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Sketch of the Character of the late Rev. William Hawkes, of Manchester.
By the Rev. J. Corrie, F. R. S.

Integritate vitæ Cato.

[MR. HAWKES was born February 10, 1759. He received his academical education in part under the Rev. Mr. Robins, at Daventry; and in part under the Rev. Dr. Aikin, at Warrington. He afterwards continued his theological studies for some time under the direction of the Rev. William Turner, of Wakefield. He first settled as a minister at Dob-lane, near Manchester, whence he afterwards removed to Bolton, where he, for a few years, officiated as assistant to the Rev. Philip Holland.

About the year 1789, a number of most respectable and intelligent gentlemen in Manchester, from their high opinion of Mr. Hawkes's talents and merit, were desirous to have the benefit of his instructions as a minister, and with this view erected the chapel in Mosley Street, at which he continued to preach, from the time it was opened till his death, August the 1st, 1820.]

THE late MR. HAWKES was so averse from every species of notoriety, not necessarily implied in the discharge of his professional duties, that he was much less generally known, than from his eminent talents might have been expected. By his friends, however, he was always highly valued; and they may now indulge the melancholy satisfaction of recollecting and recording, as well as they are able, those various excellencies of his character which, in their opinion, justly entitled him to respect and veneration.

The distinguishing faculty of his understanding was a most clear and vigorous judgment. This was discovered, not merely in the correctness with which he discriminated the various kinds of evidence, and pointed out the nice gradations by which probability ascends to moral certainty, but in particular, by the justness with which he estimated the real value, and marked the relative importance of different

truths.* He appeared always to seize and dwell upon those which were most sound, substantial and practical. His mind was more exercised in meditation than in reading, and hence it was not so much the compass, as the excellence of his knowledge; not so much its extent, as its selectness, that was admirable. On the subjects which he studied, however, his information was sufficiently ample, and his discourses from the pulpit were not less distinguished by the comprehensiveness of view which they discovered, than by the precision with which the truths he proposed to inculcate were stated, and the unexceptionable nature of the evidence by which they were substantiated.

The tenor of his preaching was rather moral than doctrinal. On proper occasions he stated and explained his theological opinions; yet whilst he expressed himself on these subjects with that decision which became his powerful understanding, his language never assumed the peremptory tone of controversy, and his mind appeared to be always pure from the slightest taint of intolerance.

We may hope, indeed, from the mercy of God, that opinions which from the very first ages of the gospel have been matter of perpetual controversy, and respecting the truth of which, men of the greatest learning, acuteness and integrity, continue to form the most opposite conclusions, cannot be of essential importance, either to the present or future happiness of mankind; and a minister may therefore reasonably be excused, if he

* Our condition had been extremely miserable, if our final state had been placed on an uncertain hill, and the way to it had been upon the waters, upon which no spirit but that of contradiction and discord did ever move.

JEREMY TAYLOR.

do not make them a very prominent object of his preaching. But whatever interest Mr. Hawkes might feel in the more dubious articles of his creed, he was deeply sensible of the infinite value of the great doctrine of a future state of existence and retribution, and of the supreme excellence of that pure and merciful system of morals, which Christianity enforces by the most powerful sanctions. With the former of these topics a variety of interesting inquiries are connected, which have in all ages exercised and perplexed the sagacity of the ablest men, and Mr. Hawkes would occasionally pursue these inquiries with that subtlety and precision of reasoning which they require: he sometimes likewise discussed those curious and difficult questions which embarrass the theory of morals; but his ordinary, his habitual and favourite subjects were those on which there is happily little difference of opinion amongst the wise and good; upon which, by the united aid of reason and revelation, we can make some near approach to certainty; and which have an immediate bearing on the great concerns of life.

These subjects afforded ample opportunity to discover the strength and soundness of his understanding. A mere grammarian is a most incompetent interpreter of those concise maxims, in which the great founder of our religion has compressed the spirit of his morality. Thoroughly to understand and properly to apply them, a knowledge of the terms in which they are promulgated, must be united with a knowledge of the subject to which they relate; a knowledge of the world as it really exists, and of human nature as modified by the circumstances in which men are actually placed. They must be studied with the aid, as it were, of a reflected light. In Mr. Hawkes, that enlargement of mind and familiarity with general and abstract principles, which are the fruits of a liberal education, were happily combined with that knowledge of life which is the result of attentive observation and experience. He was eminently successful in exhibiting the Christian character under a form of high, but attainable and practicable excellence; in demonstrating the profound wisdom of our Saviour's precepts; in pointing out the necessary and blessed tendency

of Christianity to refine, to exalt and ennoble human nature; in shewing, that, far from rejecting, it adds new purity and lustre to the light of reason; that, far from disdaining, it adopts and enforces with a deeper insight into the nature of man, and a more tender mercy for his infirmities, every virtue which has adorned the lives, or been recommended in the writings of the great philosophers of ancient and modern times; and that whatever be the form of his devotion, and whatever the articles of his creed, he is the truest disciple of Christ who discharges most steadily, wisely and magnanimously, the great moral duties of life.

These observations relate to the matter of Mr. Hawkes's discourses. That in fact was what arrested the attention of his auditors; it was only on reflection, that they adverted to the inferior merits of style and delivery. They then recollected, that he spoke with the earnestness and solemnity which necessarily attend a deep conviction of the truth and importance of what is delivered; * that his manner was perfectly easy and natural; that his language was correct and pure; his style simple, forcible, and of the most lucid perspicuity. It was rarely indeed, if ever, sufficiently impassioned to admit the bolder figures of rhetoric; but there was always that smooth and melodious flow of diction, that structure and modulation of the periods, which distinguish a finished composition, and discover a cultivated ear, and a taste formed on the best models. The tones of his voice, too, happily accorded with the weight and value of the sentiments he expressed, and contributed to render his "strong reason and masculine sense," still more interesting and impressive.

In his morning public services Mr. Hawkes used a printed Liturgy.† This

* *Reconditas, et exquisitas sententias mollis et pellucens, vestiebat oratio—nec vero hæc soluta, nec diffuentia, sed adstricta numeris; non apertè, nec eodem modo semper, sed variè, dissimulariterque conclusis.*

Cic. ad Brutum, 274.

But the eloquence of Mr. Hawkes had more power than Cicero ascribes to that of Calpurnius.

† In the afternoon service, during

was prepared by himself, and is principally a compilation from other similar works. Of the four forms of which it consists, two are taken, with little alteration, from the Liturgy of our Established Church. But though in this work Mr. Hawkes has not the merit of originality, he has in an eminent degree that of judicious selection. The sentiments are every where pure, holy, rational; the style, even in those services which are not adopted from the national ritual, is characterized by a dignified simplicity, not unworthy of that venerable formulary; and though every word appears to have been weighed and scrutinized with the utmost severity of judgment, there is still diffused over the whole that chastened and temperate fervour of devotion which ought to animate our addresses to Him, who is not only the greatest, but the best of beings. It is perfectly rational, without being cold or meagre, and gratifies the feelings, without offending the understanding.

It is in the professional character of Mr. Hawkes alone that the public can be interested; but it may be allowable to add, that he discharged all the duties of social and domestic life, with scrupulous correctness and propriety. In all he said and all he did, there appeared a calm consciousness of ability to judge aright, and of rectitude of intention; which produced a manly firmness and steadiness of conduct. His manners, though perfectly plain, were those of a person habituated to good society. There was a little reserve in them, not unbecoming the simplicity and dignity of his character. He was entirely free from affectation. His nature was abhorrent of all disguise, parade or art; and of every thing mean or sordid. Manchester abounds in men eminent for general ability, and in particular for strength and energy of mind; and it is a sufficient proof of the vigour of Mr. Hawkes's understanding, and the superiority of his intellectual powers, that by persons of this description, he was, during his whole life, beloved, admired and honoured.

It has been already remarked, that

several of the latter years of his life, he used manuscript forms of his own composition.

Mr. Hawkes was perhaps not so extensively known to the world, as from his profession and talents might have been expected. The noblest reputation to which a minister can aspire, is that which arises from the faithful discharge of his ministerial duties; from his exemplary labours for the improvement of his flock in Christian knowledge, and their edification in the virtues and graces of the Christian character; and this reputation Mr. Hawkes enjoyed in a truly honourable degree. It is not surprising that he should have disdained all the petty intrigues and artifices by which some persons build up for themselves a little fabric of celebrity among the writers or preachers of their day; yet while there is true wisdom as well as true greatness of mind, in estimating the possession infinitely above the reputation of talents and acquirements, it is greatly to be lamented that, in minds of this high order, there is too frequently a reluctance to appear before the world; a want of what is surely a generous ambition to assume that rank among men of letters or philosophers,* which they are eminently fitted to adorn. They indulge a fastidiousness of judgment which they find themselves unable to satisfy. They compare their own performances, only with models of the choicest excellence, or perhaps with some ideal image they have formed of unattainable perfection; and are discouraged by an inferiority which could be discovered by themselves alone. It is happy for society when men thus highly-gifted are placed in circumstances that call forth the utmost exertion of their faculties. Had Mr. Hawkes been thus situated, his fame would undoubtedly have been perpetuated by some masterly productions; that would have descended to a remote posterity with those of a Butler, a Balguy, a Law and a Paley.

* *Est enim gloria solida quædam res, et expressa, non adumbrata: ea est consentiens laus bonorum, incorrupta vox benè judicantium de eccellente virtute; ea virtuti resonat tanquam imago; quæ quia rectè factorum plerumque comes est, non est bonis viris repudianda.*

Cic. Tuscul. 14, 2.

*Letter of Mr. Jefferson's to a Quaker,
in Answer to a Letter expressing
great Concern for his Soul.*

(From the American Newspapers.)

Monticello,

SIR, September 13, 1813.

I HAVE duly received your favour of August 29, and am sensible of the kind intentions from which it flows, and truly thankful for them, the more so as they could only be the result of a favourable estimate of my public course—as much devoted to study as a faithful transaction of the trust committed to me would permit.

No subject has occupied more of my consideration, than our relations with all the beings around us, our duties, and our future prospect. After hearing all which probably can be suggested concerning them, I have formed the best judgment I could, as to the course they prescribe, and in the due observation of that course I have no recollections which give me uneasiness. An eloquent preacher of your religious Society, Richard Mott, in a discourse of much unction and pathos, is said to have exclaimed aloud to his congregation, that “he did not believe there was a Quaker, Presbyterian, Methodist, or Baptist, in heaven.” Having paused to give his congregation time to stare and wonder, he added, that in “heaven God knows no distinction, but considered all good men as his children, and brethren of the same family.”

I believe with the Quaker preacher, that he who observes the moral precepts in which all religions concur, will never be questioned at the gates of heaven, as to the dogmas in which all differ; that on entering there the Aristides and Catos, the Penns and Tillotsons, Presbyterians and Baptists, will find themselves united in all the principles which are in concert with the Supreme Mind. Of all the systems of morality, ancient and modern, which have come under my observation, none appears to me as pure as that of Jesus. He who follows this steadily, need not, I think, be uneasy, although he cannot comprehend the subtilties and mysteries erected on his doctrines by those who, calling themselves his special followers and favourites, would make him come into the world to lay snares for all understandings but *theirs*.

Their metaphysical heads, usurping the judgment-seat of God, denounce as *his* enemies all who cannot perceive the geometrical logic of Euclid, in the demonstrations of St. Athanasius, that three are one and one three. In all essential points you and I are of the same religion, and I am too old to go into unessentials. Repeating, therefore, my thankfulness for the kind concern you have been so good as to express, I salute you with friendship and brotherly love,

TH. JEFFERSON.

Omelia del Cittadino Cardinal Chiaramonti, Vescovo d'Imola, &c. &c. Imola: Nella Stamperia de la Nazione, Anno vi della Libertà: Homily of the Citizen Chiaramonti, Bishop of Imola, now Pope Pius the VIIth, addressed to the People of his Diocese, 1797.

THE genuineness of this curious document, though once denied, is now so fully recognized as to require no observation. A great many editions were printed of the Italian text; two French translations appeared, one of which was made by the celebrated Grégoire; a German translation was published at Sulzbach, and a Spanish one at Philadelphia, by a South American. If the sentiments of the holy father are those of the bishop of Imola, it will be a pleasing discovery for distrustful politicians, that there is one sovereign at least (and not the most contemptible) who recognizes in their full extent the claims of civil liberty, and who has been their spontaneous and their eloquent advocate.

It is not our object to criticise the high-priest of Rome. That were, indeed, an adventurous task. We merely mean to shew, and we do it with heartfelt satisfaction, that political freedom has a voice to thunder in the Vatican, and that the chair of St. Peter (*mirabile dictu!*) is at last filled by an honest Republican. For the rest we shall merely give a few extracts from the Pontiff's address. We shall then leave them to the consideration of our readers, persuaded that they will find matter there for serious reflection, and that our impressions will be anticipated by their own.

“When his duties to God are discharged, there are many inferior ones

which man owes to himself. The pure principles of reason, his own physical constitution, as well as an irresistible impulse towards his own felicity, teach him to watch over his preservation—his betterment—his well-being in general. All his views, tending to that sublime end to which the Almighty has destined him, controlling his desires and leading his heart to virtue, while he advances his own perfection, he impedes not, but rather promotes the perfection of society. Shrink not, beloved brethren, from the duties that are imposed on you—deem not the lesson too severe—call it not unfriendly to liberty. It is the essence of liberty; of that genuine liberty which is founded on philosophy and religion; and not the spurious principle which allows the monstrous privilege of doing well or ill, of acting viciously or virtuously, according to the waywardness of an unbridled will. Happy, my brethren, will ye be, if the liberty ye enjoy serve but to promote the glory of God, to regulate and controul your own conduct, and to increase the comfort of your fellow-men; thrice happy if you know and claim that higher, nobler freedom spoken of in those golden words of our Saviour, ‘*Si ergo vos Filius liberaverit verè liberi eritis.*’” *

“The Democratic form of government adopted among us, my beloved brethren, is not only not opposed to these views, not only in accordance with the spirit of the gospel, but it requires the especial exercise of those sublime virtues which are learned only in the school of Jesus Christ, and which, if religiously practised, will establish your own felicity, as well as the glory and splendour of your republic. Banish, then, from you the spirit of party, of passion, of selfish interest and ambition, and every unholy desire; for these are unworthy of the virtuous man and the Christian; these will bring you no enjoyment, but delude you to your ruin, through the delusive glimmerings of false and fantastic glory. Let our Democracy be founded on that elevating virtue which leads man upward to the ineffable Divinity—that virtue which is awakened by our natural sense of right, and

guided by the purer radiance of the gospel.”

“I speak not of Athens, of Sparta, of the laws of Lycurgus or Solon, nor of Carthage, though the rival of Rome; but to the Roman Republic itself our affections, our dearest recollections turn. A thousand pens have celebrated virtues on which I shall now be silent; but learn, my brethren, a lesson from him of whom it was said, that when fame most caressed him, he was least anxious for her smiles; learn from Cato of Utica, the means by which the Romans established their fame and extended their republic. ‘Think not,’ said he to his fellow-citizens, ‘think not that the arms of our ancestors alone enlarged our Republic. Were it so, that Republic would be wider and fairer at the present moment; for we are stronger in citizens, in arms and horses, than our forefathers were; but their views were different from ours—their virtues we have abandoned. Their system was one of industry at home, of moderation abroad, of prudence and foresight—not misled by passion nor degraded by vice.’ The virtues, indeed, of these illustrious Republicans extorted the praises of the venerable fathers of the church. St. Augustine commemorates them with honour, and draws their outlines in a way worthy of himself. Their glorious fame was the fit reward of their labours and their virtues. It was conferred on them by that Supreme Being who has crowns for the deserving. Their conduct, indeed, gave additional radiance to their liberty. Our moral virtues, which are, in other words, a love of order and decorum, will make us good Democrats; members of a pure Democracy, anxious only for the common prosperity, and far removed from hate and perfidy and ambition; from the encroachment on others’ rights, or the neglect of our own duties. Thus shall we preserve a genuine equality, maintained by laws acting equally on every member of society, to direct, to protect or to punish; laws, requiring from every individual of the Democracy the discharge of the duties he owes to God, to his neighbour and to himself; laws which give the fullest scope to his

* John viii. 36.

* Sallust, i. in Catil. 4.

exertions for his own and for the general good, while he receives in return every blessing which the protection of society can confer;—a beautiful system of equality, derived from the rights of nature, and adorned by the influence of philosophy. The high end of our Democracy should be to effect the greatest possible union of sentiments and feelings, of moral strength, to make society, as it were, a brotherhood; such a brotherhood must be raised on the foundation of the greatest possible virtue, which is the only root of so lovely a union.

“Such are your duties—such be your cares! Mark what a mighty influence such principles must have on the virtue and the happiness of man. A civil equality, a regulated liberty, affection and peace delightfully blended, these are the essentials, these are the honour of the Democratic form of governments. Other systems may be satisfied with minor virtues; but all these are required by ours: to be genuine Democrats you must be citizens of genuine virtue; study, follow the gospel, and you will be the joy of the Republic.

“Bow down with me, my brethren, before the inscrutable designs of Providence. Let the Catholic religion be the object most precious to your heart, to your devotion, to all your feelings. Believe not that it is opposed to a Democratic government. Live united to your Saviour, and you may indulge the hope of eternal happiness; you will secure your own temporal well-doing and that of your fellow-men; you will honour the Republic and those who direct it. Yes! my dear brethren, be good Christians, and you will be the best Democrats.*

“And you, my beloved co-labourers, to whom are assigned the different portions of my Christian flock,—you, who bear with me the spiritual weight of the people of God,—unite with me to support the Catholic religion, and use every effort, that the followers of Jesus Christ may be obedient to the magistrates and to the Republic.”

