian religion as tending to vilify the attributes of his Maker, as pregnant with the most pernicious consequences when taught to the great mass of the people, and as tenets that cannot be fairly inferred from the writings of the prophets and apostles, in which the Deity is represented as having a free, spontaneous, and unpurchased paternal love for all his children. That Mr. Manning regarded the doctrines of regeneration, of election, justification, &c. as they are popularly taught, as corruptions of christianity, against which it is the duty of the Christian preacher to lift up his voice, is evident from the discourses which he has devoted to the discussion of these momentous subjects, and from which we could extract much interesting and important matter, would the limits of our publication allow us to enlarge.

Thus in the sermon on "Regeneration," he says, "to be converted, in its literal interpretation, signifies to be *turned about*,

and is therefore in a religious sense the same thing with *repenting;* hence, when our Saviour urges upon his hearers that they are to be converted and become as little children, he implies that they should turn about from the way in which they are, to that in which they first set out—the way in which their gracious Maker placed them when he first set them forward on the perilous journey of life." On this subject the author argues with great force, that "whatever it be that is derived to us from the original transgression of Adam, *it cannot be guilt*: and that we are born with powers sufficient to enable us to grow up in goodness:" from these and other propositions which he justifies with much acuteness and sound argumentation, he deduces a number of very important inferences. A part of the concluding application we shall transcribe, as containing affectionate advice to that class of persons who are most likely to lend an ear to the voice of instruction.

"To those then that are young, that are not yet advanced beyond that period of life when little or nothing can have been done in prejudice of their hopes, let me give this plain and short, but comprehensive admonition, to 'remember their Creator in the days of their youth,' so as to 'walk in his ways,' by 'ruling themselves after his word.' To remember him, while they may look up to him with joy, and before those 'evil days come,' when they will otherwise be driven to seek him and his pardoning mercy in the bitterness of sorrow. Their consciences reproach them hitherto with nothing that is matter of particular repentance. Let them take care then so to order their future goings, that when death at last shall overtake them, they may then also be found in the number of those 'just persons that need no repentance.'"

To persons who, from whatever cause, are apt to despond of the goodness of God, we earnestly recommend the Sermon on "Religious Melancholy," in which though the preacher does not attempt to enumerate every case of distress which apprehensions for their future condition give rise to, yet he states some of the principal of them, in order to convince his readers that if it is their sincere intention to serve and please God, though for the present they go on their way weeping, they shall however, come again with joy, and bring their sheaves with them.

The design of the Discourses on the Jewish and Christian Sabbaths, is to inquire into the origin of the nature of the former, and of the observance of the latter which took place on the establishment of Christianity; and of the obligations mankind have been under from time to time to pay a regular attention to them as institutions of divine original. Mr. Manning traces the origin of the Jewish sabbath not to the creation, but to the entrance of the children of Israel into the wilderness, at the time of their deliverance out of Egypt, more than 2500 years after the creation: hence he infers that the ritual law, and the sabbath as a *day of entire rest*, were given at the same time: the latter as a *sign* or mark of distinction between the Jews and the idolatrous nations with which they were surrounded. It was not of the nature of a moral duty; but a positive institution enjoined on the people of Israel *only;* and he adds:

"With the exceptions to works of necessity and humanity, and such as related to the service of God in the temple, the Jewish sabbath required of that people a total cessation from all labours and occupations whatsoever: and, in this alone, as far as appears from the letter of the commandment, did the due observance of

it consist. For, as to what is said of God's having blessed, sanctified, hallowed, or ordered them to keep holy the sabbath day, it does not appear that any thing of a religious nature was implied in this; since the words themselves import nothing more than setting apart any thing, whatever it be, from ordinary uses; and no other purposes for which this day was set apart is so much as intimated in the law, but that alone of cessation from their usual labours. 'In it thou shalt do no manner of work,' was the whole of the commandment."

Mr. Manning thinks that the sabbath became a day devoted to religious services, not from any divine command, but that persons ordered to separate one day in seven from the common business of life, would naturally be led to that kind of reflection and meditation on the Creator, his works and providence, which would induce religious habits and at length religious worship, consisting of praise and thanksgiving for benefits already received, and of prayer and supplication for future blessings.

"Under the impression of these," says our author, "it would naturally occur to them, (the leaders of the people) as a measure of general use and importance to diffuse, among the people at large, their own sense of these matters, and this probably was what first suggested, as the most obvious method of doing it, the reading and interpreting of their law in their public assemblies. All this, I say, seems very natural, but we have no authority for saying how far it was the case in fact; for the scriptures which make no mention of any precept to this purpose, are totally silent also as to any practice of this sort in the earlier period of the Jewish dispensation."

Our readers will hence observe that Mr. Manning's theory is, that the sabbath as a day of rest, as a sign to distinguish the Jews from other people, was of divine appointment; but that the setting it apart for religious services was a matter of human expediency. He contends also that Christians, not being at all bound by Jewish ceremonies are not enjoined to separate one day in seven as a day of rest, and that the consecrating the first day of the week to religious services, depends not on express command, but that it had its origin, and has been continued from the consideration of the utility of such an institution. He traces the practice to the time of the apostles, and thinks their example, in this respect, equivalent to any precept they could have handed down to us on the subject.

We shall notice only one other of the Discourses before us, viz. that *On the Works of God*, and of their tendency to produce general happiness. From this we shall transcribe a paragraph which will shew the author's mode of reasoning on this important subject.

"When we pronounce of the works of God, in general terms, that they are good, it is always to be understood as spoken with a view to the whole of his design. With respect to any particular persons indeed, exclusively of the rest of mankind,—or, to our present situation and interest, independently of a future state,—or, to the immediate effects of second causes, without regard to their remoter consequences,—in this view of our condition, many of the events of life may certainly be considered as real evils; which yet, in a more extensive view of their influences upon the general state of mankind, or upon our own particular and separate interests, in some distant period of time, may be the greatest and most inestimable blessings What we affirm therefore, with respect to the appointments of Providence, is, not that every particular dispensation, considered in itself, is a blessing, but that there is

such a direct tendency of every particular event to the welfare and happiness of the whole; and to the welfare and happiness of every individual, upon the whole, as will justify us in pronouncing of the œconomy of things in general, of the government and administration of Providence, considered in all its parts, that it is, in all respects, and in every sense whatsoever, worthy of its author, —worthy of that goodness which suggested, that wisdom which contrived, and that power which brought it into being. 'Behold, it is very good.'"

