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BIOGRAPHY.

Memoir of the late Rev. W. Vidler.

WILLIAM VIDLER was born at Battle, in Sussex, May 4, 1758, the tenth child of John and Elizabeth Vidler, of that place, who in their humble rank of life were highly respected for their virtues. He was of so infirm a bodily constitution that his parents were apprehensive that they should not rear him to maturity. At the early age of nine years, he was afflicted with an asthma; and this disorder was followed at the distance of a few years by a rheumatic fever, which deprived him for a time of the use of his limbs, and doomed him to a tedious confinement. He was afterwards subject to frequent attacks of disease. These infirmities laid the foundation of his character; for though they prevented his enjoying the common school education which the circumstances of his parents allowed them to contemplate, they were the occasion of his acquiring a taste for books, the only amusement by which he could beguile the wearisomeness of a sick chamber. He read every book which came in his way, and whatever was the subject or plan or style, it was remarked that he always went through it; thus giving an early indication of that intellectual resoluteness and perseverance which strongly marked his character in the whole of his life.

But of all the books which he met with, the Bible was his favourite study: and he was encouraged in cultivating an acquaintance with the Scriptures by his mother, who was sincerely pious according to her degree of light, and to whose maternal instructions the son on his death-bed acknowledged to the writer that he owed incalculable obligations. He was in the habit of reading aloud, and thus formed that clear and distinct manner of speaking which gave him such a command over his auditory as

a preacher. His reputation as a reader, together with a natural seriousness of disposition, which was strengthened by his perusal of the sacred books, led his family and neighbours to foretel, in one of those half-serious, half-jocular predictions, suggested by an evident bias of early character, which are so frequently fulfilled, that he would one day ascend the pulpit.

In the general habit of his mind, Mr. Vidler may be said to have *feared God from his youth up*, but there were seasons when his religious impressions were particularly strong. He himself, in a memorandum before us, dated August 4, 1784, attributes his decided sense of religion to the affliction, to which we have already referred: he says, "I was taken ill with the rheumatism while I was at Hooe" (a little village near Battle) "preaching. I was very troubled to get home again, being afoot. I rejoice that my Father found me doing the work which he had committed to me. I have great reason to be quiet under affliction of body, and I think particularly under this disorder; for I was visited with this same complaint about eleven years ago, by means of which God was pleased to awaken my stupid soul to such a concern for eternity as never left me till I had tasted that he was gracious; and all the illness which I have had from that day to this, has more or less been a blessing to me. The present disorder is very painful; but I can truly say, *The will of God be done.*"

At the usual age, Mr. Vidler was put to his father's business, which was that of a stone-mason and bricklayer; a laborious employment, scarcely suited to his weak state of body. He devoted himself to it, however, as far as his strength permitted, working with his father long after he commenced preacher. Ill health only

induced him at last to abandon this employment.

In childhood and youth he was habitually irascible: he was accustomed to relate that, before he felt the necessity of subduing his temper by patient moral discipline, even trifles would throw him into paroxysms of passion which were very dreadful. It may be supposed that his good sense and his religion did not acquire the ascendancy, in this particular, on a sudden or without many hard and painful struggles. We find the following note in his Diary, bearing date, May, 1788: "Towards the end of this month, I was surprised into a fit of violent and unreasonable anger in the midst of my people at a church-meeting: whatever provocation I received from man, I have great reason to be ashamed of my sin before God. I bless God that though my passion was very great, the sun did not go down upon my wrath. O Lord! give me more meekness and patience, that I may forbear towards others, as thou forbearst towards me." This modest and pious sense of infirmity led him to exercise great watchfulness over his temper and to strive to attain self-command; and he succeeded to such a degree that those persons who were acquainted with him only in the latter years of his life have been always surprised to hear him confess this failing of his early character. He became remarkable for coolness in the midst of opposition and for patience of contradiction: he could discuss with perfect calmness the most interesting questions: his favourite maxim, one which he himself acted, was "soft words and hard arguments." This example may hold out encouragement to such as are convinced by experience of the desirableness of ameliorating or of the necessity of conquering their own spirit.

Mr. Vidler's parents were conscientious and zealous members of the Church of England and brought him up in the profession and observance of the established religion. He was first induced to attend Dissenting worship by means of a Mr. Gilbert, an Independent minister, who occasionally visited Battle as a missionary preacher; and it appears that he became one of Mr. Gilbert's hearers through the influence of a young woman, of a serious mind and excel-

lent character, in the house of whose parents the preacher carried on public worship. This person, though much older than himself, Mr. Vidler afterwards married, actuated in great measure by gratitude for the signal blessings which she had been instrumental under God in conferring upon him. He took this important step early in life, and he was ever after accustomed to recommend early marriages, as tending to preserve the morals and improve the characters of young persons and to promote domestic happiness.

We are now to consider Mr. Vidler as a Protestant Dissenter; entering upon the path of inquiry which he continued to pursue to the last moment of conscious existence, and beginning to encounter the opposition and obloquy which were not to cease to his life's end, in the assertion of the independence of his mind and in the performance of his religious duty. The commencement of his Christian life has been described by his own pen; and the narrative is so interesting, both from the facts recorded and the manner in which they are related, that, though long, we shall here insert it entire, as it has been transmitted to us, copied from the register of proceedings of the Baptist church at Battle: it was written, as the reader will perceive, with all the fervour of first love in religion, at a time when the writer considered Christianity and Calvinism to be the same.

"A short account of the planting of the Particular Baptist Church at Battle, in Sussex."

"The town of Battle appears to have been in a state of darkness with regard to the gospel for many years until the year 1776, in which year it was visited with the word of salvation by the means of Mr. George Gilbert, an Independent Calvinist, from Heathfield; who appears to have been a man of real zeal for God, and hath had the happiness to be much owned by God in his public labours. Before his coming to Battle there was indeed a Dissenting people, of the Presbyterian denomination, among whom the gospel had been in its power till about the year 1740, about which time it began to decay, and continued so to do, till at length instead of the glorious gospel, there was nothing

more than mere morality, for many years before the year 1776, in which year, as before observed, God was pleased to send his gospel to this dark place by means of Mr. Gilbert. The occasion of Mr. Gilbert's coming to Battle was thus. There was a poor man, one William Sweetingham, (Mr. W. Vidler's wife's father) that came from Brighton to Battle to make bricks; this person loved the gospel, but he could go no where to hear it nearer than Heathfield, which is ten miles from Battle: he therefore gave Mr. Gilbert an invitation to come to his house to preach; he accepted the invitation, and in January, 1776, he came and preached to about forty people in the evening; the word seemed to be well received. In February following, Mr. Gilbert came and preached again to nearly the same number of people, being encouraged by the attention of the people: he came again in March following, intending to preach as before, but was forbid by William Sweetingham's landlord to preach in his house; therefore Mr. Gilbert sat down and conversed with the people about Divine things.

"Several persons now seemed to be in earnest about their salvation, the appearance of which set the whole town in confusion: loud clamours were raised against Mr. Gilbert and his adherents, and W. Sweetingham was threatened with a removal by the parish officers, who hoped by that means to quash the gospel in its bud. In the midst of opposition, Mr. Gilbert came again in May, 1776; and as he was denied a house, he attempted to preach by the way-side, and though he met with much noise and blasphemy from several that came on purpose to hinder, yet he went on and the word was blessed. This encouraged him to come again in June following, when he preached at the same place, still meeting with many insults. The number of those who gave proof of a work of grace upon their hearts was now about twelve; and as it was quite disagreeable to be exposed thus to the insults of an outrageous mob, they much wished for an house to carry on the worship of God peaceably. Accordingly, Providence graciously favoured them in this, and an house was provided towards the close of the year

1776, and there they met for the worship of God, Mr. Gilbert coming to preach among them once a month on the Lord's day, and generally every Thursday evening beside. They still met with much opposition, and many attempts were made to prevent the success of the word, but through Divine mercy all those attempts were in vain.

"In 1777, the power of God still went with the word and the number of hearers gradually increased. Also the people were occasionally visited by some of those worthy ministers who were in connection with the pious and Hon. Lady Huntingdon, who for many years was very useful in supporting a number of ministers in the capacity of itinerant preachers throughout the nation.

"The practice of the people on those Lord's days when they had no preacher, was to meet as usual, and after one of them had prayed, to read some sound discourse among them, and conclude the service as at other times. This weak and simple way of worship was often abundantly blessed, not only to comfort those who were already convinced of their misery by nature and had fled to Christ for refuge, but also actually to convince some of their wretchedness, and to fix lasting impressions upon their minds.

"This was also useful in bringing forward a gift among the people. A youth, whose name was W. Vidler, who was often their reader when they were destitute of preaching, about nineteen years of age, at the desire of the people in general was induced, in April, 1777, to speak among them by way of exhortation. Being encouraged to continue this practice by the good acceptance it met with, he went on in it, though in much weakness and fear, till October, 1777, when the temptations he met with in the work, and a fear lest he was not in the path of duty, prevailed with him hastily to leave Battle and go into the Isle of Wight. The loss of this person did not continue long; it hath since appeared God designed him to labour in his vineyard at Battle, and therefore Providence brought him back again (though he came with reluctance) in July, 1779. During his absence the work still went on, the people enjoying Mr. Gilbert's labours

as before, and had substituted another brother to read and pray among them on the vacant sabbaths.

About this time, the conduct of the inhabitants of Battle was a practical comment upon that passage which says, 'the carnal mind is enmity against God.' They had long sought to stop the work of God in the town, and threats and promises had been used towards those who had embraced the gospel; falsehoods had also been often raised to deter others from hearing the word, but all those things had proved ineffectual. God enabled his people to take joyfully the spoiling of their character for his sake, yea and the work of God prospered also in the midst of this. It was therefore consulted how to put an entire stop to it, and the next probable mean to that end was thought to be, the breaking off all manner of dealing with those who professed the gospel. Unjust as this was, yet the chief part of the town agreed to it; and in order to make it the more effectual, articles were also drawn up to which they were to put their names, laying themselves under an obligation not to buy or sell any thing of or to those who encouraged the word, intending by this means to subdue them and bring them to poverty. But here the power of God was displayed: some of the chief promoters of this scheme refused to sign the articles at last; this discouraged the rest, so that the matter was quite dropped. But the spirit of it continued, and some of the brethren felt it long afterwards by decays in their business, occasioned by the malice and ill services of their enemies.

In 1779, the work of God still went on, notwithstanding the opposition it met with, and the ordinance of the Lord's supper was administered by Mr. Gilbert monthly to near fifty communicants; notwithstanding which, these persons had never been formed into a church, nor had they been instructed in any kind of discipline, but had been taught to despise all church order as detrimental to the power of godliness.

Mr. Vidler continued to exercise among the people, and this year went to hear a worthy Baptist minister, in the neighbourhood, whose name was Purdy, and was by his conversation convinced of the invalidity of infant

sprinkling, and the validity of believers' baptism by immersion. This conviction he communicated to some of the brotherhood, who though they could not but confess that believers' baptism was a Scripture doctrine, yet entreated him not to break the peace of the brotherhood by being baptized. He then communicated his thoughts to Mr. Gilbert, and after frequent conversation with him, and reading various authors on both sides of the question, and earnest seeking to God in prayer for direction, and being fully satisfied it was his duty to comply with the ordinance of baptism, he gave himself up to God in that ordinance, in January, 1780, and was baptized by Mr. Purdy, and two more of the brotherhood were baptized at the same time with Mr. Vidler. And as the professors at Battle were not in a church state, those three who were baptized joined themselves to the Baptist church at Rye, of which Mr. Purdy was pastor. The baptism of these three persons gave Mr. Gilbert and some of the brotherhood great uneasiness, and as Mr. Gilbert supposed many more would soon become Baptists if Mr. Vidler continued to exercise his gifts among the people, he therefore informed them, that if Mr. Vidler continued to do so, he was under the necessity of leaving them. Accordingly, upon the people's refusing to part with Mr. Vidler, Mr. Gilbert left them in February, 1780. The care of the people was now entirely upon Mr. Vidler, though he was not yet called out to the ministry; but the church of Rye thought fit to set apart the 16th day of this month as a day of solemn prayer and fasting in order to separate him for the sacred work, which was accordingly done. Several of the people who saw it their duty were also baptized the same day by Mr. Purdy. In March, 1780, some more of the friends at Battle were baptized, which in the whole made the number about fifteen. They now agreed to enter into a church state, by giving up themselves to one another in a solemn covenant to carry on the worship of God together and practice the discipline and order among them which they found appointed for the churches of Christ in the New Testament. This intention the brethren signified to the Rev. Mr. Purdy, of

Rye, and to the Rev. Mr. Copping, of Sandhurst, requesting them to be present and assist them in the great work, which they willingly complied with. The brethren had appointed March 28, 1780, in which to do the solemn business. And that day was observed by them as a day of fasting and earnest prayer to God for a Divine blessing on their undertaking."

The entry in the church book from which the above is an extract, was made by Mr. Vidler soon after the institution of the church, in the year 1780, when he was about 22 years of age.

The singular conspiracy against the Methodists, as Mr. Vidler and his Dissenting friends were called, was headed by the Dean of Battle, and was truly formidable to the little flock, consisting of inferior tradesmen and mechanics. It was broken up before it had proceeded to acts of persecution, by the death of the Dean, who was taken away from this scene of error and passion, in the prime of life, and in the midst of his career of ecclesiastical zeal.

But although this storm blew over, Mr. Vidler and his religious friends were not suffered to pass without molestation. His youth, being only nineteen years of age when he commenced preacher, and his humble occupation, occasioned a general outcry in the neighbourhood against his supposed presumption: it was not to be endured that such a person should stand up as a reformer! The chief scene of his earliest labours was the villages around Battle, and in these he commonly addressed the people in the open air, which afforded a fine opportunity for his persecutors to vent their spite. He administered baptism by immersion in the unsheeltered streams that were most convenient, and this service was particularly chosen for insulting and assaulting the young preacher and his adherents: every hindrance and molestation was resorted to that vulgar ingenuity could, and gross and violent passions execute. The ignorant multitude were encouraged in these excesses by some persons whose education and rank in life might have been expected to teach them good manners, and not just principles: amongst these was an attorney of respectable practice and connections,

who is described as having been a terror to every Dissenter in his neighbourhood.

Harassing as this opposition from abroad was to the mind of Mr. Vidler, it was a small evil compared with the difficulties and vexations which he met with at home. His family were all united against him; his parents from religious zeal, his brethren from youthful levity. His father even threatened to turn him out of doors if he did not desist from preaching. This was a serious trouble; for he had a great respect and affection for his parents, and his present system of faith would not allow him to regard their opposition in any other light than as a resistance of truth and salvation. His religious associates were persons of no power or influence, and they too had their perplexities, which increased his own. He felt, however, that he was following the path of duty; and whilst he saw the necessity of being more than usually careful of his temper and conduct in his family and in the world, that he might give no just occasion of reproach, he resolved to persevere and he encouraged his friends to stand fast in their religious profession. His amiable and affectionate behaviour in his family softened prejudice and conciliated esteem, and he was richly rewarded for his consistent and exemplary conduct by the conversion of his mother to his opinions and feelings; and external persecution and ridicule died away, through the influence of his talents and character, his enemies at length dreading to encounter his strong understanding, cool temper and keen raillery. It could not be expected that he should pass at once from a state in which his

* The following anecdotes, which Mr. Vidler used to relate in his family, shew both the bitterness and violence of his opponents and his own self-possession and native humour.

Being one Saturday at work with one of his brothers, he received on a sudden a hard blow, made by his companion with one of the tools which they had in use. He took this as mere play, till his brother repeated the blow again and again, calling upon him at the same time to turn out and fight. Thus provoked, he seized his assailant, and bound him hand and foot; nor would he release him till he had explained the meaning of his conduct,

life was occasionally endangered, to general popularity; secret calumnies were whispered by those that dared not avow openly their enmity; but he lived down even these, and long before he left Battle was in peace with his neighbours, who, to their

as well as promised that he would not renew it. The explanation of his brother was, "You must know that myself and several others, hearing that you were to preach to-morrow were determined that you should not; or, at least, if you did, that we should have the gratification of seeing the parson with a pair of *black eyes*."

One of the leaders of the opposition to Mr. Vidler, at Battle, was a shoemaker, of the name of Hayward, who in his language and profession was extremely irreligious. He had a ready wit, on which he prided himself and by which he had obtained an ascendancy over the rabble. The Methodists and their young minister served him for a never-failing joke. Hayward had carried his self-conceit into his business, and had issued an advertisement to all those who had suffered from ignorant pretenders to the "craft," that his boots and shoes and his only would "*infallibly fit*." Soon after this advertisement had been issued, on the day of the annual fair at Battle, he was standing at his shop door, surrounded by loose persons gaping for an opportunity to laugh, when to his great joy he espied Mr. Vidler coming down the street, on the opposite side of the way. The occasion was not to be resisted: his looks and attitudes prepared the by-standers for some very smart jest. On Mr. Vidler's arriving nearly opposite his door, he stepped gently across the street and pulling off his hat and making a profound bow, in a very audible and solemn voice he thus accosted him, "Good morning to you, *Parson Brick-dust*! I hope your reverence is well this morning, most Reverend Sir!" Having thus delivered himself, he retired a few paces, put his hat upon his head, and folding his arms waited triumphantly for a reply. He had not long to wait. Mr. Vidler, perceiving how highly the people relished the joke, uncovered his head with great gravity, returned a still lower obeisance than he had received, and with great stateliness of manner replied, "Good morning to you, Mr. Hayward, *Infallible Boot and Shoemaker*: I hope I have the pleasure of seeing your excellency well this morning, most *Infallible Sir*!" This unexpected retort, in which the fool was answered according to his folly, disconcerted the scoffer, raised the laugh against himself, and fixed on him the nickname of *Mr. Infallible*.

own credit, rightly estimated his superior character.

In such disadvantageous circumstances did Mr. Vidler form those habits of thinking and that manner of preaching which raised him to just distinction in the several bodies of Christians with whom he was successively connected. His sermons were studied for years in the midst of hard labour; his reading was chiefly by stealth. When he went out to work at a distance from home, he carried books amongst his tools that he might be provided with food for his mind in the short intervals from work allotted to meals; and sometimes that he might escape observation he hired a labourer at two-pence a day to carry his books to and fro. He continued this course of regular labour and desultory study until a painful accident rendered him totally incapable of supplying the wants of a growing family by manual industry. This event made him dependant for support upon his congregation, who though they were settled in a regular place of worship and increasing in numbers, did not feel themselves at first capable of giving him as a salary more than the scanty pittance of £17 per annum. The stipend was raised from time to time, as his wants or the more liberal offers of other congregations, particularly one from Portsmouth, in 1784, pointed out the necessity of augmentation, until it reached the sum of £50 per annum; when, as appears from his Diary, he was reproached, by the world at least, with oppressing his people and making a gain of godliness. His own reflections upon this occasion will best explain his condition and character:

"If ever I sought ease or plenty by preaching the gospel, I have been sadly disappointed, for I have and do generally preach six times in a week, except when I administer the Lord's supper, which may be reckoned equal to preaching once; besides which, I often walk twenty and sometimes thirty miles a week, backward and forward, the places where I preach being distant from each other."

"The people of the world charge me with greatly oppressing the members of my church in temporal things, but I bless God, I am clear from one single instance of this, choosing rather to suffer need myself, than to oppress any, and have really suffered need and

do so even to this day, in such a manner as but very few of my people do. And if any of my people have appeared to me to subscribe more to my support than their circumstances would well bear, I have desired my deacons to tell them to lessen their bounty. My God! Thou knowest I have not sought *theirs* but *them*.

The world charges me with amassing a great deal of money which I privately put out to use, while I appear poor to hide my covetousness. But so far from this, I have never yet been able to keep myself quite level with the world, which at times has been a great trouble to me, as I earnestly wish to owe no man any thing but *love*.

I am charged also with taking advantage of the religious zeal of my people in the ordinance of baptism, so that after I have persuaded them that baptism is a duty, I make them pay me half a guinea or a guinea as they can afford it for being baptized. But, first, I never yet persuaded any person to be baptized, but I have baptized many, every one of whom has requested me to do it, professing themselves to be scripturally convinced that it was their duty. 2dly, Of all those whom I have ever baptized, I never did receive the value of one penny for administering that ordinance to them, though I have several times refused presents which have been offered me on those occasions."

Worldly-mindedness was indeed so far from being the habit of Mr. Vidler's mind that he was careless of his own interests. He had few personal expences and he recommended frugality to his household; but he was confiding, generous and hospitable: we cannot wonder therefore that he was straitened in circumstances even with his enlarged income. He thus writes under date of 1787:

"Upon a review of my temporal circumstances, I find them much deranged. During the last three years, I have had something above £50 per annum, and during the whole time I have had five in family, and for the last ten months six. I find it impossible to support my family with this income, and I think it impossible for my people to make any proper addition to it."

What is to be done concerning my temporal affairs? Am I not, O God! in that place and doing that

work, both of which thou hast appointed for me? I dare appeal to thee that I am. Thou knowest that I have had the prospect of more honour in the world and better temporal provision than I could ever hope for at Battle, if I would leave my people; and thou knowest also that nothing but a persuasion that I was in the path of duty, by stopping at Battle, has prevented my going elsewhere. Now, Lord, I have sacrificed my temporal interest to my duty, to thee, and permit me to ask with the deepest reverence, wilt thou permit me to suffer for so doing? Thy word tells me thou wilt not, and my faith tells me thou wilt not. Do, I beseech thee, give me bread to eat and raiment to put on without going in debt for it.

"As an encouragement to my faith, I will call to mind some of thy kind providences towards me.

"1st. In general, thy dealing with me at Battle has been wonderful, for by increasing the number of my people and blessing them in their circumstances, they have been able to raise my stipend from £17 to £50: and though upon trial this does not appear to be so much as I need, yet it is more than could ever have been expected at Battle.

"2nd. In particular when I was once indebted to my butcher and baker fifteen pounds, and knew not how to pay it, thou Lord! that knowest what I had need of, didst send me just fifteen pounds to pay it with, though I had told no mortal of my case. Now I am sure that thy hand was in this, for it was just the sum I needed, and came just in the time I needed it, and the person who was the chief instrument in doing it knew very little about me."

We have made these extracts from Mr. Vidler's diary partly to let him paint his own situation at the time they were written, and partly to shew how deeply his religious feelings mixed with all his reflections. On the review of them in the latter period of his life, he must have smiled at the familiarity which he once allowed himself to indulge with Divine Providence, and at the simplicity with which he interpreted seasonable supplies of his wants, and happy turns in his affairs, as special interpositions of heaven.

To make his income equal to his wants, he entered soon after the date

of these memoranda into business, opening a shop at Battle for drugs, bookselling, and stationery. This business he carried on until he removed to London; though it is doubted whether it were not upon the whole a loss rather than a profit. He was not inattentive to trade, but early education had not given him the habits of a shopkeeper, and he was not sufficiently sensible of the value of money to be on the alert to seize small profits, either in buying or in selling; besides that his mind was diverted from the pursuit of gain by his religious inquiries and studies, and that his growing popularity in his denomination frequently called him from home.

In the villages around Battle, where he commenced his public labours, he continued to preach, and many persons in them were attracted by this means to the congregation at Battle, which was considered as the mother-church. Some of these villages are still preaching stations for the Unitarian minister at Battle; the individuals who compose the small congregations which assemble in them having undergone the same changes of opinion as the original congregation. Mr. Vidler extended his village-preaching, in 1788, to Northiam, at the invitation of Mr. Samuel Luff, whose yard was the first place of worship which he occupied in this town. His visits were repeated every other week, and were so successful that a dissenting church was formed which continues to the present time, its religious history being much the same as that of the other congregations connected with the parent society at Battle.

Mr. Vidler now saw himself raised by the blessing of Providence upon his labours to be the head of a large body of closely-united, affectionate and zealous Christians. Between him and his flock there was a warm and growing attachment. They were mostly, in a religious sense, his children; they looked up to him with respect and confidence, and he watched over their spiritual prosperity with parental assiduity and tenderness.

His house was ever open to his friends whom he received with Christian hospitality; and whatever might be his secret uneasiness or apprehension with regard to his worldly affairs, the smile of cheerfulness was always seen in his habitation. His domestic circle was enlarged and enlivened by

his "taking to his own home" his wife's mother who was left by her husband in a totally destitute condition. The old lady was considered as one of the family and treated by the head of it with respectful and filial affection: if she were sad, he would direct his conversation to her, nor cease till he had raised her spirits; and if she expressed her apprehensions of being burdensome, he would dispel the unpleasant thought by relating and magnifying her services and by pointing out the various ways in which God had made her a blessing to the house. She was removed with the family to London and closed her eyes under Mr. Vidler's roof, after having been a part of his household for more than twenty years.

Until the year 1791, the congregation at Battle had met in the place of worship which they occupied on their being first gathered together; but it had been for some time found to be too small for the increasing number of hearers and to be otherwise incommodious. In that year, therefore, they took into consideration the propriety of erecting a meeting-house more adequate to their wants and prospects. Their own pecuniary resources were small, but their hopes were large. It was the custom in their denomination, the Calvinistic Baptists, that poor churches should, in such cases, draw upon the liberality of the more wealthy. No reason appeared why they should not adopt a measure which had been sanctioned by general usage and had in cases less promising than their own been crowned with success. They confided in the zeal of their pastor, and reckoned that if he should go forth soliciting the aid of their brethren, his character and talents would procure him ready access to the principal pulpits in the connection, and his able discourses and popular manner of preaching would win the hearts of individuals and bespeak a hearty welcome to their fire-sides, where they knew by experience that his conversation, judicious, instructive, various, cheerful and good humoured, would be effectual to the utmost of their wishes. Thus calculating, they resolved upon the proposed measure, and Mr. Vidler agreed to travel as their representative and solicitor to the churches.

[To be continued.]

Memoir of Ellis Bent, Esq. M. A.

ELLIS BENT, Esq. M. A. died on Friday the 10th of November, 1815, at his house at Sydney, Judge Advocate of the Colony of New South Wales, which office he had filled for nearly six years.

The character of this justly lamented magistrate, who was removed from life at the early period of thirty-two years of age, by a disorder occasioned probably by the intenseness of his application to the arduous duties of his profession, was a character of no common interest, and which seems to have been formed by a combination of circumstances peculiar to himself. Distinguished during the course of the preparatory studies for his profession by unremitted attention, and the consequent attainment of literary eminence, and at the same time by a temper rather pensive and abstracted; he had not been called to the bar four years, when he was appointed to a situation, which, to such a mind as his, must have been, probably, the most interesting in which he could have been placed. The great principle which appears to have occupied his mind and to have animated his exertions, was the contemplation of an intellectual and moral process in which he himself was actively concerned, in the completion of which all the best interests of the human race were ultimately involved.

Mr. Judge Advocate Bent has left behind him a widow and five small children, one born since his death. His father, Robert Bent, Esq. his mother, three sisters and his brother, Jefferey Bent, Esq. Judge of the Court of Equity, who attended his funeral as chief mourner, survive to lament his loss. As in domestic and social life he discharged every duty of the relation and the friend with a glow of affection which kindled a return of affection; so in public life he discharged the duties of his elevated and important situation with that uprightness of principle, and with that justice tempered with mercy, which rendered him the object of universal respect.