B.

* Si, miei casi Fratelli, siate buoni Cristiani e sarete ottimi Democratici.

SIR, *September 1, 1820.*
A CAMBRIDGE man, [p. 344,] proud, no doubt, of the honour of his Alma Mater, appears to be somewhat angry because one of our Dissenting body is said to have received collegiate honours from beyond the mighty Atlantic waters; and he asks, how many of our brethren plume themselves upon what he is pleased to regard as half-fledged dignities. I am not aware that literary distinctions are the more valuable because they spring up in a soil that is subject to the regulations of the King of Great Britain: but I know that our English dignitaries have not unfrequently shone in lights borrowed from the universities of the continent, and I can see no reason why your cis-atlantic correspondent should speak in so slighting a manner of those that emanate from American professors. Every thing in this life has a comparative value; and if the Colleges of Oxford gave titles of honour in the days of Alfred, the College of Jesuits at Rome might, with much better reason, have ridiculed in those days the honours worn by our Saxon forefathers, than any one can now disdain the growing science and taste of American society. Brown University in Rhode Island, and that of Columbia in Carolina, and others which are rising on those desert spots where but lately the backwoodsman hunted the deer and lived in his wigwam, are, I conceive, beyond comparison more eminent when compared with an English university, than was Oxford when compared with Rome in the days of Alfred. Can those seats of learning alone be wise which are loaded with wealth? Let them speak for themselves. Even in them, it is the servitors, the sizers, who are generally the best scholars, and have turned out the cleverest men. Can a Magister Artium, or a Doctor Divinitatis, have a legalized existence only where royal favours are bestowed? There is something ultra-royal in all this. Alas! for poor America, if monarchy alone can give literary honours! Alas! for that State which thinks itself wise in incurring only those expenses in its government which Milton calls “the trappings of a monarchy”! If they do not renounce all pretensions to learning, they must at least resign the imaginary plumes of science and of the arts.

And if it be thus, I fain would ask, wherein consists the mighty difference between the honours of a poor Scotch college, and those of a poor American university? When I use the term *poor*, I beg I may not be misunderstood. I am referring to an anecdote in the life of Dr. Johnson, who, when he visited the University of St. Andrew's, I think, heard great complaints of the poverty of the College, and, in the pure strain of urbanity for which he was renowned, comforted them with the persuasion that *they would get rich by Degrees*. I have not yet heard that the American literary men are attempting to get rich in this way. I believe they never sell their honours. And I would have your correspondent in Cambridge be so good as to recollect, that we Dissenters cannot expect to receive literary distinctions from the Church Universities of England at any rates; and therefore, if we are desirous of having them, in order to render our names profitable to the booksellers who pay us for the use of them, or to give celebrity to an academical institution or a school, or to add an importance to our own dear selves, we are compelled either to receive them for nothing from a transatlantic seat of learning, or to pay the price of the day to one of the royal institutions of Scotland. I have seen the whole process of doctor-making, and I have known the cost of it; but having for many years resided at an inconvenient distance from these seats of learning and springs of honour, I cannot tell how the "commutation strange" is now brought about, nor on what terms; but, until I learn otherwise, I shall apprehend the same elaboration is employed which some thirty years ago I witnessed "*pour ériger en oracle*" the voice of a reverend divine in the West of England, now dead; in order that theology might, through his honoured lips, be better distilled, and better suit a certain class of professing Christians.

Let me enter a caveat, however, against lessening the merit of those gentlemen who have received their academical titles as the fit reward of their industry at college, or the extraordinary abilities they there displayed. I know some who richly deserve the honours they wear, and I respect those honours when I see them appended to

their names. Those gentlemen dignify their titles; their titles add nothing to them.

But who of us, Mr. Editor, that are not Cambridge or Oxford men, are so aristocratical as to think that we should be "guilty of petty treason," were we to receive, and to avail ourselves of, a diploma from Boston, or even from Evansville or the Prairie of Birkbeck? If any body of professors can qualify a man to act either as a divine, a physician or a philosopher, they may surely give him an authority to instruct others when his college education is completed. The "Go teach all nations," is the property of one as well as of another set of learned men, nor will our American brethren suffer the mother country to monopolize this privilege, although a Cambridge, and after him an Oxford scholar, be disposed to enter the lists with them to forbid them the prize. "Of all the cants that are canted in this canting world," surely the cant of a monopoly of learning is the most intolerable.

With a high respect for true genius and learning, even in a plain Mr., I am, Sir, from every assumption of a literary aristocracy,

A DISSENTER.

Sir W. Scott's Judgment on the Patent Coffin Case.

CONSISTORY COURT, DOCTORS' COMMONS, Nov. 8.

The office of the Judge promoted by Gilbert against Busward and Boyer.

THIS important and novel proceeding, which had been argued at great length on a former day, came on for judgment before Sir Wm. Scott this morning, who proceeded to the following effect:—

This suit is brought by John Gilbert, parishioner of St. Andrew, Holborn, against John Busward and Wm. Boyer, churchwardens, for the offence of obstructing the interment of his wife, Mary Gilbert. The criminating articles state in substance, that she was a parishioner, that she died 2nd March, 1819; the body was deposited in an iron coffin, and proper notice given of the intended interment on the 9th; but that the churchwardens prevented by force the burial taking place, and in consequence thereof the body was deposited in the bone-house; that such

iron coffin takes up less space than a wooden coffin, and is so constructed as to prevent the corpse from being taken out. That again on the 14th April, in the present year, a written notice was given to the rector, churchwardens and sexton, of an intended funeral on the 18th, and a written answer returned by the churchwardens, that they would not permit it; that the demand for interment was made on the day mentioned, but the churchwardens refused to permit the interment, unless the body was taken out of the iron coffin, and forbade any grave to be prepared.

The defensive allegation states in substance, that the account given by Gilbert misrepresents the transaction; that nothing was said by Gilbert or the undertaker about an iron coffin in the first inquiries, though then informed that the parish would not receive one; but Gilbert said, it was to be of wood. He paid the usual fees, and then declared it to be of iron, refusing to take back the fees; that a Select Vestry being assembled, and informed of it, passed a resolution not to admit the iron coffin, and a copy of such resolution was served upon the undertaker, who threatened the officer who brought it. That on March 9, a forcible entry was made into the burial ground and church-yard, and a disturbance created; but the body was returned to the bone-house; that the parish is large and populous, 30,000 parishioners, and increasing; annual burials above 800, and increasing; three burial-grounds, besides the church-yard, all nearly filled with corpses; that they would all soon be rendered useless by the introduction of iron coffins; that it is not possible to get a new burial-ground but at a great expense, and also at a great distance; and that their proceedings had been all guided and authorized by the Select Vestry, and by the parish at large.

It appears that the suit was begun under great mutual irritation, which is now properly subsided; and the parties have agreed to take the opinion of the Court on the dry question of right, without introducing with that question any imputation of the conduct on either side, or engrafting on it any demand of penalties to be inflicted, or of costs to be decreed. In this act of amnesty the Court entirely concurs, and therefore forbears to repeat any

of the wanderings into which this case has strayed since the transaction which gave it birth.

Before entering upon the immediate question, it may not be totally useless or foreign to remark briefly, that the most ancient modes of disposing of the remains of the dead, recorded by history, are by burial or burning, of which the former appears the more ancient. Many proofs of this occur in the sacred history of the patriarchal ages, in which places of sepulture appear to have been objects of anxious acquirement, and the use of them is distinctly and repeatedly recorded. The example of the divine Founder of our religion, in the immediate disposal of his own person and those of his followers, has confirmed the indulgence of that natural feeling which appears to prevail against the instant and entire dispersion of the body by fire, and has very generally established sepulture in the customary practice of Christian nations. Sir Thomas Brown, in his treatise on urn-burial, thus expresses himself (it is his quaint but energetic manner):—"Men have been fantastical in the singular contrivances of their corporal dissolution; but the soberest nations have rested in two ways, of simple inhumation and burning. That interment is of the elder date, the examples of Abraham and the patriarchs are sufficient to illustrate. But Christians abhorred the way of obsequies by burning; and though they stuck not to give their bodies to be burnt in their lives, detested that mode after death, affecting rather a depositure than absumption, and properly submitting unto the sentence of God, to return not unto ashes but unto dust again." But burning was not fully disused till Christianity was fully established, which gave the final extinction to the sepulchral bonfires. The mode of depositing in the earth has, however, itself varied in the practice of nations. "*Mihl quidem*," says Cicero, "*antiquissimum sepulture genus id videtur fuisse quo apud Xenophontem Cyrus utitur.*" That great man is made by that author to say, in his celebrated dying speech, "that he desired to be buried neither in gold nor in silver, nor in any thing else, but to be immediately returned to the earth." "What," says he, "can be more blessed than to mix at once with

that which produces and nourishes every thing excellent and beneficial to mankind?" There certainly, however, occurs very ancient mention (indeed the passage itself rather insinuates it indirectly) of sepulchral chests, or what we call coffins, in which the bodies, being enclosed, were deposited so as not to come into immediate contact with the earth. It is recorded specially of the patriarch Joseph, that, when dead, he was put into a coffin and embalmed; both of them, perhaps, marks of distinction to a person who had acquired other great and merited honours in that country. It is thought to be strongly intimated by several passages in the Sacred History, both Old and New, that the use of coffins, in our sense of that word, was made by the Jews. It is an opinion that they were not in the use of the two polished nations of antiquity. It is some proof that they were not, that there is perhaps hardly, in either of them, a word exactly synonymous to the word coffin; the words in the Grecian language usually adduced, referring to the *feretrum* or bier on which the body was conveyed, rather than to a chest in which it was enclosed and deposited; and the Roman terms are either of the like signification, or are mere general words, chests or repositories for any purposes, (*arca* and *coculus*, &c.), without any funeral meaning, and without any final destinations of their deposition in the earth.

The practice of the sepulture has also varied with respect to the places where performed. In ancient times, caves were in high request; mere private gardens or other demesnes of the families; enclosed spaces out of the walls of towns, or by the sides of roads; and, finally, in Christian countries, churches and church-yards, where the deceased could receive the pious wish of the faithful who resorted thither in the various calls of public worship. In our own country, the practice of burying in churches is said to be anterior to that of burying in what are now called church-yards, but was reserved for persons of pre-eminent sanctity of life: men of less memorable merit were buried in enclosed places not connected with the sacred edifices themselves. But a connexion, imported from Rome in 750, by an Archbishop

Cuthbert, took place at that time, and churches were surrounded by church-yards, appropriated entirely to the burial of those who had in their lives continued to attend divine service in those churches, and who now became entitled by law to render back into those places their remains into the earth, the common mother of mankind, without payment for the ground which they were to occupy, or for the pious offices which solemnized the acts of interment.

In what way the mortal remains are to be conveyed to their last abode, and there deposited, I do not find any positive rule of law or of religion that prescribes. The authority under which they exist is to be found in our manners rather than in our laws; they have their origin in sentiments and suggestions of public decency and private respect; they are ratified by common usage and consent; and, being attached to subjects of the gravest and most impressive kind, remain unaffected by private caprice and fancy, amidst all the giddy revolutions that are perpetually varying the modes and fashions that belong to lighter circumstances in human life. That a body should be carried in a state of naked exposure, would be a real offence to the living, as well as an apparent indignity to the dead. Some coverings have been deemed necessary in all civilized and Christian countries; but chests containing the bodies, and descending into the grave along with them, and there remaining in decay, don't plead the same degree of necessity, nor the same universal use. In the western part of Europe, the use of sepulchral chests has been pretty general. An attempt was made in our own time, by an European sovereign, to abolish their use in his Italian dominions; much commended by some philosophers, on the physical ground that the dissolution of bodies would be accelerated, and the virulence of the fermentation disarmed by the speedy absorption of all noxious particles into the surrounding soil. Whatever might be the truth of the theory, the measure was enforced by regulations prescribing that bodies, of every age and of both sexes, of all ranks and conditions, and of all species of mortal disease, and every form of death, however hideous and loathsome, should be nightly tum-

bled, naked and in the state they died, at the sound of a bell, into a night-cart, and thence carried to a pit beyond the city walls, there to rot in one mass of undistinguished putrefaction. This system was so strongly encountered by the established habits, as well as by the natural feelings of a highly civilized and polished people, that it was deemed advisable, at no great distance of time, to bury the edict itself by a total revocation. In the southern American establishments of the European nations, coffins do not appear to be used.

In our country, the use of coffins is extremely ancient. They are found of great apparent antiquity, of various forms and of various materials—of wood, of stone, of metals, of marble, and even of glass. (See *Gough's Sepulchral Monuments*.) Coffins, says Dr. Johnson, are made of wood and various other matters. From the original expense of some of these materials, or from the labour necessary for the preparation of them for this use, or from both, it is evident that several of them must have been occupied by persons who had filled the loftiest stations of life. In modern practice, chests or coffins of wood or lead, or both, are commonly used for persons who can afford to pay for them; for persons of abject poverty, whom the civil law distinguishes by the title of the *misera-liter egeni*, what is called a *shell* is used, and which I understand to be an imperfect coffin, and in very populous parishes is used successively for different individuals, unless charity, public or private, supplies them with a better. Persons dying at sea, are, I believe, usually committed to the deep in their bed-clothes and hammock; but I am not aware that any of these are nominally and directly required. A statute, 30th Charles II., has required that the funeral vestment shall be made of wool, and coffins must, by the same statute, be lined with wool, but the use not enjoined. I observe that in the funeral service of the Church of England, there is no mention (and, indeed, as I should rather collect, a studied avoidance of the mention) of coffins. It is throughout the whole of that service, the *corpse* or the *body*. The officiating priest is to meet the *corpse* at the gate of the church-yard; at certain parts of the service, dust is to be thrown, not upon

the *coffin*, but upon the *body*. Certain parts of the service are to be recited while the *corpse* is making ready to be put into the grave. I observe likewise, that in old tables of parish fees, a distinction is stated between coffined funerals and uncoffined funerals in point of payment. There is one of 1627, quoted by Sir Henry Spelman, in his *Tract de Sepultura*, where a certain sum is charged for coffined burials, and half the same sum for uncoffined burials, and expressly under those general heads of coffined and uncoffined funerals. From whence I draw this conclusion of fact, that uncoffined funerals were at that time by no means so unfrequent as not to require a particular notice and provision.

The argument, therefore, that rests the right of admission for particular coffins upon the naked right of the parishioner to be buried in his church-yard, seems rather to stop short of what is requisite to be proved,—the right of being buried in a large chest or trunk of any material, metallic or other, that his executors think fit. The law to be found in many of our authoritative text-writers, certainly says, that a parishioner has a right to be buried in his own parish church-yard; but it is not quite so easy to find the rule in those authorities that gives him the right of burying a large chest or trunk along with himself. This is no part of his original abstract right, nor is it necessarily involved in it. That right, strictly taken, is, to be returned to his parent earth for dissolution, and to be carried there for that purpose in a decent and inoffensive manner: when those purposes are answered, his rights are perhaps satisfied, in the strict sense in which *his claims, in the nature of absolute rights*, can be supposed to extend. At the same time, it is not to be denied that very natural and laudable feelings prompt to something beyond this—to the continuation of the frame of the body beyond its immediate consignment to the grave; and an indulgence of such feelings very naturally engrafts itself upon the original rights, so as to appear inseparably with it, in countries where the practice of it is habitually indulged. For, however men may feel, or affect to feel, an indifference about the fate of their own mortal remains, few have firmness, or rather hardness of mind, sufficient to

contemplate without pain, the total and immediate extinction of the remains of those who were justly dear to them in life. A feeling of this kind has been supposed to have caused the preference of burial to the process of burning, and has likewise given rise to extravagant means for preserving human remains for a period of time long after the term at which any memory of the individuals themselves, or any affection of their survivors, can be supposed to extend. Amongst such extravagances the use of coffins is not to be numbered; they are temporary securities, certainly not of longer duration than is necessary for the protection of the bodies they contain from the ravages of the reptiles of the earth, if any such ravages are to be apprehended. In later ages, and in populous cities, other more formidable invasions are to be apprehended; more, I mean, committed by persons employed in furnishing subjects for dissection; an employment which, whatever be its necessity, is certainly conducted not without lamentable violations of natural feelings, and occasionally of public decency itself.

It is particularly, I presume, with a view to prevent such spoliations of the dead, that the use of the coffins in question is pressed in the present application to the Court. The purpose of security against such spoliations is, as I understand, proposed to be effected by some ingenious mechanical contrivance which prevents these iron coffins being opened when once effectually closed. I don't find that any objection is made to the contrivance itself on the ground of inefficacy or any other. The objection is to the metal of which the coffin is composed, the metal of iron; and I must say, that, knowing of no rule of law that prescribes coffins, and certainly none that prescribes coffins of wood exclusively, and knowing that modern and frequent usage admits coffins of lead, a metal of a much more indestructible nature than iron, I find a difficulty in pronouncing that the use of this latter metal is clearly and universally unlawful in the structure of coffins, and that coffins so composed are inadmissible upon any terms whatever. These coffins, being composed of thin lamina, occupy, I presume it is alleged, rather less space than those of wood itself;—there is, then, no objec-

tion on that ground; and the objection that they may be magnified to any inconvenient size, seems to apply to coffins constructed of this substance no more than to those of any other. But the claim on the part of these coffins is, (which is quarrelled with, though not distinctly avowed,) that they shall be admitted on the same terms of pecuniary payment as the ordinary wood. This claim cannot, I think, be reasonably maintained but under the support of one or other of these propositions: either that there is no difference in the duration of the coffins of wood and coffins of iron, or that the difference of duration, be it what it may, ought to make no difference in the terms of admission.