The practical considerations suggested by the author as deducible from the doctrines inforced in this Discourse, are (1), That whatever be our lot we can have no reason to complain: (2), That all the censures we pass, and all the exceptions we take to the works and government of God, in general, are groundless and unjust: and, (3), That we ought to entertain an honourable and just opinion of them, and to manifest the same to others, by a suitable treatment of them in our conversation and practice. This leads to the consideration of the influence which a persuasion of the goodness of God in all his works will have on our present condition. "Our happiness," says the author, "in any situation, has a principal dependence upon the opinion we have accustomed ourselves to form of it; and so sensible indeed of this is every wise and considerate person, that let his situation be what it will, he is ever careful to make the best he can of it,—to give every argument on the favourable side its full weight, —to make all possible allowance for such circumstances as are unfavourable in it; without being nice and curious to discover more of these than necessarily and unavoidably force themselves into the account:" the consequence of this is that he never repines at any thing that befals him: and that he acquiesces in the undoubted goodness of God as the foundation of his future hopes.

"Where there is a constant impression of this great truth," says our author, "habitually influencing our conduct, that 'every thing which God hath made is good,' the mind has a stay, which nothing can remove; a dependence which nothing can shake; a resource of confidence which nothing can exhaust or interrupt. His very being is a matter of joy and gratitude, as an earnest of an happy immortality: nor repines he at any conditions on which it may be appointed him to possess it for a season; as well knowing that, however grievous, they are but temporary, and will certainly obtain for him, in the end, 'a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.' In a word, knowing who it is that is his present 'shield,' and will infallibly prove hereafter his 'exceeding great reward,' the constant language of his tongue and heart is, 'Alleluiah! for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth.'"

From the foregoing account of these volumes we need scarcely add any thing by way of recommendation. Their intrinsic merit must be evident to our readers: they are instructive and animated, calculated to inform the mind, and inspire the heart with the best sentiments of God and religion. In general the reasoning is close and solid, and the inferences deduced from it natural and impressive.

The author who died at the age of 88, in September 1801, was a living exemplar of the doctrines and precepts which he so ably inculcated upon others: he was not more distinguished for erudition, than for the mildness of his manners and for his exemplary piety: his life, therefore, was to his parishioners as instructive as

his discourses. As he did not scruple in those discourses publicly to avow sentiments not always in unison with the articles of the church to which he belonged, he wished all might enjoy the same liberty which he claimed for himself, and was, in the year 1772, one of the clergy who petitioned "for relief in the matter of subscription to the Liturgy and Thirty-nine Articles."*

ART. II. *A Plea for the Catholic Claims*: A Sermon, preached at the Chapel in Essex Street, March 10, 1813, being the Day appointed for a General Fast. By Thomas Belsham. 8vo. pp. 44. Johnson and Co. 1813.

Catholic Emancipation, daily gaining friends by becoming better understood, though daily opposed by the unenlightened or interested, who are already a minority and will soon cease to be a party, affords an example of the progress of truth and liberty in general: discussion is all they ask; fearless of opposition, provided it be open; secure of success, if inquiry be but excited.

Mr. Belsham opens his Sermon with an animated and cheering descant on the late rapid and universal growth of religious liberty, followed by reflections on the satisfaction of being conscious of participating and aiding the general improvement, and on the certainty of a glorious issue to all the plans of "Omnipotent benignity." The following simile is worthy of the subject, and more cannot be said of it:

"The progress of improvement, intellectual and moral, individual and national, is like the flowing tide. A wave advances beyond the rest, and it falls back again; you would suppose that the sea was retreating; but the next wave pushes further still, and the succeeding one goes beyond that: so that, by a gradual, and, for some time, imperceptible, but sure and irresistible progress, the mighty element bears down every obstruction, and, in due time, occupies its destined station. Even before the inadvertent spectator is aware, the soil and slime, and all unsightly and rugged objects disappear, and the whole space is occupied by the beautiful and majestic main." pp. 6, 7.

What are the "Catholic Claims?"

"What the Catholics implore is, that they may not lie under a public proscription; that they may not without a crime either proved or alledged, be degraded from the rank of citizens of a free country; that they may be permitted, when their sovereign approves, and when their country invites, but not otherwise, to devote their lives, their fortunes, their talents, and their influence, to the service of their country, to the defence of its constitution, its rights, its laws and liberties, and to the advancement of its prosperity, whether in the senate, at the bar, on the bench, or in the field. Is this an unreasonable request?" p. 16.

It is well known that promises have been held out to the Catholics, and particularly that large promises were made to them on the eve of the Union, which have never been fulfilled; in a *note* (pp. 17, 18), Mr. Belsham refers to this subject, and relates an anecdote which acquits the King of being a party to any deception that may have been practised upon the Catholics.

"Whatever promises were made or understood to be made by those who negociated the important measure of the Union, and how mortifying soever the disappointment of the Catholics, it is a pleasure to reflect that the character

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* A copy of the Petition here referred to may be seen in the 7th vol. of Mr. Archdeacon Blackburne's Works.

of the sovereign was in no respect implicated. NO ROYAL PROMISE WAS VIOLATED. Of this the following anecdote, if authentic, as it is said to be, contains ample proof. During the negociation, Mr. Secretary Dundas, afterwards Lord Melville, submitted to his majesty a draught of the proposed articles of union to learn the royal pleasure, and to take his majesty's commands upon the subject The monarch upon this occasion is reported to have said, 'I hope, Mr. Dundas, I am not pledged to extend the privileges of the Catholics.' 'Your majesty,' replied the right honourable secretary, 'is pledged to nothing; but your majesty's ministers flatter themselves that the clauses relating to the Catholics will be interpreted liberally.' 'But, Mr. Dundas, you recollect the coronation oath.' 'I do recollect it, Sire,' replies the secretary, 'but your majesty will have the goodness to consider, that there is nothing in that oath which can bind your majesty from concurring in any measure which the wisdom of parliament may recommend.' 'None of your Scotch metaphysics for me, Mr. Dundas,' interrupted the monarch, with some warmth; 'I do not approve of your Scotch metaphysics:' and immediately broke up the conference. Who would not wish that a mind so honourable had been more enlightened, even though it should have been through the medium of Mr. Dundas's Scotch metaphysics?"

In reference to the stale charge of the Catholics having broken faith with heretics, Mr. Belsham protests against the imputation to children of the iniquities of fathers, and thus happily retorts upon and expostulates with the accuser.

"What for example, was the conduct of Charles the Second to the Presbyterians, who restored him with unrestricted prerogatives to the throne of his ancestors? What was the return made by the nation to the zealous nonconformists who, with confiding simplicity, supported a Bill by which they were themselves excluded from offices and honours, in order to keep out the Catholics, under a promise, expressed or understood, that they should speedily be restored to their political rights? And where was the gratitude of the established church, after it had by the aid of the nonconformists, which it had implored in the hour of danger, compelled a Catholic tyrant to abdicate the throne? But shall we then say that it is a doctrine of the church of England, that faith is not to be kept with nonconformists? God forbid. Let every one bear his own burden. Let every one suffer the disgrace of his violated honour. But let not the innocent be confounded with the guilty; nor the honourable members of either the Catholic or the Protestant churches, bear the opprobrium of proceedings which they peremptorily disavow, and which they would neither imitate nor approve." pp. 21, 22.