The report of the committee of the House of Commons on the state of the colony of New South Wales; their approbation of the arrangements

which he suggested as necessary to be adopted in the legal department, and the consequent appointment of his brother to the office of Judge in the newly instituted Court of Equity, are standing testimonials of the opinion which was formed of his ability and integrity; and the grief which was occasioned by his death, appears by the account which is given in the Sydney Gazette of his funeral, which was attended by the governor, the officers civil and military, and indeed by the general population of the place.

The following is extracted from a Sermon preached at Sydney, on Sunday, Nov. 19, 1815, occasioned by the Death of the late Ellis Bent, Esq. Judge Advocate in New South Wales:

AS King David said of Abner, so we must this day acknowledge that in (our) Israel "a great man is fallen." This is an afflictive stroke and a severe public and individual loss. For, I would seriously ask, *when or where* shall be found a man of such approved wisdom and integrity? We have sustained a loss incalculable—I had almost said irreparable. The decease of a personage so exalted and so honourable, we ought most affectionately to remember and most piously improve. He who lately dwelt among us, distinguished by rank and learning, revered for prudence and moderation, beloved and esteemed for sweetness of disposition, amiableness of manners and uprightness of conduct,—he is gone! He is gone! no more to return! and the place which knew him *here*, shall know him no more! For the loss of such a one it behoves us to take up a lamentation and to mourn, because on a similar occasion, even "Jesus wept." He alas! who but a little while ago was in the prime and vigour of his days, and in the ample enjoyment of health and wealth, and whatever earth could afford to make him happy and respected, is now the prisoner of the grave! The days of his youth are shortened, his life is cut off in the midst! and oh! how many purposes are broken! how many cheering hopes are blasted! how many

delightful prospects have vanished like the morning cloud! What a melancholy change from yonder elegant mansion and pleasant apartments, to the house of darkness and the chambers of silence! from the soul-reviving converse of a kind brother, an affectionate wife and four lovely children—to say to corruption thou art my father, and to the worm thou art my mother and my sister! In circumstances like these, *tears* so far from being an unmanly weakness, exhibit one of the most amiable parts of our nature; they are the very essence of commiseration, and when seasonably poured forth, may revive the drooping spirit of the little helpless orphan, and cause even the widow's heart to dance for joy.

And this leads me briefly to observe, that our much esteemed and lamented friend did not fail to leave behind him a testimony in favour of the *Christian religion*. He was indeed no fanatic or enthusiast, but I hope he was a sober and rational and thinking believer in the Son of God. And indeed he assured me, that from his early days, at different periods and on many occasions, he had been accustomed to think very seriously about an eternal world and the doctrines of the Bible, which he believed were perfectly correct, unspeakably excellent, and inviolably true. On the Holy Scriptures he would invariably speak with the utmost reverence and esteem. In them he discovered such transcendent excellency and great goodness—such sublimity of sentiment and elegance of style, such godly love, truth, and faithfulness—such angelic purity and heavenly piety, as constrained him with seriousness and affection to join the devout Psalmist, and say, “Thy testimonies, O Lord, are wonderful! I esteem all thy precepts concerning all things to be right, and I hate every false way. O that my ways were directed to keep thy statutes.” Yea his chief delight (for the time before mentioned) seemed to be the *law of the Lord*, for in that law, especially in the psalms, the gospels and the epistles, “he did meditate day and night.” And the

day before his death he assured me that not from any composition of man, or from any one text or passage in the Bible, but from devoutly meditating upon the various portions of God's word, which he had read and heard, were his knowledge of salvation and the hope of a blessed acceptance through Jesus Christ derived. Prayer he considered as the most direct, effectual, and rational means of obtaining the blessing of the Lord: he would often therefore in fervency of spirit utter the most devout ejaculations. He also read prayers and prayed without a form. Piety, charity, and resignation, were strikingly visible in his close. Such was the end of that great, honourable, and worthy man. I have said nothing of his domestic and private virtues. As a husband, a parent, a brother and a friend, ye all know the excellency of his example. Let us see that none of us come short in these things. O may we by faith and prayer follow those who now inherit the promises. Over the tomb of Lazarus Jesus wept; like him we also *may weep*; but, my brethren, we cannot like Jesus raise the dead, and restore our departed friend to his disconsolate family—his mourning brother—widow and fatherless children. Yet, if permitted, and we feel so disposed, can we not shew kindness to the *living*, and erect a monument of praise to the memory of him who is among us no more? “Blessed of the Lord is he who hath not left off his kindness to the living and to the dead.” Such was the conduct of our blessed Lord. He wept over the deceased and comforted the surviving; and as he is not one who cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, when on the removal of those who were most dear to our souls, our heart is overwhelmed within us, let us, with *Martha* and *Mary*, tell all our grief to *him* who is a friend that loveth at all times, and sticketh closer than a *brother*, a *husband*, or a *son*, so shall we receive from him *everlasting consolation*. For he hath said, “come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden and *I will give you rest*.”

ORIGINAL LETTERS.

[We have already some materials for filling up this department of our Work regularly, and we trust to our Correspondents for the means of making it a permanent source of instruction and entertainment. ED.]

Letter I. from Rev. E. Williams to Rev. Mr. Grove, Taunton.

[Communicated by Dr. Lindsay, from Dr. Calder's papers.]

London, April 22, 1731.

REV. SIR,

THE long silence I have kept, may seem not very consistent with a just sense of my obligations to you. The only reason I have to offer is the unsettled state of my affairs, through Mr. Lambe's absence, and my desire of writing somewhat certain. I shall always be sensible of the advantage I enjoyed in being educated under you, and of the particular favours I received from you. Methinks I have lost a tutor, a friend, and a father, unless notwithstanding my removal, you will still give me leave to look upon you as such, by permitting me to apply to you; and as I shall always remember you under those agreeable relations, so I hope I shall be always careful to improve the advantages I then enjoyed. I look upon myself as indebted to you, for the respect and civility I meet with from my friends here, and hope I shall answer what is justly expected from one who has enjoyed so great advantages. I have preached twice before Mr. Lambe, and my going to him is at length determined, though the time is not as yet fixed, but am to go with him for Gloucester in about five weeks. I dine with them every Thursday: they are extremely courteous and affable, and converse as freely as I could wish, without that ceremony and distance usual with persons of their high rank, and hope I will be more free when better acquainted; but some of the ministers talk of my not being there for above three years. There is no harmony between them and Dr. Wright: they have not consulted him all along, at which he has expressed the highest resentment, but he does all that he can to serve me in the affair. The house at Fairford is to be licensed, but the London ministers

talk of getting me excused for once a day. I have heard a most agreeable account of the situation of the house. Mr. Milner has gained a very great reputation by his Charge. Mr. Chandler and many others think it the best they ever met with, and the ingenious author is much inquired after. Mr. Hallett's answer is come to the booksellers hand, but I hear no account of it only that it is designed to be a direct answer, and that the bookseller is not determined whether he shall publish it before winter. Dr. Gravenor and Harris were wishing to see the necessity of a satisfaction stated, and were exceedingly pleased with the hopes of seeing it done by so good a hand. When I mentioned the reasons which I thought made it expedient, I found they were not for carrying it higher. Others I find give into the notion of the absolute necessity of it for want of seeing the other notion well stated, and therefore ask why was it set on foot if not necessary? an objection which (to me) the right stating of it will entirely remove. Your preface on moral fitnesses was extremely acceptable to many; but we have some gentlemen furious for demonstration, who still cry out for more proof. I mentioned to one of these some of the plainest instances of a difference in actions, and was told it was all by an arbitrary determination; but for this determination I can find no sufficient reason given, unless an intrinsic real difference be supposed. I asked whether it was fit I should pursue my own happiness, or whether the desire of happiness was an arbitrary determination, antecedent to which happiness or misery are supposed indifferent: and even this was asserted. What notion these gentlemen must have of reason I cannot see. I am however glad to see that virtue and vice, happiness and misery, stand upon the same foot; and indeed I can no more doubt of a difference between the two former, than between the latter. My friend having extolled the mathematics as certain, we proceeded to that: he told me, that three and two make five is not a *postulatum*, but that three and two are same idea as five, and therefore equal: I should

have been glad of an opportunity of proceeding, but however looked upon this as a very good antidote against scepticism; but perhaps, Sir, you can inform me how to deal with these gentlemen. Dr. Wright, at Salters' Hall, after having told us that the will of God is always guided by what is fit, gave us this scheme, that all things existed *ab æterno* in the Divine mind, but that he was the author of all the relations between them, which take their rise from his constitution. Some of our ministers here have a very indistinct way of talking about natural religion, scolding at the admirer of it, and calling the pretences of the Deists the pretences of natural religion; that some people think that same thing called natural religion has no good design upon Christianity, and they hate to hear the name of it. An honest cousin of mine hopes I'll take care of it, and thinks it will do much harm in the world; and as for natural reason, that is as bad. Dr. Wright is angry with both of them. Mr. Lambe quits his lodgings at Hatton Garden, retires to Hempstead, and in about five weeks designs for Gloucester, and I am to go to him then, visit him frequently now, and shall be informed when he is fixed as to the time. Dr. Gravenor inquires about me wherever I preach, and takes uncommon pains with me; he apprehends the velocity in delivery to arise from my composures. The thoughts flow one after another without any pause, which he apprehends to be the reason, and is therefore making a sermon upon the text I preached on for my direction. His own method of preaching is, I believe, what he has in view; but, Sir, can you convince me that I ought to imitate it? He seems much fonder of pretty things than ever. He desired me likewise to look upon prayer as *ομιλία Θεω*, i. e. added he, talking with God, and not to think thanksgiving, petition and the like, to be the whole of it. There is at present a great scarcity of ministers, and of those that they have attempted to breed up, near six to one miscarry. I preached the morning lecture last Saturday for Mr. Benson, who shewed me a large abstract of the Acts in the nature of Lord Barrington's summary, with an abridgement of all the epistles, as they

come in the history almost finished, which he designs for the press; but a conclusion here will need no apology, and therefore,

I am, Sir,
Your obliged humble servant,
E. WILLIAMS.

Please to make my service acceptable to Mrs. Grove, Lord Wiltoughby, the families at Poundesford, Mr. and Mrs. Amory, Mr. T. Amory (to whom I will write soon), Mr. Cornish, Mr. Halliday (with my thanks for his last), and the Academy.

Letters II. III. from Rev. T. Amory, Taunton, to Rev. Mr. Brabant.

[Communicated by Mr. Jevons.]

Taunton, October 6, 1746.

DEAR SIR,

IT was no alteration in my friendship for you that occasioned my omitting to write, but I waited in hopes of hearing the effect of my recommendations. Just after my last to you, Mr. Prior shewed me a letter from Mr. Waldron (once of Beer and now of Ringwood), informing him that he was determined to remove, on account of an uneasiness occasioned by a lawsuit, and desiring him to recommend a man of moderate sentiments, and a serious practical preacher, for his successor. Mr. Prior, upon my recommending you to him, immediately wrote in your favour to Mr. Waldron, with what effect I know not; but he preaches at Ilminster next Lord's day, where I believe he will be chosen: if I see him, and the successor promises to be easy and useful, you shall hear further. Upon receiving your approbation of Bradford, I wrote in your favour to Mrs. Welman, but received no answer; which I apprehend was owing to their having hopes of retaining Mr. Flexman. He is now gone to London, and I hear Dr. Stevenson has recommended Mr. Billingsley: if he does not settle there, I'll write again, and you shall know the result. If any other place that would suit you comes within my influence, you may depend on my best offices, not only as I have a particular regard for you, but because I look on you as a sufferer for the sake of truth and a good conscience. I am much obliged by what you have done to get subscriptions, and would by you present my humble service and thanks

to the gentlemen who have encouraged the design, particularly Dr. Stonehouse. As to the difficulties he mentions—a P. [prince] may be considered in his *public* capacity or as a *private* man. Though he be a bad man, I apprehend our prayers for him may be reasonable, that God would influence him to act for the general good; but as to the making him a good man, we can only hope to be heard consistently with that wise constitution of God's moral government, that to him who improves, more should be given. God will not at our most earnest prayers *force* any man to be good, nor break in on the liberty essential to moral agents on their trial; yet in answer to prayers even for a bad man, he may indulge him in a larger trial, grant him more advantages, more favourable restraints of his Providence and inward excitements, which, if he does not comply with and improve, the greater his guilt; and this is no more than he does for the wicked son of a good parent, who, through the piety of his parent, and his good instructions, enjoys many advantages he does not deserve. As to his other case—'tis a good thought of Socrates, that what God has put it in our power to learn, by rightly using our reason, as mathematics, agriculture and the like, it is an affront to God to desire him to teach us, while we neglect to learn it, and might learn it otherwise. The Doctor had therefore better teach his surgeons to cut a good issue in the thigh, and may expect more fruit

from one good instruction given them, than *twenty prayers* for them. My best thanks to him for his recommendation of the little tracts I have published: few things would give me more pleasure than spending an evening with him. But I have filled my paper, and must subscribe myself without a compliment,

Your sincere friend,

THOMAS AMORY.

To the Rev. Mr. Brabant, at the Rev. Dr. Doddridge's, in Northampton.

London, April 14, 1771.

DEAR SIR,

I AM glad that my remembrance of you has given you any spirits, and still more pleased that Divine Providence has made your circumstances more easy and independent. I have received five pounds for you, and you may draw on me as soon as you please. Be cheerful, my friend, the time is near when the great question will be—not who got most money here, but who best employed what he had; and he will be the happiest man for eternity, not who left the largest treasure behind him on earth, but he who by doing most good to mankind, but especially in their highest concerns, laid up the largest treasure in heaven. Daily think of this, and act under the influence of this faith, and you will be happier now than a Nabob, and unspeakably happier for ever.

I am, Rev. Sir,

Sincerely your's,

THOMAS AMORY.

EXTRACTS FROM NEW PUBLICATIONS.

History of the Origin and Principles of the Wehhabites, a Sect of Mouhammedan Reformers.

[From "*Travels of Ali Bey*," 2 Vols. 4to. Vol. II. pp. 128—133.]

THE Scheik Mohamed Ibn Abdoulwehhab was born in the environs of Medina. I never could learn the name of the place, or the exact period of his birth, which I have placed about the year 1720. He pursued his studies at Medina, where he staid several years. Endued with an uncommon mind, he soon learned the minute practices of devotion introduced by the doctors, as also certain

superstitious principles, which led him more or less astray from the simplicity of the worship and the morality of the prophet. These additions, being nothing more than an unnecessary and arbitrary burden to religion, had need of a reform, as they impaired the purity of the revealed text. In consequence of this, he took the resolution to reduce the worship to its pristine simplicity, by purging it from these particular doctrines, and to confine it to the literal text of the Koran.

Medina and Mecca being interested in maintaining the ancient rites and customs, as also the popular prejudices

which enriched them, were not the proper places to introduce the innovations proposed by the reformer: he therefore embraced the idea of directing his steps towards the East, with a view to insinuate himself among the tribes of the Bedouin Arabs, who, being indifferent about the worship, and too little enlightened to support or defend its particular rites, were not on the other hand interested in the support of any one in particular, and consequently left him more facilities to promulgate his system among them, and to induce them to embrace it, without incurring any danger.

In reality, Abdoulwehhab made a proselyte of Ibn Saaoud, Prince or grand Scheik of the Arabs, established at Draauja, a town seventeen days journey east of Medina, in the desert. The period of the reform of Abdoulwehhab may be reckoned from that date (1747).

I have already remarked, that the reform was confined absolutely to the text of the Koran, and that it rejected all the additions of the imams and law-doctors; in consequence of which, the reformer annulled the difference of the four orthodox rites called Schaffi, Maleki, Hanbeli, and Haneffi. Notwithstanding which, I have known several Wehhabites who still followed one or other of these rites, and did not think them annulled.

Every good Mussulman believes, that after the death and burial of the prophet, his soul reunited itself to his body, and ascended to Paradise, mounted upon the mare of the angel Gabriel, named El Borak, the head and neck of which were of a fine form.

This event, indeed, is not an article of the faith; but the Mussulman who did not believe it would be looked upon as impious, and treated as such. Abdoulwehhab proclaimed that this event was absolutely false, and that the mortal remains of the prophet remained in the sepulchre the same as those of other men.

Among the Mussulmen it is customary to inter those who have obtained the reputation of being virtuous, or saints, in a private sepulchre, more or less ornamented, after their death, and to build a chapel over it, where their protection is invoked for the suppliant; and God is supposed to befriend their intercession.

If the reputation of any particular

saint become fashionable, the devotion increases, the chapel is enlarged, and soon becomes a temple, with administrators, servants, &c. chosen generally from among the individuals of his family, by which means the relations of the saint acquire a situation more or less opulent; but, by an unaccountable whimsicality, it often happens that the people accord the honours of a saint to a fool or an idiot, who is looked upon as the favourite of God, because he has refused him good sense. It is not uncommon, also, to see them honour the tomb of a sultan or of a cheat, whom the people have proclaimed a saint, without knowing why.

Already had the well-informed Mussulmen began to despise these superstitions secretly, though they seemed to respect them in the eyes of the people. But Abdoulwehhab declared boldly, that this species of worship rendered to the saints was a very grievous sin in the eyes of the Divinity, because it was giving him companions. In consequence of this, his sectaries have destroyed the sepulchres, chapels, and temples, elevated to their honour.

In virtue of this principle, Abdoulwehhab forbids veneration or devotion to the person of the prophet as a very great sin. This does not prevent him from acknowledging his mission; but he pretends that he was no more than another man, before God made use of him to communicate his divine word to men, and that when his mission was at an end, he became an ordinary mortal.

It is on this account that the reformer has forbidden his sectaries to visit the tomb of the prophet at Medina. When they even speak of it, instead of making use of the form employed by other Mussulmen, namely, "Our Lord Mouhhammed," or, "Our Lord the Prophet of God," they only say, Mouhhammed.

The Christians have in general a confused or false idea of the Wehhabites, and imagine that these sectaries are not Mussulmen, a denomination which they apply exclusively to the Turks, and confound frequently the names of Mussulman and Osmanli. As I write for every kind of reader, I ought to observe that Osmanli, which signifies the successor of Osman, is the epithet adopted by the

Turks, in memory of the sultan of that name, who was the principal cause of their grandeur, and that this name has nothing in common with that of Mussulman, which means the Man of Islam, that is the Devout Man of God; so that the Turks might become Christians without ceasing to be Osmanlis. The Wehhabites call themselves Mussulmen *by excellence*; and when they speak of Islam, they understand only *by* that word the persons of their sect, which they look upon as the only orthodox. They esteem the Turks, and the other Mussulmen, as Schismatics (Mouschrikinps,) that is to say, men who give companions to God; but they do not treat them as idolaters or infidels (Coffar). In a word, the Islam is the religion of the Koran, that is, the duty to one God. Such is the religion of the Wehhabites, who are in consequence true Mussulmen, such as were (according to the Koran) Jesus Christ,* Abraham, Noah, Adam, and all the prophets, until the time of Mouhhammed, whom they look upon as the last true prophet or missionary of God, and not as a simple learned man, as the Christians say of him, speaking of the Wehhabites; since in reality, if Mouhhammed had not been sent of God, the Koran could not be the divine word, and consequently the Wehhabites would act against principle.

The Wehhabites have not diminished the profession of faith, "*La ilaha ila Allah, Mouhhammed Arassoul Allah.*" "There is no other God than God, Mouhhammed is the prophet of God." The public criers of the Weh-

habites make this profession of faith to be heard in all its extent, from the tops of the minarets of Mecca, which they have not destroyed, as well as in the temple, which is already under their dominion; and why should they not do it, since the Koran repeats this profession of faith an hundred times as indispensable to the welfare of Mussulmen? The Wehhabites have, it is true, adopted also the following profession of faith:

La ilaha ila Allah ou ahadakou—

There is no other God than God alone.

La sharika la hou—

There are no companions near him.

Lohal moulkou, loha alhamdo—

To him belongs dominion, to him belong praises,

oua yahia, oua yamita—

and life, and death;

oua houa alla Kotli schai inn Kadi-roun—

and he is Lord over all.

But this particular profession of faith, which was also recommended by the prophet, does not prevent the first being proclaimed daily at all the canonical prayers.

Abdoulwehhab never offered himself as a prophet, as has been supposed. He has only acted as a learned scheik reformer, who was desirous of purifying the worship of all the additions which the imams, the interpreters, and the doctors, had made to it, and of reducing it to the primitive simplicity of the Koran; but man is always man, that is to say, imperfect and inconstant. Abdoulwehhab proved this, by falling, in his turn, into minutiae, which were not analogous either with the dogma, or moral. I shall give a slight proof of this.

The Mussulmen shave their heads, according to an established custom, allowing one tuft to grow. Several, however, do not do this; but the greater part preserve it, without attaching in reality much importance to it, perhaps through habit. Among them there are some who think that, at the day of judgment, the prophet will take them by this tuft, to carry them to Paradise. This custom was not worth the notice of a law; however, Abdoulwehhab thought differently, and the tuft was forbidden.

The Mussulmen have in general, whether from use or for amusement, a chaplet in their hands, the grains of which they count frequently, with-

* The recognition of Jesus as a Divine messenger, is, according to Ali Bey, a *fundamental* tenet of Mouhammedanism; and in recounting his visit to the supposed tomb of Christ at Jerusalem, he remarks, "The Mussulmen say prayers in all the holy places consecrated to the memory of Jesus Christ and the Virgin, except this tomb, which they do not acknowledge. They believe that Christ did not die, but that he ascended alive into heaven, leaving the likeness of his face to Judas, who was condemned to die for him; and that in consequence Judas having been crucified, his body might have been contained in this sepulchre, but not that of Jesus Christ. It is for this reason that the Mussulmen do not perform any act of devotion at this monument, and that they ridicule the Christians who go to revere it."

out saying any thing, and even whilst they are conversing with their friends, although they sometimes invoke the name of God, or repeat in a low tone of voice a short prayer after every grain. Abdoulwehhab proscribed the chaplets as a sign of superstition.

The reformer included the use of tobacco, and the employing silk and precious metals in clothes and utensils, as among the number of the greatest sins; but he did not hold the despoiling a man of another religion or rite to be a sin.

The Wehhabites have forbidden to the pilgrims the stations of Djebel Nor, or the Mountain of Light,* and those of Mecca,† as superstitious; yet they make that of Aamra,‡ and go to Mina to throw the small stones against the devil's house.§ Such is man!

* It was upon this spot that, according to Mahometan tradition, the angel Gabriel brought the first chapter of the Kour-aun to the greatest of prophets. The Wehhabites have destroyed the chapel upon its summit, and have placed a guard at the foot of the mountain, to prevent the pilgrims from ascending.

† This is probably a mistake of the press. Medina, the prophet's tomb, is the other prohibited station, in his attempt to approach which, Ali Bey was arrested by the Wehhabites, and compelled to retrace his steps.

‡ El Aamra is a mosque, about a league to the W. N. W. of Mecca, where the pilgrims assemble towards the close of the pilgrimage. "We first said the prayer," observes our traveller, "and then placed three stones one upon the other, in a devout manner, at a small distance from the mosque. We afterwards went to the spot where the infamous Abougehel, the furious enemy of our holy prophet, resided, and threw seven stones upon it with a holy fury, cursing it at the same time.

§ The following is Ali Bey's account of this ceremony. "We alighted immediately after our arrival (at Mina), and went precipitately to the house of the devil, which is facing the fountain. We had each seven small stones, of the size of grey peas, which we had picked up expressly the evening before at Mosdelifa, to throw against the house of the devil. Mussulmen of the rite of Maleki, like myself, throw them one after the other, pronouncing after every one these words, '*Bism illah Allahuak' bar*,' which interpreted are, '*In the name of God, very great God.*' As the devil has had the malice to build his house in a very narrow place, not above thirty-four feet broad, occupied also in part by rocks, which it

The reader of the foregoing account cannot fail to be struck with the coincidence of several of the principles and views of the reformers of the religion of the pseudo-prophet of Mecca, with those entertained by the champions of religious reform in our own country. Happily the parallel is not complete; for the Wehhabites in the true spirit of their master, have not scrupled to carry their reforms into effect at the point of the sword, exposing their views to the double imputation of cruelty and cupidity. "Abdelaaziz being already master of the interior part of Arabia, soon found himself in a state to extend his views over the adjacent country, and began by making an expedition to the neighbourhood of Bagdad, in 1801, at the head of a body of troops mounted upon dromedaries. He advanced upon Imam Hossein, a town at a short distance from Bagdad, where was the tomb of this Imam, grandson of the prophet, in a magnificent temple, filled with the riches of Turkey and Persia. The inhabitants made but a feeble resistance, and the conqueror put to the sword all the men and male children of every age. Whilst they executed this horrible butchery, a Wehhabite doctor cried from the top of a tower, 'Kill, strangle all the infidels who give companions to God.' Abdelaaziz seized upon the treasures of the temple, which he destroyed and pillaged, and burnt the city, which was converted into a desert."

Far different will be the conduct of those who, embracing the truth, at the same time imbibe the spirit of the humble prophet of Nazareth. With what holy vigilance ought those to guard and regulate their zeal, who aspire to purify and renovate his peaceful religion, so that unbelievers may be left without excuse, who would

was requisite to climb to make sure of our aim, when we threw the stones over the wall that surrounded it, and as the pilgrims all desired to perform this ceremony immediately upon their arrival, there was a most terrible confusion. However, I soon succeeded in accomplishing this holy duty, through the aid of my people; but I came off with two wounds in my left leg. I retired afterwards to my tent, to repose myself after these fatigues. The Wehhabites came and threw their little stones also, because the prophet used to do so. We offered up the paschal sacrifice this day."

confound Christianity with its corruptions, or assimilate it to those idle and debasing superstitions which have usurped dominion over the understanding and the conscience.

It is to be regretted that the intelligent traveller from whom the foregoing extracts are made, must be ranked amongst these scoffers; and still more is it to be lamented that the contempt which, in the character of a Mussulman, he pours upon the absurdities and delusions of the Christian world, should be so much countenanced by facts. It is said that he is a native of

Spain, and professed the religion of the Crescent, in order more effectually to compass the object of his travels—an intimate acquaintance with the internal economy of the Mahomedan States. One has little difficulty in conceiving how a native of the Peninsula has been impelled to class Christianity in the number of those delusions which have obtained or cemented their empire by the effusion of torrents of human blood, and at the expence of almost all that tends to advance the human species in liberal knowledge and the arts of civilized life.

MISCELLANEOUS COMMUNICATIONS.

Mr. Belsham's Animadversions on Dr. Magee.

SIR,
THE Very Reverend Dean of Cork, Dr. Magee, in the third volume of his theological *Ohio* lately published, in the style and temper of which he seems to have excelled all his former excellings, has selected as the text of his discursive performance six passages from the Improved Version, all of them, as he expresses it, "vitally affecting some of the great doctrines of Christianity;" as "specimens of important *unacknowledged* departures from Newcome's Version, not to be accounted for from mere accident;" and in direct contravention of their express engagement with the public to make open acknowledgment of every departure from the Primate's text. And they are further accused (with a peculiarly good grace from the learned Dean) of "employing *lengthened observations in the notes*, for the very purpose of divesting *these texts* of all appearance of the meaning which would necessarily result from the Primate's rendering, *deliberately and unacknowledgedly rejected and altered by them.*" The texts and variations are produced at length, pp. 480, 481, and the charge is alleged without any modification or qualification whatsoever.