Upon the first of these points, the comparative duration, a wish was expressed by the Court, that it might be assisted by opinions obtained from persons more scientifically conversant in such subjects than I can describe myself to be; but, being left to my own unassisted apprehensions on such a matter, I must confess that it was not without a violent revolt of every notion that I entertain, that I heard it rather, indeed, insinuated in argument than directly asserted or maintained, that iron coffins would not keep a longer possession of the ground than those of wood. To me it appears, without any experimental knowledge that I can venture to claim, that, upon all common theory, it must be otherwise: rust is the process by which iron travels to its decomposition. If the iron coffin deposited in the ground contracts no rust at all from want of air or moisture, then it preserves its integrity unimpaired; but, contra, if from the moisture of the soil in which it is deposited, or from the occasional access of a little air, it contracts rust, that rust, until it scales off, forms an external covering, which protects the interior parts, and retards their decomposition; whereas the decay of the external parts of the wood, propagates inwardly its own corruption, and promotes and hastens the dissolution of the whole. It is the fault of the party complainant, if, being left by him to judge of this matter without sufficient information, I judge amiss in holding that coffins of iron are much more, perhaps doubly more, durable than those of wood.

It being assumed that the Court is justified in holding this opinion, upon the fact of comparative duration, the pretension of these coffins to be admitted on equal terms, must resort to the other proposition, which declares that the difference of duration ought to make no difference in the terms of admission. Accordingly, it has been argued, that the ground once given to the interment of a body, is appropriated *for ever* to that body; that it is not only the *domus ultima*, but the *domus æterna* of that tenant, who is never to be disturbed, be the condition of that tenant himself what it may. It is his for ever, and the insertion of any other body into that space, at any other time, however distant, is an unwarrantable intrusion. If these positions be true, the question of comparative duration sinks into utter insignificance.

In support of them it seems to be assumed, that the tenant himself is imperishable; for surely there cannot be an inextinguishable title, a perpetuity of possession, belonging to a perishable thing; but the fact is, that "man" and "for ever" are terms quite incompatible in any state of his existence, dead or alive, in this world. The time must come when his posthumous remains must mingle with and compose a part of the soil in which they have been deposited. Precious embalmments and splendid monuments may preserve for centuries the remains of those who have filled the more commanding stations of human life; but the common lot of mankind furnishes them with no such means of conservation. With reference to men, the *domus æterna* is a mere flourish of rhetoric. The process of nature will resolve them into an intimate mixture with their kindred earth, and will furnish a place of repose for other occupants of the grave in succession. It is objected, that no precise time can be fixed, at which the mortal remains and even the chest which contains them, shall undergo the complete process of dissolution; and it certainly cannot, being dependent upon circumstances that differ, upon difference of soils and exposure of climate and seasons; but observation can ascertain it sufficiently for practical use. The experience of not many years, is required, to furnish a certainty sufficient for such purposes. Founded on these facts and considera-

tions, the legal doctrine certainly is, and remains unaffected, that the common cemetery is not *res unius ætatis*, the exclusive property of one generation, now departed; but is likewise the common property of the living, and of generations yet unborn, and subject only to temporary appropriation. There exists a right of succession in the whole, a right which can only be lawfully obstructed in a portion of it, by public authority, that of the ecclesiastical magistrate, who gives occasionally an exclusive title in a part of the public cemetery, to the succession of a single family, or to an individual who has a claim to such a distinction; but does not do that with just consideration of its expediency, and a due attention to the objections of those who oppose such an alienation from the common use. Even a brick grave without such authority, is an aggression upon the common freehold interest, and carries the pretensions of the dead to an extent that violates the just rights of the living.

If this view of the matter be just, all contrivances that, whether intentionally or not, prolong the time of dissolution beyond the period at which common local usage has fixed it, is an act of injustice, unless compensated in one way or other. In country parishes, where the population is small, and the cemeteries are large, it is a matter less worthy of consideration. More can be spared, and less is wanting. But in populous parishes, in large and crowded cities, the exclusive possession is unavoidably limited; for unless limited, evils of formidable magnitude would take place. Churchyards cannot be made commensurate to a large and increasing population: the period of decay and dissolution does not arrive fast enough in the accustomed mode of depositing bodies in the earth, to evacuate the ground for the use of succeeding claimants. Now cemeteries are to be purchased at an enormous expense to the parish, and to be used at an increased expense to the families, and at the inconvenience of their being compelled to resort to very incommodious distances for attendance upon the offices of interment: three additional burial-grounds in this very parish have been so bought. This is the known progress of things in their ordinary course, and if to this is

to be added the general introduction of a new mode of interment, which is to insure to the bodies a much longer possession, the evil will be intolerable. A comparatively small portion of the dead will shoulder out the living and their posterity. The whole environs of this metropolis must be surrounded by a circumvallation of church-yards, perpetually enlarging, by becoming themselves surcharged with bodies; if, indeed, land-owners can be found willing to divert their ground from the beneficial uses of the living to the barren preservation of the dead; contrary to the humane maxim quoted by Tully from *Plato's Republic*, "*Quæ terra fruges ferre, et, ut mater, cibos suppeditare possit, eam ne quis notis minuat neve vivus neve mortuus.*"

If, therefore, these iron coffins are to bring additional charges upon parishes, they ought to bring with them a proportionate compensation; upon all common principles of estimated value, one must pay for the longer lease which you actually take of the ground. And what is the exception to be pleaded for iron? If you wish to protect your deceased relative from the spoliators of the dead, by additional securities which will press upon the convenience of the parish, we do not blame the purpose nor reject the measure; but it is you and not *the parish* who must pay for that purpose. I am aware, (as I have already hinted,) that very ancient canons forbid the taking of money for interment, upon the notion that consecrated grounds were among the *res sacræ*, and that money payments for them were therefore acts of a demoniacal complexion. But this has not been the way of considering that matter since the Reformation, for the practice certainly goes up at least as far: it appears founded upon reasonable considerations, and is subjected to the proper controul of an authority of inspection. To inland and populous parishes, where funerals are very frequent, the expense of keeping church-yards in an orderly and seemly condition is not small, and that of purchasing new church-yards, when the old ones are likely to become surcharged, is extremely oppressive. To answer such charges, both certain and contingent, it is surely not unreasonable that the actual use should contribute

when it is called for. At the same time, parishes are not left to carve for themselves in imposing these rates; they are submitted to the examination of the Ecclesiastical Magistrate, the Ordinary, who exercises his judgment and expresses the result by a confirmation of the propriety, pronounced in terms of very guarded caution. It is difficult to say where that authority could be more properly lodged, or more conveniently exercised.

Having already declared sufficiently my opinion on the question of right, it remains only that I should direct the parish to exhibit a table of burial fees for the consideration of the Ordinary. It will be for their own consideration, in the first instance, how far these coffins should be placed upon the same footing as those of lead. It is certain that they occupy less room, and that they are less temporary in duration; but it is to be remembered, that being much more accessible in point of original expense, and therefore likely to be much more numerous, they are on that account more likely to convert these cemeteries into mines of iron, than there is any hazard of their being converted into mines of lead. It may be said that this will operate indirectly as a prohibition in populous parishes and crowded church-yards; and if it should have that effect, it is still better than that the parish should be robbed of the fair and convenient use of their public cemetery. Patent rights (and on which it seems these coffins are constructed) must be held by the same tenure as all other rights, *ita utere jure tuo alieno ne lædas*; they must not infringe upon rights more ancient, more public, and such as this Court is peculiarly bound to protect. I would recommend, in the mean time, that the body should be committed to the grave without further obstruction, but without prejudice to the present question, or to the rights of the parish. No prohibitory resolutions existed at the time of the death, and I willingly lay hold of that circumstance to recommend a measure of peace and charity to the living and to the dead.

I shall admit affidavits to be brought in on both sides before confirming the tables of burial fees.

Brief Notes on the Bible.

No. XVI.

Matthew vii. 11: "If ye, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father, which is in heaven, give good things to them that ask him?"

THE efficacy of prayer has been doubted even by some Christians, with the above and other harmonizing texts, urgent, if not imperative, in full array against them. Our Saviour, in dwelling on the paternal character of God, beautifully illustrates it by a comparison of it with that of an earthly Father, who, when his children ask for bread, is not so unnatural as to tender them a stone; and assures us of the superior benignity of our heavenly Father. A more encouraging, a more heart-refreshing assurance to weak and dependent mortals never issued from his lips.

True it is that the age of miracles, of special and visible divine interposition in human affairs, has long since passed, and apparently for ever, or for ages to come; and that, if we ask for particular mercies, we have no reason to expect that they will be distinctly conceded to us, or that any unequivocal dispensation will take place in our favour; yet the prayer of an humble and devout heart may, if not in terms, in effect, be granted circuitously or equivalently, and, as all men who reflect on past events must acknowledge, more to our advantage than in the specific mode we supplicated for them.

To contend that the Deity concerns himself only with the *race* of mankind, or with any other race in the multitude of worlds that he may have created, having, once for all, ordained the wisest and most benevolent general laws for their government and welfare, is an exclusion of his *infinity*. And it is the inattention to this, his most sublime attribute, which I apprehend to be the source of all the imperfect and erroneous ideas that have prevailed on the subject. The word itself is so vast in its import, as, if not to exceed, certainly to lull, human comprehension; but if it once obtain possession of the mind, without disturbing it, every difficulty seems to vanish before it. An absolutely infinite Being must be com-

petent, whilst superintending worlds and systems, to take cognizance of, and to bestow his attention equally upon, every atom of his different creations abounding in the universe, and without ever withdrawing it for an instant. Otherwise he would not be infinite. Assign the remotest boundary to his superintendence; say that he observes not the transient movement of a muscle, the slightest fluctuation of the mind, the most fugitive thought that enters and escapes it, the progress and aberrations even of the pen I am using, and the very formation of its characters; what is it less than saying that his observation is short of infinite?

It is this cheering word, *Infinity*, awful as it is, that inspires my mind with unhesitating confidence in the article of prayer; which assures me that the Being whom I address, while intent upon the lives and the prayers of myriads of his creatures, is intent also upon mine and regardful of my particular welfare. When I invoke him in a room, I feel a consciousness that He is in the centre and in every corner of it; in my bed, that He is within the curtains; in the air, that He encompasses me; that He is equally present to every other individual in the extended universe, and the recipient of all their prayers; necessarily so, because He is infinite, which implies his omnipresence; in other words, that his actual presence can by no possibility be any where excluded. Why, then, admit the appalling apprehension that our petitions may be unheard or unnoticed by the universal Parent; by Him who cannot—I repeat it, *cannot*, his auricular like his other faculties being infinite,—fail to hear every prayer addressed to him, and whose paternal regard for all his offspring is equally unbounded?

Further; the advocates for the inefficacy of prayer, on the assumption of the Deity's having withdrawn himself from communication with individuals, contemplate a limitation of the Divine agency. They ascribe to Him an outline merely, which he is either unable or disinclined to fill up. His omnipotence repels the former supposition; his unlimited goodness the latter.

I cannot but think that many Chris-

tian advocates for prayer have injured the argument by insisting, so much as they have done, on its tendency to generate moral habits, and induce a virtuous life, independently of human petitions reaching the ears of the Almighty. It is an apologetical strain; which the stronger view of the subject, presented by the injunctions of our Saviour and by the infinity of the Divine attributes, seems to render futile, or at the best a sceptical superelevation.

I must claim the indulgence granted to the elder Cato in his frequent denunciation of a rival state; and observe, that the God who heareth prayer, whose presence I acknowledge, and whose mercy I invoke, is the *one* and indivisible Jehovah—as in the Lord's Prayer, that pearl above all price and inestimable legacy to Christians. Did a triple deity, an assemblage of three divine persons in my oratory, ever cross my mind in the act of devotion, what a dissipation of the mental powers, when they should be most intense and collected, would ensue! The bifronted Janus was an object of worship more cognizable than a Trinity in Unity. It is consoling, however, to reflect on the gradual disrepute into which this anomaly is falling. Nor should we be surprised at the clamours raised in consequence; for, at what time are the noise and the confusion on board so great, as when a bark is in peril and the mariners conscious of it?

BREVIS.

SIR,
ON reading the candid and ingenious remarks of N., (594—597,) respecting the nature and issue of Jephtha's vow, I turned to the "Notes on Scripture" of Dr. Priestley: as his commentary on this portion of Scripture history contains some suggestions which appear to meet satisfactorily the acute objections of the "Annotator on passages of the Old Testament," perhaps you will allow me to transcribe them for the consideration of your readers.

Judges xi. 31. "This must, no doubt, be understood of something that it was *lawful* to sacrifice. No worshiper of the true God would intend to act contrary to his express prohibition,

by way of doing a thing that was acceptable to him."

Verse 37. "Had she been to be sacrificed, the apprehension of a violent death would, no doubt, have been more upon her mind than merely dying a virgin. She was devoted to pass a single life, though there does not appear to have been any proper obligation to do so."

Verse 39. "When any persons were devoted to God, so that he might be said to have a right to take their lives, *as was the case with respect to all the first-born of the Israelites*, who were spared when those of the Egyptians were destroyed, *a redemption was accepted*, and no doubt this was the case here, as an equivalent for the life of his daughter. *This would have satisfied the law*, without devoting her to a single life. But, perhaps, he might think himself obliged to deprive himself as much as he lawfully could of any satisfaction he might have received from her or her offspring: she being no longer his, but given to God, as Samuel was by his mother. Had this young woman been really sacrificed, *the father must have taken her to the national altar, and the priests must have killed her* AND PRESENTED THE BLOOD. And what priest would have done this? *His killing her with his own hands would not have been a SACRIFICE*, according to the intent and meaning of his vow, but a *murder*, for which his own life would have been forfeited. If the conduct of Jephtha in devoting his daughter to death could be justified, any other person might have murdered another after a previous similar vow. For the law of Moses would no more authorize a person to kill his daughter, than it would any other person. The vow was not to devote any thing to *destruction*, but to offer it as a *burnt-offering*; and a vow once made could not be changed."

These comments appear to me extremely pertinent; for the degeneracy of the Jewish nation at that period, as instanced by the annotator, would scarcely lead us to the admission that an act so utterly abhorrent from the Jewish ritual could on any supposition have taken place. I own that the statement of Josephus, who might have been expected to solve this difficulty by a similar interpretation to

that proposed by Dr. Priestley, if it were well founded, is extraordinary; but it must be remembered that Josephus was, after all, a *modern Jew*.

SCRIBA.

SIR,

Nov. 13, 1820.

IN the last Number of the Monthly Repository, (p. 624,) I have read with pleasure, the notice announcing the completion of that *truly national* work, the "Cyclopædia" of Dr. Abraham Rees. It is, indeed, "a lasting monument of the science, talents, judgment and industry," of the learned and venerable Editor. The remarks on the intended Dedication are *instructive*, as well as amusing.

To me it seems surprising that, in the present day, kings should not recognize the origin of their brightest glory in the improved knowledge of the countries which they govern. Is not the noblest homage which they can receive that homage which results from the intelligence and virtue of a learned and enterprising people? Do they know that there are men, in the retired walks of life, so elevated, in all that dignifies humanity, that no titular distinction can add to their importance in the estimation of society? *We* know that there are such men; but we know, too, that they are seldom to be found in the vicinity of a throne.

The Dedication would have *conferred honour* on the Sovereign of our country. To others it must be perfectly unimportant.

These remarks have been induced from happening to recollect that I had included, not long ago, in a bundle of "shreds and patches," some remarks on *asking permission to dedicate*, extracted from an "Apology for the Life and Writings of David Hume," 1777. They follow.

"Ask permission! for what? For distinguishing a man? For circulating the knowledge of his good qualities beyond the narrow circle of, very likely, a set of frivolous companions! Require leave to do this! Was there ever heard such an inconsistency? The point is misconceived. Be it again remarked, that in true science there is a greatness which can seldom *receive*, though it may often *confer*, obligations. Genius may more properly be said to patronize than to be patronized.

"If a production be fit for the eye of men of taste, it ought to be acceptable to men of rank; who are ready enough to be thought in possession of a fine taste themselves, and very frequently, no doubt, pay liberally for their dedications solely upon that principle.

"If, on the other hand, a performance be crude, trifling and ill-written, and, notwithstanding such defects, is, without the consent of the patron, adorned with a name which it disgraces, such patron ought publicly to renounce his protection, and treat the pretender as every pretender, of whatever profession, deserves to be treated; still, however, with this salvo, that if the production could have done any service to literature, or have promoted, but in a small degree, the cause of science, he would have been the first man to *acknowledge his obligations* for having been thought a fit patron to assist that cause, and to strengthen those services."

Again, as to PATRONAGE, what says Johnson?

"Seven years, my Lord, have now passed since I waited in your outward rooms, or was repulsed from your door; during which time I have been pushing on my work through difficulties, of which it is useless to complain, and have brought it at last to the verge of publication, without one act of assistance, one word of encouragement, or one smile of favour. Such treatment I did not deserve, for I never had a patron before.

"Is not a patron, my Lord, one who looks with unconcern on a man struggling for life in the water, and, when he has reached ground, encumbers him with help? The notice which you have been pleased to take of my labours, had it been early, had been kind; but it has been delayed till I am indifferent, and cannot enjoy it; till I am solitary, and cannot impart it; till I am known, and do not want it. I hope it is no very cynical asperity not to confess obligations where no benefit has been received, or to be unwilling that the public should consider me as owing that to a patron which Providence has enabled me to do for myself."—*Letter to the Earl of Chesterfield*, 1755.