We cannot go over all the topics of this well-timed, interesting Sermon, but there is a passage in the conclusion which forces itself upon us by the weight of its matter and the beauty of its style.

"Finally, it is alledged that all nonconformists, Catholic and Protestant, must be from principle, and in their hearts, *hostile* to the established religion, and from interest desirous to pull it down, and to build up their own communion upon its ruins. The prosperity therefore, and even the safety of the established church, requires that they should be deprived of political power.

"This is a very plausible and most imposing argument, and with many it has more weight than all the rest. But I hesitate not to assert, that it is an argument which will not bear examination, that it is a gross and dangerous paralogism, and that to act upon it is really to bring the established religion into that very crisis which it is so desirable to avoid. The settlement of ample revenues and the investment of the ministers of an establishment with high rank and dignity, is amply sufficient for the support of a national religion. And the church of England, protected by the laws, the customs, the opulence, and the fashion of the country, needs not, for her own security, to grasp at the monopoly of political power. She may be well content to share it in due proportion with the rest of the community.

"This, she may be assured, is the decided judgment of all who are not

within the pale of her communion: and who see no reason, why they should be laid under the bar of a political proscription. And it may behove Churchmen to recollect, that these are in number more than half the population of the United Empire.

"The safety of the established communion depends, in a considerable degree, upon the division of the nonconformist interest. No sect, single-handed, is equal to cope with the national church, though all united might, if that were their object, accomplish her downfal.

"But so discordant are they in principle, and so hostile to each other in doctrine and in spirit, that nothing can possibly unite them, nothing can induce them to act in concert, but some great, common and oppressive grievance. Such is the universal denial of their proper share of political influence; laying the whole body indiscriminately under one general sentence of degradation and disgrace.

"Remove this single impediment, efface this general stigma, grant the nonconformists their birthright, as the natives of a free country, their eligibility to political office and power, and the bond of union is burst asunder. A mutual repulsion immediately takes place. And the mass, which, in a state of compression and confinement, threatened an explosion, which might endanger the constitution both of church and state, when thus set at liberty, evaporates into air, and becomes perfectly impotent and harmless." pp. 29—31.

Our extracts from the Sermon will have given it its proper character in the eye of the reader. Better commendation than our's it has procured the author, as we learn from common report, in a formal vote of thanks from the Committee (so eminent for rank and talents,) of the English Catholics.

ART. III. *Catholic Question.* A Letter, addressed to the inhabitants of Bristol, on the subject of the Petition against the Catholic Claims; comprising a Short View of the Catholic Question. With an Appendix, containing some Strictures on Mr. Thorp's "Intended Speech." By A Protestant Dissenter. 8vo. pp. 84. Bristol, Mills. London, Johnson and Co. 2s. 6d. 1813.

The "Protestant Dissenter," as we learn from the Preface, is Dr. Stock, the biographer of Dr. Beddoes. We thank him for not withholding his name: without diminishing his literary reputation, he has, by this means, done a service to the cause which he pleads, —as none can suspect him of being an incompetent, interested or insidious advocate of the Roman Catholics.

Our pages have already recorded the No Popery proceedings at Bristol [137—143]: to these we now refer only to remark, that we think great praise is due to Dr. Stock for entering coolly into a question which had been brought forward and determined under so much delusion and with so much clamour. The Letter contains a thorough examination of the Catholic claims, and few readers of it, we should think, can forbear coming to the Doctor's conclusion, that in justice and charity and policy, those claims ought to be fully granted. The Dr. evinces his own confidence in the goodness of his cause, by his candour towards the opponents of the Catholics, at Bristol, whose conduct had not entitled them to very gentle treatment.

One of those opponents was Mr. Thorp, a Dissenting minister! who seems to have raved against Catholic emancipation, out of a sheer love of religious liberty. The following is part of the reverend gentleman's "Intended Speech,"

in the form of an apostrophe to Popery:—"An ideal monster, that is sour, livid, full of scars, wallowing in gore, disgusted with every object around, and most of all disgusted with itself, is harmless and inoffensive in comparison with thee."—This insane writing would, in the general opinion, have justified severe chastisement; but Dr. Stock understands the malady of such authors as Mr. Thorp, and has contented himself with lenient correctives, which are most successful in altering a diseased constitution of mind.

ART. IV. *A Protestant Layman's Letter*, in Reply to the Rev. Mr. Thorp's Speech against Catholic Emancipation. 8vo. pp. 20. Hamilton, Paternoster Row. 1813.

This is another of the publications that have grown out of the discussion of the Catholic question at Bristol, and one of the few local publications that (like the last under review,) will bear, and repay, reading every where. The *Layman* has said enough, we think, to convince even Mr. Thorp, that the *Protestant*, ought not to hinder the civil rights of the *Catholic*, *Dissenter*; at any rate, his cool arguments and good temper must make the Reverend opposers of justice, charity and freedom at Bristol and other places, ashamed of their ignorance, violence and calumny.

The probable fate of the Protestant Dissenters' claims ought not to influence those of the Roman Catholics; we say, as Dissenters, let all others be *righted*, though we continue *wronged*. But it is a question of some interest, whether Catholic emancipation will free Protestant Dissenters from their bonds (see Layman's Letter, p. 20); we are not so "confident" on this head as the Layman; and should this article reach his eye, we would invite him to discuss this topic in that part of our work, devoted to Miscellaneous Communications.

ART. V. *A Sermon on the Influence of Religious Knowledge, as tending to produce a gradual Improvement in the Social State.* Preached at the Meeting-House, Monkwell Street, January 3, 1813. By James Lindsay, D. D. For the benefit of the Royal Lancasterian Institution. 8vo. pp. 56. Johnson and Co.

A sound head and a warm heart have both poured their contributions into this sermon, which is a glowing picture of knowledge and its attendant blessings. The case of *Athens* is happily brought forward and ably argued and made to bear upon the subject of the sermon (pp. 10—17); as is the character of the Quakers (pp. 33—38), whom Dr. Lindsay panegyrises, we are persuaded, sincerely, but, we suspect, rather exorbitantly;—we acknowledge the virtues of the Friends, but we cannot be blind to some capital defects, the necessary consequence of their moral system, among which is the insincerity, not always known to the subject of it, which is brought on by high-strained, impracticable pretensions.

The following passage contains, in the first sentence, a just view of late events, and in the second, a prediction, the fulfilment of which is due to truth, justice and freedom.

"Amidst all that we have to deplore in the melancholy events of the last 20 years, the heart of a Christian is consoled by the reflection, that the ascendency of Rome and the feodalties of a large portion of Europe, of which the one supported spiritual and the other civil despotism, are gone for ever. *The Church of France can never regain her power, because she can never regain her revenues; and the necessities of other countries will soon induce them also, to seize upon those riches, without which, in the present day, ecclesiastical authority would be perfectly impotent.*" (pp. 24, 25.)