I have thought it expedient to notice these charges, because some candid and sensible persons, who duly appreciate the Dean's general arguments, have nevertheless expressed their surprise at what has appeared to them, the gross inattention of the editors of the Improved Version, in passing over without

notice the important discrepancies which the Very Reverend accuser has produced. Alas! their honourable minds could have no suspicion of the artifices which a professed polemic will condescend to use. They will read and wonder.

I. The first of those texts which the Very Reverend writer has selected as an "*important*" instance in which the editors aforesaid have "*deliberately,*" and, as he elegantly expresses it, "*unacknowledgedly* rejected and altered the Primate's rendering," is,

Luke i. 35, thus translated by Dr. Newcome: "Therefore that holy child also who shall be born of thee, shall be called *The Son of God.*" The editors substitute "A Son of God," and they have omitted to acknowledge the variation.

Upon this most important distinction between A Son and THE Son, the Very Reverend and Very Learned writer has descanted through thirty-five pages of *lengthened observations*, in the notes, to shew that neglecting to acknowledge a variation of such magnitude, "could not be accounted for by mere accident," but must have been the result of some sinister design on the part of the editors.

It is in vain to urge to the Very Reverend accuser, in extenuation of the offence, that the Primate's monosyllable *THE*, being printed in italics, was an indication that it was not found in the original, and, therefore, that the deviation was the more excusable: for it will appear in the course of these observations, that Unitarian readers being "men of sound understandings and

honest hearts," against whom the Very Reverend Dean entertains the same laudable antipathy as his great prototype, the Bishop of St. David's, know nothing of the distinction between roman and italic characters, or of the use of that distinction. See p. 672 of the Dean's volume.

To the charge, therefore, as it stands in the indictment, the editors of the Improved Version must plead guilty. They have verily and indeed substituted their own roman A for the Primate's italic THE. And this they have done, as the Dean says, quite *unacknowledgedly*, and as I think very unnecessarily: for it is very probable that the authors of the fable of the miraculous conception meant in this passage to affirm that Jesus derived the title of the Son of God from his miraculous birth; thus hoping to efface in some measure the scandal of the cross, by elevating, as they foolishly dreamed, the founder of their faith to a level with the hero gods of the heathen mythology. This was a great step for so early an age: but the sublime mystery of the sonship of Christ, as the second person in the Trinity, had not then been discovered. The editors, therefore, of the Improved Version, who have been guilty of this needless alteration, I leave to the tender mercies of the Dean of Cork: and I request the pious reader seriously to consider the solemn question of the venerable dignitary, whether such "a specimen of important *unacknowledged* departure from Newcome's Version is to be accounted for from mere accident," and to give his judgment accordingly.

II. The second text in which the editors of the Improved Version are accused of "*unacknowledgedly* departing from the Primate's rendering," is John i. 12, thus adopted by the Archbishop from the Public Version: "But as many as received him to them gave he **POWER** to become children of God." The Improved Version for "power," substitutes **AUTHORITY**.

And here the editors of the Improved Version must again plead guilty. They have rejected, they have altered, and they have not acknowledged. A common reader with a grain of charity and "a sound understanding," who sees but little difference between being *empowered* to become children of God, and being *authorised* to call themselves by that honourable name, would

candidly say of the omission, "per- adventure it was an oversight!" Not so the perspicacious Dean of Cork! wherever he spies an Unitarian, he sees an enemy to the constitution in church and state. He is sure that it is impossible for an Unitarian to make use even of the commonest phrasology, without some deep and concealed meaning of blasphemy, sedition, jacobinism, or perhaps even worse. And in the present case, he has eked out four and twenty pages of "lengthened observations" and learned "notes," to prove that the editors of the Improved Version mean something very bad, though he cannot precisely tell what, by this *important* and *unacknowledged* substitution of **AUTHORITY** for **POWER**.

III. The third count in the indictment of the Very Reverend accuser, is John iii. 13, the first clause of which is thus translated by Archbishop Newcome: "Now no man **GOETH** up to heaven but he who came down from heaven." The editors of the Improved Version have, in preference, substituted the words of the Public Version, "No man hath **ASCENDED** up to heaven."

One would not have suspected that there could be any great harm in this; but, unfortunately, Unitarians can do nothing right! Accordingly, in page 480, this variation is marked without any qualification or reserve, as one of those "*important unacknowledged* departures from Newcome's Version, which are not to be accounted for by mere accident;" on which "the editors employ lengthened observations in the notes, for the very purpose of divesting them of all appearance of the meaning which would necessarily result from the Primate's rendering deliberately and *unacknowledgedly* rejected and altered by them."

So the indictment stands in its original form, p. 480; and in this sense it must necessarily be understood by every attentive reader. And yet if the reader's patience holds out to p. 640, he will see by the Dean's own acknowledgment that there was no foundation whatever for the accusation. His words are, "this variation, however, is acknowledged:" as it most certainly is, in a "lengthened note" of fifteen lines, by the editors of the Improved Version. And if it be so acknowledged, and you knew it to be acknowledged, was it fair, Mr. Dean, in you, in p. 480, to introduce this clause as "a specimen

of important unacknowledged departures from Newcome's Version?"— Upon whom, in this case, does the charge rest of a deficiency "in honour and honesty?"

In the last clause of the verse, however, the Very Reverend accuser stands upon stronger ground. The Primate reads, "the Son of man, who was in heaven," for which the editors of the Improved Version most unacknowledgedly substitute "the Son of man [who is in heaven]," not only presuming without any notice to substitute the *is* of the Common Version for the *was* of the Primate's, but, what is infinitely worse, including the last four words in brackets, as an indication not only of their own doubts concerning the genuineness of the clause, the reasons for which they have assigned in a "lengthened observation" of three lines at the foot of the page, but what is far worse, as implying that Newcome and Griesbach partook of the same doubts.

"Are we then to suppose," exclaims the indignant accuser, page 541, and what reader possessed of the smallest portion of holy zeal can fail to sympathize in his feelings, and to join in the eloquent interrogatory, "Are we then to suppose this careful and significant demarcation by the brackets, to which nothing corresponding occurs in either Griesbach or Newcome, as well as the substitution of *is* for *was*, to have been both of them slips of the pen, or errors of the press? both occurring without the slightest notice of the variation, and both occurring together in a clause of considerable moment in the Unitarian question, and one also to which a note [of three lines] is annexed, relating both to the authenticity of the clause and to its meaning, the attention of the editors of course specially directed to both the points of difference, and yet neither of them glanced at by a single observation?"

As every reader may not understand this heavy charge of the two brackets, which rouses the Dean's indignation to such an alarming height, it may be proper to mention that Griesbach, in his edition of the Greek Testament, prefixes a certain mark to every reading which in his judgment is probably erroneous, though he did not take the liberty to alter it in the text. And Archbishop Newcome professes to include such readings in brackets. This

notation is adopted in the Improved Version. In such notations, as all know who have made the trial, it is difficult to be perfectly correct. The Primate himself candidly acknowledges that he has "sometimes inattentively departed from this rule." The editors of the Improved Version have in the present instance committed an error of the same kind; and they must be content to leave their case to the judgment of the reader. All readers are not like the Dean of Cork.

Why the Very Reverend accuser should quarrel with the editors for substituting *is* for *was*, is not so apparent. It is the orthodox interpretation: it is appealed to as a proof of the divinity of Christ: it is also the word used in the Public Version. The editors therefore are surely entitled to some thanks, for redeeming the clause from the hands of the Arians, to which the Primate's translation had given it. But, alas! all is wrong which Unitarians can do. Every thing in them partakes of the nature of sin. And the sum total of the Dean's indignant complaint amounts to this, that though the translation of the editors is and must be right, being the same as King James's Version, it was very officious in them as Unitarians to adopt it. So much for the two brackets and the word *is*.

IV. The fourth charge against the editors of the Improved Version is taken from Rom. ix. 5, the first clauses of which are thus rendered by the Primate, in conformity with the Public Version: "Whose are the fathers, and of whom AS CONCERNING THE FLESH Christ came:" for which the editors substitute, "BY NATURAL DESCENT Christ came."

This is a variation of some importance. The phrase "according to the flesh," is a Jewish idiom. It is used by the Apostle Paul to express natural consanguinity. Thus Rom. ix. 3, he speaks of the Jews as his "brethren and kindred according to the flesh." His language is well understood; it involves no mystery, nor is it suspected of any. In the next sentence the same phrase in the same sense is applied to Christ. And the English reader misled by his system, immediately discovers a reference to his human nature, as distinguished from his divine. To obviate this error, the editors of the Improved Version have substituted

what appeared to them the equivalent phrase "by natural descent."

This is a departure from Newcome's Version not acknowledged in the notes of the Improved Version. It is for the candid reader to judge whether this omission was inadvertent and unintentional, or voluntary and fraudulent. The Very Reverend dignitary puts it up as "a specimen of important unacknowledged departure from Newcome's Version not to be accounted for by mere accident:" and in support and aggravation of the charge, he urges, p. 589, that "it was a change to which the editors attach a very high value, and which, with the Archbishop's Version lying before them, could not have been made without the fullest deliberation and design. This must be evident to every one who considers not merely the wideness of the departure from the Archbishop's translation, but the still more *emphatical* language of the *Primate's* note, 'of whom as to his *human lineage* Christ is descended.' Whether the editors have on this important part of Scripture acted with good faith by their professed model, I leave to the reader to judge for himself." And so, Mr. Dean, do I, fully convinced that no reader of judgment and candour will impeach their integrity upon such insufficient and slender grounds.

In the remainder of the verse the Primate reads, with the Public Version, "WHO IS OVER ALL, GOD BLESSED FOR EVERMORE, AMEN:" for which the Improved Version substitutes upon the authority of Clarke and Lindsey, "GOD, WHO IS OVER ALL, BE BLESSED FOR EVER."

The Dean is very indignant that any change should be made in the Bible translation. But for this the editors of the Improved Version do not ask his leave: and at any rate, they would not hesitate to prefer the authority of the celebrated Dr. Samuel Clarke, and the learned and modest Lindsey, to that of the parading Dean of Cork.

"But the point," as the Dean observes, p. 585, "with which we are more immediately concerned, is not so much the change of Version, as that the change should be made without notice." This text is alleged by the Very Reverend accuser as "a specimen of *important unacknowledged* departure from Newcome's Version, not to be accounted for by mere accident:" it is

brought forward as a violation of the engagement which the editors had entered into with the public, of making open acknowledgment of every departure from the Primate's Version, and therefore as a breach of "honour and honesty" in a case "vitally affecting some of the great doctrines of Christianity." And this very clause, "God, who is over all, be blessed for ever," is blazoned in capitals to excite attention, to attract the eye, and to fix upon the reader's mind the conviction, which under these circumstances is inevitable, that this clause is included in the general charge, and that it is an important specimen of fraudulent dealing on the part of the editors of the Improved Version, which deserves to be exposed to public indignation, and which merits the severest reprehension.

But what will be the surprise of the candid reader when he learns that the accusation is totally unfounded; and that, with the single exception of the word "Amen," which is unaccountably dropped in the Improved Version, the "suppression" of which the Dean himself acknowledges to be "a matter of inferior consideration," the variation from the Primate's text is distinctly acknowledged in the notes to the Improved Version. Where were the Very Reverend accuser's visual organs when he committed so great an oversight? The whole *lengthened observation and note*, extended but to eighteen lines, and the acknowledgment of the variation stands in the second line of the note. It was hardly possible to overlook it.

No: and it is too probable that he did not overlook it. What will be the astonishment of every reader who possesses honourable feelings to learn, that at the very time when the Very Reverend accuser selected and published this clause as a specimen of important unacknowledged departure from Newcome's Version, and when, upon that ground, he held up the editors of the Improved Version to public infamy as guilty of deliberate fraud and falsehood, there is strong ground of suspicion that he knew that the charge in this particular was totally unfounded. For the accusation having been alleged in the front of his work, where every body would see it, and blazoned in capitals that every body might notice it, it is so ordered, that a hundred pages further on, p. 592, the concession sneaks in,

en passant, as if ashamed of itself, that the editors in their note remark that "the Common Version, here adopted by Dr. Newcome is, 'Who is over all, God blessed for ever'."

Come forth, Mr. Dean, I beseech you, and make good your allegations. Exert your ingenuity: ransack all the stores of your profound learning. Display your logical dexterity. Shew us how both sides of a contradiction may be true. Explain how the neglect to make an acknowledgment, can prove a man to be destitute "of honour and honesty," when, by your own concession, that acknowledgment was actually made. Vouchsafe us some satisfaction upon this head, that so we may not only admire your prowess as a sturdy, undaunted and persevering polemic, but may esteem and respect your character as a man of honour and veracity, as a lover of truth, as a friend of virtue, as a consistent professor and teacher of the doctrine of Christ.

V. The fifth specimen of "important unacknowledged departure from Newcome's Version," is, 2 Cor. viii. 9, which the Primate renders thus:

"For ye know the gracious goodness of our Lord Jesus Christ, who though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that through his poverty ye might be rich." For which the Improved Version substitutes the words, "while he was rich, yet for your sakes he lived in poverty."

And sooth to say, the editors have actually omitted in their notes all notice of this variation from the Primate's text.

* When the Very Reverend dignitary has given a satisfactory solution to the questions stated above, perhaps he will have the goodness to explain in what sense consistent with veracity he has made the assertion, p. 829, when, in allusion to the Unitarian missionaries, he says, "here we find teachers directed to guard all against the danger of belief, and to enforce emphatically, as the most important truth, that he alone shall be saved who believeth not." The vulgar imputation of heresy, infidelity, God-denying and such-like nonsense, because we do not believe as the orthodox believe, we are accustomed to: and the silly buzz has long ceased to annoy us. But that our missionaries emphatically preach up unbelief as essential to salvation, is quite a new charge, which rests at present solely upon the Dean's averment. Where is his proof?

Here a glorious opportunity offers for the Very Reverend accuser to display his learning, his eloquence and his charity; and most amply hath he availed himself of it.

To establish the charge of fraudulent design in the ungodly editors of the Improved Version, the Dean begins his Commentary, p. 593, with an authoritative and unqualified assertion, which in the Very Reverend dignitary's writings often supplies the place of proof, that "this passage directly and forcibly expresses the pre-existence of our Lord." He then complains that the editors "not only substitute words which completely divest the passage of any such signification, but that in a note of some length" (being no less than eighteen lines, of which the learned writer may justly complain, being himself so conspicuous for brevity), "enlarging upon and confirming their own rendering, throughout the entire of it not the most remote hint is conveyed of any variance from the Primate's translation." "The Improved Version translates in a sense directly opposite to that of the Primate: labours to enforce the necessity of this sense in a note which is carried to considerable extent; and in which Wakefield, Grocius and other authorities, are introduced; does this in contradiction not only to the Primate's rendering, but to his illustration and support of that rendering in strong and emphatical terms in his note, which directly challenged their attention; all this too on a point of vital import in the Unitarian scheme (hear the Dean), and yet in no place is there the slightest glance at this gross departure, or the name of the Archbishop once alluded to, notwithstanding the most solemn assurances to the public, that in every instance of deviation from the Archbishop's rendering, acknowledgment is openly made in the notes."

And now, Messrs. Editors, after this solemn indictment at the bar of the public, what have you to say why sentence should not pass upon you according to the law of Dr. Magee?

In the first place, Sir, with respect to the sense of the passage, every scholar and every school boy knows that the proper translation of the three words *πλουσιος ων εντω χρεστε*

is, "being rich he lived in poverty." The Dean in a mass of learned notes, carried on to the marvellous extent of nearly fourscore pages, has proved very much to his own satisfaction, that the same three words may be rendered, and by some learned lexicographers and divines have been actually translated, as in the Public Version, "though he was rich he became poor." And that we may not be lost in the miry gulph of the Dean's criticisms, let this for argument's sake be allowed. Let it be admitted that the words as they stand are ambiguous, and admit of both interpretations.

But even upon the supposition that the Public Version exhibits the only true and admissible translation, the text contains no proof whatever of the divinity or the pre-existence of Jesus Christ. The Dean's *dictum* that "this passage directly and forcibly expresses the pre-existence of our Lord," is the silliest, wildest assertion that ever was made. Ignatius Loyola was rich, yet he became poor: is this a "direct and forcible expression of the pre-existence" of the founder of the order of Jesuits? Such it seems is the logic of Dr. Magee.

It is indeed true, that if the pre-existence of Christ had previously been proved, upon principles independent of this text, the apostles words might be supposed to allude to that doctrine. But first to assume the doctrine in order to explain the text, and then to infer it as a conclusion from the text, is to assume the very point to be proved; of which species of logic, to say the truth, the work of the Very Reverend and Very Learned Dean supplies many beautiful examples in addition to the specimen here exhibited.

This text therefore not being of that *ital* import to the Unitarian scheme which the Dean is pleased to represent, it is possible that the editors of the Improved Version, though Unitarians, might through mere inadvertence neglect to notice this unimportant variation from the Primate's text: and not with that deep and fraudulent design, which is so charitably imputed to them by the pious and orthodox Dean!

Allow me, Sir, here to explain a doctrine which I have stated in the

Calm Inquiry, and which the learned dignitary has, as usual, taken abundant pains to misrepresent and to distort: and (which is of more consequence) which some worthy and well meaning persons have misunderstood.

In the *Calm Inquiry*, p. 174, I have stated it as probable that our Lord possessed a voluntary power of working miracles: in this sense I explain the text, John iii. 34, "God giveth not the spirit by measure unto him." It was presumed, and it ought perhaps to have been distinctly expressed, that our Lord's powers were restricted to that class of miracles which were necessary for the promulgation of the gospel: such as healing the sick, curing the insane, raising the dead, &c. And it was conceived that our Lord's mind was so disciplined by his temptation and other means, and that his understanding was so enlightened, that he would make no improper use of the mighty powers intrusted to him, and would never be inclined to work a miracle upon an improper occasion. This hypothesis is thought best to explain the tone of authority adopted by our Lord upon such occasions, and to account for his great and visible superiority over the apostles, who only appear to work miracles upon immediate suggestions, and in the name and by the authority of their master. It is obvious to every reflecting mind, that the exercise of our Lord's voluntary powers under such circumstances would eventually produce precisely the same effect as if in every instance he performed a miracle in consequence of a Divine suggestion: and this fact was distinctly foreknown to the Supreme Being at the time when these great powers were intrusted to the direction of his chosen servant and messenger Jesus Christ. This hypothesis appears to me to be sufficiently intelligible, but it is not one upon which any great stress is to be laid. And the generality of Unitarian Christians are more inclined to believe that our Lord performed no miracle but in consequence of an immediate suggestion.

T. BELSHAM.

[To be concluded in our next No.]

SIR? January 24, 1817.

IF you think it is not taking too great a liberty with a set of men who are confessedly of very great importance to the welfare of society, will you have the goodness to give the following observations a place in the Repository.

AN OBSERVER.

HAVING awoke from the slumber in which we have lain for more than half a century, on looking around we have been alarmed at the depredations which have been committed upon our ranks by enemies of different casts; and, animated by the virtuous energy of the champions of gospel truth in the metropolis, we have attempted in the country to rally our forces, and by every honourable and virtuous means to engage the kingdom at large in a serious examination of the doctrines which have been passing current amongst us since the period of the reformation. We have the satisfaction of knowing that our exertions have not been in vain; that Unitarianism has spread and is still going on to spread; and there is a promise in the present state and appearance of things of a still greater harvest which God will give to our labours: for truth extends itself on every side as it advances, and every accession of strength that it acquires is an assurance of a double and threefold vigour which it will gain at the next stage.

Under these pleasing views of futurity, we look with a considerable anxiety to every means by which Scripture truth is taught, and are much more alive to the influence of each of them than were our ancestors fifty years ago. With most concern we look to our public teachers, the most important of all our means, and are anxious that they should be as free from imperfection as possible, and provided with all those facilities and energies that can render their labours the most effective. And I trust that if these observations should fall into the hands of any of the young men who are now rising up to become public teachers, or into the hands of those who have recently engaged in the work of the Ministry amongst us, they will believe that I am not wanting in a high respect both for themselves and for the very able instructors

of whose lessons they have enjoyed the advantage, but that it is my wish to offer a few remarks on a subject of which there appears to be a general complaint.

It is well known that the class of religionists which has been willing to be known by the name of Rational Dissenters, have endeavoured to support their pretensions to the character, by despising altogether the influence of the passions, by disapproving of all means of public instruction which savours in the least of methodism and of proselytism, and by enclosing themselves within no other fences than those of plain logical and Scriptural proofs of the goodness of their cause. This plan of cool calculation was not likely to have an influence upon the mass of the people; therefore not only have the mass of the people been indifferent to the arguments of these men of reason, but their own advocates and friends have found the regions they inhabited so very unanimating and chilly, that they have forsaken them for the more lively services of the orthodox or the more profitable ones of the professors of the national faith. Now, although I flatter myself that a very different view of the subject is cherished in the minds of the young ministers who are now educating amongst us, yet I fear that the mode of instruction is not altered in our colleges, and that they are still educating men who will shine only in the paths of logical accuracy; who, completely absorbed in the rules and practice of rhetoric, will neglect, perhaps think lightly of, the more effectual and sure way to the heart of the multitude, by the graces of elocution and the influence of manner. Never may the preachers of Unitarianism become the loose and careless demagogues, who try to "tear a passion to rags," that they may "split the ears of the groundlings." But, they have a part to act which requires that they also should "suit the action to the words, the words to the action," and shew all that native ease and lively energy in the defence of gospel truth, which others shew in supporting one assumed character after another, in order that they may amuse and instruct the general audience of a theatre.

It is certainly a matter of no sur-

prise, that among the men who are educated for the ministry, there are very few of real eloquence. If the students of the fine arts of drawing and music were selected with the same indifference as to their natural qualifications, as our students in divinity are selected, at the age of sixteen, and they were afterwards to pursue those lines as a business, whatever abilities they might discover, good or bad, we should certainly have very few of them excelling in these arts. How few of the many lawyers that are called to the bar obtain a sufficient eminence to secure briefs enough to pay the expences of the circuit? Many are obliged to retire altogether from public life; and many others who wear the gown feel themselves under an obligation to their more fortunate brethren, when they nominate them as arbitrators, or refer a cause to them upon which they are not willing to enter. And let any one attend but half a session in the Houses of Parliament, he will see how very few of the gentlemen there, who have all possible advantages of education, can deliver a tolerable speech with a tolerable degree of propriety. And why should it be otherwise with Dissenting ministers? Considering the necessity a Dissenting minister lies under, of having his double weekly service prepared against the Sunday, whether any new idea may or may not strike up, or his mind be in a state to prepare it or not, and the little pains that are taken to instruct him in giving effect to what he is to deliver; it is rather surprising that there are about us so many ministers who maintain a high degree of respectability in their public services: and our congregations are unreasonable in expecting more from them. It is however extremely desirable that the qualifications of ministers should be increased. Nor can it be said that our colleges give them a proper education, when no attempts are made to render the vehicle interesting and inviting in which they send out into the world the truths they hold sacred. With respect to the great bulk of mankind, manner is even more than matter; and one man will give interest and effect to an empty discourse, while another suffers an able and superior treatise to die away on his

lips without making even a solitary impression.

The Unitarian orator is in a case somewhat unfortunate. He cannot, if he would, employ the powerful scenery and machinery which his Calvinistic brother has at command. He has neither the poetic licence of a Milton, nor the gloomy but awful apprehensions of a Young or a Cowper, to give energy to his discourse. The Calvinist, when he seeks to move the passions, can play with firebrands and with vengeance. He has an angry and revengeful King, almighty and terrific, at his command, frowning upon his rebellious subjects, and at his feet he can place a lovely child soothing him to mercy. Who can resist the influence of such a scene? Terror first and then love seize upon the yielding mind. What father can sit unmoved? What mother has not her bowels yearning within her? What child does not desire to be in that child's place, and thus to triumph by a gentle and an amiable mastery? Who has read the Arabian Nights Entertainments, and does not know the charm of secret influences? These also the orthodox divine has at his command. He has a cruel foe, who is always lurking about and still unseen, a hellish fiend armed with power little short of almighty, and with cunning and malice far above human opposition. Against these too he can oppose celestial agency. As on the boards of a playhouse, so in the house of God, they have recourse to strange attachments, to high wrought scenes, to deep plots and to terrific developements. In these we sadly fail. The cultivated and not the natural wickedness of the human heart, is the most terrific scene the Unitarian preacher can unfold—a scene so little inviting to the taste of the multitude, that they turn from it ill understood. Failing in machinery, what can we substitute in its room?

Add to this consideration, that the practice has long prevailed in our societies for our educated men to prepare their addresses to the people upon paper, and deliver them with proper form and ceremony to the congregation. Their attention is necessarily taken up with their compositions, which they are desirous of

delivering accurately and without error; and, while their minds are absorbed in the plan, the style and the general arrangement, (the marshalling) of their piece, they are necessarily inattentive to the tone of voice in which it is delivered; they acquire a monotonous tone, or fall into a whine or sing-song manner of uttering their sentences: and hence it has happened; that some of our best composers and most accurate scholars have been the least animated in their delivery, and the least able to keep their hearers awake. It may truly be said of some of these men, that they cast their pearls before swine; and that, if they consulted the taste of their hearers, together with the state of their minds, they would provide a very different portion to serve up to their homely but hungry appetites.

The evil is, perhaps, yet more increased by another practice, which has of late been finding its way into our societies, of reading in a dull and lifeless manner prayers which have been previously composed with precision and art. Could written prayers be delivered in such a way as that they seemed to come fresh from the heart, no reasonable objection could be urged against them; because all that anxiety is removed by them from the breast of the congregation, and all that embarrassment from the minister, which are surely destructive of devotion. But the evil is in this, that, while the service of the church is proverbially gabbled over from the mere habit of repeating it, our reading ministers go sometimes through their prayers with so much heaviness and stupidity, as to lead the congregation to conceive they have no interest in them; and that they are meant only for the people's use. There are indeed ministers who read their prayers in a manner so serious and impressive, that no one would suspect them to have been pre-composed but from watching their eye; and certainly there may be as much, nay there should be more deep and true devotion in the man who reads a solemn address to the Almighty, which he has digested, and to which he has formed his mind in his study, than there can be in the loose chance-directed effusions which are poured forth on the spur of the moment.

No one can be ignorant of the difference between the tone of voice in which we relate an event that has happened within our knowledge, and that in which we should read the same from a book or a newspaper. In the latter instance our attention is engaged by the words, which we are anxious to read correctly, and we lose all the interest of conversation; the eye, which most of all discovers the passions and affections of the mind, is fixed on the paper, its influence is lost to the listener, and the hands and arms give no help to the story: while the words are delivered with a certain solemnity, and at such regular distances, that they must inevitably be to a certain extent monotonous. But in extemporary delivery we distinguish the passion and emotion of the speaker, by the various quickness with which the words are delivered; and by the tone of voice, which varies as he proceeds. It is almost impossible that a sermon or a prayer when it is read, should be delivered with the same energy, with the same natural pauses, and the same variation of voice, as a free address, and therefore it is less interesting and moves far less the persons who are the hearers. Here lies, I apprehend, the true secret of producing effect: could our reading ministers be so well acquainted with their compositions before they deliver them in public, and so feel the sentiments they contain, as to accompany them with the same variation of voice and the same pauses and motions which they would employ in saying the same off-hand, such are the advantages that the composition of a prayer or sermon possesses, in point of style, of correctness and of variety, that there would soon be an universal approval of the reading of sermons and prayers in our societies. Let but a man read with the life and ease of colloquial address, he would inevitably rivet the attention of his audience, and move their feelings in the highest degree. This is actually done on the stage, and with still success might be done from the pulpit.