So much for Patronage and Dedi-

cations: subjects that justly rank with others on which men should think correctly.

J. P.

December 4, 1820.

Notes on a few Passages in the New Testament.

MATT. i. ii. A summary of Griesbach's * observations concerning the authenticity of these chapters, may not be unacceptable to a particular class of readers.

(1) No testimonies of ancient writers can be adduced which ought to throw a doubt on the first and second chapters of this evangelist. We meet with them in all those Greek MSS. which are entire: they exist in every ancient version which is not mutilated; nor can it be proved that they have been introduced into these translations at a later period, and by another hand. The *Codex Ebnerianus* † does not furnish an exception: both chapters are contained in that MS., which merely follows the earlier *codices* in the arrangement of the sections and the titles; “in omnibus, quotquot κεφαλαιων notatione et τιτλοις instructi sunt, codicibus, Matthæi κεφαλαιων A seu primum inscribitur περι των μαγων, et incipit Matth. ii. 1. Similiter Marci κεφ. A, titulum præ se ferens, περι το δαιμονιζομενου, inchoat Marc i. 29, &c.—Quin in epistolis quoque plerisque eadem est των κεφαλαιων ratio. Primum, v. c., epistolæ ad Romanos κεφαλαιον incipit Rom. i. 18.—Sic accidisse videtur ut primæ libri cujusque particulæ in enumerandis κεφαλαιois mentio fieret nulla. Ex quibus omnibus patet, Novi Testamenti librorum pæne omnium initia fore resecanda, si eam sacri contextus partem, quæ primum κεφαλαιον antecedit, in νοθειας suspicionem adducere fas esset.”

Dr. Williams ‡ has in vain appealed against these chapters to the Latin MSS.: in all of them, the whole of the introductory narrative occurs. In

some, it is true, we find the genealogy detached from the history: but the separation is arbitrary and unwarranted. At the end of the seventeenth verse of the first chapter the Harleian MS. marked 1775, and of the age of the 6th or 7th century, exhibits the words, *Genealogia hucusque*: INCIPIT EVANGELIUM SECUNDUM MATTHÆUM. These sentences, however, are not placed in the text: nor were they written by the original transcriber; they stand in the margin, and were the addition of some later possessor or copyist. * Latin MSS., of the 10th, 11th or 12th century, may also be produced in which the genealogy is, in like manner, distinguished from the narration. To these, nevertheless, we oppose the evidence of far older and better *codices*, both in the Latin tongue and in other languages. The utmost, indeed, which the MSS. alleged by the objector can prove is, that in the middle ages some individuals existed who looked on the genealogy not as belonging to the history, but in the light of an appendix, or rather an introduction to it. Now the suspicion indulged by these men does not affect the authenticity of much the larger portion of the chapters, or even intimate the *spuriousness* of the genealogy, but merely aims at separating it from the body of the history; in consequence of this pedigree (as they supposed) not having been drawn up by the evangelist himself, though he judged fit to adopt it, by way of preface to his narrative.

(2) Further: These chapters cannot be fairly arraigned by any thing that we know of the gospel according to the Hebrews or of that of the Nazarenes or Ebionites. It is far from being certain that the genealogy and the history of our Lord's miraculous birth were originally wanting in *all* of them: nor can Matthew's Gospel be so connected with them as to make it probable that whatever is not found in those apocryphal works was also passed in silence by our Evangelist.

(3) Equally irrelevant, in this view, are the conjectures of some learned men in favour of the existence of an original gospel, [*urevangelium*], from which Matthew, Mark and Luke drew

* Comment. Critic. in Text. Græc. N. T. Partic. ii. 47—65.

† Michaelis' Introd. to N. T. (Marsh) II. 257, 258 (1793).

‡ “Free Inquiry into the Authenticity of the First and Second Chapters of St. Matthew's Gospel. Edit. 2, Lond. 1789.” Griesbach.

* “Vide *Symbolas nostras criticas*. Tom. I. p. 309.” Griesbach.

as from a common source. Should we even allow that such a document was in being, and that it had no such materials as are contained in these chapters, still it by no means follows that they did not proceed from the pen of the Evangelist. For if any other individual could make this addition to the primitive gospel, why might it not have been made by Matthew?

(4) No argument, moreover, can be deduced, against the chapters, from Mark's silence. Granting that he availed himself of the Gospel of Matthew, in framing his own, he, nevertheless, is not its epitomist: he contented himself with selecting from it what suited his purpose; omitting every thing besides, as, for example, the Sermon on the Mount.

(5) Luke was in the same situation. Between his introductory chapters and those of Matthew there are variations, and even apparent discrepancies. The probability is, that he used a former and more concise *edition*, as we may term it, of his predecessor's gospel.

(6) That there are many and great difficulties in these chapters, cannot be denied. But this circumstance is no sufficient reason for calling their authenticity in question. In the introduction to this Gospel we have nothing which Matthew *could* not have written. Although from the nature of the case, he could not be an eye-witness of the events here recorded, or even receive his knowledge of them from those who were either the spectators or the subjects of the transactions, he might still derive his information from unexceptionable sources. Some *obscurity* would, at the same time, attend the narrative, as the consequence of the interval between the date of the facts and that of their being thus committed to writing.

(7) The objections of Faustus the Manichæan it cannot be important specifically to notice: they regard the difficulties to which we have just adverted, and, in particular, the genealogy, which he wishes to separate from the history.

(8) Such, then, and so feeble, being the arguments brought against the introduction to Matthew's Gospel, we do not hesitate in receiving these chapters as authentic.

(9) We have now only to inquire, whether the Evangelist himself col-

lected, from unexceptionable witnesses, the events recorded in this portion of his history, or found it already reduced to writing, and judged it worthy of being prefixed to his narrative? Our opinion is, that there are sufficient indications of the two first chapters both of Matthew and of Luke having proceeded respectively from those authors; the style and manner corresponding in each case to the severally acknowledged characteristics of the two Evangelists.

As Luke's histories are distinguished by the relation of *angelic appearances*, by the frequent occurrence of *concise speeches* from some of the principal personages, and by occasional *Hebraisms*, so in Matthew's introductory chapters we see presumptions that the author of them is no other than the author of the body of the narration. This Evangelist is remarkable for pretty numerous appeals to the prophecies of the Old Testament: and these are often alleged through the *whole* of his Gospel. It further seems to have been his fixed persuasion that the Deity not seldom interposes *by dreams* to admonish men what they should do, or to warn them of what they should avoid. Matthew, accordingly, relates that the wife of Pilate endeavoured, in the following manner, to prevent the governor from condemning Jesus to death: "have thou nothing to do with that just man; for I have suffered many things this day *in a dream* because of him." * The phrase KAT' ONAP is employed by no other writer in the New Testament: nor does it ever occur in the LXX; we meet with it however in Matthew's Gospel six times.

It is probable that both this Evangelist and Luke prefixed the *genealogy* to their Gospels, as they received it from the family of Joseph or of Mary. The errors of it are therefore attributable not to these historians, but to the unknown authors of the document. From the first ages attempts have been made to reconcile the dissonances in the pedigrees, the authenticity of which, nevertheless, was not brought in question. To their existence in the respective narratives of Matthew and of

* Matt. xxvii. 19. Griesbach shews that there is no just reason for disputing the authenticity of this verse.

Luke, friends and foes bear testimony. And, on a review of the whole of the evidence, external and internal, we must declare it to be our conviction, (1) that the Greek Gospel of Matthew always contained these chapters; (2) that proof is wanting of there having been formerly any gospel, the source, as it were, of this, from which they were absent; and, (3) that, in all probability, Matthew was the author of the chapters; with the exception however of the genealogy, which he borrowed from some quarter not distinctly known to us, and prefixed to his own composition.

Matt. xxiii. 14: "Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive the greater condemnation." "Griesbach," says Mr. Wallace,* "transposes the 13th and 14th verses, on good evidence. The editors of the I. V., on evidence equally strong, reject the 14th verse, and consider it as an interpolation from Mark xii. 40, and Luke xx. 47." The biblical student may not be displeased with a reference to Griesbach's latest thoughts † on this part of the text of the N. T. That learned man delivers his opinion as follows: "delendum eum esse pronuntiarem, nisi recurrentia verba *οἱ δὲ ὑμῖν, γραμματεῖς καὶ φαρισαῖοι, ὑποκρίται, ὅτι* omissioni ansam præbuerit tam facilem, ut mirum profecto esset, si librarii omittendo non peccassent; uti etiam eandem ob causam, Bengelio teste, codex 86 et latini nonnulli libri versum 13 neglexerant, a correctoribus jam in marginibus suppletum.—In medio ergo res retinenda, et lectori, qui tamen de gravibus suspicionis adversus versum 14 causis admoneri debet, judicium permittendum esse videtur."

Acts iii. 1: "Now Peter and John went up together into the temple, at the hour of prayer, being the ninth hour." These apostles of Christ, we perceive, set apart certain times for the more immediate expression of the feelings of devotion. The practice is founded on the frame and laws of the mind, no less than on the commands of Divine Revelation, and on the ex-

amples of eminently wise and good men in every age and country. If there be those who would persuade us that piety and devotion cannot be regulated by the figures of a dial, or that religious affections cannot be excited in large bodies of men, and, by analogy of reasoning, in individuals, by the tolling of a bell, we may fairly infer from the use of such arguments, the want of a just knowledge of human nature in those who employ them. Nothing can well be more obvious and satisfactory than the answer which they admit: habits of devotion must be formed in the same manner in which other mental habits are acquired. So long, therefore, as religious services are considered as the *means*, instead of being made the *end*, the advantage, and even the necessity, of them, must be evident. If it be once granted that they are proper, we plainly see that, whether they are social or retired, there must be fixed times for the performance of them: nor is there any thing more irrational and visionary in piety and devotion being regulated by the figures of a dial, or in the religious affections being excited by the tolling of a bell, than in the lively recurrence of other feelings at the seasons, and as the effect of the circumstances in which they are accustomed to receive a peculiar gratification. If habits depend on regular and duly-repeated acts, no man whose experience gives him this conviction can be at a loss in replying to the objector. He alone will despise stated hours of prayer who either questions the duty and efficacy of the practice, or so relies on supernatural assistance as to fancy himself exalted above the need of ordinances: thus nearly related, in this point, to each other, are the apparently opposite characters of the enthusiast and the sceptic!

Rom. xiii. 1—8: "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers," &c. Paul glances, in this passage, with united delicacy and force, at the obligations of rulers, and describes what HE should be, let his title be what it may, in whom the supreme functions of the state are lodged: "he is the minister of God to thee for good:" on which sentence I transcribe the comment of one of the best Scriptural critics of any age or nation:—

"As Christianity," says Dr. John

* Plain Statement, &c., p. 74.

† Comm. Critic. &c. Partic. ii. 11—15.

Taylor, * "was then growing, and the powers of the world began to take notice of it, it was not unlikely this letter would fall into the hands of the Roman magistrates; and whenever that happened, it was right, not only that they should see Christianity was no favourer of sedition, but likewise that they should have an opportunity of reading their own duty and obligations.—The apostle with a masterly hand delineates, and strongly inculcates, the magistrate's duty, while he is pleading his cause with the subject, and establishing his authority upon the most true and solid ground. He dexterously sides with the magistrate, and vindicates his power, against any subject who might have imbibed seditious principles, or might be inclined to give the government any disturbance; and under that advantage, reads the magistrate a fine and close lecture upon the nature and ends of government. A way of conveyance so ingenious and unexceptionable, that Nero himself, had this epistle fallen into his hands, could not well have missed of seeing his duty, and yet would have met with nothing flattering on the one hand, nor offensive or disgusting on the other."

1 Cor. i. 12: "— and I of Christ." Bishop Pearce (in loc.) suspects "that these words were not in the original." Yet we have no authority for omitting them; nor should either the text or the translation be disturbed. The writer complains of schisms in the church at Corinth, and of the propensity of its members to enrol themselves under the banners of human, uncommissioned leaders. What he laments and censures is, that some individuals declared their attachment to one apos-

* Paraphrase, &c. on the epistle to the Romans. For the high value of this work, see Bishop Watson's Collection of Theol. Tracts, Vol. III., at the beginning. Of the descendants of Dr. Taylor, so well known throughout a wide circle for their talents and their virtues, for their several attainments in Science, Learning and the Arts, for their amiable manners, their generous public spirit, and their enlightened attachment to Truth and Liberty and Religion, it may with eminent propriety be said, that they have shewn

"——— quid mens rite quid indoles
Nutrita sanctis sub penetralibus
Posset——."

tle or minister, to Paul, to Apollos, to Peter; although he does others the justice to own that *they* acknowledged HIM alone "who is the head"—*I am of Christ*. It was mortifying that the name of *Christ* should appear to be on no higher level than the names of his servants. Hence the writer immediately asks, *Is Christ divided?* Nothing can be more in our author's manner.

N.

York,

October 28, 1820.

SIR,

ON the night of the 11th inst., after I had been some time retired to rest, and, not being immediately disposed to sleep, was occupied in observing and admiring the planet Jupiter, now in all its beauty, and interested in forming conjectures whether at some future period in the revolution of ages, we may not be permitted to join with the inhabitants of other planetary worlds in one general hymn of thanksgiving and praise,—in an instant my room was illumined by a blaze of light which could hardly, I think, have been produced by a thousand flaming flambeaux. On drawing aside the curtain, I saw a tremendous column of fire towering up to a prodigious height, and emitting sparks in every direction. The sight was most inexpressibly awful, at once sublime and terrific. Happily for the inhabitants of this street, (Lendal,) the large corn-mill from which the conflagration proceeded was at some distance, and on the opposite side of the river Ouse, which runs parallel with it. Still, however, the sight was most overwhelming: if we were not personally in danger, doubtless there were many others that were; and when this all-devouring element has once gained the ascendancy, who shall say where its ravages may terminate? In this afflicting event, however, as doubtless in every other, we may point out many alleviating circumstances which human wisdom could not have controlled, and of favourable coincidences which human foresight could not have produced, and which afford a striking proof that the great Supreme Disposer of all events, in the midst of judgment, remembers mercy. I shall merely state one or two instances.—If the night had not been unusually calm and tranquil, not even a breath of air

to fan the flame, or to convey the flakes of fire that now fell into the river, to the tops of the neighbouring houses, whole streets must have been destroyed. Again, if some part of this same river had not been drawn off two days preceding for very different purposes, the necessary engines would not have been efficiently placed, one side of the building on fire being close to the margin of the water. Once more, if three vessels laden from the mill had not been got under sail the day before the accident, they and their cargoes must not only have been inevitably destroyed, but the dreadful conflagration would have been tenfold increased! "O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness;" that they would consider themselves as ever under his guardian care, and declare his mighty works to the children of men!

How forcibly, Mr. Editor, did this bring to my mind what must be the horrors of a besieged city, where spectacles of this kind surround the wretched inhabitants on every side, and where, if any should escape the flames, the poor forlorn fugitives are subjected to massacre and death, in a thousand frightful forms, or to cruel outrages from the infuriated soldiery, still more to be dreaded than even these! Yet, to fight bravely, and to conquer in any cause, in itself however unjust, especially if decked in military array, is denominated *glorious*; the victor is crowned with laurel, and suppliant crowds bow the knee before him! And do we use this language and yet call ourselves Christians—the humble disciples of Him "who, when he was reviled, reviled not again"—of Him who "endured the cross, despising the shame," that he might demonstrate to succeeding generations in what true glory really consists—of Him who, having risen from the grave, and shewn that death is not the end of man, has "for ever sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high"? Can we think on these things and reflect for a moment on the dreadful evils of which war is the prolific parent, (evils evidently not less destructive to the conquerors than to the conquered,) without unfeignedly rejoicing in the formation of Peace Societies, and sincerely endeavouring to aid their success? Their leading object, in my mind, should be, not so much to discuss the question

how far war can, in any case, be justified on Christian principles, as to discourage the war spirit, to point out from time to time the malignant passions it engenders and inflames, the horrid crimes to which it leads, and the ruin and desolation which it fails not to spread on every side. Respecting the strenuous advocates for this dreadful practice, may we not say, with the good old patriarch, "O my soul, enter not thou into their secret; unto their assembly, mine honour be not thou united"?

C. CAPPE.

SIR, October, 1820.

THE commendations passed most deservedly (pp. 163—168) on the *Family Sermons* published by the Rev. Mr. Butcher, induce me to suggest that he could make the treasure more complete to families unable to attend public worship on account of distance, &c., by composing a short introductory prayer, and another longer prayer, (for immediate subsequent delivery, condensing the subject discussed,) distinctly suitable to each sermon. I need not point out the usefulness of such a book of prayers to families who have no Unitarian places of worship, within many miles, to attend. And who can do it so well as the devout author of these Sermons himself? One volume possibly might contain the substance of the three volumes of Sermons.

G. M. D.

The Canonical Gospels the support of Unitarian Christianity.

(Concluded from p. 672.)