ART. VI. *Proof from Scripture that God, even the Father, is the only True God, and the only proper Object of Religious Worship:* containing Remarks on the Rev. Dr. J. Pye Smith's Discourse on the Adoration of our Lord Jesus Christ. By Lant Carpenter, LL. D. 12mo. 1s. 6d. Johnson and Co. 1812.

To those who are acquainted with Dr. Carpenter's former publications, in favour of Unitarianism, the title of this pamphlet will be a sufficient recommendation of it. Dr. Carpenter enters thoroughly into his subject, and meets objections in all their force and disposes of them with ability. To opponents he is exemplarily candid, and his strain of writing, tinctured with unaffected piety, is peculiarly fitted to conciliate such readers as apprehend that Unitarians are strangers to religious feeling.

The remarks on Dr. Smith's Discourse are, we humbly think, a complete vindication of the sole worship of the One God, the Father. We should be really glad to see Dr. Smith's plain and direct answer to them.

ART. VII. *The Grounds of Unitarian Dissent.* A Sermon, preached Nov. 15, 1812, at the opening of the Chapel in Union Place, Glasgow. By James Yates, M. A 12mo. 3d Edition, (1st and 2d Editions 8vo.) pp. 36. Glasgow: Brash and Reid. London: Longman and Co. 1813.

The opening of a chapel for the sole worship of the One God, in Glasgow, forms an era in the history of Unitarianism. The station is most important, and the duties of the minister who fills it are in no common degree arduous; the Unitarian church at Glasgow is happy, however, in the enjoyment of the services of such a preacher as our author, who writes well, reasons forcibly, and manifests a serious conviction of the importance, and a becoming zeal for the diffusion, of divine truth.

Mr. Yates lays down the three following "Grounds of Unitarian Dissent," "1, The free and unbiassed Use of the Understanding on Religious Subjects; 2, The Worship of God the Father only; 3, Holiness of Heart and Excellence of Conduct the only means of obtaining Salvation." These principles are clearly explained and zealously enforced.

We wish permanence to the connection between Mr. Yates and his people, so honourable to him and so useful to them; and we hope that through their joint labours, and those of other Unitarians, and Unitarian Societies, we shall have the pleasing duty of recording the dedication of many houses of prayer in Scotland to the God and Father of Jesus Christ.

ART. VIII. *The Full Reward of the Faithful Minister of the Gospel in the growing Improvement of his Hearers.* A Sermon preached at the Quarterly Meeting of an Association of Protestant Dissenting Ministers, at Stand, near Manchester, September 10, 1812, and published at their request. By William Turner. 8vo. pp. 24. Newcastle, Hodgson. London, Johnson and Co. 1812.

Seriousness, fervour, and affectionateness characterize this Sermon, which forms an admirable text on which Christian ministers may preach to their own hearts, and a judicious rule by which hearers of the gospel, who are in earnest in religion, may judge of their improvement under the means of grace.

ART. IX. *The Principles of Protestant Dissenters stated and vindicated;* in a Sermon preached at the Old Jewry Chapel, on March 10th, the day appointed for a General Fast, and published at the Request of many who heard it. By Abraham Rees, D. D. F. R. S. F. L. S. Editor of the New Cyclopædia. 8vo. pp. 48. Longman and Co. 1813.

Were Fast Days always employed by dissenting ministers in the delivery of such sermons as this, there is no consistent dissenter who would not welcome their arrival. Amidst his arduous labours for the public good, Dr. Rees has found leisure for the publication of a brief but satisfactory exposition of the principles, the grievances and the claims of the dissenters. We thank him for this new service to the cause of truth and liberty; and we cheerfully refer to his sermon such of our readers as wish to be informed on the dissenting question, which must we conceive soon undergo legislative discussion, or to learn the views and expectations of the leaders amongst the dissenters in this day-dawn of complete religious freedom. In our judgment Dr. Rees speaks in this discourse the sentiments of all respectable dissenters of the three denominations, and we trust he will be heard by the public with a degree of attention proportioned to the importance of the subject and to the weight of his talents and character.

INTELLIGENCE.

Unitarian Fund.

The annual meeting of this Society was held agreeably to advertisement (in this work and in the public papers), on Wednesday the 9th instant, in the Unitarian Chapel, in Parliament Court.

The religious service was opened by singing, the *Rev. W. Vidler*, minister of the chapel, reading the hymns. Next, the Rev. *Thomas Rees* delivered the introductory prayer, and read the twenty-fourth chapter of Acts. The Rev. *S. S. Toms*, of Framlingham, engaged in the second prayer, which by its simplicity, fervour, and true Christian strain much affected the worshippers. The preacher was the Rev. *Edmund*

Butcher, of Sidmouth; the subject—*Heresy*; the text—Acts xxiv. 14, *But this I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my Fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and the prophets;* upon which Mr. Butcher made three observations, which were the heads of his discourse, viz. 1, That Paul was neither ashamed nor afraid to own himself a heretic; 2, That notwithstanding his heresy, he conceived that he retained the piety of his ancestors; 3, That both his heresy and his piety were the consequence of his being a sound and pious believer. These observations naturally spread out into a statement of the duty of free inquiry, and of the principles which are now chiefly deemed heretical, i. e. the doctrines of Unitarianism. In conclusion, the preacher pleaded warmly, and we are happy to add successfully, on behalf of the Unitarian Fund. Many of his reflections appeared peculiarly pertinent, in consideration of his own recent avowal of a change of opinions. He concluded the service by prayer.

The congregation was numerous, and the collection at the doors larger, we believe, than on any former occasion.

Many individuals concurred in requesting *Mr. Butcher* to publish his sermon; with which request we understood him to have complied.*

After divine service the members of the Society proceeded to business, *James Young*, Esq. in the chair; a considerable part of the congregation staying, by invitation from the Chairman, to hear the Reports.

The Treasurer reported the state of the Fund, according to the audit of the accounts, on the 1st of January, by which it appeared that the expenditure of the last year had exceeded the income by fifty pounds. It was added, however, that an improvement had taken place in the finances of the Society during the few months of the present year, in consequence of the adoption of measures, the benefits of which are only beginning to be felt; and a hope was expressed that the next report of the state of the Fund would be answerable to the highest expectations of the members. It was also understood that no falling off would have appeared in the Treasurer's balance, if the subscriptions in arrears had been paid in: these are chiefly the country subscriptions, which the Collector has no means of obtaining. We therefore take the liberty of suggesting to subscribers in the country the propriety of transmitting their subscriptions to the Treasurer or Secretary as early in the year as is convenient.