I have said that the Christian minister has a part to act. I wish that this truth was more considered than it is, and that ministers would not be either afraid or ashamed to regard themselves in the capacity of

actors, and actors too in the highest and most honourable of characters; and that they would think a little more, not only of the sentiments they have to deliver, but also of the manner in which these sentiments are to proceed from their mouths. I would have them consider, that the great object for which they mount the pulpit is to produce a most important effect, and that there are certain means by which alone that effect can be produced. It is not often that a valuable moral impression is produced by the skill of the rhetorical artist in a formal and dry discourse; while the homely language of the extemporaneous speaker, who is warmed by his subject and speaks from the dictates of his heart, provided only that he observe a moderation and a chastity in his language, is always gratifying to the audience, and will sooner carry conviction to the heart.

It is well known to be a rule in the colleges in Scotland, to encourage the young divines to prepare their sermons in their study, and deliver them *memoriter*, or from such copious notes as will supply them with an abundance of matter to fill up the half or three quarters of an hour. If a man have self-command, and possess a tolerable stock of modest assurance, the latter mode is preferable, and by degrees he will acquire a fulness of utterance, and be a workman that needs not to be ashamed. This plan therefore is recommended to their young men; and I believe it is also recommended in the most respectable of those institutions that are educating ministers for the Independent or moderately Calvinistic societies. But some of the Scotch professors rather prefer the entire composition of the sermon, and committing it to memory; assuring their students, that, however difficult it may at first be found by a person who is not accustomed to the exercise of the memory, it will become by industry and diligence inconceivably easy. This is manifest in the experience of even the common actors on a stage, and in the exercise of school boys, whose memories are found to strengthen in an extraordinary manner by frequent and regular exercise. Dr. Alexander Gerard, of Aberdeen, was a remarkable instance of what may be done by the exercise of the memory. When he first as-

sumed the office of a preacher, his recollection was so inert, that with the greatest difficulty he committed a sermon to memory in a fortnight, and never ventured to preach more than once during that time, unless he could deliver the same sermon in another place. But as he practised the art of learning his sermons, he found his memory strengthen perceptibly, till at length he could repeat the whole of a discourse accurately after reading it only twice. Here is an instance of a man's acquiring by mere dint of industry the mastery of an art for which he did not appear to be fitted by nature, which may serve as an encouragement to a young man of the most obtuse recollection.

There have been amongst the English Dissenters a few instances of eloquent preachers; but none, I believe, in which they have not obtained their celebrity by other means than by the stiff rules of a college. Of Dr. Foster I can say nothing from personal knowledge. I knew something of Dr. Fordyce, both men greatly celebrated in their day. I believe the cause of their popularity might be found in a happy art of delivering their addresses well, and giving them an interest which was strictly their own. The most distinguished character which the present generation of Dissenters has known as a preacher was Mr. Fawcett, who was many years morning preacher to the society at Walthamstow, where he resided, and who delivered a Sunday evening lecture during the winter season at the Old Jewry. His eloquence was of a rare and striking kind. Not only Dissenters of all classes, but Churchmen of the highest rank, and some of the leading dramatic characters of the day, were his hearers. Mrs. Siddons and her brothers were frequent attenders on his evening services. But Mr. Fawcett, of Walthamstow, in the morning, was a very different man from Mr. Fawcett, of the Old Jewry, in the evening: a manifest proof that his great excellence was assumed, and therefore that it was acquired by art. He may have had a natural aptitude of speech and gracefulness of manner: but it is well known that he improved these by great care. When he was a student at Daventry, he was so impressed with the importance of

manner to a public speaker, that he formed the resolution, after the example of Demosthenes, to acquire a correctness at any cost. Upon Bury Hill he expended his powers of youthful elocution; and often have the cowherds and the company that were walking on its delightful sods stopped to listen with surprise indeed, but also with pleasure, to his eloquent addresses to the thorn bushes and the fern that grew thick around him. "Surely that man is out of his head," was no uncommon exclamation, on hearing his vociferation and seeing the wildness of his gestures. But thus he acquired the power of charming the largest and most genteel London audience that ever assembled in a Dissenting place of worship. Nor can one doubt that the oddest ideas would have been also formed of the Athenian orator, had he been seen in his cellar, with his face half shaven, practising before his large glass, by the light of his lamp, and a sharp pointed sword hanging over his shoulders. These were both the pupils of art, and both obtained a merit of the highest kind.

But the late Hugh Worthington, of Salters' Hall, was perhaps the most extraordinary of the pulpit orators that England has known: with no superior stock of knowledge, and far from a happy knack of getting up a sermon, he possessed the art of riveting the attention and pleasing even those who went to criticise. Never shall I forget his upright posture, his piercing eye, his bold and decisive tone, his pointed finger, the interest he gave to what he delivered, and the entire nothingness of what he often said. He retained his popularity to the very last; and if he had held religious opinions which were decided and clear, and had conceived it to be of importance to defend them, he would have been a valuable champion, and his popularity would have acquired a farther celebrity from his decision. There was one part of his plan which may be recommended to young preachers, and without much difficulty might be followed by them. When he was drawing towards the close of his discourse, he usually shut his book, and went on for a few minutes, the book in his hand, either *extempore* or *memoriter*, I cannot

say which, and thus by an energetic conclusion, added weight to what he had already delivered.

Although acquainted personally with Dr. Barnes, I had no knowledge of his pulpit powers, but have been informed that he was far inferior in point of composition to many whom he altogether eclipsed in the town and neighbourhood of Manchester. And I doubt not that your readers may supply the names of many more, who have owed their celebrity and the power they possessed of doing more good than, I fear, they cared about, to natural powers of voice and manner, which were improved by observation on the world and a desire to rise high in the popular esteem.

A well known writer, in his usual odd but striking way, has thus exemplified the importance of manner.

"Are we not here now," continued the corporal, striking the end of the stick perpendicularly upon the floor, so as to give an idea of health and stability,—"and are we not,"—dropping his hat upon the floor—"gone! in a moment." There was nothing in the sentence; it was one of the self-evident truths we have the advantage of hearing every day; and if Trim had not trusted more to his hat than to his head, he had made nothing of it."

Now, Sir, there is generally speaking little besides these self-evident truths that the Christian minister has to deliver; and it is too common for him to make nothing of them, merely owing to this circumstance, that he trusts to very little besides the words themselves, and has no machinery at hand to help the effect.

I have heard of one gentleman who may ascribe, it is said, a part of his oratorical celebrity to a noted county election, and of another who probably would never have been thought an orator, had he not frequented the playhouse and caught some of the manners of the stage. Nor let them be censured for the means they have employed to improve and enrich themselves. Ministers have no reason to dread the charge of having recourse to stage effect. For what is stage effect, but a simultaneous impression on the senses and on the understanding of the audience, in order to produce a virtuous moral feeling? Much

might they learn from the most chaste and most admired of our actors. From them might be selected much that would give an interest to the preacher; and above all, they might learn those easy unaffected manners which often appear to be most distant from the pulpit.

"Follow nature," is the best rule the Christian orator can observe: but do they follow nature who adopt the artificial modes of composition, and delivery, checking the impulses of nature and supplying their place with the formalities of art? There is seldom fear of going wrong in the breast of the extemporaneous speaker; he intends to deliver what the impulse of the moment suggests, and he is not apprehensive that he shall deliver it in an unnatural manner. But the case is generally different with him who abandons the leadings of nature, and relies upon a well-digested and well-arranged composition. It is his fear that he shall mistake in reading it, and not give the words their proper emphasis; and he not unfrequently meets with the misfortune of which the Roman poet sings:

*"Frangere dum metuis, frangis crystal-
lina;
Secura nimium, sollicitæque manus pec-
cant."*

Not any thing can be of more consequence to a young man who is to become a public speaker, than that he should obtain a certain degree of modest assurance, and conceive himself to be placed in a rank somewhat above the people who have raised him into their pulpit. "Always think," said an old preacher to a young man who was to take his place in the pulpit, "that you are addressing men that are beneath you. If you don't point out your own blunders by your irresolution and alarm, they probably will not find them out; and if they do, go on, and give them something else to think about."

I recollect that between twenty and thirty years ago, it was a disputed point whether the institutions for educating our ministers ought to be near the metropolis or at a remote distance from it. It was argued that the vicinity of London was peculiarly unfavourable to study; that perpetual engagements and visits took off the

attention of the students from their books and their lectures; and that they could pursue with greater steadiness their course of study in a place where were few temptations to dissipation and pleasure. Actuated by these considerations, the trustees of Coward's fund removed the students that were at Horton to Daventry, and broke up that academy altogether in the year 1785. Now I humbly conceive they were guided by a mistaken principle. It may be true that more book-learning might be stuffed into them at Daventry or at York, than they would acquire at London or at Paris; but at the same time they lose in those places every chance of gaining a knowledge of the world, they lose the opportunity of mixing in good company and of investigating the different ingredients of which society is made up. And when they quit their secluded college walls, they know no more of the world which they will be called upon to instruct, than Parson Adams or the Recluse of the Convent. There are two ways of educating a Dissenting minister: the one is making him acquainted with all the vagaries of the human brain, which are crowded into the metaphysical and theological lectures of a college, and at the same time indeed with some of its finest and most valuable thoughts; the other is sedulously reading his Bible and studying men as they are, and from the character which he finds them to bear, and that which they ought to maintain, to prepare the addresses he will make to them on the day of pulpit instruction.

The venerable Theophilus Lindsey once said to a man who expressed his apprehension that he was not qualified to undertake the business of public teaching, from having in consequence of a succession of unavoidable embarrassments neglected his book learning,—"If you have not been studying books you have been studying men, and I don't know whether that is not better." Indeed we have had many strong proofs of the acceptableness and the usefulness of men who have enjoyed few advantages of collegiate learning, but have been students of life and manners, and by observation on the wants of society have furnished the requisite

instruction. It is unquestionably a great loss to our young students to be excluded from the benefits of a mixed society and an extensive observation of men and manners.

It must also be important for them, when engaged in preparation for pulpit services, that they should study the manner of those who are already engaged in those services: and I know not a greater evil that can possibly attach itself to the situation of a student in divinity, than to be compelled as to be expected, which is about the same thing, to attend public worship always in the same chapel, and generally to hear the same preacher. This is an evil to which all students must be liable who are educated in the country. Those of York and Wymondham are in this respect unfortunate; and there is more than a chance that, while they are acquiring the erudition of their theological and other tutors, they will not outstrip them in energy and in eloquence. Young men who have a manner to acquire which shall render them acceptable and useful in our congregations in future life, ought to have opportunities of hearing the most eloquent men both in the Church and out of it, and amongst Unitarians, Arians, Arminians and Calvinists. And he who will not take a lesson from an ecclesiastical or orthodox orator, because he is to be a Dissenting Unitarian, has but a little soul and probably will never make a great man. *Fas est, &c.* And if the tutors of Homerton Old Academy are alarmed when they hear of their young men visiting the Gravel Pit Meeting, we shall not return them the compliment of a similar alarm when our's are seen entering their houses of worship. We want some of their manners to mix up with our principles, and then probably we shall make a more savory and better relished dish: for, unpopular as our notions are, it is against our mode of presenting them that the greater fault is found. On this ground the institution at Durham House is the best calculated to bring forward young men of popular talents; and I will express my hope that it will not be expected of the students there to confine themselves to the preaching at the Gravel Pit Meeting, however great the advantages they there enjoy. The Claytons, the Collyers, and even

the Hawkers, may suggest to them some useful hints, and especially, if there be a natural turn for oratory, a patient hearing of them, and a free investigation of their respective manners. I even regret that Mr. Aspland's students cannot now go to Salters' Hall, and there learn to give to airy nothings a name; for it may sometimes happen to them also, in searching for variety, to address their congregations in sermons of little worth—a misfortune that occasionally befalls most men.

It may perhaps suggest itself to some one, that imitation will never make an orator, that it is generally accompanied by a betraying of the design, and is disgusting. It may sometimes be so. Perhaps, not only a poet, but also an orator, is born and is not made. But, as a poet will render himself far more illustrious if he studies the works of other poets most esteemed, and may enrich his verse by flashes of their genius, so the natural orator may correct imperfect habits and gain better ones, by studying those who are held in esteem; while they who have no native powers, or in whom those powers are feeble, may increase and strengthen and ameliorate them to an inconceivable degree, by the allowable and laudable practice of sitting under them to learn.

I perceive, Sir, that my remarks have been written down with a strange want of method; but my engagements are of that kind that I either must send them to you as they are, or keep them in my desk. I hope the importance of the subject will justify me in troubling you with them in their present form.

Dublin, 12th January, 1817.

SIR,

IN the Repository for last May there is an article from Mr. Seaverns relative to Anti-baptists. I refer that gentleman to "The Life of a Dissenting Minister," printed by G. Jones, p. 155, on the Perpetuity of Baptism. If his conclusions are just, baptism was intended to be confined to the apostolic age. For the convenience of your readers who have not the book at hand, let them compare Matt. xxviii. 19, 20; Mark xvi. 15—18; Luke xxiv. 47—49, and Acts i. 4—8. The signs that fol-

lowed believers in that age were visible. I do not know of any at present. I do not wish for angry discussion, but for information. Many persons refer me to other parts of Scripture, and make inferences from them. My object is to get an explanation of the passages referred to above. In the prosecution of my inquiries on this subject, I find many Unitarians have long held opinions similar to the author of the work I have referred to.

J. H.

SIR,

Feb. 2, 1817.

I REQUEST your insertion of the following passage, which is peculiarly seasonable, and contains a just tribute to the memory of a man whose name and reputation are dear to most of your readers. The passage is quoted from *The Spirit of Despotism*, a 12mo. volume, "printed in the year 1795," but not published.

The author has entitled his Ninth Section, "On taking advantage of popular commotions, accidental excesses, and foreign revolutions, to extend prerogative and power, and encroach on the liberties of the people."—P. 62.

At p. 69, he asks, "Who but a fool would wish to restore the perpetual despotism of the old French government, through a dread of the transient outrages of a Parisian tumult?" remarking that "both are despotic while they last; but the former is a torrent that flows for ever, the latter only a land flood, that covers the meadows to-day, and disappears on the morrow."

He then concludes the Section in the following terms:—

Dr. Price has a passage so applicable to the present subject, that I shall beg leave to close this section by the citation of it: and on the mention of his name, I must pay a trifling tribute to his memory, which is the more necessary, as his character has been scandalously aspersed by those who are ever busy in discrediting the people and their friends, and who, pretending a love of goodness and religion, blacken with their foulest calumny those who are singularly remarkable for both, for no other reason than that, under the influence of goodness and religion, such persons espouse the cause of freedom, and prefer the happiness of millions to the pomp and pride of a few aspirants at unlimited dominion.

Meek, gentle and humane; acute, eloquent and profoundly skilled in politics and philosophy; take him for all and all, the qualities of his heart, with the abilities of his head, and you may rank PRICE among the first ornaments of his age. Let his enemies produce from all their boasted despots and despotical satraps, any one of his contemporaries whom, in the manner of Plutarch, they may place by his side as a parallel. Posterity will do him the justice of which the proud have robbed him, and snatch him from the calumniators, to place him in the temple of personal honour, high among the benefactors to the human race.

"But I return from the digression, into which I was led by an honest indignation against the vilest of calumnies against the best of men. These are the words of Dr. Price:

"Licentiousness and despotism are more nearly allied than is commonly imagined. They are both alike inconsistent with liberty and the true end of government; nor is there any other difference between them, than that one is the licentiousness of GREAT MEN, and the other the licentiousness of little men; or that by one, the persons and property of a people are subject to outrage and invasion from a king, or a lawless body of grantees; and that by the other, they are subject to the like outrage from a lawless mob. In avoiding one of these evils, mankind have often run into the other. But all well-constituted governments guard equally against both. Indeed, of the two, the last is, on several accounts, the least to be dreaded, and has done the least mischief. It may truly be said, if licentiousness has destroyed its thousands, despotism has destroyed its millions. The former having little power, AND NO SYSTEM TO SUPPORT IT, necessarily finds its own remedy; and a people soon get out of the tumult and anarchy attending it. But a despotism, wearing a form of government, and being armed with its force, is an evil not to be conquered without dreadful struggles. It goes on from age to age, debasing the human faculties, levelling all distinctions, and preying on the rights and blessings of society. It deserves to be added, that in a state disturbed by licentiousness, there is an ANIMATION which is favourable to the human mind, and puts it upon exerting its powers; but in a state habituated to

despotism; all is still and torpid. A dark and savage tyranny stifles every effort of genius, and the mind loses all its spirit and dignity.

"Heaven grant, that in guarding against a fever, we fall not into a palsy."

I shall thank any of your readers who can mention from what work, by Dr. Price, the quotation is taken, and especially to whom *The Spirit of Despotism* may have been attributed. He is now, probably, added to the great majority. That he was no every day writer, his general information, conveyed in correct and polished language, sufficiently declare. Nor was he a party writer, for he complains of "public men" as "appearing to forget, in their zeal for a few distinguished houses, the great mass of the people, the party of human nature." He was, of course, a determined enemy to war, ably exposing the courtly apologies for human destruction.

SENILIUS.

Corrections of a few Errors in the Memoir of the late Rev. B. Carpenter, inserted in our last Number.

P. 5.

WHEN Mr. C. came to Daventry, A. D. 1768, Dr. Ashworth was theological tutor. Mr. Hill taught mathematics, logic and metaphysics: and the Rev. Thomas Halliday was the classical tutor, for which department he was eminently qualified.

P. 6.

Mr. Francis Blackmore, said to have died in 1761, was living in 1781.

Mr. John Stokes was colleague to Mr. F. Blackmore. He was suspected of a leaning to heresy, and resigned his office before the appointment of Dr. Allen. Mr. Stokes lived to the age of 84, highly respectable in his character and connexions. He died about the year 1781 or 1782. Dr. Stokes, an eminent physician at Chesterfield, is his grandson: he is also a distinguished botanist: to whom the late Dr. Withering was under greater obligation in drawing up his celebrated treatise on Botany, than he chose to acknowledge.

SIR,

Feb. 4, 1817.

WILL you permit me to add a word on the subject of miracles to Mr. Cogan. As an abstract proposition, the incompetency of testimony to prove miracle, to which Mr. Hume's

argument goes, must be given up by all, and I think is given up by all men of serious thought. Dr. Cogan, in his *Ethical Questions* just published, has well exposed this extraordinary argument. It is the opinion, however, of Dr. Hartley, who I take to be the greatest writer, on such subjects, that the last or any age has produced, for one of his hints is equal to a volume of other writers, that miracles were frequent in early ages; and if one well attested in heathen countries, were brought forward, he would not reject the miracle, but admit the testimony. This appears to me to be perfectly fair and consistent; for God is the Father of all nations, and may have interposed in all. It is therefore probable, admitting the Christian miracles, that some of the miracles of the second and third centuries were real. Nor is it any valid objection to their reality that some were false, any more than that much testimony is false, in ordinary facts; which, however, does not invalidate the true testimony to other facts, or was ever thought to do so. There seems, too, to have been great need of miracles in the second century; and I agree with Mr. Cogan, that upon any other supposition than miraculous interference, it is impossible to account for the spread of a self-denying religion. That this religion did produce the greatest self-denial, in the early ages, and that it has done so in all ages, amongst many, cannot be denied. Its miraculous establishment, then, must be admitted.

It is on any supposition difficult to account for such a miserable life as this is; but an after state seems to be the only possible solution of this difficulty, upon the admission of a benevolent Creator. But the very supposition of a future state seems to imply its communication to man in a way either miraculous or otherwise; and the most probable is a miraculous communication, since it is not so clearly discoverable in any other way. Nor do I think that the existence of a God could have been known so definitely in any other way.

Having named Dr. Hartley, let me observe that Dr. Priestley, after he had reached his eminence of fame, was so modest as to pretend to be no more than a commentator on Hartley. There was great merit in this, as indeed in the whole life and conduct of Dr.

Priestley. Allied to Dr. Priestley, in his modest merit, is Mr. Belsham, who ranks himself in no higher order, and who has, perhaps, no superior at this day, in moral philosophy, theology and practical good conduct.

A. B. C.

SIR, January 12th, 1817.

CHRISTIANITY is a very excellent, because a very plain thing; it is neither encompassed with difficulties, nor involved in obscurity; its doctrines are the just deductions of a cultivated and enlarged mind, from the contemplation of the character and perfections of the Deity, as displayed in his visible works, and of the wants and condition of man in civil society. Its founder, who was the best and wisest of men, whose life was one continued scene of benevolence and love, and all whose efforts were directed to the calling of sinners to repentance, and the reforming of mankind, by teaching them to do unto others as they would that others should do unto them, was, in one word, a teacher of goodness; and the test by which his disciples were to be known was, the observance of his commands and the imbibing of his spirit: goodness, therefore, is the criterion of belief—badness of unbelief.

With this view of Christianity, I have been accustomed to consider every thing that was not purely practical, as, at least, unimportant; and, on the subject of miracles, I had fallen into the opinion of Mr. Hume, that a miracle being a violation of the order of nature, or, as Mr. Cogswell* would define it, a deviation from the order of nature, can never be rendered credible by testimony.

The historians or biographers of the life of Jesus cannot, as such, be entitled to a greater degree of credit, than the historians or biographers of any other man. When they state his views of the Divine Being, and the moral principles he taught, we give full credit to their statement, because of the fitness of these to the condition of man as a social and relative being, and of the justness of these with the order of nature. But when they record miraculous events, must we not be sceptical if the same rules of estimating the credit of all other historians, be justly applicable in estimating theirs? We give credit to

no profane historian, how credible soever he may be as such, who records what appears to be miraculous. We believe no historic fact which does not approve itself to our experience, or agree with the established order of things. "The actions and fate of the late Emperor of France" come within this rule; but were the historian of that great man to declare that he once raised a dead man to life again, I do not apprehend that his testimony would produce a conviction upon the mind of any individual. Why, then, should that degree of credit be extended to the historians of Jesus, who, we know, were frequently reproved by him for their gross and inadequate apprehensions of the nature of the Messiah, and the quality of his dispensation, which is withheld from all other historians? If the evidence of testimony be conclusive here, can the testimony of Carte, Bradwardine, Malmesbury, Fortescue, and many others, be rejected, when they seriously declare that they witnessed the instantaneous cure of the king's evil by the touch? But, although they are acknowledged authorities upon other matters, who gives credit to their testimony upon this?

Before, however, it can be admitted that the Divine Being interfered miraculously to communicate Christianity to mankind, it must be shown that such an interference was necessary, and that the genius of that religion required it. This appears to me a cardinal point; and I am somewhat surprised that my worthy friend Mr. Wright, who has written an Essay upon this subject, in which, as is usual with him, he has said a great many good things, has entirely overlooked it.

Now in viewing the operations of the Deity, both in the natural and moral world, we perceive one unobscuring, unbroken chain of cause and effect. True it is that nothing takes place without his direction and control; but he operates through secondary causes, and never labours in vain. Each effect hath its adequate cause, in the established constitution of things, and all the dispensations of his providence are accomplished by the ordinary operations of his power. His finger is in every thing, and every individual is his ministering agent. Thus it may be said he raised up Sir Isaac Newton, and enabled him to make those discoveries which are of the first impor-

* M. Repos. Vol. XI. p. 644.

tance for forming a just estimate of the grandeur of the universe, and the power and wisdom of the great Architect. For this purpose, Sir Isaac was the especial messenger of God; his mind was especially illumined for the work; but I do not apprehend any direct communication took place between him and the Deity. Certainly his discoveries were made in the ordinary way, but they were not less the work of God on that account. It was precisely in this manner, I conceive, that Jesus was raised up and sent into the world to reform it. For while the established laws of God are equal to every thing, and all his providential plans are carried into effect without departing from them; why should we suppose a direct infringement or extension of those laws in the case of Jesus? If the Divine Being could accomplish by ordinary means the object he had in view, in introducing Christianity into the world, is it a just conclusion, from what we know of the uniformity of his operations, that he would multiply means by resorting to an extraordinary exertion of his power? Would not this view of his character and perfections be the most grovelling and degrading? The mission of Newton was different in its nature from that of Jesus, but both were alike the messengers of God.

The view which Jesus hath given us of the character of the Divine Being, is the just deduction which a rich and correct mind would form from the contemplation of his works and providence. The principles he hath left us for the regulation of our conduct, perhaps never before expressly taught, but probably always practised in a greater or less degree by the virtuous and good in every age and clime, are the most natural conclusions which a survey of the institutions of society would suggest to an enlightened mind, understanding the natural rights of man, and the basis upon which such institutions should be formed. Jesus taught no doctrines but natural ones. *Nature is the text, and revelation the context*, is the favourite expression of a venerable friend of mine, who firmly believes the miraculous nature of Christianity. But what is there in the doctrines which Jesus taught that required an extension of the laws of nature, or a deviation from them? Were the doctrines true? Truth is its own best evidence; it needs

no proof; and a thousand miracles would not convince me of error.

That Jesus cast out devils, by healing the maladies of madmen, may be admitted; but whatever might be the means by which these cures were effected, the power does not appear to have been peculiar to him, but enjoyed in common with others who were not his disciples. Luke ix. 49, 50. Can then a power which is common, be evidence of a direct communication from God to an individual?

A. B. C.

Hotwells, January 22d, 1817.

SIR,

ALTHOUGH the pages of your valuable Miscellany might be occupied with matter of far greater importance than the following, yet I would beg leave to offer a few words in reply to your Correspondent, A. (Vol. XI. p. 704), who has evidently mistaken the intention of my former letter, signed J. B. wherein, after stating my opinion upon a subject there referred to, as well as in reference to circumstances that had passed under my own observation, I simply recommended the subject with two propositions to the consideration of Unitarian ministers generally, leaving it to them to pursue that line of duty which their superior judgment might suggest. What I there proposed was (however unlikely to answer the purpose) with a sincere desire to promote that, which a firm belief in the genuine doctrines of the gospel necessarily leads to, namely, the spread of pure religion and the practice of virtue; and gratifying as the entertainment might be, or however desirable the treat of controversial preaching, if it does not tend to that end, it is like sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal.

The epithet "dry" applied to Scripture morality, is what I by no means approve of. The reason why it appeared in my letter was, because it had been so applied by those of whom I was then speaking. As to the cause of its being so called, whether it be on account of its being met by some morbid quality of the mind or not, never having studied the doctrine of the mind, I shall not attempt to determine.

That I am not averse to practical discourses (and those which are doctrinal are such in effect), might be seen by the disparity in numbers of those

recommended to be doctrinal: and far be it from me to wish the ministers of the gospel to abate in their exertions in enforcing the precepts of the gospel, being fully persuaded that it is the union of good works with faith which constitutes the religion of Christ. And if the neglect of good works be the natural result of doctrinal or controversial preaching, then by all means let us bid it farewell: but if that be not the result (and I firmly believe it to be quite the contrary), I must still recommend it, as it will not only be an entertaining treat to those who approve the doctrines preached, but a means of promoting the best interests of mankind.

I remember having read of a book entitled "Innocency with her Open Face;" and though I am far from wishing to assume that character, yet feeling a consciousness of it with respect to this part of my conduct, as well as in that to which it refers, it is with pleasure I subscribe myself,

JOHN BARTON.