WE have then the old objection as to the difficulty of reconciling the evangelists: * but the writer does

* The disagreement in particulars of the gospel historians is a favourite topic with Infidels. They can only make a handle of it, if the plenary inspiration for which Bolingbroke so zealously contends, be conceded to them. It should be shewn that the *historical* writers of the Bible ever pretended to inspiration. Mr. Evan-son gave up this point to them in his "Dissonance." He, too, thought, by "expunging" the disagreeing gospels, to remove stumbling-blocks out of the way of those who would not thank him for

not seem fortunate in the selection of his instances. He asks, "What, can be more impracticable than all attempts to reconcile Luke iv. 22, and Matt. xiii. 55, both proving that Jesus was the son of Joseph and Mary, with Matt. i. 18, and John i. 9, 14?" Now, admitting the fact of the miraculous conception, the text, Luke iii. 23, "being, as was *supposed*, the son of Joseph," whether we read the word *supposed* or *registered*, at once removes this exceedingly trifling objection. With regard to John i. 9, 14, the objector first begs the question, that the texts can only be explained in his own manner, and then decides that they cannot be reconciled with the testimony of Jesus being the son of Joseph. How Christ being "the true light," (ver. 9,) is inconsistent with his being the son of Joseph, he does not condescend to say; but as to the "word being *made* flesh," (ver. 14,) he must know that the original may be rendered "the word *was* flesh;" and that in this case, so far from any impracticability of reconciliation, the texts literally coalesce; and if, as I have before proved, the *word* in Jewish phraseology was a mere periphrasis for God himself, operating by his wisdom and power, "the word becoming flesh," however foreign to our mode of expression, means no more than the man Christ Jesus being "the power of God and the wisdom of God," or anointed with his wisdom and power, and is equally consistent (admitting the fact) with Jesus being the son of Joseph. The words, on either scheme of interpretation, form a significant refutation of the phantomist heresy, and, as harmonizing with passages to the same effect in the acknowledged writings of the Apostle John, carry with them their own evidence of authenticity.

That no gospel of apostolical authority was extant at the period when Luke wrote his, (which Lardner has, I think, satisfactorily shewn,) may be

the office. He was not aware that he was also removing one of the strongest supports of Christianity,—the argument from the independence of testimony. Had the gospels concurred in the choice and particularity of facts, we should then have been told of a plan of concerted imposture.

allowed without leaping to the very summary conclusion, that no other gospel was written afterwards. It is said, that of Matthew's having written any gospel, "the only testimony we have is that of Papias:" but, if this were so, what is there to impugn the testimony of Papias? He is thought to have been acquainted with John, the Apostle: but Irenæus, who knew John's disciple, Polycarp, bears also testimony to Matthew's having written a gospel; and the same writer gives a similar attestation to the fact of Mark and John having each written a gospel, and quotes, as a part of the gospel written by John, the opening of the very proem which so much perplexes and astounds the detector of Spurious Christianity—"In the beginning was the Word."

It is one of the strong holds of Unitarian Christianity, that THREE out of the four evangelists afford no intimation of the deity of the Son of God. The conclusion follows, that any thing in the fourth gospel which should appear to introduce doctrines incompatible with the simple humanity of the Messiah, must have been intended by the writer in some different sense; for this is not the addition of any omitted fact, but the addition of a stupendous revelation, altering the whole basis both of the Jewish and Christian systems. As Matthew was himself a disciple, and as Mark and Luke transcribed the things related by Peter and Paul, the latter of whom heard the history of Jesus from the older apostles, the three first evangelists must have been qualified to tell whatever was known respecting the person and character of Jesus; and the supposition that John declared something omitted by them, in an article affecting the very essence of Christianity, is both disparaging to the former apostles and incredible in itself. The more so as, since the gospels were not written for the original promulgation of Christianity, but for the purpose of recording the facts and discourses which had already been promulgated by preaching, had the apostles preached the literal doctrine of a deity or a super-angelical spirit incarnate in the human nature of Jesus of Nazareth, the people of the churches which they founded would necessarily be astonished that all the three evangelists should have over-

looked a truth of such importance. That the apostles preached no such doctrine is apparent from the epistles left by them, which were first written, and which, notwithstanding the attempt to wrest passages grammatically ambiguous, wherever they are plain in the letter, contain express testimony to the sole deity of "the God of our Lord Jesus Christ." John would therefore contradict not merely the preceding evangelical historians, but the pastoral letters of the apostles, including his own. But, notwithstanding the *Gnostic* or *Platonic* glosses put upon the text of the proem to his gospel, there is, in fact, no such contradiction. So far from agreeing that we should have all that we could "wish or want" in the meagre and mutilated gospel offered to us by the detector of Spurious Christianity, we, as Unitarians, neither want nor wish to be deprived of an argument which, though of a negative kind, is equivalent to a demonstration of what was *not* the faith of the primitive Christians.

If revelation is to be brought to the standard of every man's private reason as to what is probable or congruous with his abstract notions of the possible or desirable attributes of the Deity, it may as well be given up. A writer who rejects facts because opposed to common experience, may reject books that he might not *want* and that he might not wish. But the question is one of testimony. The books, now esteemed canonical, were acknowledged as such by the elders and the churches of the second century, and had been so acknowledged by the elders and churches of the century preceding. "This canon," says Lardner, "was not determined by the authority of councils; but the books, of which it consists, were known to be the genuine writings of the apostles and evangelists, in the same way and manner that we know the works of Cæsar, Cicero, Virgil, Horace, Tacitus, to be theirs. And the canon has been formed upon the ground of an unanimous or generally-concurring testimony and tradition."

As the Unitarians are accused, as a thing of course, with straining or mutilating scripture to their purpose, and are taunted with the admonition, that the context of scripture is against them, the assertor of Genuine Christianity has kindly come forward to help

them by allowing the charge, and proposing to expunge at once the impracticable gospels:

Non tali auxilio nec defensoribus istis.

We defy the charge; we disclaim the assistance.

But, it seems the "enlightened Unbeliever" cannot assent to revelation in the present state of the written gospel. This, as has been already shewn, is begging the question, that whatever he chooses to charge upon the received Scriptures is really contained in them. As to the enlightened Unbeliever, a man is not the more enlightened for being wise in his own eyes. He may be an enlightened politician, an enlightened historian, an enlightened natural philosopher, but this does not make him an enlightened Unbeliever. Aversion from fair inquiry, and dogmatism accompanied with superficial knowledge, do not entitle a man to be thought enlightened; yet this is very commonly the character of those who take upon them to expose the impostures of Moses and Jesus. Gibbon's cold and sneering evasion of Dr. Priestley's challenge of discussion is well known.

The reasoning which the writer has put into the mouth of his enlightened Unbeliever is completely inconsequent. It may be allowed to be characteristic. "Doctrines contrary to the Divine perfections, as discovered by the light of nature," (in other words, as approved by his individual judgment,) are "embraced and professed by *all* the churches in Christendom, and *said* by them to be contained in, and capable of proof from, the New Testament. Now on such evidence I cannot believe in Christianity."—The objector assumes what is false in fact, that such doctrines are embraced by *all* the churches; the Unitarian church, as is well known, disclaiming those to which the allusion is particularly made. He then adds, that these doctrines are *said* to be contained in the gospel; and, without further inquiry, rejects Christianity. But the only justifying reason for his incredulity would be, not that the doctrines are *said* to be contained in the books of the New Testament, but that the books do actually contain them; and, in reply to Mr. Cobbett, who talks of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, who are not three

Gods, but one God, and of the wicked Jews killing God; or Mr. Carlile, who, borrowing the former writer's syllogism, sealed also with the approbation of the Lord Bishop of St. David's, affirms that the *Trinity* is the fundamental doctrine of Christianity, and consequently that an unbeliever in the Trinity is not a Christian,—they may simply be challenged to shew, that the Bible, from the beginning to the end, contains one word about God the Son, or God the Holy Ghost, or killing God, or Trinity.

In another part of the same paper in which the writer insists on the "impracticability of converting the Unbeliever by argument," he adverts to the prediction of APOSTACY IN THE CHRISTIAN CHURCHES. What in this case becomes of the proposition of his Unbeliever, that the doctrines of all the churches in Christendom, *said* by them to be contained in, and capable of proof from, the New Testament, the writers of which, they affirm, were inspired, "are contrary to just notions of the Divine perfections, and therefore warrant the rejection of Christianity"? What becomes of that objection, which he confesses to be a *formidable* one, "that there are scarcely two teachers of the different doctrines which they embrace that can agree upon what this revelation, said to be from God, does teach"? Or what title has this Unbeliever to the epithet of enlightened, when, on finding the natural and necessary consequences of the corruption thus predicted, he infers from the prediction and its accomplishment the false pretensions of Christianity?

The writer is not content with shewing us (in the manner we have seen) that one class of Unbelievers is *too enlightened* to be convinced, but he finds out that another class is *too ignorant*. The "labouring classes of the people" are "concluded all under" unbelief. Why the manufacturers of the North are to represent the whole common people of England, I cannot see; but, as the labouring classes have gone on for centuries contented with their creeds or their hymn-books, and neither in this nor in any other country are apt much to complain of things "hard to be understood" in matters of established credence, I presume to doubt this sudden flood of sceptical

illumination. With respect to the degree of *religious* disaffection, the four gospels are certainly not in fault. The Radical Reformers, indeed, in their wisdom, have mixed up Paine's gross and illiterate infidelity with his axioms in politics: but this is accidental. The prime movers of popular disaffection were *decay of trade and want of food*; and if any thing of a religious complexion blended itself with their feeling of the benefit which would accrue to them from reform, it arose from the opportunity which the Church and State alliance gave for the identifying Christianity with the political system; from the secular character and political officiousness of the established clergy; the grievance of tithes, and other matters of similarly deep theological import.

As to the writer's most complacent proposition, that these "classes are neither from education nor inquiry capable of understanding the subject," let me ask, *what* subject? That of creeds, or decretals, or half-popish formularies? The subtleties and contradictions contained in these, form a distinct subject from the teachings of the Holy Scriptures, though the writer, in order to substantiate the preferableness of expunging to explaining the gospels, chooses to confound them together. "Incapable of understanding" the things of God! Why, Sir, it was "THE POOR" that had the "gospel preached unto them." Whatever may be the case among those who have been parroted in the church creeds and catechism, and who are apt, like their betters, to imagine that religion has its essence in certain forms appointed by law, and in a scrupulous periodical attendance at their own parish church, the state of intellect among the *Dissenting* poor (whatever may be the speculative errors of the particular sect, which yet are quite compatible with the sharpening of the understanding) offers a complete contradiction to this writer's supercilious assumption, that the labouring classes are incapable of understanding religious questions. As regards the Unitarian faith especially, a more gratuitous assertion has never been hazarded; and the daily progress which its clear and scripturally-grounded principles are making among the less educated classes, offers a practical confutation of the

writer's argument, that the difficulties which clog the existing gospels oppose themselves to its reception. Are there "any perplexities to be unravelled" in the declaration that "there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus"?—in the preaching of Peter, that "Jesus of Nazareth was a man approved of God by miracles and wonders and signs which God did by him"?—or in that of Paul, that "God had appointed a day in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained, whereof he hath given assurance to all men in that he hath raised him from the dead"? The writer may shut us out of "the churches of Christendom;" but, as he has confessed the authenticity of the book of Acts, and of Paul's general epistles, he has in that very admission borne testimony that we are the church of Christ: "So we preach and so they believe." When the writer, therefore, ventures to assert that "Christianity has never been proposed to the Unbeliever in its native purity," he contradicts both himself and the facts: for as to his implication that the canonical gospels do not so exhibit it, this is a mere begging of the question in dispute; and wherever the Unitarian faith has made proselytes, it is by the aid of those very gospels which he describes as exclusively favourable to the corruptions of Christianity.

Yet we are to admit the necessity of government's interfering with prosecutions for blasphemy, because it is impracticable to convince Unbelievers by argument, in the existing state of the written word, and because government is the guardian of the public tranquillity. What is meant by "the torrent threatening to overwhelm the peace and security of the nation," I cannot guess. I have seen and heard of tumultuous meetings for reform, but I have neither heard of nor seen any insurrectionary prayer-meetings in honour of the "unknown God." It seems this writer, who gives the orthodox credit for their doctrines being justified by scripture, admits, with equally respectful acquiescence, that religion and the state are necessarily conjoined; so that a belief in Christianity and "submission to the laws of their country," is one and the same

thing. Dr. Horsley might well threaten Dr. Priestley with the sword of the magistrate, when this convenient doctrine of state-craft and priest-craft finds a defender in one who stands forth as an assessor of "the native purity" of the religion of him who said, "My kingdom is not of this world."

But if, politically speaking, government would be justified in repressing the expression of infidel opinions "by the strong arm of the law," it would only be, I suppose, from the probability that the remedy would be effectual. Now it is notorious that the reverse is the case. Persecution adds importance to the man, and the stimulus of curiosity to the matter: nor is this all; for the inference is naturally drawn, that as they who have recourse to the power of the law are reduced to this mode of defence through the impotence of argument, the Infidel is imprisoned because he cannot be answered. The government are, therefore, defended by the necessity of extirpating opinions subversive of national peace and security, (meaning private judgments in matters of religion,) in their adoption of means which have an inevitable tendency to propagate what they are applied to extirpate.

If, then, the writer mean that this "torrent" threatened to overwhelm the religion of the State, the same necessity of repression by the "strong arm of the law," (a most goodly and all-justifying phrase,) may be made out for the wholesome discipline of imprisonment and fine being applied to the *Nonconformist*. The door is again opened to travelling ecclesiastical commissions, and the Bishop of *St. David's*, and the Archdeacon of *Sarum*, may yet adopt the prayer of *Simeon* in the temple, when they see not only the God-denying Unitarian, but even the nonconforming Methodist, apostolically questioned by the method of the rack.*

* "The commissioners were empowered to visit and reform all errors, heresies, schisms; in a word, to regulate all opinions, as well as to punish all breach of uniformity. They were directed to make inquiry, not only by the legal methods of juries and witnesses, but by all other

I cannot see, Sir, that these enlightened objections are so formidable as to call either for coercion or concession, allowing that either would be consistent with Christian principle, or would answer the end if it were. But the experiment of concession has in fact been tried, and has totally failed: the compromise has been proposed, and has been met with scorn. Of a believer who disclaimed some three of the gospels, Cobbett asked, how many weeks would pass before he gave up the remaining one? Thus it is—if we give up three gospels, they will demand the fourth; if we allow them the epistles, they will claim the Acts. *Demo unum, demo etiam unum*. That the writer's enlightened theist "wishes for light," is only another of that congeries of gratuitous assumptions which he has heaped together as first propositions. Till he can prove his point, that this enlightened unbelief arises from no rational view of Christianity or no pure and native form of gospel truth having been presented to the acceptance of the Deist, I shall persist in the opinion, that Dr. Priestley's Series of Letters to a Philosophical Unbeliever, was calculated to satisfy any person capable of being satisfied by reasonable proof. "If they believe not Moses and the prophets, neither would they believe though one rose from the dead."

CEPHAS.

SIR,

Torquay.

I READ with painful feelings in your Numbers for August and September, [pp. 448—452 and 525—530,] a paper entitled, *An Attempt to distinguish between Genuine and Spurious Christianity*; and I am desirous of doing my feeble endeavour to deter my fellow-Christians from entertaining the views which it recommends. Indeed, could it make good its pretensions, and enable us to distinguish with satisfaction what is genuine from what is corrupt in the records of our holy religion, it would deserve our most serious attention; but if, as I

means and ways which they could devise; that is, by the rack, by torture, by inquisition, by imprisonment.—*Flume's Hist. of England*, V. 263.

fear is the real case, the only result of such speculations must be to destroy entirely the authority of revelation, and leave us destitute of its light and comfort in a sea of doubts without bottom or shore, let us consider the matter well before we suffer all the foundations of our faith to be thus undermined. The writer of this paper, indeed, professes to be a Christian, nay, he appears zealous for Christianity, and desirous to convert Unbelievers. But meanwhile he is labouring to discredit the only historical monuments by which the truth of Christianity is attested, and in so doing is fighting on the favourite ground of the Infidels, and among the foremost of their ranks. For who and what is a Christian, if not he who believes and receives the religion of Christ as taught in the New Testament? As to the man that rejects the authority of this standard, who can say what he is? Can he pretend to know the doctrines which Jesus taught, or to believe in the miracles by which his mission was attested, if he denies the authenticity and credibility of the only narratives by which we can have any knowledge or evidence of either? Such Christianity as this will, as it appears to me, neither benefit the possessor nor convert the unbeliever. To be convinced of this, we must observe, that the reform of Christianity which your correspondent proposes, does not consist in bringing back religious faith and practice to the standard of the Scriptures, that good work in which a true and enlightened Christian is always ready cordially to join; no, but in reforming the Scripture itself, according to the standard of our own judgment of what it ought to be. If any story recorded in the Gospels should appear to us a little strange, we are at once to expunge it as a fable. It is not by the lawful processes of criticism, as applied to other ancient writings, to endeavour to remove corruptions and restore the sacred text to its genuine state; it is not to make allowance for the occasional inaccuracies and mis-statements which are found in all historical works: it is not to allow the fallibility of the sacred writers on minor points, not involving the grand principles of the religion they were commissioned to teach: "for," says your correspondent,

"though these are very useful and laudable objects when bestowed on books that are authentic, of what use can it be when applied to books that are spurious?"—No; we see it is to reject a great part of the New Testament as spurious. And these books that are to be regarded as spurious are not those seven of whose authority some doubt from the first ages existed in the church, but three at least out of the four Gospels; the fourth itself also being treated with very little ceremony. It is maintained that we cannot rely on the authority of either of the Gospels but that of Luke. Such is the opinion of this writer; but, perhaps, if we were to ask the opinion of three others, each would name one of the other three Gospels as that most entitled to credit. And to shew that this is not mere conjecture, I refer the reader to Bishop Marsh's valuable Dissertation in his edition of Michaelis.