The Secretary next proceeded to read the Report of the Committee, which embraced a great variety of topics, and extended to a considerable length. It appears that the labours of the Society, increasing every year, are every year more important and successful. Although some interesting documents were not brought into the Report, in consequence of their having been communicated by the Committee to this work, it

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* Any persons desirous of more than a single copy are invited to give their names, with the number of copies they wish for, to the Editor.

was still found necessary to exclude some matters of intelligence and to touch very briefly upon others. Even of Mr. Wright's Journals comparatively little use was made.—The first topic of the Report was Mr. Smith's Bill, now before parliament, for the relief of the Unitarians, which grew out of an interview of a deputation of the Committee with the Rev. T. Belsham, and a subsequent communication from these two parties to Mr. Smith.—Scotland was the next topic: here there are two considerable congregations, with acceptable and popular ministers, Glasgow and Edinburgh; the Unitarian cause is also in a prosperous state at Dundee, where Mr. R. Millar has so long officiated, and for this place a minister is wanted. From these and other places, the Committee have been importuned to engage the services of one of the missionaries in the North. The only mission actually resolved upon, however, was one now in a course of completion, by the Rev. Mr. Campbell, of Newcastle. This was planned by Mr. Turner, of Newcastle, who contributed to the Report a full account of the plans of Mr. Haldane, the patron of Dissent in Scotland, under whom Mr. Campbell was brought forward in the ministry.

In the short abstract of Mr. Wright's labours, was a pleasing account of a recent missionary journey into Suffolk and Norfolk, in which counties, Norwich is, of course, the most prominent place; here Mr. Wright was welcomed into three pulpits: by the countenance and assistance of the Norwich ministers he gained admittance likewise into some of the neighbouring villages.—The congregation at Reading answers to the character given in the last report: they have engaged a commodious place of worship, and are anxiously looking out for a minister.—The latest measure taken by the Committee and brought into the report was the visit of Mr. Vidler to Chatham, where he still continues exciting much attention. —The Society were much gratified in learning that already they are aided by the Unitarian Academy, the students in which have begun to officiate at Stratford, and to supply for Mr. Vidler in his absence.—It was announced that the Committee had been so happy as to engage the services of the Rev. John Kentish, of Birmingham, as the preacher of next year:—application is made to the Rev. T. Madge, of Norwich, to preach the year following.

The Committee concluded with expressing their great satisfaction in having been able to obtain the consent of about one hundred gentlemen, chiefly ministers, in the country, to receive subscriptions for the Society; and their strong hope that under this patronage and with this assistance the means of the Society would be fully adequate to any object they might have in view. The hope will, we are persuaded, be re-echoed by our readers.

The Report, of which the above is a hasty abstract, was received by the Society, and directed to be published in substance. Thanks were voted to the Rev. E. Butcher, for his sermon; to the Rev. J. Kentish the preacher-elect, for his agreeing to the wishes of the Committee; to the Rev. W. Turner, for his communications and advice; to the ministers and others who have assisted the mis-

sionaries, during the past year; to the country receivers; to the missionaries; and to the several officers of the Society, &c. &c. It was resolved that the Society approved of the step taken by the Committee, in conjunction with the Rev. T. Belsham, with regard to the penal laws against Unitarians. The expediency of a mission to Scotland was the subject of another resolution. The following gentlemen were chosen into office for the year ensuing, viz.

Mr. John Christie, Mark Lane, Treasurer.
Rev. Robert Aspland, Hackney-Road, Secretary.

COMMITTEE.

Mr. Sam. Barton, Bishopsgate-Street,
— David Eaton, High Holborn,
— David Gibbs, Grub Street,
— William Hall, Crosby Square,
— Samuel Hart, Paternoster-Row, Spitalfields,
Rev. Thomas Rees, Bernard's Inn,
— William Vidler, West Ham.

AUDITORS.

Mr. L. Rowe, Brentford,
Mr. W. Sturch, Stanhope Street.

After the business was concluded, the members and their friends adjourned to the London Tavern to dinner, where a still larger company was assembled than ever before met on this occasion: namely, upwards of Three Hundred persons, — William Frend, Esq. in the chair.

[The further account of this day, so auspicious to the Unitarian Fund, is reluctantly but unavoidably deferred to our next. ED.]

Unitarian Academy.

The Annual Meeting of Subscribers to this Institution was held at the King's Head in the Poultry, on Thursday the 10th instant.

The Committee's Report read to this meeting consisted, besides the Treasurer's accounts, chiefly of a communication from the Theological Tutor, respecting the good character of the students, for application and deportment, and the fair expectations which may be indulged as to their progressive improvement. The short period elapsed since the commencement of the Academy, and that necessarily occupied in mere elementary instruction, rendered impracticable, for this year, the proposed annual examination.

The report having been approved, it was resolved unanimously, on the recommendation of the Committee that the services of the Students under the direction of the Theological Tutor be offered to the Unitarian Fund.

At the suggestion of Dr. Cogan, the following Resolution was passed unanimously,

That the Rev. Mr. Aspland be desired to express to the students under his tuition, the great satisfaction of this society, at the favourable report transmitted to them, of their diligence and exemplary behaviour, which is so honourable to themselves, and so encouraging, respecting the object of the institution.

It was further resolved unanimously,

That the kind offer of the Exeter Trustees, respecting the loan of their books, be accepted. A hope was expressed in the Committee's report "that this commencement of a library will encourage donations of books from other friends to the objects of the Institution."

That the Committee provide, as soon as possible, a classical tutor. This resolution could not fail to be connected with the recollection of the loss sustained by the Academy in the decease of Mr. Dewhurst. The theological tutor, referring to this event, in his communication to the Committee, well says, that "as long as the Institution lives, it will be recorded to its honour that the first scholar amongst the Protestant Dissenters had engaged his learning and character in its service."

Thanks were unanimously voted to the students of York Academy for their handsome donation of 10*l.* to this Institution. This resolution to be transmitted to the Rev. Mr. Wellbeloved.

The thanks of the Meeting were also unanimously expressed to the Rev. Russell Scott, of Portsmouth, for the liberal donation presented by him from his congregation to aid the funds of this Institution.

The following officers were elected for the year ensuing.

Mr. John Christie, Treasurer.

Committee—Dr. Cogan, Messrs. W. Frend. T. Gibson, T. Hardy, E. L. Macmurdo, J. T. Rutt, J. Young; Secretary, Mr. Richard Taylor; Auditors, Messrs. S. Parkes and R. Stevens.

Any of whom will receive subscriptions or donations from those who wish to encourage the objects of the Unitarian Academy. R.

General Baptists' Assembly.

On Whitsun Tuesday was held at Worship Street the GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE GENERAL BAPTISTS, when many friends were present from various parts of the country. The Rev. JOSEPH DOBELL preached an excellent sermon on the occasion from Eph. i. 22. "And gave him to be the head over all things to the church." At four o'clock, when the business relative to hechurches was done, the company retired to dine at the White Hart Tavern, Bishopsgate Street, where they passed the remaining part of the day, the REV. J. EVANS in the Chair, with brotherly love and Christian harmony. E.