Edinburgh, February 7th, 1817.

SIR,

I OBSERVE in your last Number (Vol. XI. p. 704), a Letter upon Doctrinal Preaching, which I regret to see written not in that spirit of moderation which the subject requires. The writer indulges some ill-placed wit upon the epithet "*dry*," as applied to morality, and inquires what dry moral discourses can mean? The answer I think is obvious, and deserves attention. When a minister supposes that he sufficiently discharges his duty by reading to his congregation an essay upon some branch of morality, composed in the style of the ancient heathen moralists, and enforced by arguments of little more weight than such as they employed, presented to them entirely by the light of nature, then such essays or sermons must appear "*dry*" to an assembly of Christians possessing the superior advantages of a divine revelation. That such sermons are often brought forward in our Christian assemblies, falls within my own knowledge, whether by reputed Orthodox or Dissenters makes no difference in my present argument; and the reasons why they are made use of are also very obvious. It occurs not unfrequently that reputed Orthodoxy is in many respects not very agreeable either to the

pastor or his people, even in the Establishments: so that it generally appears to the minister a kind of duty to avoid what *would give offence*. Amongst Unitarians or Presbyterian Dissenters the same considerations will operate much more powerfully, if the stronger dislike to established opinions which they entertain, is accompanied at the same time with a *dread of singularity* not inferior to that of their friends in the Establishments—a coincidence, I believe, by no means uncommon.

If we examine farther what the *proper* preaching of Christian morality by either of these classes of Christians *should be*, it will inevitably be found to resolve itself into the opposite of the above, I mean into what is generally termed *doctrinal preaching*, choose what subject we may. For instance, how can any minister, who in the slightest degree disbelieves the doctrine of the Trinity, satisfy himself that he does all he can do, and *ought to do*, in recommending devotional exercise and exciting devotional habits, if he refrain from stating what the Scriptures appear to him to declare concerning the *proper Object* of religious worship? And if he does this, how can he decline stating what the Scriptures appear to him to teach regarding the person and character of our Saviour? If another person shall see cause to think that the Scriptures do not countenance the unworthy notions supported by reputed Orthodoxy, concerning the justice, goodness and mercy of God, how can he treat of these attributes of the Deity without controverting generally-received opinions? If he shall also believe that certain Orthodox opinions have a tendency destructive of all moral obligation and practical Christianity, how can he enforce the observance of any of the moral virtues upon which such opinions have any effect, without declaring what appears to him to be the Scripture view both of the opinion he disbelieves, and of the moral precept he would inculcate? In fine, how can *such* ministers conscientiously preach *pure* Christianity, if they avoid doctrinal preaching?

It is to be regretted there ever should have existed an idea that the proper discussion of Christian doctrines was inconsistent with the cultivation of Christian morality. The necessity for doctrinal preaching arises from the di-

versity of opinion which prevails among all sects of Christians regarding the proper understanding of the Scriptures. This diversity of opinion, no doubt, is permitted by Providence for good purposes: among others it may be intended to preserve these holy records pure and uncorrupted. The experience of eighteen centuries clearly shews how apt men are to ingraft upon them ideas and interpretations foreign to the proper signification of the original language: but we may also perceive that in consequence of the strict criticism to which they have been constantly subjected, they are preserved to us in a state of purity which no other records of the same standing can boast of. Even if ~~an~~ intention could be traced by our limited faculties in this dispensation of Providence, the existence of diversity of opinion being apparent, it must be allowed to be the imperative duty of all Christian teachers to *promote uniformity*; and if they act from no motive but a love of truth, it is impossible they can do any harm. Indeed it is only by bringing all men to agree on the proper interpretation of Scripture, that the necessity for doctrinal preaching can be superseded. Until that happy period arrive, our Saviour as well as all his apostles clearly point out to us both by precept and example, the duty of controverting generally-received opinions, when they are in opposition to the promotion of true Christianity. "Ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old,"—"But I say unto you,"—this surely is controversial preaching, and the authority is undoubted.

It is true that doctrinal preaching, like every talent entrusted to us, may be abused; but the proper use of it must be left entirely to the discretion and judgment of the individual who is called upon to exercise it. It will not answer the purposes either of religion or morality (if there be a distinction), to suppress it altogether. It may be done in a manner the most conciliating, the most interesting, the most convincing. By means of it, the most elevated devotion to God may be excited; the most enlightened benevolence to man may be promoted, to the complete destruction of every irritable and revengeful feeling, and a love of truth may be cultivated, which will scrupulously reject all secondary objects of gratification or pursuit, while the

mind is engaged in her cause *alone*: all which beneficial consequences operating upon the minds of men may, and ultimately must produce, effects of the highest importance to the present as well as the future happiness of the human race.

Let Christians, therefore, study to cultivate the proper *manner* of discussing among themselves opinions upon which they "agree to differ;" but let them not hurt the cause of truth by refusing their countenance to her vindication in *every instance* where they shall think she has suffered injury.

N. B.

SIR, Temple, Jan. 30, 1817.

THE following curious *morceau* of pulpit eloquence may probably furnish amusement to some of your readers. It is extracted from a small publication bearing the title of "Sermon preached in St. Giles Kirk, at Edinburgh, commonly called Pockmanty Preaching, by Mr. James Row, sometime Minister of Strowan." The tract is published without date, but its contents appear to determine the time of its delivery from the pulpit to be the year 1643, when the solemn league and covenant was framed at Edinburgh by the persuasion (according to Hume) of Sir Henry Vane, one of the commissioners from the English Parliament, then at open war with the misguided Charles. The text is from Jer. xxx. 17, "For I will restore health unto thee, and I will heal thee of thy wounds, saith the Lord; because they called thee an outcast, saying, this is Zion, whom no man seeketh after." The preacher thus opens and anatomises his subject. "I need not trouble you much by telling you what is meant by Zion here, ye all ken it is the poor Kirk of Scotland; for the Kirk of Scotland is wounded in her head, in her hands, in her heart and in her feet. First, in her head, in the government; 2dly, in her hands, in the discipline; 3dly, in her heart, as in the doctrine; 4thly, in her feet, as in the worship." The first of these general divisions was naturally susceptible of subdivision, and the preacher displayed much quaint ingenuity in pointing out in what respects the Kirk had been affected in each of her five senses, particularly in that of hearing, "by

the bringing in of the organs," since which she had become "as deaf as a door nail." After discussing the 2d and 3d general heads, Mr. Row proceeded as follows:

"Now I come to tell you how she is wounded in her feet, and that I call the worship of the Kirk of Scotland. The Kirk of Scotland was a bonny trotting nag, but then she trotted sae hard, that never a man durst ride her but the bishops, wha after they gat on her back crosslanged her, hap-shacked her, and when she became a bonny pacing beast, they took great pleasure to ride on her; but their cadging her up and down from Edinburgh to London, and it may be from Rome too, gave her sik a het coat that we have these twelve months bygone been stirring her up and down to keep her fra foundying: yea, they made not only a horse but an ass of the Kirk of Scotland. How sae quo' ye? What mean ye by this? I'll tell you how they made Balaam's ass of her; ye ken well enough Balaam was going an unlucky gait, and first the angel met him in a broad way, and then the ass bogled and started, but Balaam got by the angel and till her and battarmed her sufficiently; that was when episcopacy came in, and then they gave the Kirk of Scotland her paiks. Afterwards Balaam met the angel in a strait gait, and then she startled mair than before; but Balaam till her again, and whaked her soundly; that was when the five articles of Perth were brought in. The third time the angel met Balaam in sae straight a gait that the ass could not win by, and then it pleased the Lord to open blind Balaam's eyes, and that is this happy day's work; now God has opened all our eyes. We were like blind Balaam ganging an unlucky gait, and riding post to Rome; and what was gotten behind him upon the ass wot ye? I'll tell you, that was a pockmanty, and what was in it trow ye but the book of Canons, and of Common Prayer and the High Commission? but as soon as the ass sees the angel she falls a flinging and a plunging and o'er gangs the pockmanty, and it hings by the string on the one side, and aff gaes blind Balaam, and he hings by the trough on the other side; and fain would the Carl have been on the

saddle again and been content to leave his pockmanty; but, beloved, let not the false swinger get on again, for if he get on again he will be sure to get on his pockmanty also."

This pious *jeu d'esprit* is closed by several quaint exhortations "to subserve the covenant," which doubtless had their intended effect with numbers of the several classes to whom they were addressed. In comparison with this, how tame and impotent in effect would have been an oration in the liberal and philosophic tone and temper of the Freethinker in King Henry the Eighth's parliament (see *Mon. Repos.* Vol. XI. p. 697), whose plan of reformation did not, like that of John Knox, put down "idle, ravenous and cruel" bishops, merely to substitute priestly dominion in another shape; but who seems to have been "born out of due time," and to have had few auditors who could enter into his extended views of religious liberty and the right of individual judgment.

R—D.

SIR,

Jan. 6, 1817.

THERE can be no inquiry so interesting on the subject of religion as the state of the human dead. Indeed, on this point, the value of human existence turns, whether it is to be considered as a blessing or a curse, whether the Deity be benignant or malevolent. For if the Scriptures teach the doctrine of eternal torments, human existence is represented by them as an unutterable curse. The Unitarians distinguish themselves in this inquiry, and are likely I think to bring the Scriptural doctrine to light, so that hereafter a greater harmony of opinion may be expected. That a Being the author of all men's appetites, passions, and circumstances, should mark the deviations to which these have led, with eternal misery, is incredible upon any other supposition than pure malevolence. But where are we to look for the Scriptural doctrine on this subject? In the Gospels of Matthew and Mark? When Mr. Evan-son's arguments are answered with respect to these Gospels, then their authority may be acknowledged, and their language subjected to fair criticism. It is certain that these Gospels,

and also that of John, were written long after Jesus delivered his discourses which they profess to record, by expressions found in these Gospels themselves, as where it is said that certain false reports remain to *this day*. But of the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles of Paul, there is independent evidence, clearly pointed out by Paley, and these tend to establish the Gospel of Luke. Now, whatever be the doctrine of Paul, concerning the state of the human dead, it is probable that such doctrine is the genuine doctrine of the Gospel; for his Epistles were clearly written before any of his Gospels, and it is certain that they are his genuine writings. Now the general doctrine of Paul seems to be that men shall be rewarded and punished according to their works; and if he had stopped here, we might have been left with an indefinite impression, that such a portion of good and evil would fall upon mankind, as is consistent with strict justice in the Being, who gave to all their appetites, passions and circumstances, which they have improved or abused. But Paul appears to teach further, that the righteous shall be rewarded with eternal enjoyment, and the wicked be visited with vindictive punishments, which shall end in their destruction. His language is always *death, destruction, &c.* And he used the words *wrath* and *vengeance*, applying them to God in his punishment of the wicked. Mr. Locke appears to state this to be the clear doctrine of the Gospel, and it does appear to me to be the doctrine of St. Paul. I would ask any man if he read the Epistles of Paul, without ever having heard of any doctrine concerning the human dead, would not this be the conclusion he would draw? Nor let any one startle at vindictive punishments. Are not all punishments such? Is not the notion involved in the very idea of punishment? Punishment in common language has no other meaning, never has had another meaning. Philosophers may call it suffering; but they cannot retain the word punishment, without accepting a vindictive meaning. All mankind have ever understood it in this sense. The doctrine of Paul, therefore, seems to be, that all men shall be raised from the dead, the good to eternal enjoyment, the bad

to painful destruction, and that the pain of such destruction shall be according to the degrees of their wickedness.

If any of your readers favour these observations with notice, I shall be grateful, as too much attention cannot be called to this subject. Mr. Hume has said, and said justly, that taking all the popular doctrines of all religions for granted, it is the **INTEREST** of all men that none of them should be true. But if I have put a proper construction upon the doctrine of Paul, it is not the interest of all men that they should be false, because the good shall receive more than they deserve, and the bad shall receive no greater punishment than they merit. Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?

A CONSTANT READER.

Anecdote of Dr. Franklin.

Tenterden, Feb. 5, 1817.

DURING the residence of this distinguished philosopher and statesman in this country, and very soon after his examination at the council board, where he experienced a great deal of abuse, particularly from the attorney general, he visited an intimate friend and acquaintance who then resided at this place. During his abode here, his friend took occasion one day to ask him, if the abusive and sarcastic language of the attorney general hurt his feelings? to which the Doctor jocularly replied; "not at all, my friend; not at all:—it fell off like the drops of rain from my oil skin coat." A reply that shewed in a striking manner the amiableness of his disposition, a mind influenced only by integrity and conscious innocence. The writer had the above anecdote from the Doctor's respectable, and at that time truly venerable friend.

SIR, Pontalc, Jan. 28, 1817.

I RECOLLECT that you once invited Correspondents to send you any passages, in old writers, which contained early notices of Unitarianism in England, and might increase to a valuable collection of materials for a connected History. Such a work will probably be undertaken whenever those Unitarians who can afford to form libraries shall manifest some zeal

to encourage what may be called their own literature. At present, as I fear your editorial experience can attest, they would, I believe, sooner expend pounds as patrons of some splendid and highly fashionable work, than shillings to assist one however devoted to an object which they profess to consider as of first importance, if brought out with no attractions but such as utility required, or were suited to the simplicity of truth. To contribute, however, the little in my power to such a collection as I have mentioned, for the use of better times, I send you what I found in an old pamphlet, with the following title, which I copy *verbatim et literatim*.

"A Briefe Description or Character of the Religion and Manners of the Phanatiques in generall. Scil. Anabaptists, Independents, Brownists, Enthusiasts, Levellers, Quakers, Seekers, Fifth-Monarchy-Men, and Dippers. Shewing and refuting their Absurdities by due Application, reflecting much also on Sir John Præcisian, and other Novelists. *Non seria semper*. London, printed, and are to be sold by most stationers. 1660." Pp. 52.

At page 12, the author, complaining of the dislike expressed by the *Phanatiques* to the forms practised by the clergy of the Church of England, adds, "If they use the ancient doxology giving glory to the Trinity, as the Greek and Latin Churches ever did, their Socinian and Arian ears are so offended, as if Christians should ask them leave to own the blessed Trinity."

At page 15, this anonymous author pays his awkward compliments to a Unitarian work, in Latin, which is soon to be brought before the English reader. He describes the *affections* of the *Phanatiques* as "apt to run out into much disorder and confusion in rustical impertinencies, and pitiful rhapsodies of confused stuff, spitting out their poison like the *Racovian* Catechism, and such like primers of the devil, against all Christian duties, extern decency, and distinction of order or office; against all holiness, morality and modesty in men's lives."

Having censured such as he deemed the more extravagant *Phanatiques*, my author adds, p. 42, "Some, though fiery, yet are orderly and patient in government; though they excel in gifts, yet are not swelled with tumours.

But these are as unsavoury salt, that is good for nothing, unless it be new-boiled in an Independent or *Scabbling* cauldron, over a Socinian furnace, with a popular fire."

Such are the manner and the connexion in which the opponents of the Trinity were introduced exactly at the era of the *Restoration*. I am tempted to go a little beyond my immediate purpose to give this author's character of all the Theologians whom he found without the sacred pale of the Episcopal Church.

"They are mothy and mongrel predicants, centaurs in the church, half clerics and half laicks; the by-blows of the clergy, gifted hypocrites, severe momusses, a whining people, *trivulatory* Christians, new dwindling divines, the prophetic pigmies of this age, undained, unblest, untried, unclean spirits, whose calling, commission and tenure, depends on popularity, flattery and beggary; their excellency consists in *tautologizing*, in praying *extempore*, that is, out of all time, without order or method; being eminent in nothing above the *plebeian* pitch and vulgar proportion. They spin out their sermons at their wheels, or weave them up at their looms, or dig them out with their spades, weigh or measure them in their shops, or stitch and cobble them with their thimble and lasts; or thrash them out with their flayls, and afterward preach them in some barn to their dusty disciples, who, the better to set off the oddness of their silly teachers, fancy themselves into some imaginary persecution, as if they were driven into dens, and caves, and woods. Their holy and learned academies, where they first conned this chymical new divinity, and are since come to so great proficiency, were *Munster's Revelations*, *Geneva's Calvinism*, *Amsterdam's Toleration*, and *New England's Preciseness*." Pp. 49, 50.

To this invective is added an abominable and unauthenticated charge against the moral character of Calvin, followed by a charge apparently as groundless, of "stealing the greatest part" of his Institutes "out of the Works of Melancthon and *Hieronimus Sarcerius*." My author adds, "or, as *Westphallius* the Lutheran saith, he stole all from *Ecolampadius*." I have not met with these charges against the morality of Calvin's life, or his inte-

gity as an author, in his Biography by Roman Catholics, who would scarcely have omitted them. I suspect that the whole was a tale invented, or too easily credited by this most virulent partizan of an Episcopal Church.

REGRESSUS.

SIR,

Feb. 1, 1817.

THE following is a faithful transcript from a printed sheet lately put into my hands. As a curious specimen of modern *Popery* and of Papistical Latinity, you may perhaps deem it not unworthy a place in your interesting Miscellany. A literal translation would no doubt be generally acceptable, if some of your readers would favour us with one.

W—D.

Propositiones Theologicae de Religione et Ecclesia Christi.

I. Deum existere, illumque esse unum, vel solo rationis lumine hominibus innotescit.

II. Eadem ratio naturalis cultum Deo tum internum tum externum hibendum esse docet.

III. Ratio naturalis sibi relicta plures veritates ad completam religionem pertinentes minime perspicere, neque voluntatem ad actiones veritatibus cognitis consentaneas satis efficaciter impellere potest.

IV. Hinc nunquam genus humanum sine religione aliqua divinitus revelata extitit.

V. Considerata religionis Christianae natura, modoque quo primum instituta atque propagata fuit, dubitari non potest, quin auctor illius sit ipse Deus.

VI. Salus æterna non potest in quolibet religione Christiana fundamentales tantum admittente articulos obtineri, cum non fundamentales minime rejici possint utpote eadem revelantis Dei auctoritate innixi.

VII. Libri omnes religiosi tam proto quam deuterocanonici, catalogo concilii Tridentini comprehensi, sunt a Deo inspirati.

VIII. Libros sacros a Deo inspiratos esse quo ad res et sententias, plerique omnes theologi existimant.

IX. Vulgata Latina editio est authentica eo sensu, quod cum libris gentilibus congruat in omnibus quæ ad fidem et mores pertinent.

X. Libri sacri passim perobscuri difficilisque intellectu sunt.

XI. Libri sacri una cum traditionibus divinis sunt completa credendorum regula.

XII. Librorum sacrorum lectio in lingua vernacula neque promiscue omnibus necessaria est, neque utilis.

XIII. Christi ecclesia semper fuit, semperque erit conspicua.

XIV. Notæ veræ ecclesiæ sunt, quod sit una, sancta, catholica et apostolica.

XV. Notæ hæ omnes soli Romanæ ecclesiæ competunt.

XVI. Non solum probi et prædestinati, sed etiam improbi et damnandi sunt in Christi ecclesia.

XVII. Hæretici et schismatici sunt extra Christi ecclesiam.

XVIII. Ecclesia nunquam errare potest in rebus quas Deus credendas aut faciendas revelavit.

XIX. Neque in decidenda orthodoxia et heterodoxia quorumvis textuum dogmaticorum.

XX. Nec sacri codices, nec principes, magistratus ve civiles, nec spiritus privatus sunt judices controversiarum fidei.

XXI. Episcopi duce Romano pontifice recte semper atque sine omni errandi periculo judicant de controversiis fidei, tam in concilio generali, quam extra concilium.

XXII. Eadem erroris immunitate gaudet vel solus Romanus pontifex dum toti aliquid ecclesiæ credendum proponit, sive, ut aiunt, dum loquitur ex cathedra.

XXIII. Munus convocandi generale concilium, illique præsidendi, vel per se, vel per suos legatos, spectat ad pontificem Romanum.

XXIV. Beatus Petrus fuit episcopus Romæ, ibique supremum diem optinuit.

XXV. Beatus Petrus a Christo principatum accepit in ecclesia, et jurisdictionem in rebus religionis in omnes fideles.

XXVI. Principatus hic beati Petri et jurisdictio transit ad omnes successores ejus pontifices Romanos.

Defendentur in Collegio Saxosylvensi (vulgo Stonyhurst) a Reverendo Richardo Norris, Theologiæ Auditore, anno 1817, mensis Januarii, die 14, ab hora nona matutina ad undecimam, Præsidente Reverendo Norberto Rorsak, Theologiæ Professore.

BIBLICAL CRITICISM.

Jan. 16, 1817.

On the "sin unto death" spoken of by the Apostle John.

1 John v. 16, 17.

IF any man see his brother sin a sin, which is not unto death, he shall ask, and he shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it. All unrighteousness is sin: and there is a sin not unto death."

I shall examine, severally, three interpretations of this passage; and shall then propose one which I consider as less fairly liable to objection.

I. The first of those which are now to be canvassed, is stated at large by Dr. Benson, who paraphrases the verses in the following manner:

"—if a Christian, by an impulse of the spirit, perceives that any Christian brother has sinned such a sin as to draw down upon himself a disease, which is not to end in death; but to be miraculously cured by him: then let him pray to God; and God, in answer to his prayer, will grant life and perfect health, unto such Christians as have sinned a sin which is not unto death. There is a sin, which draws down a disease upon Christians, that is to end in death. I do not say that he, who has the power of working miracles, shall pray for that: because, in such a case, God would not hear his prayer; nor miraculously cure his Christian brother, at his request."

In a dissertation on the passage, this writer observes that "as God had treated his ancient people, the Israelites, in a most remarkable and distinguishing manner, under the law, so did he treat the Christians, the subjects of the Messiah's kingdom, at the first erecting this spiritual kingdom;—punishing some of the more irregular, and (perhaps) otherwise incorrigible offenders, with some remarkable disorders, or even with death itself." * * *. "A sin," he adds, "which brought on a disease, that ended in death, was called a sin unto death. And those crimes among the Jews, which brought on diseases, that were afterwards cured, might have been properly called sins not unto

death; as those that were mortal, might as properly have been called sins unto death."

Dr. Benson says,

"—a sin not unto death could not be known, any other way, than by a divine impulse, or immediate revelation. For, without that, it was impossible to know certainly that they should be able, by praying, miraculously to cure their Christian brother of his malady." And, further,

"When any Christian thus knew that his Christian brother had sinned a sin not unto death, he was to pray for his recovery; and immediately God would grant him life and perfect health unto that offending, but sincerely penitent, Christian. But, without such a prophetic impulse, they were, by no means, to pray for him, in order to cure him by miracle."

Again, (and here I agree with this author):

"The sin unto death was not one particular crime; but any bad habit, or any act of great wickedness."

My objections to Dr. Benson's exposition, are that it receives no countenance from the apostle's subject and context; that it creates difficulties, instead of removing them; that it assumes a fact the existence of which requires proof; and that far from being sanctioned, it is even opposed, by Scriptural phraseology.

In the two preceding verses, John had spoken generally of the readiness of God to grant the petitions offered by Christians in conformity with his will. It should be remembered, too, that not a word is said, in any former or subsequent part of the treatise, respecting *bodily diseases*. The grand topic of the writer is purity of faith—both speculative and practical—in the gospel. All expositors admit that the eighteenth verse has this reference. Why then should it be imagined that, in the passage before us, there is a sudden transition to another and very different theme?

There is a considerable opposition to the apostle's language in Dr. Benson's paraphrase and reasoning: "if a man," says John, "see (ιδῇ) his brother sin a sin which is not unto

death, he shall ask. Now to see the commission of this sin, is to know it *personally*, and on the evidence of sense. But the learned commentator affixes a new and inadmissible signification to this word, *see*. For he glosses the clause thus: "if a Christian, by an impulse of the spirit, perceives that any Christian brother has sinned such a sin, &c." No doubt, there is a reading* which, could it be established, might give plausibility to this interpretation: the word however to which I allude, is not even noticed by Dr. Benson, and, in truth, is undeserving of regard. It remains therefore for those who adopt the opinion of this critic to shew by what process the verb employed in the text can be made to denote an impulse of the spirit. The excellent writer, contrary to his practice, has contented himself here with an assumption. It is an assumption, too, by which we are far from being aided in discovering the import of the terms *a sin not unto death* and *a sin unto death*. If we take this author as our guide, a fresh perplexity occurs to us, in the midst of our investigation. We are desirous of exploring the respective senses of the phrases which I have just transcribed: and yet our attention must be diverted to an unusual and arbitrary comment on a verb of very familiar occurrence! Whether *a sin not unto death*, could be known, or not be known, any other way than by a Divine impulse, or immediate revelation, is an inquiry the issue of which depends on our previously ascertaining the nature of that sin. However, besides the extreme difficulty, if I may not call it the impossibility, of reconciling Dr. Benson's gloss on the term *see* with the principles of sound criticism, his hypothesis renders it necessary for us to suppose that the prayers of which the apostle speaks were not to be offered without "a prophetic impulse." Does John, let me ask, thus qualify and restrict his assurance? No: he simply says, "If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask, and shall obtain life for him." This passage contains, at once a command and a promise. Here the future tense is manifestly equivalent with the imperative mood. But if the obligation

to present the prayer was so essentially connected with "an impulse of the spirit" that the petitioner could not otherwise be satisfied of the propriety or success of his request, both the command and the promise must have been superfluous.

It is conceded that "Almighty God did sometimes see proper to punish" offenders among the first Christians "in a very remarkable manner, by sending upon them some bodily disorder; and, in the case of great crimes, even death itself." In 1 Cor. xi. 29, 30, and in other passages of the New Testament we have examples of the fact. To deliver over unto Satan an unworthy member of the church (1 Tim. i. 20), was simply to excommunicate him; to cast him out of the family of Christ into his own place, the world. As to the prayer of faith spoken of in James v. 14, 15, there is not the least evidence that the malady to be cured by it was the immediate effect and punishment of sin: for the words of the apostle concerning the diseased person are, "if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him."

Dr. Benson takes for granted that "a sin which brought on a disease ending in death was called *a sin unto death*." But he has not produced a single authority in behalf of this exposition. I am aware of its being a current opinion that the healing of bodily disorders and the forgiveness of sins are frequently represented in the New Testament as one and the same act. It is an opinion in which I cannot acquiesce. A supposed illustration and proof of it, have been found in Matt. ix. 5, 6. On curing "the sick of the palsy," our Lord said to him, "Take courage, son; thy sins are forgiven thee." But why should we imagine that the language of Jesus was enigmatical? Had he not literally a delegated "power on earth to forgive sins?" Did not he even communicate this power to his apostles? "Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained," John xx. 23. This text must govern our interpretation of other passages containing the same phraseology. Forbearing to inquire how far this power of forgiving sins extended, it plainly was not synonymous with the power of healing diseases; which prerogative had already been conferred on

* εἶδεν. Griesbach, in loc.

our Lord's immediate attendants, Matt. x. 8. The correct paraphrase therefore of the words, "thy sins are forgiven thee," is, 'Perceiving that thou art qualified for becoming a member of my spiritual kingdom, I assure thee of the pardon of thy offences, on repentance: and, in testimony of my being authorized to grant it, I work a miracle of healing on thy body.' Jesus, agreeably to his character and practice, first asserts a claim, and then makes it good by an act which no man could have performed had not God been with him.