Thus, while we cannot agree which Gospel to assume as genuine, the authority of all the four will be destroyed. But not only does your correspondent reject the three Gospels of Matthew, Mark and John, but even in that of Luke he supposes there is, I know not how much, fable and falsehood. Thus he not only sets aside the two first chapters as a fabrication, but pours contempt on the account of the Gadarene demoniac, the transfiguration and the temptation as contained in this Gospel. Now it is not my business here, even were I competent to the task, to enter on a defence of the authenticity and credibility of the Gospel histories: it is obvious that this forms a main part of what is called the evidence of Christianity, and is treated in works on that subject, among which I would especially recommend to the reader *Lardner's Credibility* and *Michaelis's Introduction to the New Testament*. No doubt the subject presents considerable difficulties, and admits of much variety of opinion among Christians; but I wish to call attention to this important point: viz. that if we yield to the persuasion that the Gospel histories are not authentic and credible, we do in fact resign our belief of the Christian religion. The Christian religion is embodied in facts; and if the evidence of those facts be destroyed, the authority of the religion is also destroyed: we shall be brought to regard

the Gospel as a vague and uncertain tradition; and, as such, how can it direct our conduct or support our hopes? The plan proposed for ascertaining what is genuine in the Gospel history is, moreover, so unsettled and arbitrary, that there does not appear the smallest chance that it could ever produce any union in the judgments of Christians in relation to its object. Divided, as the Church of Christ has ever been, yet in past days there has existed in the canonical Scriptures a common standard for appeal, both in disputes among themselves and with Unbelievers; but the plan now proposed would make every thing disputable, and, removing the only common ground on which parties could meet, would annihilate every hope and every semblance of union. How practical piety could flourish amidst this confusion and uncertainty, or how Infidels should be inclined to submit their freedom of thought to a revelation thus divested of authority, I cannot conceive. In fact, the grand practical question in regard to the truth of Christianity is, not whether God once gave a revelation to man by Jesus Christ, which is now lost or obscured; but, whether that religion which is contained in the existing records of Christianity, is or is not a revelation from God. I trust, Sir, the importance of the subject will excuse my troubling you with these imperfect remarks. In concluding, I cannot but venture to express a wish, that the Editor of the *Monthly Repository* saw it advisable to be somewhat less liberal, as I would call it, in the communications to which he gives publicity. Far be it that I should trespass on ground that does not belong to me; but I would, with much deference, submit it to his judgment, whether the liberal principles on which he conducts his work do really require that he should lend its pages to the propagation of doctrines which tend so directly to undermine the common faith of all Christians, Unitarians as well as others. The free admission of such papers certainly renders the work less fit for us to put into the hands of our children and our families, and, indeed, of our friends in general; while it tends to harass our own minds with a succession of the petty assaults of unbelief, without any equivalent advantage resulting from it.

But again I apologize, and leave the matter to your better judgment, remaining your constant reader,

EUELPIS.

Uffculm,

SIR, *October 9, 1820.*

ABOUT four years ago a very particular friend of mine proposed a question to me, which, he said, he thought was not generally understood by professing Christians; it was—What do you think of Jesus Christ? It struck me as being a very extraordinary question; for as I had been educated in the belief of the Trinity, and had always been in the habit of hearing that doctrine inculcated, I did not entertain a doubt of its being perfectly consonant with scripture and with reason. At that time I was totally unacquainted with every controversial publication on the subject, and only recollected a few texts which I quoted to him, and which (from the prejudice of education) appeared to me to be quite conclusive. My friend told me he apprehended I did not understand the real import of the texts on which I rested my belief in the generally-received opinions, and strongly recommended me to give the subject a candid and impartial investigation, and finding me disposed to do so, he kindly supplied me with two tracts, “Penn’s Sandy Foundation Shaken,” and “Elwall’s Trial,” the perusal of which gave rise to doubts respecting my former creed, and excited a spirit of inquiry which induced me to adopt every means in my power to form correct ideas of the primitive doctrines of Christianity. By reading a number of works on each side of the question, and by comparing them with the New Testament, I became perfectly convinced of the Unity, love and mercy of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. I was particularly interested with Foster’s Narrative of the proceedings of the Friends in his case; and I confess that, in my opinion, the members of that highly-respectable Society (as it is frequently called) have given the world a very poor specimen of that free toleration which they so much profess to revere. It strikes me that an impartial reader may easily perceive, from the general tenor of the works of the early writers of that Society, that they were, in the strict sense of the word, Unitarians,

particularly when he sees the numerous and warm controversies in which they were so frequently engaged with persons who held the opposite doctrine. Under this impression of the genuine principles of the Society, I cannot regard their recent proceedings but as a proof of degeneracy, and as a deviation from those liberal sentiments and that Christian charity by which I conceive their ancestors were actuated when they wisely concluded not to adopt a creed. I have expressed these sentiments to a number of persons in that connexion, (for I have an extensive acquaintance with them,) and have found many of them, and even some who were present at the Yearly Meeting when Mr. Foster’s excommunication was confirmed, totally ignorant of the points on which he is said to differ from the Society. I have invariably endeavoured to impress them with the necessity of becoming acquainted with their own principles, by which alone they would be able to appreciate and defend them, and I have also recommended the perusal of such works as I thought most likely to be of assistance to them in so laudable an engagement. In many instances I have succeeded far beyond my expectation; and it has been most gratifying to me to observe with what frankness and zeal they have applied themselves to the interesting and important subject; and I now know several persons of talent and influence in the Society, and who are reputed very consistent members, who publicly avow their belief in their primitive Unitarian principles, and who openly express their disapprobation of those attempts to restrict the exercise of private judgment, which were so strikingly exhibited in the proceedings against Mrs. Barnard and Mr. Foster. I have lately made a tour through the principal places of England, and have no hesitation in saying, that these sentiments and feelings are becoming very general, especially among the younger part of the Society; and one person told me, he was pretty certain we should hear of no more disownments on account of Unitarian principles—“in short,” said he, “if Friends were to continue to disown persons on those grounds, they would soon have to disown the majority of their members.”

But it is not to the Society of Friends only that my observations have been

confined. I have found, in my own neighbourhood, and throughout my late tour, persons of almost every denomination disposed to bring their religious tenets to the test of reason, and to the uniform declarations of Christ and his apostles; and I have witnessed them dismissing their former mysterious notions, and embracing the rational and consistent belief, that there is but one God, the Father, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.

On the whole, Sir, I cannot but congratulate the friends of Truth on the progress which it is evidently making in the world.—The time, I believe, is fast approaching when Christianity shall be released from the fetters of superstition and bigotry, and, resting on the basis of reason, shall meet with equal approbation from the peasant and the philosopher.

JOHN JONES.

P. S. On observing in your Monthly Repository for August, [p. 471,] the question by “An Unitarian Traveller”—“Is Unitarianism increasing or decreasing?” I thought that a letter from me on the subject might not be unacceptable to some of your readers. If you are of the same opinion you will please to insert it.

Dudley,

December 7, 1820.

SIR,
MAY I be allowed to pay a humble tribute to the memory of the Rev. THOMAS HOWE, of Bridport, whose death is briefly announced in the last Number of the Monthly Repository? It is impossible for me to discharge this duty, without feelings of deep and sincere regret. I esteem it among the highest privileges of my life, that for nearly twenty years I have been honoured with his unreserved and affectionate friendship; and the more I have seen of his heart and his character, the more reason have I found to admire and love him. The few imperfect notices that I shall offer are by no means intended to supersede a more regular and connected memoir, which I hope will soon be furnished by some other hand.

Mr. Howe was born at Uffculm, a village near Tiverton, in the county of Devon. He pursued his studies for the ministry under the able superin-

tendence of Dr. Kippis and Dr. Rees, at the academy which, a few years before, had been removed from Wellclose Square, London, to Hoxton. Among his fellow-students were several individuals who have filled important stations in the Dissenting churches, and some who have risen to considerable eminence in the republic of letters.

It was, I believe, immediately on quitting the academy, where he distinguished himself by the most regular and persevering industry, that Mr. Howe preached, for a few months, at Exeter, as an assistant to the learned and pious Micaiah Towgood, a name deservedly held in the most grateful remembrance by every friend to the sacred rights of conscience, for his incomparable “Letters” in vindication of Protestant Dissent.*

Mr. Howe, soon afterwards, engaged himself as chaplain to the Rev. Sir Harry Trelawny, who, having become dissatisfied with the doctrines of the Established Church, (though he was always enthusiastically attached to the splendour of its rites and ceremonies,) at that time officiated as “minister of the Presbyterian Church at West Loe, in Cornwall.” With this gentleman, notwithstanding his singular fluctuations in opinion,† the history of which

* See “A Dissent from the Church of England fully justified,” by Micaiah Towgood. See also Manning’s *Life of Towgood*, p. 25. It is a subject, I think, of regret, that Mr. Manning should not have enriched his volume with a short account of the distinguished ministers in Exeter and its neighbourhood, who were Mr. Towgood’s contemporaries and friends. The public has, at length, been gratified by an interesting outline of the character of one among them, the Rev. Samuel Merivale. It is found in the posthumous Discourses of his pupil, the Rev. Joseph Bretland; himself one of the most accomplished, the purest and the kindest of human beings.

“Oh, I could stop and linger, if I might!”

† See “Orton’s Letters to Dissenting Ministers,” Vol. II. p. 20 and p. 200. Sir Harry Trelawny, just before he relapsed into the bosom of the Establishment, published a pamphlet in defence of Nonconformity. During the short time that he exhibited himself in what some persons

will hereafter be both entertaining and instructive, Mr. Howe continued, through life, to maintain a friendly and

may regard "his happiest phases," he preached and printed two eloquent sermons; one from 1 Cor. iii. 9, before an assembly of Ministers at Exeter, Sept. 9, 1778; the other from 2 Cor. x. 7, on a similar occasion, at Taunton, June 26, 1779. The following extract from the latter discourse is inserted here as a specimen of the preacher's style.

"Many of those who are now called Unitarians were once Calvinists. When they were, what was their character? They were generous, pious, charitable, benevolent, zealous, worthy men. Upon farther study, constantly praying for light and knowledge, still continuing serious and exemplary, they saw reason to change their sentiments; and then observe the enormous metamorphosis. Their generosity becomes prodigality, their piety slavish superstition, their charity springs from pride; their zeal evidences their hatred of Christ, their benevolence is spite in disguise, and, in one word, they are the children of the devil, and the enemies of all real righteousness.

"How discerning must our judges be! Blessed God, thou seest not as man seeth. To thee they commit their cause, and it shall be re-heard at the last decisive day. Suppose now an Unitarian in the wrong. He has lived, as far as he knew, according to the laws of reason, conscience and religion. His faith in God has guided him steadily through life: his hope of immortality has supported him in the hour of death. He approaches the judgment-seat, and finds that He whom he respected as the first and most favoured creature of God, is really God himself. With reverence, joy and awe, will he prostrate himself before the throne, and say,

"Most adorable Judge! From the first day that I knew thee by the revelation of thy word, till this solemn season, thou knowest that I have loved, served and honoured thee with unfeigned sincerity. To exalt thee among men, and proclaim thy glories and goodness, has been my delight. As the Messenger of the Most High, the only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth, I have ever respected thee myself, and warmly exhorted others to respect thee; I find that thou art far higher than I conceived. Forgive, most compassionately, my mistake, and suffer me, from henceforth, for ever to adore thee with that homage, worship and honour, which are thy eternal right."

"Can you imagine the kind Saviour

agreeable intercourse. He determined some years ago to inscribe a work, which he was on the eve of publishing, to his early patron, and had actually drawn up a very respectful dedication. The delicacy of his mind, however, led him to abandon the idea. He was apprehensive that the tenor of his performance might awake painful recollections where his only wish was to gratify.

From Trelawne, the family mansion of the Reverend Baronet, Mr. Howe removed to Ringwood, in Hampshire, and there, as the pastor of a congregation, most tenderly attached to him, he spent several happy years of his life.

I think it was in the summer of 1787, that he accepted an invitation from the flourishing and highly respectable society of Protestant Dissenters at Bridport, to succeed the Rev. George Waters, "a man," as he is described by one who knew him well, * "of distinguished modesty, humility and piety." Mr. Howe was ordained to the pastoral office, at Bridport, on July 10th, 1788.† The services of the day, all excellent in their kind, were afterwards printed; and I cannot omit this opportunity of affectionately recommending Dr. Kippis's most admirable "Charge," to the diligent and repeated perusal of every young person, the desire of whose heart it is to engage with pleasure and success in the interesting duties of the Christian ministry.

It was at Bridport, a spot endeared to me by a thousand tender recollections, that I first became acquainted with Mr. Howe. He was then an inmate in the family of the Rev. Samuel Fawcett, at Mountfield-House, an elegant

would frown upon him? Would he not embrace him in the arms of his tender mercy, accept his services, and crown him with everlasting life?"

* See Dr. Toulmin's Sermon at Mr. Howe's Ordination, p. 13.

† On this occasion Mr., afterwards Dr., Toulmin preached; Dr. Rees proposed the questions; and Dr. Kippis delivered the Charge. A very liberal and masterly Charge was delivered at Bridport, September 26, 1788, by Dr. William Prior. It passed through three editions within a few months; and it richly deserves republication.

seat, in the immediate neighbourhood of the town. Beneath that roof all was regularity and order; there was a continual interchange of those pleasing offices, those testimonies of confidence and esteem, those exercises of self-denial and self-control, and those facilities for mental and moral improvement, which "make it life to live;" and in that happy dwelling I have often witnessed how much the spirit of devotion can heighten every enjoyment and sanctify every grief. Only a single member of the family now survives, venerable for years and virtues, and best beloved where he is most intimately known. "Late be the hour, and distant be the day," when I can, with propriety, speak of him, as the feelings of gratitude and affection prompt! But there was one, who has long since made her bed in darkness, and whom the accents of human praise cannot reach. It may, therefore, be permitted me to say, that the memory of that silent, unpretending piety with which she adorned her Christian profession, of those mild and gentle graces which she cultivated in the sequestered shade that was so congenial with her disposition, and of that kind and peaceful temper with which she cheered and blessed the domestic circle, will never be effaced from the tablet of my heart. She was called from the present scene on the 15th of May, 1808. A few days after, Mr. Howe wrote to me; and the following extract from his letter will enable the reader to judge of the degree in which the excellences of this amiable person had conciliated his regard, and what influence her removal was likely to have upon his future comfort. "We have lost a valuable friend. On Monday, Mrs. Fawcett was seized with a fever, the progress of which medical aid was of no efficacy to stop. For the first three days she had the perfect use of her reason, and expressed a calm resignation to the Divine will, with respect to the issue of her disorder. On the Thursday morning the fever affected her head, and she was generally in a state of delirium till her death. This event took place on the Saturday evening, the sixth day of her illness. Having been myself very much indisposed for the whole of the week, I was less able to command my feelings and to exercise fortitude in these

trying circumstances. On the Tuesday succeeding Mrs. Fawcett's death, I attended her remains to Grewtarn, where they were interred in the family vault.

"You were well acquainted with her; but you had no opportunity of knowing her peculiar virtues. These will not be forgotten by me, as long as recollection remains; and I hope her example will be of benefit to me, through the remaining part of my sojourn in this state of trial. I have lived with her and her beloved partner for upwards of thirteen years, during which time, I believe, she never once frowned on me. The harmony which subsisted between us, notwithstanding our differences of religious sentiment,* was never interrupted for a moment. She was always obliging and kind to me; she was, I assure you, no common friend; and it seems to me as if, by her loss, I am deprived of maternal care. I expect that my happiness in future life will be materially affected by this awful event. But I would bow with calm submission to the will of heaven. Infinite Wisdom cannot err; and there is always some gracious end to be answered by the most afflictive dispensation. It is a heavy stroke, indeed, to Mr. Fawcett. He was deeply sensible of her worth. Happy for us, we sorrow not as those without hope. Never did Christianity appear to me more valuable than at present. How well calculated is it to soothe the mind, under the darkest scenes of human life, especially on the loss of pious friends! Were I to follow the direction of my feelings, I should write to you on no other subject."

At the beginning of the year 1805, Mr. Howe published an Abridgment of Dr. Taylor's "Key to the Apostolic Writings," to which he prefixed a Dissertation, containing an epitome of the gospel history. By his desire, I had the pleasure of superintending the work in its progress through the press. My friend felt no common satisfaction in receiving the thanks of Mr. Lindsey for his publication. That eminent confessor informed him, that he thought it calculated to do much good, especially among the middle and lower classes of

the one party and the other to violence to build

* Mrs. Fawcett was a member of the Independent congregation in Bridport.

society. "This," says Mr. Howe, * "abundantly compensates for the charge of my Bristol bookseller, that I am opposing the glorious peculiarities of the gospel, and that he cannot, in conscience, give circulation to such a book."

While he was employed in the preparation of this little work, doubts began to suggest themselves to his mind on some of the opinions which he had hitherto entertained, as to the person and offices of Christ. "I intended," he observes, in a letter addressed to me on the 31st December, 1804, "to insert a note at the beginning of my account of the birth of Christ, stating that the chapters in which it is found, there is great reason to think, were not written by the Evangelists. On your suggestion, however, I have omitted it entirely, and commenced the history at our Lord's entrance on his public ministry." It was about this time that he entered upon a more careful study of the Sacred Scriptures, under a deep sense of his responsibility, with frequent prayers to the throne of grace, and in the spirit of sound, cautious and enlightened criticism, comparing the phraseology of one passage with that of another, and "making," as he expresses it, † "due

* In a letter to me, dated October 8, 1808.