Dudley Double Lecture.

On Whit-Tuesday, June 8th, the Annual Meeting of Ministers, denominated "the Double Lecture," was holden at Dudley. The Rev. John Kentish conducted the devotional service. Two very interesting and impressive discourses were delivered:---the former, by the Rev. John Corrie, on the value of revelation, from Luke ii. 10, 11. "And the angel said unto them, Fear not; for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord:"---and the latter by the Rev. Dr. Toulmin, on the reciprocal duties of a minister and the people of his charge, from 1 Cor. iv. 1. "Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God." The readers of the Monthly Repository will learn with pleasure that both the sermons are to be printed. Fifteen ministers were present, and the congregation was numerous. At the anniversary in 1812, it was unanimously resolved, that the senior preacher in future be requested to select some subject connected with the duties of ministers and people in dissenting congregations, and the younger preacher some subject connected with the evidences of divine revelation.

J. H. B.

Warwickshire Unitarian Tract Society.

The Annual Meeting of the Members of the UNITARIAN TRACT SOCIETY, established in Birmingham for WARWICKSHIRE and the neighbouring Counties, will be holden at Hinckley in Leicestershire, on Wednesday, July 7, 1813. The Rev. James Tayler, of Nottingham, has engaged to preach on the occasion. Religious service will begin at eleven o'clock.

Western Unitarian Society.

The General Annual Meeting of the WESTERN UNITARIAN SOCIETY will be holden at Taunton on Wednesday, the 14th of July next, when a sermon will be preached by the Rev. Joseph Hunter, of Bath, or, in case of failure, by the Rev. T. Howe, of Bridport.

Meeting of the Norfolk and Suffolk Unitarian Book Society.

The first Meeting of the NORFOLK and SUFFOLK UNITARIAN BOOK SOCIETY, called the EASTERN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION, will be held at Norwich, on Thursday, the 22nd of July: the Sermon to be preached by Mr. Aspland. There will be a Sermon on the preceding evening. One of the services will be at the Octagon, the other in Mr. Perry's Meeting House, Cherry Lane. On Tuesday the 20th, there will be public services in the General Baptist Meeting House, Norwich, on occasion of the ordination of Mr. Winder:---Mr. Wright, of Wisbeach, Mr. Philpot, of Saffron Walden, and Mr. Gilchrist, of London, to preach.

Lincolnshire and Cambridgeshire Unitarian Association.

The LINCOLNSHIRE and CAMBRIDGESHIRE UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION will be held at Boston, on Thursday. the 29th day of July: the Rev. R. Aspland, of Hackney, and the Rev. Thomas Madge, of Norwich, to preach on the occasion. Dinner at the White Hart Inn. There will be a Sermon preached on Wednesday evening the 28th.

J. P.

Kent and Sussex Unitarian Christian Association.

The second Meeting of the KENT and SUSSEX UNITARIAN CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION, was held at Tenterden, on Wednesday, June 16, and was numerously and respectably attended. The Rev. J. W. Morris, of Lewes, conducted the introductory and devotional part of the service; and the Rev. J. Dobell delivered a very appropriate and comprehensive discourse from Ephes. i. latter part of 22nd verse. Eighty-four persons, or upwards, afterwards dined together. A small Tract Society for the dissemination of valuable knowledge, and the promotion of Christian piety and virtue, was determined on; and corresponding resolutions adopted. Mr. Dobell was requested by the associators to print his sermon, which he obligingly complied with; and it was adopted as a second number.

The day passed in perfect harmony. Several persons addressed the Meeting; and all present appeared to be animated with one spirit of zeal, in support of that great first principle of religion the unity of the one only living and true God; accompanied with the liberality and charity which will ever possess the minds and distinguish the characters of all truly enlightened and sincere Christians.

L. HOLDEN.

MONTHLY RETROSPECT OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS;

OR,

The Christian's Survey of the Political World.

The Catholic question is of far greater importance than its proposers or opposers ever attributed to it. Party may have influenced it, and worldly politics had a great bias on the sentiments of all sides. But we look beyond the narrow schemes of the worldly politician; who is far from being what he deems himself to be, a very mighty and important agent in the affairs of the world. He is merely an instrument in the hands of a Superior, whose thoughts are not as our thoughts, nor his ways as our ways; who can bring good out of evil, and turn the vain designs of men to purposes which they never imagined, and to which, could they have foreseen the result of their efforts, they would never have given their assent.

The two chief Catholic sects in this island have opposed each other, as it is said, tooth and nail, and the established sect has gained a temporary superiority. Its spirit has thus been shewn; but we have now to record a generous act on the part of a third sect, which is established in the northern part of this island. The kirk of Scotland in its grand constituted assembly, consisting of elders and ministers, has petitioned Parliament in favour of the Catholics. This is a firm and decisive step. The opposition of the churchmen of England was carried on in what we might call an underhand way, by all the schemes of narrow politics; in Scotland the question was discussed in a solemn manner, and the result was highly honourable to its members. The Catholics may now boast that they have a very decided majority of the population of the United Kingdom in their favour; and we trust that this act of the kirk of Scotland will produce a beneficial effect on the minds of those dissenters in England, who, desirous of civil privileges for themselves, refuse to allow their neighbours' claim to an equal participation with them in what in fact is the common right of all mankind.

We must here impress on the minds of our readers, that the kirk of Scotland is as much established by law in the North, as the church of England is in the South of this island. The churchman with all his pride and self-consequence here becomes, the moment he passes the Tweed, a dissenter. His arrogance must give way to pretensions founded on just as good a claim for superiority as he advances here: and we, who look upon both as merely civil institutions, in which the church of Christ is no more concerned than with the respective arrangements of the army and navy, cannot but smile at these changes of superiority in the episcopalian and presbyterian. But the difference of the two churches in the treatment of the catholic question leads us to a more accurate investigation of their constitution, and to attribute a superiority to that of Scotland, which though it does not remove the charge of assimilation to the kingdoms of this world, yet holds out the hope that it may gradually be brought nearer to a resemblance of the church of Christ.

Very happily for the country the convocation is no longer permitted to sit; for if it did it would be merely an assembly of priests, than which it is impossible to conceive a worse for the general comfort and improvement of mankind. The church of England is ruled by certain laws, of which the bishops are the chief executive officers. In Scotland is a representative body, consisting of ministers and elders, or in vulgar terms, of clergy and laity, in which the affairs of the church are decided. The mixture of the laity, as they are called, a term by the way unknown to the Christian church, gives a manifest superiority to this establishment; for the experience of mankind has proved that churchmen by themselves, of whatever denomination they may be, are very unfit to be trusted with the government of any community.