It is remarkable that in John xi. 4, we have a phrase which, it may fairly be conceived, the apostle would have used had he been speaking here of a bodily disease: "when Jesus heard [that Lazarus was sick], he said, This sickness is *not unto death*." The beloved disciple, we perceive, employs very different language, and treats of a *SIN* not unto death. Am not I entitled to conclude that the difference of expression arises from a corresponding difference of subject?

II. On these grounds I dissent from Dr. Benson's explanation of the *sin not unto death*, &c. From that which is proposed by the editors of the "Improved Version, &c." I must likewise withhold my humble suffrage.

"Sin and disease," they observe in their note, "were considered as so inseparably connected, according to the Jewish philosophy, that, perhaps, the apostle might mean nothing more by the advice which he here gives, than to recommend prayer for the sick when the disease was curable, and to dissuade from unbecoming impottnity where the malady was evidently incurable, and fatal. See John ix. 2. 34. Matt. ix. 1—8. See Dr. Priestley *in loc*."

This interpretation is so far distinct from Dr. Benson's that it does not proceed on the hypothesis of a *supernatural* infliction of disease being the case treated of by John: in other respects the two expositions are nearly identical, and lie open to the same objections. Justice indeed to the Editors, &c. requires me to observe that they propose their explanation as *conjectural*, and do little more than repeat the sentiment of Dr. Priestley; which he has not supported, however, by any reasoning or quotation.

If the object of the apostle was simply "to recommend prayer for the sick, &c." it seems reasonable to believe that he would have expressed himself in the phraseology of James on the same topic, and on a similar occasion. V. 15, &c. Concerning the passages to which the Editors, &c. refer their readers, it is obvious to remark that not one of them is pertinent to the end for which they are produced; at furthest, they evince no identity of language on the subjects of disease and sin, but merely indicate the existence of an erroneous opinion respecting them among the Jews; an error which our Lord discountenanced, instead of adopting. The irrelevancy of Matt. ix. 1—8 to the hypothesis on which we are animadverting, I have pointed out. Whether John ix. 34, mean any thing more than that the individual addressed was born of sinful parents, and in a degraded rank, is at best doubtful: the just explanation of it, appears to be afforded by Ps. li. 5, compared with John vii. 49. Even as to the remaining text, John ix. 2; though the question of the disciples be framed on an erroneous tenet of "the Jewish philosophy," it rather proves that they assumed a *connection* between *sin* and certain states of the human body than that their current phraseology was founded on an imagined *inseparable* relation between disease and sin: they speak of the man before them as being destitute of one of the senses, not as afflicted with *sickness*. I think, with deference, that the Editors, &c. have laid down too general a proposition. That the Jews admitted an *universally inseparable* connection between sin and disease, and that their usual language to denote the want of sight or of health was in conformity with this opinion—these points are not yet established. Both positions must be supported by satisfactory evidence before the interpretation here offered by the Editors, &c. is acknowledged as correct. VII.

III. J. G. Rosenmüller would detach this passage from the rest of the chapter: and he takes the *sin unto death* to be "a capital offence against the laws of society:" *Mihi ἀμαρτία πρὸς θάνατον videtur esse crimen capitale quodvis. Pro eo, qui tale crimen commiserit, non vult apostolus intercessionem fieri apud magistratus, quibus jus*

vita et necis competeat; ne pagani in suspicionem adducerentur, talia crimina apud Christianos parvi fieri. According to this commentator, John dissuades his Christian brethren from interceding with the magistrate in behalf of any individual of their number who has committed a crime of so high a degree: and the apostle's motive in suggesting the caution is to prevent the heathens from supposing that the disciples of Jesus deemed lightly of such offences. On the same principle, Rosenmüller, of course, explains the *sin not unto death*—*videtur esse levior culpa transgressione legis alicujus civilis contracta, quam, a Christiano admissam facile ita exaggerare poterant magistratus pagani, ut supplicii reum pronuntiarent eum, qui mitiori poena affectus dimitti potuisset. Pro ejusmodi peccatore deprecari poterat frater Christianus, ut vita ei donaretur.* If a professor of the gospel were convicted of a crime far less heinous than any of the class just adverted to, for him his fellow-believers might petition the judge, and implore that life the forfeiture of which might too easily be decreed by the prejudices, suspicions and jealousies of a heathen magistrate.

This is very ingenious, but, like the preceding interpretations, has no countenance from the apostle's context. Rosenmüller acknowledges indeed that the basis of the exposition is hypothetical: *hæc mea est CONJECTURA.* In proof of it's having no solidity, let us compare together the fourteenth, the fifteenth and the sixteenth verses.

14. —“this is the confidence that we have in him [in God. See Benson in loc. and 1 John iii. 21.], that if we ask [*αἰτωμεθα*] any thing according to his will, he heareth us. 15. And if we know that he hear us whatsoever we ask [*ὁ ἀν αἰτωμεθα*], we know that we have the petitions [*τὰ αἰτήματα*] that we desired [or asked, *αἰτήκαμεν*] of him. 16. If any man see his brother sin a sin which is not unto death, he shall ask [*αἰτήσει*]; and he [God] shall give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray [*ερωτησῃ*] for it.”

If any person be inclined to place a stress on a supposed difference between

the verbs *αἰτεω* and *ερωτάω*, let him consider that in John xvii. 9, the latter is used, as in numerous other passages, for *prayer to God*: *ἐγὼ περὶ αὐτῶν ερωτῶ, κ. τ. λ.* “I pray for them, &c.” Now in the fourteenth and fifteenth verses of the fifth chapter of the first of John's Epistles, *prayer to God* is confessedly spoken of: how perfectly incongruous therefore is the interpretation which, in ver. 16, assigns to the words *αἰήσει* and *ερωτησῃ* the sense of *intercession with the civil magistrate*. This single objection would seem decisive against Rosenmüller's exposition.

IV. Though I can scarcely hope to be successful where so accurate a critic has failed, I am not discouraged however from making the attempt: in his own language, and with the diffidence which becomes me, I say, “Si quis rectius quid docuerit, ego ei libenter adstipulabor:” my object is to elicit truth, by inducing more diligent and skilful labourers than myself in the field of sacred criticism to favour me with their assistance.

The *sin unto death* I take to be *apostacy from the Christian doctrine*, such apostacy as the writer to the Hebrews describes in vi. 4, &c.: consequently, the *sin not unto death* is *guilt of an inferior degree and kind*. By *death* I understand, in both cases, the *second death*, or the *future punishment which awaits impenitence*.

In the former part of this interpretation I have the pleasure of finding myself confirmed by the opinion of Archbishop Newcome (note in loc.), who thus paraphrases the words *a sin unto death* “aggravated apostacy, blasphemy against the holy spirit.” For what remains of my exposition I have not, it is true, the advantage of the same great authority. Yet whoever considers that, in Scriptural phraseology, *death* often signifies *condemnation to severe and final punishment*, as in John v. 24, 1 John iii. 14, may without difficulty receive it under this sense in the verses before us. The whole passage will then appear to be consistent with itself, with the apostle's subject and style, and with the spirit and the truths of the Christian revelation.

N.

STR., Feb. 6th, 1817.

A WISH having been expressed in the last Number of the Repository (p. 43), by the Reviewer of Dr. Holsley's posthumous work, that some of your readers would communicate a translation of the 101st Psalm, I beg leave to trouble you with the following, which lays claim to your attention only in case no other should be offered.

PAMPHILUS.

PSALM CI.

This Psalm is generally ascribed to David, and there is no reason to doubt his being the writer of it. It was most probably composed soon after the tribes of Israel had submitted to him, and he was universally acknowledged king. He speaks in the concluding verse of *the city of Jehovah, or Jerusalem*; but it appears from 2 Sam. v. that he did not gain possession of that city till all the tribes had joined in allegiance to him. In this Psalm he solemnly professes his determination to govern his family with strictness and integrity; to suffer no evil-minded persons in his court; to employ and protect the pious and the good; and to use his high authority in extirpating all the impious and the wicked.

A Psalm of David.

1. Of piety and of justice will I sing;
2. To thee, O Jehovah, I will address my psalm.
3. I will instruct in the path of integrity
4. The men whom thou shalt bring to me.
5. I will walk with a perfect heart
6. In the midst of my house.
7. I will not place before mine eyes a lawless deed;
8. Transgressors I will hate,
9. They shall not adhere to me.
10. The perverse of heart shall depart from me;
11. A wicked person I will not acknowledge.
12. Him that secretly slandereth his neighbour I will destroy;
13. Him that hath a proud look and an ambitious heart I will not endure.
14. Mine eyes shall be upon the faithful of the land,
15. That they may dwell with me.
16. He who walketh in the path of integrity,
17. He shall minister to me.

7. He shall not dwell in my house.
- Who practiseth deceit.
- He who speaketh falsehood,
- Shall not continue in my presence.
8. Every morning will I destroy
- All the wicked of the land;
- That I may cut off from the city of
- Jehovah
- All the workers of iniquity.

Ver. 1. "Of piety and justice, &c." i.e. "I will declare my resolution of conducting myself in my kingdom with a constant regard to the will of God and the virtue of my subjects, especially of those about my court;" or, "I will now solemnly declare how I mean to act as king towards the virtuous and the wicked, shewing [on] favour to the one, and awarding punishment [on] to the other."

2. To this verse the Reviewer particularly directs the attention of the translator; and it is indeed the only passage in the Psalm that presents any serious difficulty. In the authorized English version it is rendered thus: "*I will behave myself wisely in a perfect way. O when wilt thou come unto me! I will walk within my house with a perfect heart.*" And so, with only some slight variations, it is rendered in all the ancient and most of the modern versions. The variations chiefly respect the sense of *לִמְנוּחַ* in the first clause, and the connexion and form of the second: some considering *לִמְנוּחַ* as transitive, others intransitive; some connecting the second clause with the first, while others connect it with the third; some rendering it interrogatively, others without the interrogation. Thus the Targumist, followed by some Commentators (vide Pol. Synops.), renders the first and second clauses—"I will cause thee to understand a perfect way, when thou shalt come to me;" considering it as addressed by Jehovah to the king. Mudge takes the verb transitively, but refers it to David, thus: "I will give instruction on the way of integrity; when will it come unto me?" that is, as he observes in a note, "I will compose a maschil to teach the true conduct of life: oh, how long will it be ere I have the pleasure of enjoying it?" The Syriac is singular in rendering *לִמְנוּחַ* by *לִמְנוּחַ*, "I will walk." Rosenmüller connects the middle with the last clause, thus, "*Quando ad me ve-*

vies, *ambulabo in cordis mei integritate, intra domum meam, i. e. quando ad me venies, visendi causa, qualis ego sum, et quod loca sint mea, reperias me integrum et inculpatum; &c.*" Dr. Geddes observes (but not quite correctly) that this is the common rendering. The late French version, in a paraphrastic manner, not unusual, renders the first parts of the verse—"Je tacherai de connoître la voie la plus droite: *quand m'abdera-tu dans ce dessein?* But all these and many more that might be cited, appear to me to mistake the meaning of the term *מו*. If disregarding the ancient versions and the masoretic punctuation, we consider it as a noun and not a conjunction; if we further supply the common ellipsis of *וה*, and take *מו* in a transitive sense, the whole verse becomes plain and intelligible, and perfectly suitable to the context. Mr. Street, so far as I know, was the first to understand it in this manner: his version is,

"I will instruct in the path of
virtue

The men thou shalt place under
me."

Geddes has followed him, but not without a characteristic variation. He renders the verse,

"In the paths of innocence I will
instruct

All those whom to me thou shalt
subject,"

in violation, as in too many other instances, of good taste and melody. The sense here given to *מו* is that which it bears in many other places. *מו* occurs in the sense of *men* at least twenty times. But I anticipate an objection, that *מו* ought to be in an absolute and not a constructed form. But perhaps the following canon of Glassius may obviate the difficulty.—"Nomen absolutæ seu integræ formæ quandoque pro constructo ponitur; et vice versa." He has subjoined several instances and referred to Buxtorf for more; and though all the instances cited may not be satisfactory, the irregularity is sufficiently common to sanction the proposed translation of this verse, especially as it appears to be the only intelligible one, and that which the connexion requires. As for *מו*, as Mr. Street observes, "a great number of copies have *מו*;

and perhaps *מו* may be the right reading; but *מו* is used for *מו*. Exod. xv. 17." By the phrase, "the men whom thou shalt bring to me," the Psalmist must be understood to mean "those whom Jehovah should appoint to be near his person, his courtiers and counsellors. *מו* *מו* the men of his divan." See Job xix. 19.

3. "I will not set before my eyes a lawless deed." *דבר בלעל*. *דבר בלעל* or *דבר בלעל* are not uncommon phrases; but *דבר בלעל* occurs only here and in Ps. xli. 9. In the Sep. it is rendered here *πραγμα παρανομον*, in the Vulg. *rem injustam*, and it is generally thought to signify any *unlawful practice*. "I will not place before me any wicked action as a thing to be imitated," or, "I will never give the least countenance and encouragement to such an action." Mudge translates it "*any cursed thing*," and observes, "He" (the Psalmist) "begins with his intention to persevere in the true religion. A thing of Belial, as I have observed elsewhere (viz. Ps. xli. 9.), answers to what we mean by a *cursed, devilish* thing; an idol, to which he opposes the sincerity of his heart; none of the guilt of it should stick upon him."

Ib. "Transgressors I will hate." *וה* *וה* *וה*. For *וה* (which occurs nowhere else) 38 MSS. read *וה*; and according to the Syr. *וה* may be read *וה*; which the Sep. and the Vulg. have understood in the plural: Sep. *πορνείας παραβάσεις*; Vulg. *facientes prævaricationes*. Dimock, who adopts Mudge's rendering of the preceding clause, observes that the last part may be explanatory of the former: "I will not set an idol before mine eyes; that which maketh, or causeth revolters (viz. an idol), I hate." Which is certainly plausible, and must, perhaps, be adopted, if *וה* according to Houbigant, and in conformity with the usage of the term in every other case, must be considered as denoting persons, not things. Rosenmüller, after Le Clerc (to whom, in general, he is more indebted than is, I suppose, commonly known), renders the whole verse thus: "*Non ponam ante oculos rem et factum malum; facere declinantium odi*:" and on the last clause observes: "*Facere, infidus hominascens, ut apud Latinos accire dunt nihil est.*" The translation adopted

above, is supported by the ancient and many modern versions. What Dr. Horsley would have made of this passage, had he taken this Psalm in hand, may perhaps be conjectured from his version of Hos. v. 2, the only other place in which the noun *דַּבָּר* occurs. "And the prickers have made a deep slaughter, &c." His notes in justification of this strange rendering are amusing, but too long to be transcribed.

5. "an ambitious heart," *רחב לבב* "*latum corde*, i. e. insolentem et ambitiosum, neque ullis modestiæ finibus et præscripto contentum."—Rosenm. Dr. Chandler renders it "*an arrogant heart*," but Mudge prefers the version of the Sep. *απλησυν καρδια*, "insatiably covetous," a sense which the term would undoubtedly bear, denoting a character, as he says, "as much to be avoided by a good prince as the proud."

1b. "I will not endure." *לֹא אֶכְלֵם* The infin. *אֶכְלֵם* being understood. The full phrase occurs in Jer. xlv. 22, Prov. xxx. 21, but the abbreviated one, as here, in Isa. i. 13. The Sep. has *τὸν αὐτοῦ συνησθιον*, followed by Vulg. Syr. Arab. and Æthiop. "*I will not eat with him*." This, as Geddes observes, is no improbable reading, but the other is to be preferred.

6. "I dwell with me," i. e. as my ministers and counsellors.

8. "Every morning," *בְּכָל יוֹם* alluding most probably to the time when justice was usually administered. See 2 Sam. xv. 2. Street, without any authority, reads *בְּכָל יוֹם* and renders it "*with nice examination*." Others take

it metaphorically, for *immediately, without delay, assiduously, &c. &c.*

1b. "all the wicked," i. e. all who shall be convicted whenever I sit in judgment. Some, as Geddes, think that the term *לֹא* is to be taken in a restricted sense, to signify *some*.

The reflections which Dr. Chandler makes on this Psalm (*Life of David*, Vol. II. p. 20.) are so excellent, that I hope I may venture to add them here.

"This Psalm," he observes, "affords an admirable lesson for princes, to direct themselves in the administration of their affairs in private and public life. They should be the patrons of religion and virtue, and encourage them by their own example and practice. Those of their household, their servants, ministers, and particularly their favourites and friends, should be of unblameable characters, and, if possible, eminent for every thing that is excellent and praiseworthy. Subtle and fraudulent men, backbiters and slanderers, and private informers against others, they should detest, and shew the utmost marks of displeasure to them. They should maintain the honour of the laws, and impartially punish all transgressors against them; and instead of indulging to ease, and being engrossed and dissipated by pleasure and amusements, they should consecrate a just portion of their time to the public service, and promoting the real happiness of their people. Thus they will be indeed truly *patriot kings*, honoured of God, and esteemed and beloved of men."

POETRY.

THE GRAVE.

(From the German.)

Dreamless is the pilgrim's sleep,
Lulled on nature's peaceful breast;
There no wearied spirits weep,
All is slumber, silence, rest:
Sweet and soft that pillow—there
Dew-drops fall—but falls no tear.

Sober-clad forgetfulness
Hovers o'er the pilgrim's tomb;
No shrill accents of distress
Interrupt the holy gloom:
In death's darksome shades unknown
Guilt's deep pang, and sorrow's groan.

There fast rolling ages quell

Storms of passion, dreams of care;
Silence and oblivion dwell

In eternal union there;—
Hearts that burn and hopes that glow,
Cold in death repose below.

Take me to thy arms, O earth!

Bind me to thy bosom fast;

Thou who first didst give me birth,

Give me sweet repose at last.

Mother earth! with flow'ry breast,

Take, O take me to thy rest!

REVIEW.

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

ART. I.—*Dr. Price's Sermons on Various Subjects.*

[Concluded from p. 48.]

THE eleventh Sermon in this volume, proves that the writer of it was the strenuous and eloquent advocate of the noblest kind of freedom:

"—there is yet a liberty, unsung
By poets, and by senators unprais'd,
Which monarchs cannot grant, nor all
The pow'rs
Of earth and hell confed'rate take away."

From 2 Pet. ii. 19 ["While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption; &c."] Dr. Price discourses "on spiritual or inward liberty." "There is a moral slavery," says he, "which ought to be the principal object of our detestation, and consequently a moral liberty which ought to be the principal object of our attachment:" and he proposes to explain this liberty, and to shew its importance and excellence.

He begins with observing that the conscience of a man is the man; the reflecting principle is our supreme principle. Liberty being an exemption from all such force as takes away from us the capacity of acting as we think best, it is plain that whenever any passion, becomes predominant within us, or causes us to contradict our sentiments of rectitude, we lose our liberty, and fall into a state of slavery. A person governed by his appetites is most properly a slave. This is the case which Paul describes in Rom. vii. 22, 23.

"—licentiousness in a state is attended with an infringement of liberty, and some of the greatest evils of slavery. In such a state the rights of every member are liable to perpetual invasion. Oppression and violence prevail, and a riotous mob governs instead of a wise and a good legislature. What is similar to this may be said with great propriety of that licentiousness which takes place in the mind when the passions become tumultuous and ungovernable. That is the worst force we can be under, which prevents us from doing what our duty and interest require. The like is true of self-denial. It is not the man who denies his passions in obe-

dience to his judgment who most properly practices self-denial, but the man who does the contrary,—the man who denies his judgment in obedience to his passions. This man denies what alone is truly himself. He denies his reason."

The preacher next shews "that the account now given of moral liberty" implies no inconsistency between it and natural liberty: for the most perfect moral liberty takes place where there is the strongest attachment to rectitude, and the least capacity of deviating from it; and where therefore there is the least degree of that indifference in which some have said that natural liberty consists. "Natural liberty, however," adds Dr. Price, "by no means signifies an indifference of will with respect to the way in which we shall act, but merely the power of self-determination, and it is alike common to all agents as such, and incapable of any variety of degrees. The greatest certainty of acting in one way in consequence of the influence of motives, can never clash with it."

We are little inclined to engage at present in a metaphysical discussion; though we confess that we cannot subscribe to all the statements and reasonings of our author on this part of his subject. He afterwards says, "this is a speculation that may be too abstruse for this discourse:" and here we agree with him in opinion.

Dr. John Jebb's definitions of natural and moral liberty, appear to us at once concise and accurate: we lay them before our readers—

"The natural liberty of man consists in having a will to act,* and an exemption from all restraints, arising from defects in the instrument of action, such as in hands, feet, from palsies, &c. as well as from the restraints arising from natural external circumstances."

"Moral liberty, when I have the will to act, and am not restrained by the prevalence of bad habits, which prevent that state of mind from being followed by actions or muscular motions. In this sense,

* See the definition of "will" in Hartley. Vol. I. [of the original edition] p. 3 and 371.

every vicious man is really, and without a figure, a slave."†

The "analogy between civil and moral liberty," is finely pointed out, by Dr. Price, in this discourse. He then recommends the latter from a consideration of the honor which it implies, and of the advantages and blessings which it insures. We copy some of the concluding sentences of the animated preacher's exhortation:

"In every sense of the word, liberty is one of the first and most essential blessings. We are all in this country justly zealous for civil liberty. Would to God we were all free in the best sense! That civil liberty which we so passionately admire has nothing valuable in it compared with the liberty which I have been explaining. To this then let us apply our warmest zeal. He who is conscious of wanting this, should be ashamed of pretending any zeal for the other."

"I am exhorting you, fellow-Christians, to be free. You may say that you are Britons, and therefore in possession of freedom. But the proper reply is that made by our Saviour to the Jews, *he that committeth sin, is the servant of sin.*"

Of the twelfth sermon the text is Isaiah l. 10, "Who is among you that feareth the Lord, &c." and the subject, "Trust in God, the best support of the righteous under afflictions." In the words from which he discourses Dr. P. considers three things: "1st, the circumstances they describe, *walking in darkness, and seeing no light.* 2d, the very important truth, that in such circumstances our best relief is *trusting in the name of the Lord, and staying ourselves upon God*; and 3rd, this further truth, that the relief derived from hence can be enjoyed only *by those that fear the Lord.*"

The words "walking in darkness, and having no light," are properly applicable only to circumstances of the deepest distress. In such a situation we should consider that the Deity is always intimately present with us, that he stands in the nearest relation to us, that he is almighty, all-wise, and all-benevolent: and hence we shall obtain relief. The exhortation however in the text, is addressed only to the pious and obedient; it is in *well-doing* that we are commanded to commit our souls to God.

This discourse contains a very energetic and beautiful summary of those arguments for the goodness of God which Dr. Price advanced in a volume of sermons published during his life. We have been particularly impressed by the following passage:

"My feelings have been sometimes so shocked when I have seen a fellow creature groaning under distress, that I have been ready to cry out in my haste, 'how is it possible that such sufferings should be consistent with the goodness of the Deity?' But I have soon corrected myself by considering, whence did I receive these feelings? Can I be more compassionate than the Being who gave me compassion? Were he malevolent, would he have made me to detest malevolence? Is it credible that he should have planted within me principles which render his own character shocking to me?"

In No. XIII. Dr. P. represents "The nature of true righteousness," and prefixes the memorable text, Matt. xxv. 46, "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal." In explaining these words, he says,

"By everlasting punishment here is plainly meant the same that is elsewhere called everlasting destruction and the second death, or the same with what our Lord means, when in other places he speaks of *burning up the chaff with unquenchable fire, and throwing the tares into a furnace of fire, where is weeping and gnashing of teeth.* It would be extremely absurd to understand such phrases in a sense strictly literal. They can mean no more than a miserable extermination, like that of chaff or tares when thrown into an inextinguishable fire which consumes them. On the contrary, by everlasting life in my text is plainly meant preservation, in opposition to extermination,—an everlasting existence in opposition to everlasting destruction,—a blessed immortality in opposition to a second death."

We have made this extract, that our readers might further judge of Dr. Price's opinion concerning the nature and duration of future punishment: they will consider how far his exposition of his text is correct; and some of them perhaps will concur in our doubts whether the passages referred to, Matt. iii. 12 (which, by the way, is the language of John the Baptist, and not of our Lord), xii. 30. 42, are

† Works, Vol. II. 146, 147.

parallel places—the former, we conceive, relates solely to the destruction of the Jewish state.

This preacher insists “on the four following particulars as necessary to entitle us to the denomination and character of righteous men. 1st, The establishment within us of good principles, and acting from them. 2d, The superior efficacy of such principles within us to the efficacy of all other principles. 3rd, The manifestation of their superiority by avoiding all habitual guilt and practising all known duties: and 4th, a constant endeavour to grow better.” On these important points he enlarges with his usual excellence.

Two sermons, the fourteenth and fifteenth, follow “on the evil of sin;” the text being Prov. xiv. 9, *Fools make a mock at sin.* Here sin is represented as a transgression of the eternal laws of truth and righteousness, as contrary to the order and constitution of the world, and to every person's private judgment and conviction as well as to the will of the Deity. Such is sin in its nature: and its consequences are most pernicious. It pollutes and injures our minds: it renders human life miserable, and fills it with groans and lamentations. All that we now see of its effects, is but the beginning of the wretchedness annexed to it. The complete infliction of its assigned punishment, is reserved for another world. It is a very natural inquiry, *whence came this evil? why is it permitted?* In an extensive and complicated plan, contrived by Infinite Wisdom, there must be many things that the reason of man cannot explain or account for. Yet there are several considerations which may help to relieve our perplexity. The creation of free agents, that is, of beings endued with active and self-directing powers, is absolutely necessary to the production of the greatest happiness; such powers being the foundation of all virtue and merit. Now moral agency implies, in the very notion of it, a capacity of acting wrong as well as right. By not granting such powers, or by restraining the exercise of them, evil might have been excluded: but in this way would have been excluded also all that is most honourable and worthy in the creation. Further; a state from which moral evil is banished, or where its existence is

rendered impossible, cannot be a state of trial and discipline. Add to this that the ends of goodness required the creation of the lower not less than of the higher orders of creatures. Somewhere or other in the scale of existence there must be introduced such a being as man.

This “perplexed and difficult” discussion our author closes by exhorting his hearers to remember that evil is permitted only for a time. He then observes that the account which he has given of sin recommends to our approbation and belief the Scripture history, serves to prevent or remove our surprise [*astonishment*] at the severity of the future punishment threatened to it, demands our gratitude to God for the hope he has given us in the gospel of its being pardoned, and shews the presumption of those persons who imagine they can atone for it, and deliver themselves from its consequences, by the tricks of superstition. It therefore becomes us to reflect what reason we have for sorrow that we have ever practised this evil; although no sincere penitent ought to give way to despondence.

“The eternal and eternally improving happiness of the righteous in a future state,” forms the topic of the sixteenth and seventeenth discourses: and the preacher's text is I John. ii. 25, “And this is the promise that he hath promised, even eternal life.” First, the credibility of the promise is considered—then the circumstance that the future life is to be an existence always improving.

Under the former of these heads, Dr. P. argues from the nature of the human soul. “It is,” says he, “a simple and indivisible substance,” and therefore as such incorruptible. On this idea he enlarges through four pages. Surely it is too metaphysical for the basis of any reasoning on a subject so infinitely momentous! We cannot admit the premises, and still less can we accede to the conclusion. The human soul, be it what it may, is the work of Omnipotence: its duration must accordingly depend on the will and energy of the Creator. It cannot be *naturally* incorruptible and immortal. What Almighty power has made Almighty power can destroy. The utmost which, even on this writer's own principles, can be proved from the nature, real or supposed, of

the soul, is that it admits, not that it will enjoy, an eternity of being.