† In his Sermon before the Western Unitarian Society, p. 23, note. In a letter written to me a few weeks after this sermon was printed, Mr. Howe says, "Though the general strain of our preaching be plain and practical, we do right in frequently calling the attention of our people to our principles, as *Unitarian Christians*. It tends to cherish the spirit of free inquiry into the Sacred Scriptures, and is, thus, favourable to truth and virtue. This spirit much prevails in Bridport. Works for and against Unitarianism are in constant circulation amongst us. Many copies of a popular tract in favour of the Godhead of Christ, and an admirable Answer to it, are most industriously dispersed. Our Trinitarian and our Unitarian friends 'run to and fro,' and the result will be, I hope, that 'knowledge shall be increased.' Between them, it is so managed, that those who read 'the one' pamphlet, are under a kind of necessity of reading 'the other' also. This is surely as it should be. A worthy Calvinistic neighbour, whom you

allowance for the highly figurative mode of speaking which was common in the East, and which was adopted by our Lord and his apostles." The result was a conviction, which all his subsequent inquiries served to strengthen and establish, that Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant, is strictly and literally of the human race. The terms in which he wrote to make me acquainted with the change that his religious sentiments had undergone, were these: "I have entirely given up Arianism, I adhered to it as long as I could, till the force of evidence drove me from it into strict Unitarianism. This is the little leaven which I now think will eventually leaven the whole lump. For this purpose there must be the union of serious piety and candour, and the wisdom of the serpent must be blended with the harmlessness of the dove."

Towards the close of the year 1808, Mr. Howe was attacked by a fever, from which, during several weeks, there was no expectation that he could recover. He was himself fully aware of his imminent danger, and those who watched, with so much kindness and assiduity, around his bed, can bear witness to the humble confidence and the pious resignation which he then displayed. At length it pleased the Almighty to raise him up; and how often have I heard my excellent friend expatiate, in strains of holy gratitude and wonder, on the glorious hopes and promises which supported him in that most awful scene! He cast himself on the goodness and mercy of God in the gospel of Jesus Christ, and he experienced the efficacy of his views, as an Unitarian Christian, to enliven the gloom of sickness, and to scatter the darkness of the grave. These feelings he has himself described with touching simplicity, in a note to his Sermon, preached before the Western Unitarian Society, at Taunton, on Wednesday, July 14, 1813. In a letter which I received from him in the spring of 1809, and which can neither be transcribed nor read without emotion, he says, "What cause have I for thank-

know, has been firing his great guns at my little sermon. What execution he will effect, time must shew. Our friends are by no means discouraged."

fulness to that gracious Being who made my life his guardian care, when in circumstances the most threatening. May I learn to put a cheerful trust in Providence for the future; from the divine goodness I have experienced, and to devote my spared life more diligently to the service of my kind Preserver! Such, indeed, were the alleviations with which I was indulged in my affliction, and such the soothing consolations communicated to my mind by the principles of religion, that, upon the whole, being free from bodily pain, I think I may class the four months of my confinement among some of the most comfortable in the course of my life. The warm and kind attachment which my friends shewed to me was greater than I before knew that they felt, and it has been a source of much pleasure to me, that though I was laid aside from public service, for a long time, my place was regularly supplied."

This alarming fever left Mr. Howe in a condition of great bodily weakness; it fatally undermined his constitution; and from that period his friends have been sensible of the gradual decay which has brought him down to his native dust. He exemplified, however, in a peculiarly important and striking sense, the justness of the apostle's remark, that "though the outward man perisheth, the inward man may be renewed day by day." * Never did he appear to lose sight, even for a moment, of what he owed to his heavenly Benefactor. On the 2d of April, 1809, he returned to the duties of the pastoral office with redoubled energy. His beloved hearers received him from the borders of the grave with increasing affection and regard; and no one could witness the ardour of his zeal without being convinced that it was because he had *felt* the inestimable value of the uncorrupted doctrines of the gospel, that he was more than ever anxious to inculcate a fearless, diligent, unbiassed examination of the Scriptures, and thus to be made the honoured instrument of leading his people to a more perfect acquaintance with "the truth as it is in Jesus," and of promoting among them the influence of genuine Christianity.

* 2 Cor. iv. 14.
VOL. XV. 5 A

In preparing for the services of the sanctuary, he was eminently conspicuous for indefatigable application, and it was in these services that he ever found the purest and the most valued of his pleasures. The house of prayer was his exceeding joy. There he led the devotions of his flock with a solemnity, a fervour, a heavenly-mindedness, that were all his own. There he lifted up his voice, not to amuse, but to convince and to awaken. There he described the happiness of piety, by exhibiting religion in its most attractive forms, and by unfolding the purity and the bliss of the heavenly world. There he displayed the paternal character of God and the love of Christ, which was stronger than death. His instructions, coming from "a heart convinced of immortality," derived thence a power, a beauty, a persuasive tenderness, which it was scarcely possible to resist.

"He bore his great commission in his look,
But sweetly temper'd awe; and soften'd
all he spoke.
He preach'd the joys of heaven and
pains of hell,
And warn'd the sinner with becoming
zeal;
But on eternal mercy lov'd to dwell.
He taught the gospel rather than the
law,
And forc'd himself to drive, but lov'd
to draw."

DRYDEN.

Of what he was in his personal and social character, I shall attempt no delineation. I could speak of his devotedness to God, and of the simplicity, the childlike simplicity and singleness of his heart; I could say much of the candour which he always exercised towards good men of all denominations; of his entire freedom from that exclusive, intolerant, dogmatizing spirit so disgracefully common in the Christian world; and of the "unmasked relief" which it was his delight to carry to the abodes of the poor, the aged, the sick and the forlorn: I could enlarge on the kindness of his disposition and the amiableness of his manners; but these are embalmed in the fondest recollections of all who knew him, and the remembrance, "never to die," may well soothe and comfort us in this melancholy hour. Favoured with that

calm dismissal, * which has been the object of desire to many a pious mind, he is now beyond the reach of infirmity and pain; and, oh! how precious to the heart is it to believe, that, when the morning of the resurrection breaks, through the mercy of God, if we are not unworthy, he will be our companion again; and we shall renew, together, all the endearing intercourses of love, and enter upon an endless career of improvement in those mansions of our Father's house, where no voice will be heard but that of thankfulness and of praise!

JAMES HEWS BRANSBY.

I annex what I apprehend to be a correct list of Mr. Howe's publications.

1. The Millenium, or Cheerful Prospects of the Reign of Truth, Peace and Righteousness; and Serious Reflections on Commencement of the New Century. Two discourses preached at Bridport; the first on Nov. 5, 1800, and the second on Jan. 4, 1801. 8vo.

2. A Key to the Apostolic Writings, by John Taylor, D. D., abridged, with a Preliminary Dissertation on the Scriptures of the New Testament. 12mo. 1805.

* A Correspondent, whom I have much reason to esteem, writing to me from Bridport, on the mournful event, observes, "The death of our excellent pastor was very sudden. He had been spending the day (Wednesday, November 15) at the house of a friend, and returned home at about seven o'clock in the evening. Five minutes after he entered our house he expired, without a struggle or even a sigh, in a chair which he had placed by the fire, for the purpose of warming himself, the evening being very cold. Such a death, as the close of a most pious and useful life, may be said to have been truly desirable, for one whose infirmities were fast increasing, and would probably soon have rendered him incapable of discharging his ministerial duties. While, therefore, we feel the loss of him to be great—and it is particularly so to us, among whom he resided as an inmate, and who saw him daily exemplifying the vital power of his principles on his amiable temper—we cannot but be sensible that we ought to bless God for his easy removal,—a translation, as it were, in the midst of abundant usefulness, from earth to heaven."

3. A Sermon on the Folly and Danger of Pride—without the Author's name—in Bransby's Selection of Sermons for the Use of Families. Vol. I. p. 189. 12mo. 1808.

4. A Sermon on our Lord's Prayer, relating to the Union subsisting between God his Father, Himself, and his Disciples; delivered at Taunton, on Wednesday, July 14, 1813, before the Western Unitarian Society. 12mo.

Mr. Howe was also the Author of many Communications, to which his name is generally subscribed, in "The Monthly Repository" and in "The Christian Reformer."

Mr. Howe on the Widows' Fund.

[By the unavoidable postponement of this communication, it now appears, such is the vanity of human life! as posthumous. It is, however, strikingly characteristic that our lamented correspondent's last paper should be a plea on behalf of "the fatherless and widows in affliction." Ed.]

Bridport,

June 27, 1820.

SIR,

I THOUGHT it incumbent on me a few months ago, to make a few observations (which you had the goodness to insert in your valuable Repository, XIV. 681) on the "Society established for the Relief of Aged and Infirm Protestant Dissenting Ministers of the Three Denominations, Presbyterian, Independent and Baptist, in Necessitous Circumstances." I noticed that this is formed on the same broad and comprehensive basis as the Widows' Fund. This latter benevolent Institution, however, I am led to conclude, on looking over the annual reports of the managers, is not so well known, or at least so generally supported by Protestant Dissenters, as its merits claim. I take the liberty, therefore, of calling their attention to it. I wish my plea, in behalf of the deserving objects of this charity was read by all the Dissenters in the United Kingdom. As this, however, cannot be accomplished, I would, by your leave, give it as extensive a circulation, at least, as your liberal publication.

"The Society for the Relief of the Necessitous Widows and Children of Protestant Dissenting Ministers deceased," is of no recent date. It was

established by some friends to humanity, religion, and the Protestant Dissent, so long ago as the year 1733. I am not able to recount their names; but their memories, as the founders of this benevolent Institution, will be transmitted with honour from generation to generation, and in ages yet to come, many a destitute widow and fatherless child will, I trust, have reason to rise up and call them blessed. The laudable object they had in view was to establish a permanent Fund, for the charitable purpose above specified, by their liberal subscriptions, which has been supported and gradually increased by donations, the annual contributions of individuals, occasional legacies, and collections in places of public worship. There is a general meeting of the subscribers in London once every year, who choose out of their body twenty-seven managers, together with a Treasurer* and Secretary, for the ensuing year. These are composed of respectable persons of each of the Three Denominations of Protestant Dissenters. Thus every possible security is given for the judicious and impartial application of the funds of this Institution. A subscriber of the sum of five guineas becomes a member of this Society for life, and has the privilege of recommending objects, whose cases he deems deserving of attention. A person who subscribes one guinea annually, is a member during the continuance of his subscription. "A Sermon, recommending the useful purposes of this Society, has been preached annually in London, in the month of April, at the Meeting-House in the Old Jewry, but which is now removed to Jewin Street, Aldersgate Street, after which a collection has been made." Some of the most eminent among the Protestant Dissenting Ministers of the Three Denominations have publicly advocated this noble cause, every year from the institution of this Society to the present; and the first who stands in the list is the Rev.

* Ebenezer Maitland, Esq., No. 52 Coleman Street, London, has for many years kindly filled the office of Treasurer, and John Webster, Esq., No. 25 Queen Street, Cheapside, that of Secretary to the Society.

Samuel Chandler, 1785. "Every minister who preaches the annual sermon in London, or who makes a collection for the benefit of this Institution, either in London or in the country, becomes a member for life. The Treasurer's accounts are audited once in every year, and the same, together with a general state of the Charity, are laid before the subscribers at their annual meeting. The managers meet the first Tuesday in every month, from the month of October to the month of May, both inclusive, precisely at twelve o'clock, at Batson's Coffee-house, Cornhill, London, to receive applications in behalf of petitioners. If the petitions are approved of at two successive meetings, the managers grant relief." Such are the general regulations of this charitable Institution.

The annual sum given to the English Widows was originally no more than £5, and to the Welsh Widows £3. Since the year 1811, the English Widows have received £15, and the Welsh Widows £11. The friend of benevolence, however, will sincerely sympathize with the managers in the grief they express at being under the necessity of making a *deduction*. They have, from time to time, circulated very pressing and eloquent appeals to the congregations of Protestant Dissenters in behalf of this Institution, especially in the year 1817, recommending stated annual collections among them; "these, however small, as the managers observe, might by the aggregate amount enable them, not only to raise the exhibitions to what they have been, but also to increase them. It is with much concern they have to state the disappointment of their expectations, and that, notwithstanding the liberal contributions of some congregations and of some individuals, they were under the painful necessity of disposing of a *considerable part* of their funded property, to pay the exhibitions of that year, 1817." They have been also compelled to reduce the exhibitions to English Widows who last year stood in the list, to £14 annually, and to Welsh Widows to £10, and to the new rates of Widows to £12 and £8. On seeing this deficiency, I was led to examine and compare the annual accounts for some years past, in order

to ascertain from what part of the supply of the funds of this Society it arises. This, I think, may be traced chiefly to the diminution of congrega-

tional collections, as appears from the following statement, which I have drawn from the printed reports of the managers :

A. D. 1814, Cong. Coll... No. 92... Amount of the Contributions, £			1817	5	11½
1815,	ditto,	124	ditto,	645	15 6
1816,	ditto,	25	ditto,	172	4 10
1817,	ditto,	17	ditto,	128	0 2
1818,	ditto,	32	ditto,	421	2 9
1819,	ditto,	24	ditto,	107	2 9
1820,	ditto,	12	ditto,	43	12 2

Let the reader particularly remark, that in the year 1815, one hundred and twenty-four congregations contributed to the Widows' Fund, and this last year, not more than twelve. How is this lamentable deficiency to be accounted for? Can it be supposed that the Protestant Dissenters, who are in the constant habit of making costly sacrifices to their convictions of duty, need be reminded of the apostolic observation, "it is right to be zealously affected *always* in a good thing"? When I consider their readiness in general to contribute very liberally to pious and benevolent institutions, it would be both unnecessary and presumptuous in me to admonish them, "never to be weary in well-doing." The principal reason for their suffering this cause to decline arises, I am persuaded, from their not paying *due attention* to the claims of this Institution. That many are obliged to diminish their usual acts of beneficence, from the pressure of the times, there is no doubt; and this would account for the collections in the respective congregations being *less*; but that none whatever should be made in them, must be attributed to the cause just assigned. Is it supposed that there is not at present such an urgent call for the Relief of the Widows and Children of Protestant Dissenting Ministers as formerly? Is the number of those of them who may be ranked among proper objects of charity less, or are their necessities, by a concurrence of providential circumstances, greatly diminished? Were this really the case, the present plea in their behalf would be wholly needless. Before the reader, however, determines this point, let him peruse the following extract from the report of the managers just published: "A minute inquiry was made last year into the circumstances of the

Widows relieved, and the accounts from many, very many, were truly distressing. Many are wholly supported by charitable institutions. Many have not any other support, but what they receive from this Fund. Some are supported by the daily manual labour of themselves and their children, and obtain from 2s. 6d. to 10s. per week; and some are obliged to seek relief from their parishes. Their distress speaks feelingly for itself, and the managers trust, that it need only to be known that it may be relieved."

The number of Widows annually aided by this Society is on an average about 190, besides the sum of £10, which the managers are empowered to give occasionally, for apprenticing out any child of a deceased minister. It is pleasing to reflect on the sad evils and calamities which have been either removed, or at least alleviated, by this noble Institution; how many "Widows' hearts have been made to sing for joy;" how many fatherless children, who might otherwise have fallen victims to ignorance and vice, have been hereby led into the paths of virtue, and brought up to such honest employments as to enable them by their industry and prudence to provide decently for themselves, and to be useful to society. Were it possible for us to see all the good which this charity has produced from its first establishment in 1733 to the present time, the view would afford every benevolent heart purer delight than the contemplation of the celebrated exploits of the most renowned heroes of either ancient or modern history. The object of this address is to prevent the sphere of its usefulness from being contracted, of which there is imminent danger; its design is to *enlarge* it, and, by making greater provision for "the fatherless and widow in their affliction," more effectually

to answer one of the purposes, as defined by an apostle, of pure and undefiled religion before God, the common and gracious Father of all mankind.

In their cases, indeed, every thing unites, tending to excite sympathy in the humane breast, and ready assistance when ability admits. There was one class of people among the first believers in Jesus, to whom peculiar attentions of benevolence were shewn by their brethren; these were indigent widows. The objects of this charity are the same in kind; and as in general we may rank them among serious and sincere professors of the gospel, they stand in that peculiar and endearing relation to us, which is implied in the title of Christian. They are members with ourselves of that spiritual body of which Christ is the head.

They are the Necessitous Widows and Children of Protestant Dissenting Ministers. Is it asked, what *peculiar claims* for relief they have on that account? Let the following statement be duly considered. The Dissenters, as a body, it is well known, are at considerable expenses, by their voluntary annual contributions, in supporting the cause they have espoused. Deeming it, however, to be the cause of Christian truth and liberty, and calling no man Master on earth, to whose spiritual decisions they are bound implicitly to bow, "one being their Master, even Christ," they act a consistent and conscientious part. They think it incumbent on them, readily to sacrifice their worldly interest on the altar of integrity, of which some of their ancestors set them a noble example. Great, however, as are their necessary expenses in erecting meeting-houses, and maintaining their respective modes of worship, the salaries of their ministers do not in general enable them to provide for their families; on their removal, therefore, these, if destitute of any other source of supply, must be left in indigent circumstances. Let the appeal be made then to the dictates of the understanding and the pure feelings of the heart, whether they have not claims on the Dissenters at large, to add to their other expenses, an annual provision for the support of distressed objects of this description.