This may be called strong language, but we appeal to the history of mankind for the proof of our assertion. Every

institution indeed of man partakes of the weakness of the individual or individuals, by whom it is formed: and this is to be kept continually in mind, when we reason upon the constitution of any society. If a set of men meet together to legislate for another set, with whom there is not a strict community of interests, such is the frailty of human nature, that we cannot expect, that the interests of the ruled should be consulted when they come in competition with the interests of the rulers. Hence the great art in all human institutions is to make the rulers feel as much as possible for the ruled, and in nothing was the policy of the church of Rome more manifest, than when by preventing its priests from marrying, it formed a separate society of rulers, as much removed as human nature allowed, from the class subjected to its spiritual authority. The superiority of the church of England to that of Rome is greatly owing to the priests of the former being by marriage connected with the governed, but still they form a separate body, acting under determinate laws. The church of Scotland is superior to the church of England, in that their clergy are not only united by marriage to the party governed; but also the party governed has its delegates in the general assembly of the church, whose affairs are thus managed by the joint voices of what are called clergy and laity. The superiority of the church of Christ is manifest, in that it admits of no such distinction as that of clergy and laity, and in its regulations, for all its rules have been previously laid down by its great Author, every member of the community is consulted.

The catholic question has been managed chiefly by the laity in both islands, and this in England has been attended with a singular occurrence. In the English Committee was a Romish bishop, who threw out very severe insinuations against one of his colleagues, a man as justly celebrated for his talents and integrity as beloved for his urbanity of manners and general benevolence. This language suited rather the priestly character of the fourteenth than of the nineteenth century, and the committee shewed, that they stood no longer in dread of an episcopal mitre, for they voted the bishop out of their body. In fact the catholics of England are no more in blind subjection to the see of Rome, than the churchmen of England are to that of Canterbury. The age of priestly delusion is gone by, and the meeting together of the catholics for the discussion of their civil rights necessarily opens their mind to a variety of topics connected with religion. In Ireland however, the body of delegates does not seem to have acted with all the prudence, which the situation of their affairs demands. They have entered into a question, which might well have been avoided, and voted an address to the Princess of Wales on her escape from the attacks of her enemies. In this it does not seem to have had the concurrence of its chief members, for they were not at the meeting upon this occasion, and it can no longer be concealed, that they were not likely by this step to heal the breach, which so unaccountably subsists between them and the high character, in whom their hopes were at one time so fondly centred.

As delegates came over from Ireland to transact the business of the Irish catholics in this country, many of the friends of civil and religious liberty united to give them a dinner on their departure. A very large list of stewards appeared upon this occasion, consisting, with very few exceptions, of members of the two houses of the legislature. The chair was filled by the Duke of Bedford, who was supported by the Royal Dukes of Kent and Sussex. A display of oratory took place, such as might be expected, when the speakers were those, who are most distinguished for their talents in parliament, and one feeling prevailed over all, that of an enlarged and liberal way of thinking with respect to all men, whatever may be their religious denomination. A circumstance that must excite grief in every liberal mind, was alluded to by his royal highness the Duke of Sussex; namely, that the spirit of the Orange faction in Ireland had been caught by some unhappy men, in this country, who are forming Orange-lodges, and administering illegal oaths of secrecy, by way of perpetuating religious animosity amongst us We cannot think that Englishmen will degrade themselves to become instruments of so contemptible a party spirit.

The question of religion in India, has been frequently alluded to in the House

of Commons, and on the resolution concerning it being introduced, very contrary opinions were maintained. On the one hand it was asserted, that the reports of the conversion of Hindoos, by missionaries, are fallacious in the highest degree; that of the very few who were or who pretended to be converted, every one was a rogue: that the religion of the Hindoos was pure and unexceptionable, the exposing of children and burning of women being no part of their religious code, and to be paralleled by the suicides and murders of infants by mothers, in this Christian country; that the dancing girls of India found a counterpart in the prostitutes of the highly civilized city of London;—that in a population of nine hundred thousand persons, in a district in India, there were only eighty-eight commitments for every species of crime, in ten years; and in the city of London alone were, in the last year, sixteen hundred and sixty-three commitments;—that the moral character of the Hindoos was a great deal better than the moral character of the people of this country, high and low;—and that we ought to entertain more anxiety to save the lives of thirty thousand of our fellow countrymen, than the souls of all the Hindoos, by the probable advantages of Christianity. These propositions were all met with counter assertions, and it was contended, that the communication of knowledge must be a good, and from this good the Hindoos ought not to be debarred; that no unfair means were to be used in promoting Christianity, but that the natives should, at least, have the opportunity of seeing it in its true colours:—that the best way of rooting out the foul enormities perpetrated in Bengal, was by introducing Christianity amongst the natives. We may observe, in general, that on both sides, the word Christianity is used without attaching any definite ideas to it; and, that the different parties refer to very different standards in speaking of it. By some it is estimated by the established religion of this country; by others, by the doctrines of various sects in it; by others, according to the lives of the professors of it; by a few according to the law of life, in the New Testament. In general, indeed, little is meant by the conversion of the Hindoos, but to exchange their worship of one sort of a Trinity for another,—to restrain their numerous incarnations to one only, supposed to have taken place in Palestine,—and to remove their bramins for a Christian priesthood. But much more is requisite, and we do not scruple to speak it plainly, namely, to take off the reproach of Christianity, by Christians living worthy of the religion they profess, by shewing themselves to be really the disciples of the Prince of Peace, by being able to convince the Hindoos, that they all belong to the family of love, that they all speak the same thing, worshipping in spiritual union, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and looking forward with firm confidence to the establishment of the kingdom of heaven. When this is done only in this small island, then may we send forth our missionaries to India, and then will the Hindoos no longer turn a deaf ear to those arguments, which are sufficiently refuted by the appeal to the manners, lives and diversities of opinions of the professors of Christianity.