—"it must occur," Dr. P. supposes, "to every one, that if indeed this imperfect and mortal state is to be succeeded by another, it will be a more perfect state, and particularly a state of immortality." Yet how unspeakably wide is the interval between time and eternity, between imperfection and what is absolutely perfect!

He afterwards remarks that

"Nothing is too much to be expected from Infinite Goodness."

To which position we readily subscribe. Is it true however that unassisted nature and reason prove the *infinity* of this attribute? are not our best ideas of it derived from revelation?

With the highest respect for Dr. Price's memory, we are of opinion that he dwells too long "on reasonings which, though" he thinks them "probable, are undecisive, and cannot give the full conviction we wish for." Of the evidence arising from the assurances of the Christian revelation he justly pronounces that it "is plain and direct, and fitted to produce the strongest satisfaction."

"If truly righteous, we are through the Redeemer of mankind to burst the bands of death at the last day, and to recover the exercise of our present powers. We are to enter upon a new state of being, where mortality shall be swallowed up of life, and the hand of death shall never reach us—where our happiness shall continue always undiminished, and our existence be commensurate with that of the everlasting Deity. Is not this indeed too vast a hope? What! to survive the sun and stars! to live for ever!—to exist in bliss beyond all the limits of time, and after being happy for myriads and myriads of ages to be no nearer to an end of our happiness than at the first moment when it begun? Can this be possible? Fellow Christians, it is possible. The arguments I have offered prove it to be more than possible. They prove it to be *probable*, *very certain*, if the gospel is true."

To the inquiry, "after millions of ages have been spent, shall we not find employment wanting for our faculties, and the funds of happiness be exhausted?" The preacher well replies, "that there is in the works and perfections of God, and in infinite truth an inexhaustible fund of employment for our faculties. If the

curiosity of a reasonable soul is boundless, there is likewise a boundless variety of objects to gratify it." The works of God, are, probably, unlimited in extent. An existence *eternally improving*, is to be the portion of the righteous. Such is the nature of an intelligent mind that it can never reach a point of perfection beyond which it is incapable of going. On the improveableness of our natures Dr. Price enlarges with great comprehension of thought and fervour of expression; though some of his readers may perhaps imagine that he attributes too much to the natural capacities of "spiritual essences." From his speculations and reasonings he infers the credibility of a future life; the wisdom of God in making our existence progressive, and one part of it a preparation for another; the dignity of man; our obligations to the Divine Goodness for blessing us with existence; the importance of our attaining a just superiority to this world; and the dreadful state of those who come short of the happiness which has been described. Of "the wicked" our author says that, "like a plant crushed in the seed," they "are to be lost and undone."

"Nothing can well set the evil of sin in a stronger light than this. What ruins an immortal nature,—What blasts an existence that would otherwise have been eternally improving, and thus deprives it of infinite happiness, may indeed with the strictest propriety be said to be an infinite evil."

In the eighteenth sermon, from 1 Cor. x. 31, "Whether therefore ye eat or drink, &c.," we are addressed "on the duty of giving glory to God." This duty is explained, and the obligations to it are enforced.

The glory of God is a phrase which has been sadly misunderstood and misapplied. It cannot mean the absolute sovereignty of the Deity, but must have relation chiefly to his moral excellencies. His innate glory and dignity, as possessed of every possible perfection, cannot be affected by any thing that any being can do. But his glory as the governor and lawgiver of intelligent creatures, is in some measure dependent on their conduct. As far as his subjects think meanly of him; as far as they are rebellious or disaffected; and anarchy and misery prevail among them, so far he is dis-

honoured, and his government wants its proper glory. In order then to glorify God, it is necessary that we entertain worthy and honourable apprehensions of him, that we express these sentiments by suitable acts, and particularly by the discharge of all the duties of private worship, that we pay a just regard to all his institutions, that we endeavour to lead others to glorify him, and that we exercise devout gratitude, obedience and trust. Thus to glorify God, is the sublimest of all ends. He has a right to our best services, and gratitude should bind us to honour him by benefiting our fellow-creatures. Jesus, our great exemplar, has been the means of contributing in the highest degree to the glory of God; and those who glorify their Maker he will glorify.

Dr. Price discourses "on the duty of imitating God" in the nineteenth sermon. His text, Matt. v. 48, "Be ye therefore perfect, &c." is explained (as the preacher might have remarked) by the parallel passage in Luke vi. 36, and does not enjoin a visionary, impracticable attempt.

We imitate the Deity, when, like his, our wills are directed by truth and righteousness, when we strive to do all the good in our power, and are placable and forgiving. And it is reasonable that the same moral distinctions which are a rule to God, should be a rule likewise to us. To imitate him, is our dignity not less than our duty. It is also our happiness. If religion be considered as the imitation of the Supreme Being, its foundations are securely laid, and its evidence is strong. No doubt can be entertained of its being both a spiritual and a rational service: and to form just notions of God, is manifestly of the first importance.

This is a sermon of much value; whatever be thought of those views of the foundation of morals which one part of it unfolds.

The twentieth and last sermon, is, "on the future inheritance of the righteous," from Rev. xxi. 7. "He that overcometh, shall inherit all things," or, says Dr. Price, "all these things," "that is, all the happiness just described." The character here mentioned, is first considered, and, secondly, the reward and blessedness annexed to it.

He who overcometh, acts under the

influence of a love to truth and righteousness—from the desire of maintaining the order of his mind,—from a sense of duty to the Governor of the world,—from a regard to his own happiness, and the hope of heavenly assistance. Many are the enemies whom he encounters, and the difficulties which he surmounts:

"they have commonly been arranged under the three heads of the world,—the flesh—and the devil; but they may with more propriety be comprehended under the two first of these heads, the devil certainly having no other power over us than is implied in the temptations of the world, and the lusts of our own hearts."

Such an one as is now represented, perseveres in his successful conflict, till death sets him free. And, in consequence, he possesses that moral excellence which is the highest honour and dignity of a reasonable being: he acquires the approbation of the Deity—his inheritance is that of a kingdom which cannot be moved; and he stands in the relation of a son to that Being who has all the wealth of nature at his disposal, and he may expect that nature will be made to furnish its richest stores to bless him.

We have experienced high satisfaction in reviewing these discourses of a man on whose public instructions we were accustomed to attend during a part of our early lives, and whose simplicity, fervour and talents we warmly admired from the moment we became acquainted with his preaching and his writings. To the editor we respectfully offer our acknowledgments for bringing this volume before the world: happy shall we be if the sale of it encourage him to prepare a second; to consist, we would humbly recommend, of sermons less similar to each other, in point of subject, reasoning and thought, than the compositions which have now passed under our notice. Discourses, from Dr. Price's pen, on some of our Lord's parables, and on a few of the more remarkable narratives in the Scriptures, would give variety to such a posthumous work as the present, and be exceedingly agreeable and beneficial.

Mr. Morgan observes, in the preface, that had his uncle lived to have published these sermons himself, "they would have undergone many

corrections and additions." A few trifling inaccuracies of punctuation, and, occasionally, two or three of composition, are, no doubt, visible: but we have purposely refrained from marking these minute defects, where so much substantial excellence prevails. The editor is, perhaps, too sanguine when he says, "I am not aware that any sentiment will be found which can afford matter for controversy." That Dr. Price was a controversialist, is far from being a disparagement to his memory: and, whether we agree with him in opinion or not, we look back with veneration upon his love of truth, the vigour of his intellect and the gentleness of his spirit.

ART. II.—*The Duty, Necessity and Means of striving for the Primitive Faith.* A Discourse, delivered at Kidderminster, June the 21st, 1815, before the Unitarian Tract Society, established in Birmingham, for Warwickshire and the Neighbouring Counties. By Charles Berry. 12mo. pp. 42. Belcher and Son, Birmingham; Eaton, London.

WE regret that this Sermon did not earlier fall into our hands. It is now we understand out of print; but such is the amiable spirit which it breathes and its suitableness to the state of mind of numbers of the reputed orthodox who are first beginning to inquire, that we would suggest to the respectable and growingly useful Society before whom it was delivered that they cannot do better than keep it in their catalogue by a re-print. To our readers in general the perusal of it would afford much gratification.

Mr. Berry's text is Jude 3, on contending for the faith, and his subject is ranged under the three heads, 1st, *The object* for which we are to strive, 2dly, *The reasons* why we should strive for it, and 3dly, *The means* by which we may strive for it.

These topics are discussed with great simplicity of language, but with much propriety and force of argument. In pp. 20—24, the preacher lays before his "Evangelical friends" the reasons which prevailed with him in favour of the Unitarian system.

ART. III.—*The Unity and Simple Personality of God.* A Sermon, preached at Oldbury, June 20th, 1816, before the Unitarian Tract Society, established in Birmingham, for Warwickshire and the Neighbouring Counties. By John Small. 12mo. pp. 46. Belcher and Son, Birmingham; Hunter, London.

THIS Sermon is a very able argument on the following propositions: That there is one God, the Supreme Lord and Ruler of the world, to whom worship and obedience are due, is a truth universally admitted by Christians: If it be admitted that God is one individual Being, it must of course follow that he is one individual Person: If there be three persons in the Godhead, to each of whom is attributed infinite perfection, by what means, it is reasonable to inquire, can they possibly be distinguished: There can be but one divine person, because the true description of Deity will not apply to more: And the Holy Scriptures, both of the Old and New Testament, describe the Divine Being as one individual Person.

The preacher alludes feelingly (p. 41) to his own state of mind heretofore as a Calvinist, and he concludes (p. 45) with an eloquent tribute to the memory of the late amiable and venerable Dr Toulmin.

ART. IV.—*A Sermon preached July 16, 1816, at Bandon, before a Meeting of some of the Members of the Presbyterian Congregations of Cork and Bandon.* By William Hincks. 12mo. pp. 22. Cork, printed.

WE have been much pleased with this Sermon, delivered in a country where religious inquiry is at a low ebb: it is a decided avowal of Unitarianism, and suggests some strong reasons why Unitarians should avow the truth. The Sermon has, we see, excited attention in Ireland: we should not be surprised if the respectable author were to be honoured with an effusion of Dr. Magee's anger in the next Supplement to his *Anti-Unitarian Rhapsody*.

OBITUARY.

Mrs. HESTER MILNER.

Eheu ! fugaces

*Labuntur anni ; nec pietas moram
Rugis, et instanti senectæ
Afferet, indomitæque morti !*

HOR.

How swiftly glide our flying years,

Alas ! nor piety nor tears

Can stop the fleeting day :

Deep-furrow'd wrinkles, posting age,

And death's unconquerable rage,

Are strangers to delay !

On Friday, January 24th, 1817, died at an advanced age, Mrs. HESTER MILNER, of *Cross-Street, Islington*. She was the youngest daughter of Dr. John Milner, formerly the much respected pastor of the Presbyterian congregation at Peckham, where he for many years conducted a seminary with distinguished reputation. Of his talents and erudition he gave indubitable proof, by the publication of his *Latin* and *Greek* Grammars, which are still held in estimation by the learned world. These and a few single Sermons were the whole of his writings. With this gentleman the amiable Dr. John Hawksworth, author of the *Adventurer*, lived as an assistant—as did also Dr. Oliver Goldsmith, who was much esteemed by both master and pupils for the amenity of his disposition and the benevolence of his heart. Mrs. H. Milner amused her friends with anecdotes of his genius and eccentricity. Among others she told me that upon her asking him one day what Commentator on the Scriptures he would recommend, Goldsmith, after a pause, replied, “*Common Sense* is the best interpreter of the SACRED WRITINGS !” A domestic anecdote relative to the *Milner* family, who came from Somersetshire, must not be lost. Those conversant with the History of England well know that the unfortunate Duke of Monmouth, having landed at Lyme, in 1685, was soon after proclaimed king at Taunton. His object was to preserve the civil and religious liberties of Britain from destruction, with which they were threatened under the dynasty of the Stuarts. A lady who presided over a respectable female seminary at Taunton, waited upon the Duke with twelve of her pupils, presenting him as the defender of Protestantism, with a handsomely bound Bible, and offering him their congratulations. The new monarch was soon defeated, and perished on the scaffold ! His followers were by means of those barba-

rians, Kirke and Jefferies, visited with indiscriminate vengeance. The school was dispersed and ruined. The young ladies were so frightened, that one of them through a mere paroxysm of terror lost her life ! Mrs. H. Milner told me that her mother's mother was a pupil at the school, but the parents hearing of the indiscreet zeal of the conductress of the seminary, sent for their daughter a few days before, and thus providentially rescued her from the impending calamity !

Dr. Milner left behind him one son and ten daughters, so that the good old gentleman used facetiously to tell his friends that “his family was large, having ten daughters, and there was a brother for every one of them !” The son was a physician at St. Thomas's Hospital, and afterwards a practitioner of eminence at Maidstone for near half a century, where he died, much respected by the inhabitants of that town and its vicinity. The fortune which he had acquired by his profession as well as by marriage, was bequeathed to his sisters, who had lived with him, and between whom there subsisted a high degree of mutual affection. Upon the decease of the brother, the family continued to reside at Maidstone for a few years, when Mrs. Hester Milner and her only surviving sister removed to Islington. This sister dying, the subject of this memoir was the only one left of this numerous family. At Maidstone she was a member of the Presbyterian congregation under the pastoral care of the Rev. A. Harris ; and on her settlement at Islington, she attended the Rev. Nathaniel Jennings, whom she justly respected for his candour and piety. She was aware that these gentlemen were not alike in their religious creed, but she never troubled herself with speculative points, and was most commendably disposed to receive instruction from good men of every denomination.

Mrs. Milner possessed an excellent understanding, improved by a more than ordinary degree of reflection. In person, manners and acquirements, she was altogether of the old school. Her conversation was intelligent and instructive. She touched on interesting topics, and was pleased with information respecting them. With French and Italian she was well acquainted. Of *Telemachus* and of *Jerusalem Delivered* she had that relish of the original, that she could not bear any version of them, though it is acknowledged that their translators, Hawksworth and Hoole, executed their tasks with fidelity.

The writer of this article, who had the pleasure of being intimately acquainted with her, had the honour to be consulted respecting what books were best to be purchased for her winter's amusement. The Works of Lord Bacon and of Archdeacon Paley, as well as the Correspondence of Samuel Richardson and of Anna Seward, together with Fuller's Worthies of England, were procured for her by particular request. Sir Walter Raleigh's History of the World was another publication with which, notwithstanding its antiquated style, she was much pleased. The ordinary effusions of the press had no charms for her: she was edified only by works of established reputation. Nor was she (though leading a very secluded life) wholly devoid of curiosity. By special desire I accompanied her to Westminster Abbey, and a visit was meditated to Bunhill Fields. She held in veneration the illustrious dead—whose names were emblazoned by their genius, their patriotism, or their piety.

The deceased had a talent for poetical composition, and exercised it on tender and elegiac subjects. Some lines on a snow-drop, and also on that domestic little bird a robin, who had visited her house for several successive winters, were, on account of their delicacy, much admired. Stanzas likewise on the death of a favourite sister evinced the sensibilities of her heart. She had many manuscripts both in prose and poetry. Once indeed she furnished me with an article translated from the French for insertion in a periodical publication, and her friends have her translations of some of *Petrarch's Sonnets* in their possession.

Her opinions on almost every subject were marked by singularity. With difficulty she submitted to any medical prescription but what she thought her brother the physician had sanctioned, nor admitted in theology any sentiment or practice, but what she imagined her Father the divine had adopted. Observing one day at my house the beautiful engraving of the resurrection of a pious family, she exclaimed, after minutely noticing it, "I do not like that picture—there is the old man with his grey hairs and wrinkles; I have no ideas we shall rise with any of the deformities of age at the resurrection."

A cold brought on an illness which terminated her quiet and peaceful life. She was not even one day confined to her chamber, though her indisposition was severe. Medical assistance however skilful came too late to prove of any avail. She was found dead in her bed, the clothes untrampled—her features not in the least distorted, and with every appearance of tranquil dissolution. She had slept the

sleep of death! The very day before, she lamented to a female friend, that having gone thus far through the winter—this calamity should now befall her. But "the inevitable hour" which awaits every son and daughter of Adam had arrived. Not even patriarchal longevity exempts from the ravages of the last foe. *Methuselah lived nine hundred and sixty nine years, and HE DIED.*

Her property, which was very considerable, was devised in a well-written will of her own composition, to relatives, friends and charitable institutions. She bequeathed handsome sums to those excellent establishments—the Orphan School City Road, the Presbyterian Fund, and the Fund for relieving the Widows of Protestant Dissenting Ministers. Nor has she forgotten two faithful female-servants, who, liberally remunerated, are made comfortable during the remainder of their lives. Indeed her legacies have been numerous and liberal: and the writer must in justice add, that on the only two occasions he ever applied in behalf of the sacred cause of charity—the one the case of the French Protestants, the other an instance of individual distress, she gave to an extent that does honour to her memory.

Her remains were deposited in Maidstone church, along with those of "her dear brother and sisters," as she usually termed them, most of whom were like herself remarkable for longevity.

And now the insatiable grave hath closed upon them all, and will in like manner engulf the successive generations of mankind.

"But know that thou must render up thy dead,
And with high interest too! they are not thine,
But only in thy keeping for a season,
Till the great promis'd day of restitution,
When loud diffusive sound from brazen trump
Of strong-lung'd cherub shall alarm thy captives,
And rouse the long long sleepers into life,
Day-light and liberty!"

Thus though disease and accident may spare the children of men for a long series of years, approaching even to the revolution of a century, yet old age lurks behind, and, without respect of persons, bows down the human frame tottering and trembling into its original dust. Let not however this venerable period, the natural and uncorrupted wish of every rational being, be deprecated or despised. "To the intelligent and virtuous (says Dr. Percival), old age presents a scene of

tranquil enjoyments, of obedient appetites, of well-regulated affections, of maturity in knowledge, and calm preparation for immortality. In this serene and dignified state, placed as it were on the confines of two worlds, the mind of a good man reviews what is past with the complacency of a good conscience, looks forward with humble confidence in the mercy of God, and with devout aspiration to his eternal and ever-increasing favour!" *The days of our years are threescore years and ten, and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow, for it is soon cut off, and we fly away. So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto the acquisition of substantial wisdom.*

J. EVANS.

Islington, Feb. 18, 1817.

Died on the 25th day of January, THOMAS COMPTON, one of the Society of Friends, at his house, in *Booth Street, Spitalfields*, aged nearly 68 years, leaving a disconsolate widow (an example of every conjugal and maternal virtue,) eight sons, and four daughters, to sympathize with her in affliction.

He was a valuable member of society at large, without the shadow of sectarian principles;* and a most active guardian of the poor, in whose service may be traced the more immediate cause of his dissolution.

At the soup and parish poor houses in that extensive district, he will long be remembered for his assiduity; and each surviving associate in the wide field of labour, will yield to him the merit of most watchful and unceasing exertion, even at the sacrifice of health. Domestic comfort or private business, never presented an obstacle to his impression of public duty.

After the confinement of about a week to his chamber, and the progressive decay of nature, he quietly breathed his last in entire resignation, without sigh or groan—and although no cenotaph will record his worth, it is embalmed in the hearts of his immediate descendants, and many others, who can truly adopt the language of the Psalmist,

— "Behold the upright: for the end of that man is peace."

* Yet was he a firm believer in the simple and sublime doctrine of the Unity and Supremacy of God the Father. See *Foster's Narrative*, &c. p. 351, and the review of that work, *Mon. Repos.* Vol. X. p. 246.

Died at *Homerton*, near *Hackney*, MARGARET ANN CLENNELL, aged 9 years and 6 months: so little advanced in life, short must be this memoir of her existence! To a heart overflowing with affection to her parents and friends, and unremitting kindness to every living creature within her reach, she united such cheerful alacrity both of body and mind as endeared her to every one who knew her: her anxiety for information and consequent progress in knowledge, made her the desired companion of many more advanced in years, whilst her fond parents indulged the delightful dream of a future expansion of intellect, forming a character, in which knowledge, benevolence and utility, would have been eminently conspicuous.

Though the taste for composition had not appeared, yet its dawn in the taste of selection was often exerted; amongst other instances of this, she had chosen from the numerous pieces in the "*Original Poems*," "*The Address to the Violet*" (Vol. II. p. 113); this she wrote out and directed as a letter to her "dear father," and placed where she was certain he would meet with it. On the first of June of the past year, it pleased the Sovereign Disposer of all events to remove her from this state of being!—those who have lost a child so justly endeared, can best feel for her afflicted parents!

"Oh, if thou hoverest round our walk,
Or under every well known tree;
We to thy fancied shade would talk,
Whilst every tear is full of thee!"

Blessed with a promise of uncommon intellectual strength, taken from the life of this world at so early an age, the hopes of her friends and parents thus untimely frustrated—yet let not her removal be adduced as an instance of premature dissolution inevitably attending the speedy unfolding of such mental powers: here there was nothing to sanction such an idea, her disorder was entirely unconnected with the head. Mankind would indeed be a tremendous abortion, if the early opening of intellect was necessarily accompanied by early death. Let us not weaken our attempts in assisting the perpetual improvement of mind, so far as our individual exertions can forward it, by so palsying a consideration—the suggestion of a despairing imagination. If the finest production of the Father of Being should only be doomed, by his parental fiat, like the meteor of a moment, to a momentary duration, the consoling idea of the perpetual improveability of mind would have in this world at least, nothing to reward its exercise but unaccomplished, though perpetual effort; nothing but a baseless calculation, and that deferred hope which

maketh the heart sick! "Were we to form our systems on the credibility of such suggestions," says a writer alas too deeply interesting, "who would kill the darling of his heart with knowledge? The apprehensive nature of parents must shudder at the first scintillations of common sense, and fancy death to lie in ambush behind every shew of intelligence, the grave to spring a mine under the feet of genius: the skill of education would but betray its victims into the clutches of the universal enemy; the pen of the writer would become a poisoned arrow, the voice of the teacher would only be heard to sing a dirge over the extinction of his species!"

With others who have had like cause of grief, and are resigned under such a dispensation, her parents are thankful for the time, though short, this affectionate and lamented child was allowed to comfort them with her endearing society; they look forward with ardent expectation to an improved state of being where their child will be returned to their longing arms, where disorder, physical or moral, can have no existence, and where death itself will cease to be necessary! Praises, immortal praises to the Lord and Father of nature, who, whilst he afflicts by these bereavements, allows his rational offspring such a consolation, even in such sorrows!

On the 10th December, 1816, GEORGE, the infant son of Mr. Joseph GRISBROOK, of *Tenterden*. The immediate occasion of my transmitting to you an account of the death of one so young, is to state to the Protestant Dissenters in general, and particularly to those who avow their faith in the Divine Unity, and in the proper humanity of the Lord Jesus Christ, the following circumstance. On the day of the burial, a written inquiry was sent by the vicar of the parish, in what name, in what doctrine and faith, and by whom the deceased child had been baptized. To this an answer was sent, that it was baptized by the writer of this memorial, in the usual form; or according to our Saviour's own words, Matt. xxviii. 19. The vicar sent word that this was not satisfactory; and soon after in a note, that except it had been baptized in the name, in the faith and in the doctrine of the holy and indivisible Trinity, no burial service should be read at the grave over the corpse. It was of consequence buried without the church burial service. To console the parents, a funeral address was delivered in the house; about ten days after this, the vicar sent word

that he would read it in future; but positively and repeatedly denied our right to it. This led on to a correspondence with the deputies of the Protestant Dissenters, through their secretary and solicitor, Mr. Webster; the form of words used being stated, and our denomination that of *Presbyterians*, though like many other congregations, not having any connection with or acknowledging any ecclesiastical authority over us on the part of the Scotch Kirk. This was followed with letters from the committee, through their secretary, that the refusal was illegal; and that the burial service was matter of right and not of favour.

In two following instances, the burial service has been read over Unitarians; the vicar still denying our right. It was therefore judged to be necessary to insist upon it, in the case of Mr. Grisbrook's child, or that the burial service should be read at the grave. The right being now admitted, this was required merely as a public testimony of it, and took place on Friday the 14th, at half-past twelve, in the presence of a considerable number of persons of all denominations, collected to witness so unusual an event.

S. HOLDEN.

Tenterden, Feb. 19, 1817.

P. S. The above has not been sent to the *Monthly Repository* with an invidious intention, but as applying to a subject of an evidently public nature, interesting to Unitarians, and to all Protestant Dissenters.

On the 17th of December, at the advanced age of 81, J. MACE, Esq. of *Tenterden*, and one of the firm of the *Tenterden Bank*, after suffering for a long period from a cancer in his face. He was for many years in extensive practice as a surgeon and apothecary, and of high and deserved reputation in his profession; but had for some years retired from business. Active and ardent in his disposition, he ever tenderly felt for and sympathized with the afflicted; and impressed with a just sense of the importance of mental cultivation, he was ever prepared to give his support to every useful public institution. The general reading of our departed friend and brother was extensive, and his faith in the great leading principles of natural and revealed religion, established upon the firm basis of free, serious, and earnest inquiry, and full conviction. In the strict sense of the term an *Unitarian*, he took the greatest delight in those enlightening, consoling and animating sentiments which stand in connexion with, and flow from the unriouled supremacy, and the unchangeable goodness, love and

* Malkin's "Memoirs of his Child."

mercy of the one only living and true God, equally believing in the Lord Jesus Christ as the divinely inspired messenger of his truth and grace. He bore the trials of his concluding days with great fortitude and patience, although often wishing for the period of his removal, and closed his eyes upon the world with every appearance of serenity and peace.

S. H.

Edward Longdon Mackmurdo, Esq.

In the Obituary of *Mr. Mackmurdo*, p. 58, there is an error in the name and another in the date. The name should have stood *Edward LONGDON Mac-murdo*, Esq.: he died Jan. 28d, in his 61st year, and was buried in his family vault in Bunhill Fields.

INTELLIGENCE.

DOMESTIC.

RELIGIOUS.

The late Political Prayer.

The Prince Regent was assailed with mud, gravel, potatoes and stones on his return from the Parliament House. One of the Lords of the Bed-chamber appears to have believed that an air-gun was fired at his Royal Highness. He is perhaps alone in this persuasion, but all sane persons are agreed that the conduct of the populace was outrageous and criminal, and that the individual rioters are deserving of punishment. A mob is ill-fitted to judge of measures of state, much more to deal out retributive justice to the state actors. The first magistrate of the country is always entitled to respect, and especially when he is engaged in the exercise of the highest constitutional functions. If the people disapprove of the measures of government, it is their right, it is even their duty, and a duty of the most solemn kind, to assemble in a legal manner, and to express their sentiments, to state their wrongs, and to demand their rights, in language becoming free-men, BORN FREE.

These are, we believe, the views of the greater part of the well-informed and moral people of the United Kingdom. His Royal Highness's ministers, however, have judged this a fit occasion for alarming the nation with a report of the attack upon the Regent being the result of treasonable plots: it remains to be seen whether any such plots have been formed, and whether if they have had an existence they were any thing more than the mad schemes of a few half-witted or fanatic and starving desperadoes, unconnected with any body of people

whatever. In the mean time, the cry of treason serves the purpose of bringing the pursuit of reform into discredit, and of frightening the rich and the timid and the dependents upon the government into declarations and addresses, which for the moment give life and strength to the system of misrule which has reduced the nation to a state of unparalleled distress.

As usual, the ministers of the Regent have enlisted the church into their service, and the following manifesto, in the form of a prayer, has been put out by authority, and ordered to be read in all churches, on fourteen successive days:

“Almighty and most Merciful God, who in compassion to a sinful nation, hast defeated the designs of desperate men, and hast protected from the base and barbarous assaults of a lawless multitude, the Regent of the United Kingdom, accept our praise and thanksgiving: continue, we implore thee, thy protection of his Royal person. Shield him from the arrow that flieth by day, and from the pestilence that walketh in darkness; from the secret designs of treason, and from THE MADNESS OF THE PEOPLE.

“And whilst we pray for thy mercy and protection, give us grace, O God, to perceive and know what things we ought to do, lest impatient of evils, and unmindful of thy manifold goodness, we seek relief where relief cannot be found, and abandon those never-failing sources of national prosperity and happiness—obedience to thy commandments, and the fear of thy holy name.

“These prayers and praises we humbly offer to thy Divine Majesty, in the name and through the mediation of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.”

The people is a large phrase, and it is not quite consistent with decorum or gratitude or truth that the ministers

either of state or of religion should charge them with *madness*. If any of them be *mad*, the governors of church and state would do well to inquire *what has made them so?*

This part of the prayer has excited universal disgust and resentment. Mr. Brougham and Sir Francis Burdett have denounced it in the House of Commons as an insult on the people, and a solemn mockery of devotion.

In the second branch of the prayer there is a tacit acknowledgment that the governors and governed *ought to do something*: what the latter *ought to do* and what they *ought not to do* we have before stated,—they *ought not to run into violence*, but they *ought to use the means which the Constitution has put into their hands, of asserting and recovering their rights*:—what the former *ought to do* and *ought not to do*, is not difficult to conceive, though not very pleasant to them to state; perhaps, we might best express ourselves in sacred language, and therefore we refer the reader to *Daniel* iv. 27.

The compilers of the prayer deprecate *impatience of evils*, having probably in their memory the language of the ruling statesman of the day who has charged the people, the *mad people*, with an *ignorant impatience of taxation*. In spite of the gay lord and the ministers at the altar, it is to be feared that the multitude who *are an hungered* will still complain; and it might be a profitable speculation in the Cabinet Council, and in the meetings of ecclesiastics whether the diseased body politic might not be cured of impatience by being relieved from suffering. *Undo the heavy burdens and let the oppressed go free*; and if the people then complain, they may be justly accused of *madness*, and may be abandoned to the lash of the Noble Lord's eloquence, and to the prayers of the priests.

Another evil which the prayer points out is the *seeking of relief where relief cannot be found*. This ground of supplication, is, we hope not solid, and we are sure not respectful either to Parliament or to the Throne: for where do the people seek relief, but from the Prince Regent and the Two Houses? And to say that relief cannot be found *here*, is to throw a most unseemly suspicion upon the constituted authorities. If we may oppose

our opinion to that of the Archbishop of Canterbury's chaplain, to whom, probably, we are indebted for this strange piece of piety, we will venture to assert that the nation may find relief in the crown and the legislature, and that if they continue their constitutional exertions the relief is at no great distance.

On a future occasion we trust that the Bible will be searched for a precedent of prayer in time of national distress; there is a passage, *Nehemiah* ix. 32—37, which we would recommend as a pattern.

Christian Tract Society.

The eighth Anniversary of this Society, was holden on Monday the 17th of February, at the Old London Tavern, Bishopsgate Street. In the meeting for business the chair was occupied by the Treasurer, James Esdaile, Esq. The Report of the Committee was read by the Secretary. It commenced by repeating the declaration of the preceding Committee, that from the organized state into which the Society had now been brought, much of novelty was not to be expected in the detail of its proceedings and successes; but added that though the past year had been marked by no event of a very striking character, either favourable or unfavourable, and though the channels of distribution were nearly the same as in preceding years, the number of tracts which had been sent into circulation had exceeded that of any former period of the same length. The Report farther expressed the regret of the Committee that owing to the want of manuscripts adapted to the objects of the Society they had been able to publish during the last year only two new tracts, one from the pen of their old and valuable contributor, Mrs. Mary Hughes, the other by a gentleman who from its first institution had entered warmly into the design of the Society, and in many ways entitled himself to its best thanks. Of each of these tracts, forming Nos. 30 and 31 of the series, it was stated that 2000 copies had been printed, and it was added that owing to the continued and increasing demands for the Society's publications, the Committee has been obliged to reprint no less than ten of the earlier tracts, to the number of 17,500 copies—making, with the 4000 new tracts, the whole number printed in the course of the last year 21,500, being 11,500 more than were printed in the year preceding. The Report stated in reference to the past labours of the Society, that since its institution in 1809 it had printed in all 280,000 tracts, that of this number there had

been circulated previous to this anniversary 190,000, of which upwards of 23,000, had been distributed during the last year.

The following statement was given of the Society's present property.

In the Treasurer's hands.....	11	16	4
Due to the Society from Booksellers, Country Societies, &c.....	180	15	4
Estimated value of the Stock	235	13	0

428 4 8

Due from the Society for Printing, &c.....	78	18	0
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Leaving a balance of.....	349	6	8
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In favour of the Society.

The Report contained an earnest recommendation to the Subscribers to use their influence with their literary friends to furnish the Committee with manuscript tracts, suited, as to length, subject and style of composition, to the design of the Society; the pecuniary resources of the Society being represented as equal to the multiplication of its publications.

The Report having been read, thanks were voted to Mrs. Mary Hughes, and the other literary benefactors of the Society during the last year; to the Treasurer, Secretary, Committee, Auditors and the Collector, Mr. Marsom. The following gentlemen were afterwards chosen into office for the year ensuing.

James Esdaile, Esq. Treasurer.
Committee.

Rev. Thomas Rees, Mr. Frend, Mr. Parker, Mr. Foster, Mr. Hart, Mr. Gibson, Mr. Roberts, Mr. S. Barton, Mr. Bailey, Mr. Fennel, Jun. Rev. J. Evans.

Auditors.

Mr. Parkes, Mr. J. Taylor, Mr. Titford.

No Secretary was appointed, Mr. Rees having stated that it would be impossible for him again to accept that office, in consequence of an engagement into which he had entered with another Society, and the Committee not being prepared to recommend a successor. The Committee were empowered to fill up the vacancy as soon as they were able, Mr. Rees engaging to discharge in the mean time the duties of Secretary.

After the customary routine of the business of the Society had been gone through, the subscribers and their friends, to the number of about seventy, dined together on the usual economical plan, William Frend, Esq. in the chair. The day was passed with much harmony and spirit, the sentiments delivered from the chair being enlivened by the eloquent and pertinent

observations of the chairman, and by the addresses of the gentlemen whose names had been connected with some of them—among whom were Mr. Aspland, the first Secretary of the Society; the Treasurer, Mr. Esdaile, Mr. Wilks, Mr. Foster, and Mr. Gibson. Several new names were added to the list of Subscribers.

Orthodox Alarm in Ireland.

[We copy the following from a Cork newspaper: we have already, p. 116, given an account of the Sermon which has raised this outcry. Ed.]

To the Editor of the Cork Advertiser.

Wednesday, Aug. 14, 1816.

SIR.—I saw yesterday, for the first time, a Pamphlet, entitled, "A Sermon preached July 16th, 1816, at Bandon, before a Meeting of some of the Members of the Presbyterian Congregations of Cork and Bandon," and I confess I read it with concern. I had imagined that Ireland, or at least the South of it, had been uncontaminated by the leprous taint of Socinianism: and I would not have believed that any one pretending to ordination from any Christian Church, and who is (if I mistake not) paid by the country for promulgating the tenets of Christianity, would openly preach the Deistical doctrines of Antitrinitarianism. But I find by this pamphlet that I was deceived.

The Sermon is below criticism. It is not recommended by argument, learning, or eloquence; the place of which is occupied by canting liberality and real intolerance, or rhetorical flourishes about aerolites and thunder-storms, and cumbrous masses and mists, and stormy waves, *et cætera de genere hoc*. It should not have been noticed by me (who am, I hope, above the idleness of criticising frothy blasphemy), had not the preacher been a Presbyterian minister, and (as he asserts) urged to publish it by a Presbyterian congregation. Though not a member of that sect, I feel (as what serious Christian does not?) the highest respect for their truly Christian principles. Differing from them chiefly on points of Church government, I must bestow my tribute of applause on their Protestant creed, and their sound Trinitarian sentiments. I look therefore on this assumption of their name as highly impudent, to say no worse, and I hope that they will not suffer themselves to lie under the stigma of having given any countenance to the impieties of this pamphlet.

I am, Sir, your humble Servant,

NICENUS.

Case of Mr. Charles Herbert, a Sufferer for Conscience' Sake.

The following statement of a case of persecution and extreme distress occasioned by a firm adherence to Unitarian principles, is earnestly recommended to the attention of the readers of the *Monthly Repository*, and to the friends of rectitude and liberality in general.

Mr. Charles Herbert, conductor of a charity school, at Elham, near Canterbury, was, at the conclusion of the last year, expelled from his situation, the duties of which he had uniformly discharged with a strict regard to its requisitions, and on which he depended for the scanty maintenance of a family consisting of a wife and nine children, purely on account of his embracing Unitarian principles, and his frankness when called upon, in avowing his convictions. For many years previous to this event, his circumstances had been much straightened from the operation of the same narrow and persecuting spirit. He had long entertained objections to many parts of the church catechism and service, and from a particular dislike to a passage in the former, which relates to the imputation of Adam's sin to his innocent posterity, had left it out in the instruction of his *own* children. This omission quickly attracted the notice of the clergyman, who then officiated at Elham, and who also expressed himself highly dissatisfied with some peculiarities which he observed in Mr. Herbert's mode of tuition. These peculiarities, however, are such evident improvements, and tend so materially to facilitate the progress of the pupil in every branch of learning, that on an inspection of the school, the clergyman was obliged to acknowledge his error; nevertheless he would not consent to giving his acknowledgment the same publicity that he had to his groundless complaints. On the contrary he gave encouragement to a friend of his own, in establishing a school in a neighbouring village, by means of which Mr. Herbert's already scanty income was reduced to thirty-pounds per annum.

The malignity of opposition still continuing, baffled every effort to make known his improved system, and together with the very unfavourable circumstances attending the impoverished condition of Elham and its neighbourhood, rendered unprofitable to himself its important advantages. His mind, however, though depressed, still continuing unbroken and ingenuous, a few years since he incidentally met with the "*Letters to Mr. Wilberforce on Hereditary Depravity*," by a Layman," which opened to him a new and delightful field of theological reflection,

entirely coinciding with his preconceived opinions. Desirous of being further conversant with Unitarian writers, he communicated his wishes by letter, to Mr. Belsham, from whom he received a supply of tracts, in the contents of which he soon became deeply interested; and though he determined to maintain a strict adherence to his former line of conduct in the management of his school, so long as he remained in that situation, yet a few of these tracts found their way into the hands of some neighbours, who shewed a degree of interest in the same important inquiries. Intimations of these circumstances at length reached the ears of the present curate of the village, ever watchful to guard the sacred mysteries from the unwelcome intrusion of investigation and discussion. The orthodoxy of Mr. Herbert now appearing suspicious, he was warned before a conclave, consisting of the clergyman and the other resident trustees of the charity school, to give an account of his principles. A certain inquisitorial rudeness appeared in their conduct on this occasion, which ill accorded with the manly and independent spirit of Mr. Herbert, and to avoid misrepresentation he determined to deliver to the clergyman, in writing, an explicit declaration of his faith, which he did as follows: "I believe that Jesus of Nazareth is a proper human being, the greatest of all the prophets of God, descended from the family of David, and sent into the world to abolish the Jewish economy, and to teach the great doctrine of a future life; also that the world was formed by one Supreme God, and that it is governed by him, and that the loving our neighbours as ourselves, and being merciful even to brute beasts, are the duties of every Christian."

Although these convictions had no influence whatever on his conduct in the school, yet the clergyman and his friends now resolved to make this unequivocal voucher of his integrity the foundation of their future proceedings against him. They accordingly on the 27th of May, 1816, delivered to him in writing, a notice to quit the school and premises at the ensuing Michaelmas. All his remonstrances on the irregularity of the notice, on his not having violated any condition on which he was appointed,* and on the

* It was directed by a clause in the will of the gentleman who bequeathed the house and salary for the schoolmaster, that whoever was appointed to that situation should "be a true son of the Church of England;" but of this condition Mr. Herbert was not informed at his appoint-

plea of humanity in favour of a helpless family depending entirely upon his exertions in that situation for their maintenance, were disregarded, and the measure was persisted in with all the rigour which the clergyman and his colleagues could exercise.

But as they had exceeded their legal authority in the promptitude of their proceedings, and Mr. H. was wholly unprovided with any other situation or resource, the school remained under him after the expiration of the term, and in the mean time the affair was brought before some gentlemen, who were appointed what they called *out-trustees* of the school; that is, they did not reside in the parish, and whose sanction had not hitherto been formally obtained. At length, early in December, Mr. Herbert was summoned before these gentlemen, and again closely questioned respecting his faith, and particularly his denial of the Deity of Jesus Christ. As he still could not but acknowledge his convictions upon this head, he was further questioned as to his not quitting his situation in compliance with the notice; and peremptorily told that he must quit without fail on or before the 31st of December. His pleas for some degree of lenity were utterly disregarded; the school was taken away, and the combined influence of divines, justices, &c. is even now exerted in depriving this forlorn individual of scholars of every description; of those whose friends paid for their instruction, as well as those belonging to the charity school. The efforts of these gentlemen indeed were not confined to his expulsion from the situation which he had long holden, but a threat was uttered by the clergyman that his declaration should follow him wherever he went, in order to prevent him from obtaining a situation any where. But we trust that the dictates of rectitude and liberality, by the protection which they are ready to afford to injured worth, will obtain an effectual triumph over all such machinations.

Mr. Herbert with his numerous and helpless family is now "deprived of every stay save innocence and heaven." Under circumstances so imminently distressing, ~~ment,~~ nor indeed had he then any thoughts of leaving the church, as he had no acquaintance whatever with Unitarians, nor did he even know that there were such persons in existence. And after he had adopted his present opinions, he invariably caused the children committed to his care to be instructed in the doctrines of the church, without ever hinting to them that he was of a contrary opinion himself.

it is hoped that the generous friends of integrity, of enlightened and liberal principles, and indeed whoever will allow the plaintive cry of humanity to influence his breast, nor suffer its most pressing solicitations to be over-ruled by superstition, nor by the cold calculating spirit of worldly-mindedness, will be ready to exert their efforts on behalf of this worthy sufferer for conscience' sake, and of his innocent family. And if this statement should reach any benevolent individuals who may be acquainted with any situation or any means by which an ingenious man, a good arithmetician and algebraist, well qualified to act as a teacher, an accountant, or in any concern in which diligence and fidelity are the principal requisites, it is earnestly requested that they will be pleased to communicate the information either to the Editor of this Repository or to either of the undersigned.

We, the undersigned, have inquired into the truth of the above statement, and believe it to be strictly correct.

ABRAHAM HARRIS, Minister of the Unitarian Congregation at Maidstone.

THOMAS PINE, Secretary of the Kent and Sussex Unitarian Association.

Removals amongst Unitarian Ministers.

DR. ESTLIN, of Bristol, retires from his pastoral duties at *Lewin's Mead, Bristol*, at Midsummer next; and DR. CARPENTER, of Exeter, engages to succeed him as copastor with Mr. Rowe.

MR. FOX, of Chichester, has been unanimously chosen to succeed the late Mr. Fidler, at *Parliament Court, London*. He enters upon the pastoral office at Lady day. There will be a public service on his settlement, at which several of the London ministers have agreed to officiate. [For particulars see the *Wrapper*.]

MR. HUTTON, from *Dublin*, formerly of the York Academy, and late assistant minister to Mr. Tayler, of Nottingham, has accepted and entered upon the pastoral office, at *Walthamstow*, near London, vacated by the resignation of Mr. Cogan. Mr. Cogan's farewell sermon is, we understand, to be included in the two volumes of sermons, which at the request of his friends, he has sent to the press.

MR. W. JOHNSON has resigned the charge of the Presbyterian congregation at *Lewes*; and the congregation have engaged Mr. Horsfield, of the Unitarian Academy, Hackney, to succeed him at Midsummer.

[It is intended to resume this article occasionally; information is requested.

Ed.]

Unitarian Congregations in want of Ministers.

EXETER. At Midsummer there will be a vacancy here by the removal of *Dr. Carpenter* to Bristol. The congregation has two ministers: *Mr. Manning* has been for many years, and still continues one of the pastors of this ancient and respectable church.

LIVERPOOL, Renshaw Street. *Mr. Lewin*, the aged pastor of this congregation, has resigned his pastoral charge; his successor is not yet appointed.

EDINBURGH. *Dr. Smith* having removed to Yeovil, this congregation is destitute of a settled minister. *Mr. Wright* is now preaching at Edinburgh as a missionary from the Unitarian Fund. The situation would be very advantageous for a young minister wishing to attain the advantages of an University education.

NEWPORT, Isle of Wight. This congregation has been supplied for some time by *Mr. Gendier*, lately of the Unitarian Academy, Hackney, but ill health has unhappily laid him aside from his public duties. The service is at present carried on by the kindness of *Mr. Hughes*, one of the congregation, formerly minister of Leather Lane, London.

ILMINSTER, Somersetshire, vacant by the removal of *Mr. Evans* to Carmarthen.

LOUGHBOROUGH, Leicestershire, vacant by the resignation of *Mr. Owen*.

CHICHESTER. This congregation will be vacant at Lady-day, by the removal of *Mr. Fox* to *Parliament Court*, London, as successor to the late *Mr. Vidler*.

[This article, compiled at the request of many correspondents, is intended to be continued occasionally. Attested information on the subject of it is requested. Eds.]

MONTHLY RETROSPECT of PUBLIC AFFAIRS;

OR,

The Christian's Survey of the Political World.

THE Parliament has been re-assembled, but under most unhappy auspices. Before this meets the public eye the safeguard to the liberty of the subject will probably have been removed, and Englishmen, if suspicion is entertained against them, will be liable to be seized and detained in prison. That such a power should be lodged in a government in cases of imminent danger to the state cannot be doubted: but awful is the responsibility of those persons who advise such a measure, unless they are perfectly convinced that it is absolutely necessary, and that without it the danger to the whole community is extreme. Whether the times called for such a measure we have to learn. Facts will be declared, and upon them its propriety will be judged. Melancholy, however, is the state of the country; which, after the sufferings of so long a warfare, when it expected repose in the blessings of peace, finds itself harassed by the suspicion of real or pretended conspiracies, alike destroying confidence between man and man, and embittering the comforts of life. If our countrymen are so bad as they are represented to be, if such blasphemy and profaneness and even treason reigns among them, wonderful has been their secrecy, that those horrible vices have not been more publicly displayed. But, if they are so wicked, this wickedness cannot have sprung up in a moment. Nemo repente

turpissimus. Some causes must have brought it on; and when these are allowed by all parties, a remedy may easily be found. At any rate, if the lower classes are plunging themselves into vice, let the higher be more careful what examples they set. High and low, rich and poor, to you all the words of God are equally addressed! Reform whatever is amiss in your conduct. Remove the beam out of your own eye, and then ye will see better to take the speck out of the eye of your neighbour.

The Prince Regent went down with his usual state to address the Parliament, but through the immense multitudes which he passed the cheerful sound of hurrahs was not heard, but horrid hissings and hootings proclaimed the indignation of the populace. On his return from the House these symptoms of popular displeasure were increased, and even stones were thrown at the carriage. A pane on one side was at first started and afterwards smashed. The Prince, however, received no personal injury; but as soon as he had descended from his carriage a communication was made to the two Houses of the insults that had been offered to him, and the danger he had escaped.

The consequence of this communication was an immediate suspension of the discussions in the House as usual upon the speech from the throne. A Noble Lord

who accompanied the Prince in his carriage was examined, and he gave it as his opinion that the pane was starred not by stones or gravel, but by shot from an air-gun, and in this opinion perhaps he stands alone; and happily for the country he does stand alone, for it must affect every loyal mind with unfeigned sorrow that any man should be found who under the pretence of real or imaginary grievances should aim at a deliverance from them by means of assassination. The thing is too absurd to be entertained for one moment, when so many other causes may be assigned for the starring of the glass. It might have been from the throwing up of gravel by the hoofs of horses, or by wanton boys, or some enraged person who thereby vented his discontent, but without the least idea of taking away life. If we admit the notion of the use of an air-gun, it follows that the individual who used it aimed at assassination. But supposing that he had obtained his infamous end, what purpose could the taking away of the life of the first officer in the kingdom under the crown answer? Another Regent would have succeeded, and if the assassin had had associates in his guilt, no advantage could be derived to the party which employed him.

The pretended attempt at assassination may then be fairly dismissed from our minds, but the other outrages committed are sufficient to excite our commiseration and indignation. The first officer of the crown ought to be protected in the performance of his highest duty; and what is said of the first officer may be applied to the lowest constable, for there is an end of all society if individuals can assault with impunity those who are entrusted with the execution of the laws of the whole body.

The two Houses concurred therefore with great propriety in offering their homage of sorrow to the Prince Regent for the insults that had been offered to him in his way to and from the House, in their hopes that the perpetrators might be brought to condign punishment, and in the renewal of their loyal vows of allegiance to His Majesty's government. Addresses to the same purpose came up to town from all quarters of the country, but the matter seemed to be made of much greater importance than necessary when a solemn prayer was ordered to be read in all the churches upon this occasion. The Prince's life we are convinced was never in any danger, and the whole might be reduced to a wanton act, probably of idle and wanton persons, for the punishment of which the laws were sufficiently strong; and it may be matter of surprise that none of the malefactors were detected.

This will appear very extraordinary when we consider the numerous *cortège* with which the Prince is attended not only of soldiers but of constables. If the latter had been mixed properly among the people, one would think some one or other of the throwers of the stones would have been detected. Some persons have been apprehended for tumultuous behaviour, and it was attempted to bring a charge of treason, but on farther examination this fell to the ground, and they were admitted on bail. Whether they will be tried on any other charge time will discover.

But the issue of this day has been of far greater importance, and its results were not anticipated by ministers at the time they framed the speech from the throne. That dissatisfaction reigns throughout the country cannot be doubted, but it must be distinguished from disaffection. The source of this dissatisfaction being duly investigated will afford a sufficient clew to all the late proceedings.

About six years ago the Speaker of the House of Commons declared that there were mal-practices in the representation of the people at which our ancestors would blush, and it was said that one of the ministers was involved in them and screened from the punishment of so high a misdemeanour only from the universality and notoriety of such pernicious conduct. This speech of the Speaker's found its way into every corner of the kingdom, and led every one to inquire into the real representation of the Commons in Parliament, and how far that House as at present constituted was calculated to answer the purposes for which it was originally designed. One circumstance was too striking not to produce a very considerable sensation, namely, that the greatest county in the kingdom sends only two members to Parliament, whilst several individuals were known to possess the power of sending two or three times that number. It had also been stated in the House that seats in it were as notoriously bought and sold as stalls for cattle in a fair.

Such facts as these impressed upon the minds of every one, and at a time when the distresses of the nation forcibly called upon all to inquire into their causes, produced the effect that might have been anticipated. From one end of the kingdom to the other were meetings for petitioning Parliament, and from the opening of the House the table of the Commons was loaded with declarations of grievances couched in different terms, some respectful and others very unguarded in their language. These caused continual debates, and of the latter several were rejected, but the petitions to the Houses contain myriads upon myriads

of signatures, far more numerous perhaps than were ever known at any period of our history.

The uniform language of these petitions was a reform of the abuses existing in the representation of the people: some stated the reform they required, others were content to leave the reform to the wisdom of Parliament. The former class varied in its ideas of reform: some were for universal suffrage and annual parliaments; others for an extension of suffrage to householders and those paying direct taxes; others merely requiring the shortening of the duration of parliaments and correcting abuses that existed by the traffic and sale of boroughs, or the innovations of time depriving them of inhabitants. Several of the petitions excited considerable debates, in which the petitioners were treated with little ceremony. They were represented as wild, visionary, fanatical. The idea of universal suffrage seemed to fare the worst, and perhaps none of the speakers against it were aware that it existed even in Europe, and exists now in a small corner of it, if its institutions have not been destroyed by the French volcano. In a canton of Switzerland the right of suffrage commences at the age of fifteen, and is enjoyed by every member of that community at that age. The people are remarkable for their ingenuity and industry, and when the absurdity of admitting boys at the age of fifteen was inveighed against by a Frenchman to one of them, he shrewdly replied that the number of boys who voted in their assemblies was small in comparison of that of their men, and at any rate the enjoyment of such a right was not so contrary to common sense as the constitution of his kingdom, which allowed a boy of eighteen to dispose of their lives, liberties and property.

In opposition to these petitions, a more formidable engine was now employed. It was solemnly declared to the House that a spirit of disaffection and treason had widely spread itself, and that it could be met only by new powers in the government to suppress it. A committee was appointed by each House to investigate secretly this matter, and a green bag sealed up was delivered to each, containing the documents on which the apprehensions of extended disaffection was founded. After a short interval the committee delivered their report, in which to the surprise of the public, a great part referred to the notions of an obscure man in Yorkshire who died of a broken heart in consequence of a prosecution for what he supposed to be a grand discovery and one of the greatest benefits to mankind. The walls of the metropolis had in a few places

been scribbled over with the words of Spencean plan, but so little did they excite that very few persons gave themselves the trouble to inquire into its existence or nature. Some wretched men have been taken up and are now in the Tower, supposed to be the disciples of this Spence; and as their trial is soon expected, the nature of this plan and how far it is connected with schemes of a treasonable nature will be laid open to the public. Disaffection was also imputed to several societies under the names of Union societies, Hampden clubs and the like, but as nothing relative to them was asserted beyond what the public knows by advertisements and accounts of their proceedings, it is incumbent on the parties who drew up and those who countenance the report, to shew that the individuals connected with them had any designs against the government.

But whether there are individuals or not in the country really engaged in a plot or conspiracy, the report afforded sufficient ground for a plan to suspend the Habeas Corpus Act, to introduce some new law to protect the person of the Prince Regent, and to prevent improper assemblages of the people. These bills are now pending and seem likely to go through both Houses with a very considerable majority in their favour. In the mean time the question of the reform of Parliament remains to be decided. This is to be brought before the House by Sir Francis Burdett after the holidays, and then it will be seen whether corruption will be triumphant or such regulations be made as wisdom may dictate.

If the opinions of the people were taken upon this subject, it is probable that ninety-nine out of a hundred are for the reform of the House of Commons, and a very great majority of this number would be content with such a reform as might ensure the integrity and independence of the House. Of those who are against reform in general, most probably ninety-nine out of a hundred derive advantages from the present system, and of those who do not derive any advantages from it, probably the greater part are apprehensive of a greater danger from any change than of permanent benefit. In this difference of opinion let every one be fully persuaded in his own mind. Our kingdom is not of this world, yet living in this world we must be careful how we give a sanction to corruption, neither siding with a multitude to do evil, nor encouraging an evil cause because it is patronised by wealth, or power, or precedents of time.