The attention of the public has been diverted from religious to financial subjects, and a loan of twenty-seven millions for the present year naturally makes a deep impression. It is attended with this novel circumstance, that no new taxes are raised, and consequently the country feels little embarrassment from the measure. This arises from the views now taken of the sinking fund, a mysterious term, like that of the Trinity, on which, for a long time, it was scarcely deemed less than sacrilege to meditate. The necessity of the times has, however, dispelled the delusion, and people now begin to enquire with freedom, why they should borrow with one hand to pay with the other. We have now a large annual sum raised on the public, to redeem the national debt, that is to make purchases of stock, whose interest is regularly paid to commissioners, and applied in the same manner for purchasing more stock, the nation in the mean time, not receiving the least benefit from these purchases, the stock being merely transferred from one name to another, and looking to a remote period when the stock is to be entirely cancelled. Instead of going on with this pernicious plan, and raising new taxes for a new loan, the government has made a loan for the services of the present year, the interest of which is paid by the sum in the Commissioners' hands for the reduction of the national debt. This sum will be about a million and

a half a year, and consequently for the next year their purchases will be less by that sum. Next year a similar loan may be made in the same manner, and till all the money in the commissioners' hands is thus appropriated, we may go on with the war, without a new tax. To enter into an examination of the demerits of the sinking fund, on the former plan, and how far the new system is capable of improvement, would take up too much of our time; but where is the mind that is not impressed with grief at at the appropriation of these twenty-seven millions, and with hopes that the time will come, when man, entertaining better views of his destination, will turn his loans, in every country, to the benefit, not to the destruction, of his species. Twenty-seven millions, expended in this island, would drain its marshes, excavate canals, form roads, and remove every nuisance and obstruction to air or water in populous cities. But the god of this world has blinded the hearts of men, that they should not see how their temporal and eternal interests would be consulted, by taking upon themselves the easy yoke of the Prince of Peace, and fitting themselves for the inheritance promised to all his true followers.

Dreadful murders have excited alarms in the bosom of every family. The horrors of a field of battle and the destruction of the villages where they were perpetrated, created a far less sensation than the murder of a worthy couple in their beds, by a ruffian, who put an end to their existence with savage ferocity and a profusion of blood. We would not diminish the feeling for our fellow creatures, thus prematurely taken out of the world: but let those who delight in war reflect, how many similar horrors are perpetrated, not on the field of battle merely, but in various places where a licentious soldiery have the mastery over the feeble inhabitants. In the comments of writers on the New Testament, and in the sermons of preachers, it is not uncommon to have an improvement, as they call it, on the text; and an improvement on these domestic murders might be made, by prayer to the Almighty, to turn our hearts, not only from the shedding of the blood of our fellow-creatures, but from every evil passion which tends to their injury.

A cessation from slaughter has taken place in one part of Europe. The Russians, Prussians and French have agreed to abstain for six weeks from the perpetration of those acts which have lately stained the fields of Germany with so much human blood. May the Supreme Arbiter of all events infuse into the breasts of the respective sovereigns an ardent desire to extend this to a more lasting period, and that all the nations concerned in the late animosities may, with a spirit of conciliation, search into the cause of their disputes, and arrange them as beings ought to do who are endued with reason! The armistice was not settled till after many a hard-fought field, in which both sides claim the victory: but the continual advance of the French proved, that whatever might be the language of their opponents, with themselves lay the real advantage. The political grounds of this armistice cannot be ascertained in this country. The sources of information are very scanty; the real state of the contending armies is very imperfectly known. It was a great thing for the French Emperor to have brought into the field an army potent enough to drive back his enemies, and instead of fighting for his dominions on the banks of the Rhine, to stand forth in the heart of Silesia, the avenger of his wounded honour. He cannot lose by the armistice, as, in the period assigned to it, he can recruit his armies, and particularly be able to make up his deficiency in cavalry. Russia will have more difficulty in this respect, and perhaps she begins to be tired with the war, and would gladly listen to terms of accommodation.

The part that Austria has to act is now of high importance, and this power is said to be the mediator of the intended peace. A congress, at one time, was to be established for this purpose; but a rumour has arrived, that the four sovereigns of France, Austria, Russia, and Prussia are to meet and to make their own arrangements, independent of subordinate officers. It cannot be doubted, in this case, that every thing will be conducted with greater ease; but little foresight is necessary to determine which will have the greatest advantage in the conference. In the mean time, the troops of the respective powers are stationed within certain lines of demarcation, and of course each party will prepare itself for renew-

ing the conflict, in case hostilities should re-commence.

Sweden has really entered this conflict, or, at any rate, made a demonstration, the Crown Prince being with an army of Swedes in Germany. For this effort he is to be paid by Great Britain with a million of money, the cession of the island of Guadaloupe, and the support of Russia and England in his design of annexing Norway to Sweden. Thus, in this disastrous war, the throne of Denmark, one of the oldest allies of Great Britain, is likely to be the greatest sufferer. Its fleet seized in the port, its capital burnt, its West India islands lost, it is now threatened with the separation of its ancient territories. To justify all this, politicians say, that Denmark is allied to France, and therefore we may do to it what injury we please: and it is in vain for Denmark to urge, that she chose unwillingly her side, that all she did was by constraint. The law of the politician is decisive; the weak are doomed to suffer. On the other hand, the politicians are not quite agreed on the propriety of ceding an island during war, as it too much resembles the jacobin principle of revolutionary France, of determining, during war also, what conquests should be annexed to its territory; nor do they allow, on the same grounds, the partition of the realm of Denmark and Norway, in which, besides, they do not see any propriety, as any diversion in that quarter will have little or no effect on the great enemy, and will prevent the Swedes from exerting their efforts in a proper direction.

Hamburgh is again at the mercy of the French, and is suffering under pecuniary contributions; but no marks of that vengeance which were dreaded have as yet appeared. The expected insurrection in the north of Germany has been of little use. In France *Te Deums* have been sung, for repeated victories; and the constituted authorities have been accused, in our papers, for the blasphemous manner in which the praises of the congregations have been called for. If we had not seen similar abominations practised in every country in time of war, we should join seriously in the same censure: but where is the country that does not, in the same manner, call on him whom they style the God of battles? The Cardinal Maury has rendered himself conspicuous on this occasion, and the addresses of this churchman are a signal proof of the versatility of his talents.

Every thing leads to expectation in Spain. Lord Wellington has advanced to Salamanca, and the armies on both sides are marching and counter-marching. The United States of America have had some advantages in Upper Canada, of which they have taken the capital; and their marine already begins to be talked of under the name of the navy. But we cannot finish our review without coming back to our own country, and declaring our satisfaction at the rebuke given by the Speaker of the House of Commons to a person brought to its bar for corrupt practices in the election of members of parliament. He is only, it seems, a very poor person; but be he what he may, the Speaker delivered the sentiments of the House on this occasion. He has declared his own and their sentiments on the wickedness of those men who sap the morality of the country, by corrupting its citizens in the duties they have to perform, and the eminent privileges they possess. How great then must be the wickedness of a House of Commons, should it connive at similar practices in any of its members!

ERRATA.

Vol. VIII. P. 226, 2d col. l. 25 from the top, for 1797 read 1787.
333, 1st col. l. 2 from the bottom, for *Bend* read *Band*.
336, 2d col. l. 6 from the bottom, after the word *iniquity*, place a *comma* instead of *a period*.
337, 1st col. l. 15 from the bottom, after the word *aid*, place a *note of interrogation*.
Ib. 2d col. l. 24 from the top, for *dram* read *dream*.
340, 2d col. l. 15 from the bottom, for *latter* read *better*.
363, Note, l. 17 from the bottom, for *conitatus* read *concitatus*.