This excellent Institution, and "the

Society lately established for the Relief of Aged and Infirm Protestant Dissenting Ministers in Necessitous Circumstances,"* are nearly allied to each other. They are two amiable and deserving sisters, though the one is much older than the other. Unable to help themselves, and destitute of any human aid besides, hand in hand they throw themselves on the pity and benevolence of the Protestant Dissenters, without which they must sink into decay and expire. Surely this will not be permitted. The hand of charity will be readily stretched out for their relief, protection, and permanent support. In return they will pray to heaven for its choicest blessings to descend upon you, ye friends to the Aged, Infirm, and Indigent Minister, the destitute Widow, and the fatherless Child.

T. HOWE.

Clapton,

December 3, 1820.

SIR,

I WAS not a little surprised to find that your respectable correspondent (pp. 642, 643) had thought it just and proper to record in the *Monthly Repository* his censure of my "remarks," published, exclusively, in the *Christian Reformer*, as having "appeared" to himself "and many others unreasonably severe." After tolerating such a course of proceeding which you will not, I believe, upon reconsideration, think quite regular, I depend on your tried impartiality to allow me the following quotation, *verbatim*, of the two short letters which contain the whole subject of difference between your respectable correspondent and myself, and will thus give information to any of your readers who may not have seen the *Christian Reformer*.

* I have often heard the complaint, that the Dissenters are like a rope of sand, that they have no common bond of union. Can there be, however, a better bond of union than a hearty concurrence in the support of these two benevolent societies, which hold forth common relief to distressed objects of a certain description of each denomination among them, and compromise the religious sentiments of none?

"Caution to be used in suggesting New Translations, &c. in the Sacred Writings."

Colyton,
SIR, May 18, 1820.
The female sex, however lovely and amiable, yet sometimes manifest that they have a will of their own, though obedience has been vowed to their husbands. Should alterations take place in the matrimonial service, the obligation will still rest on very high authority, yet attempts may be made to evade it. When good Parson Adams endeavoured, by using St. Paul's words, to restrain his wife when becoming restive, Mrs. Adams not being possessed of reasoning abilities, tried, as the common people say, to baffle him, by saying it was 'blasphemy to quote Scripture out of Church.' A lady of superior sense when disposed to rule, evaded the strict precept, declaring 'that she revered St. Paul's command, and would obey her husband if he would always promise to do just as she desired.' A wife more conversant in modern publications, when the Scripture doctrine of obedience was urged, replied, 'The passage might not be properly translated.' Assured by a learned friend that it was quite accurate, her reply was, 'St. Paul then could not be inspired when he wrote it.'

"JOSEPH CORNISH."

"On New Translations."

SIR,

Clapton,
July 1, 1820.

"When I observed, among the contents of your last number, an article on the 'Caution to be used in suggesting New Translations in the Sacred Writings,' I naturally expected, from the general conduct of the *Christian Reformer*, that a question of serious importance would have been treated in a becoming manner. With no small surprise and regret I found the subject introduced in a ludicrous connexion, as if some 'lord of the creation' had designed, with the assistance of 'good Parson Adams,' to divert a very few of your readers, if, indeed, any of them can relish such amusement, at the expense of Christian wives."

"Your correspondent may probably design, in a following number, to be serious. Then, I hope, instead of being satisfied with a sarcasm on 'modern publications,' he will communicate to your readers the considerations which have led him to conclude that the New Testament is always properly translated, especially in King James's Version; and whether St. Paul authoritatively declare a doctrine, or, without any air of authority,

propose an illustration of his subject, or offer friendly counsel to his Christian brethren; that, under these different circumstances, whatever 'he wrote' is equally to be regarded as the infallible dictate of divine inspiration. Setting aside what the Apostle would, I think, include among the 'jestings which are not convenient,' this, I apprehend, is the important question, on which serious students of the Scriptures may maintain, with equal sincerity, very different opinions."

"J. T. RUTT."

I am sorry if these "remarks" have been deemed by serious and impartial readers "unreasonably severe," or more than the occasion required, putting the question, as to the preceding letter, *an quis sed quid*. Yet I freely confess, that my letter was no sooner printed than I regretted that it had not contained an acknowledgment of the respect which I justly bear to the exemplary Christian character of Mr. Cornish, one of the last persons whom I should expect to allow himself in the indulgence of levity, though but for a moment, upon a serious subject.

J. T. RUTT.

Enfield,

June 21, 1820.

SIR,

I AM glad to see that the subject of Necessity has been brought before your readers by so able an advocate as Mr. Cogan. He, in the addendum to his former Communication, [p. 69,] has without hesitation pointedly met the most formidable and obnoxious of the objections usually brought against this, which may justly be deemed a glorious doctrine. For, amidst the corroding cares and distressing anxieties of this chequered scene, where the human view is circumscribed within so narrow limits, what so animating to the good, so consolatory to the dejected mind, as the firmly-grounded assurance that, according to the expression of the poet,

All discord's harmony not understood,
All partial evil's universal good;

that amidst the conflicting, bolsterous, unreasonable wills of men, all acting, as they feel they do, their various parts with complete freedom of choice, all are absorbed in, all unite with the

one Supreme Will which determines all?

Your Correspondent Dr. Morrell allows [p. 86] that the philosophical argument has always appeared to him to admit of no reply. On the theological argument from the Divine prescience, as displayed in prophecy and its fulfilment, Mr. Cogan has not touched, as not lying within his design when treating the subject philosophically, or perhaps as being an *argumentum ad hominem*. But though such, yet with every one who admits that the Bible contains a regular train of prophecies which have been fulfilled and still are fulfilling, the argument may have its force. How can any event be predicted, that it will assuredly come to pass, unless that event be *certain*? But if any event be certain, it must be necessary; there must be a connected chain, perhaps rather a system, of causes and effects which render that event fixed and sure amidst the circle of possibilities that would present itself to the mind that discerns not the secret springs, actions and reactions continually operating through the whole of that system. To allow that any event is *certain*, and yet to contend that it is not necessary, must be a mere logomachy. The disputant must be only alarmed at the consequences which he fears will be drawn from the use of the term necessity, and must suppose that by adopting the softer one certainty, he precludes any such deductions from his premises. If an intelligent being perceives that any event will *certainly* take place, he perceives the whole train and circle of causes and effects, the operation of which fix the certainty of that event and render it necessary that it, and not any other, should take place in the given combination of circumstances. What but this certainty, this necessity, can render any event, even such as depends on the free will of intelligent agents, predictable?

But it is not the understanding which rejects the doctrine. The force of the arguments which establish this is acknowledged. But the feelings—feelings which perhaps arise from preconceived notions, and from the long established customs of society and principles of legislation, acted on by human governors—these feelings seem to oppose the dictates of the under-

standing, and lead to a suspicion of fallacy in the argument which would otherwise convince, and at least to become sceptical respecting the doctrine, if not to reject it altogether. Thus your ingenious Correspondent Homo contends, that it is a question of consciousness, and by consciousness must be resolved, if even it be resolved at all. Your able and celebrated Correspondent Mr. Cogan replies, that, without an appeal to consciousness, we may pronounce, that a definite effect must have a definite cause. Now cause and effect are correlative terms. And if it be allowed that the latter event is an effect, that *effect*, no doubt, must result from an adequate cause. But do not they who contend for the self-determining power of the will, maintain, in fact, however they may reject it as a distinct proposition, that an event, that is, the volition and consequent action of man, may take place without a cause? Is it not some confused persuasion that such is the fact which leads them to maintain the notion of a self-determining power? What but this can they mean in declaring that the will may act from itself, without motives, and even in opposition to all the motives that are presented to, or that lie before it? I would, therefore, to accommodate the proposition to the notions which seem to influence the judgments of such, propose it rather in the following form:—If of two contingencies, neither of which implies a contradiction or a previous natural impossibility, the one takes place and not the other, there must have been something which determined that it, and not the other, should take place. Thus in the case of willing or not willing to do a thing, of choosing one of two things and not the other, in which no previous natural impossibility or contradiction was involved, there must have been something which determined the mind to choose the one and not the other, or else the mind must have been determined without a determination; the intellectual faculty must have acted without intelligence; it must have made a distinction without perceiving a difference; the reason must have drawn a conclusion without a reason, and have preferred one to another without a preference.

If the matter be referred to consci-

ousness, what is it that we are conscious of? Does any one feel conscious that he can prefer one of two things that appear to him exactly alike, between which he cannot perceive the minutest difference? Is not this the very circumstance which brings the mind to a stand, and makes it hesitate in its choice? It cannot determine, it knows not how to choose, because it perceives nothing which may give the preponderance. It may continue hesitating some time, all the while striving to discover a difference, that that difference may give the preponderance to the one or the other. And if it were a matter in which it was not called upon to decide, no determination would be made. But in a case in which it must decide, the mind catches hold of any circumstance; it will at one time take that object which is nearest, at another time that which is farthest off, merely because the one idea or the other occurs first to the thought. Just as I have heard of persons setting out to take a walk, undetermined which way to go, decide by holding a stick or cane upright on the ground, and which ever way the stick fell, pursuing that direction. But does not every case of this kind imply the very fact for which the Necessitarian contends,—that without a motive, without a preference, without something to determine the choice, no choice can be made? In referring the matter to consciousness, it appears absolutely necessary that the mind should stand entirely free from every bias, and at the same time should so firmly and distinctly reflect and recollect each step of its progress from the proposition, through the various stages of hesitation and volition to action, as to know assuredly the whole path it has passed, and perceive clearly each pace it has stepped.

Many, from the very evanescent nature of the operations of volitions, and from having never inured their minds to reflect, to look back and attend minutely to what has passed within, can give hardly any account of what led to their volitions. Not recollecting any thing of the mind's progress, no wonder they should say, they willed it, because they willed it. They felt—they were conscious of—what? That they chose without making a choice? That they preferred without perceiving

any difference? No one can maintain that. It only amounts to this: the impression was so evanescent that it cannot be recollected. And this seems to be confirmed by the circumstance, that in cases in which the mind is obliged to decide in haste, or where the matter is so trifling as to need no deliberation, or where any thing of hurry of spirits occasions confusion of thought, even the more reflecting feel themselves as unable to recall the reasons of their determinations as do others; while they may acknowledge, at the same time, they know they had a reason, though they cannot now recollect what it was. In more important concerns, when the mind determines calmly, deliberately, after weighing the arguments on each side, to the reflecting the reasons of their decision are apparent; and in such cases they may be partially, at least, if not altogether so, even to the less thoughtful. Laying these facts together, that in proportion as we are more inured to reflection on what passes within us—as we determine more coolly, calmly, dispassionately, with a more nearly exact recollection of the whole process of the mind, we discover that our volitions are decided by motives, and that the far larger part of our volitions and thoughts are exceedingly evanescent,—what reason can be given why we should conclude, that in the latter case we are guided by a self-determining power of the will, though in the other cases we are plainly determined by motives? We cannot be said to be conscious of that of which we have no recollection. In the evanescent cases, then, we cannot say that we are conscious of acting by a self-determining power. We are conscious only that we have forgotten the reasons which determined us. In proportion as we ascend in the scale of distinct, vivid recollection and calm deliberation, we perceive more clearly, we become more and more *conscious*, of the influence of motives. Every argument from analogy then would lead us to conclude, that motives must be the swaying power in all cases, which *consciousness* informs us is so in the more distinct ones.

We said likewise, that the mind of him who is to decide whether he feels conscious of acting by a self-determining power, should be free from every

bias. How many a criminal at the bar of justice has alleged in his defence, that he felt himself impelled to do the crime of which he stood charged, by some unknown power that he could not account for; that something seemed to whisper to him that he must proceed, and urge him on to the atrocious deed! On the other hand, many an one, on his attention being first attracted to this subject, has stated cases and supposed himself to be acting without motives, or contrary to the strongest motives, not perceiving that all the while his mind was under a bias, and that he was influenced to decide as he did by the wish to adduce an argument against the doctrine to which his old prepossessions were repugnant;—that this at the time became in his mind the strongest motive. What are we to understand by the declarations of the wretched culprit in the former case, but that great was the strength of the motive, urgent was the impelling influence, arising from the bad passions under which he laboured, and by which he was enslaved? The strength of these blinded his mind and indisposed him to, yea, urged him from, any thing like that calm reflection which would have recalled him to better motives and prevented the crime. These formed the evil spirit, the extraneous devil, to whose suggestion he would now, when brought to a more sedate state of mind, attribute the crime, of which he would fain seem incapable had he not been thus acted upon by a foreign power, by a malignant foe, whose might he would readily suppose he had not the ability, even if he had the will, to resist. In the one of these cases the party contends he had no power at all, much less a self-determining power, yea, that he was actuated contrary to his will by another power; in the other, that he was entirely governed by this self-determining power, and *that* in opposition to the motives presented to his mind. The unbiassed, impartial observer can in the mean time perceive that both the one and the other were all the while acting under the influence of motives, and were determined by that motive which, in the given circumstances, was, at the moment of decision, the most urgent.

But we are told that the conscience, that the feelings, which are part of our very nature, tell us that we deserve

direct punishment, vindictive punishment, punishment separate from the effects or the natural consequences of our actions. Now as to conscience, do we not speak of a pure conscience, an enlightened conscience, a tender conscience, a hardened conscience, &c.? What can this imply but that the consciences of men vary? Some will accuse or excuse what others will condemn. Look to the several stages of human society, the progressive advance of civilization, the influence of Christianity on either bodies of men or individuals. Do we not find the conscience varying in its dictates in proportion to the influence of these several causes? The conscience of one tells him that *sua patria* is every thing; that all must be sacrificed to it; that to rob, plunder, pillage, destroy what belongs to another country, is all right and honourable; but to do so to your own country is flagitious. The conscience of the bandit tells him that all is honourable, noble, great, and that in proportion to the difficulties and dangers he surmounts, by which he acquires wealth, glory and distinction. The conscience of the Arab, wandering over his deserts, tells him he is bound by all laws, human and divine, to protect the stranger who puts himself under his protection, and seeks a shelter in his tent, but that the very hour he leaves him, he becomes a lawful prey. What was the conscience of the followers of Odin, whose delight and glory was in their feastings after battle, to drink the blood, and that out of the skulls of their enemies?

But our feelings in even this enlightened day, and in this enlightened part of the world, tell us that we deserve this distinct, this vindictive punishment. Since we have seen that the consciences of men vary so much, it may be very justly asked, how did we acquire these feelings? Are not all our feelings derived from the law of association? Are they not all formed, regulated, varied, by the customs of the country in which we are born, the manners of the age in which we live, the principles and practices of the family in which we are brought up, and the habits of thought and reflection which we ourselves contract? Hence the ill-informed, the ignorant persecutor, guided by his feelings, glories in persecuting those whom he deems

heretics, believing that he is doing God service, and benefiting the souls of those whose bodies he is mangling and consuming. Hence the Indian has laughed at his tormentor in the midst of his agonies and sufferings, and chided him with the want of skill in his art. Hence the martyr, bound to the stake, from the midst of faggots and flames has exulted in his sufferings, encouraged his fellows, and praised his God. In the same manner our feelings are formed with respect to *vindictive* punishment. We are born and brought up under terrestrial parents, fathers of our flesh, who for a time chastened us, not entirely like our Father in heaven, the Father of spirits, for our profit, but for their pleasure. We are educated under the influence of the laws of our country. These in all countries, with respect to the penal part, too much partake of a vindictive quality. They proceed upon the principle of terror, rather than on that of reformation. It is not till mankind become more enlightened, till they have better understood the nature of the human mind, that the latter principle is acted upon in the regulation of private families, or in enacting the laws of the state which shall protect the worthy and shall correct or punish the delinquent. Most countries and most families have been more or less under the dominion and regulation of arbitrary governors, tyrannical rulers, and oppressive chiefs, who, in the punishments they inflicted, consulted more, were influenced rather by, their vindictive feelings than by the consideration of what would most conduce to the general benefit. Especially was this the case in ages past, when the nature of the human mind and the effects of sanguinary statutes or of penal codes was little regarded. Vengeance was wreaked on the poor wretch who had offended his sovereign, in the same manner as passion dictates the punishment that shall be inflicted on the offending child of the ignorant parents of the present day in the uninstructed or ill-informed classes of society. And to justify all this, the ill desert of the culprit was enlarged, emblazoned, set forth in the most vivid colours; and all that passion dictates, all that vengeance decrees, is represented as being only condign punishment, as nothing more than the offender had deserved. And even in

those cases in which benefit was really intended by the governors, were not their minds too much guided by the influence of the preceding sanguinary customs, manners and laws? They were not yet sufficiently enlightened, society had not yet attained that degree of intelligence which would lead them to distinguish between correction, setting right or reformation, and condign punishment or vindictive infliction. Are not many of the still existing penal laws in all countries, residues of the former barbarous state of society when vengeance was the order of the day?

Living, then, as we do, in a state of society that has derived several of its institutions, many of its customs, principles and manners from such a preceding state of things—in a state of society in which, from the imperfections of our nature and condition, something like vengeance may be necessary to restrain the violent, is it to be wondered at that the idea of vindictive punishment should be so connected with all that we deem ill-desert, vice or sin? These are the habitual associations which we form in our minds from our infancy, throughout our childhood, and even in our manhood. From such associations arise our feelings. These feelings lead us to judge that vengeance, direct, absolute punishment, abstracted from the consequence of actions, is fit, is right, is necessary for the well-being of the whole; and that therefore it must, it ought to take place under the superintendence of the Great Supreme. Now suppose any human government to have instituted such a code of penal laws as would render it the plain, undisputed interest of every member of the country to obey those laws, and that every one felt that by disregarding and breaking those laws, he entailed on himself misery, wretchedness and woe, as the natural consequence of his actions, from which he found that he could not escape but by altering his conduct, and that that alteration would quickly change his condition from wretchedness to happiness,—should we not admire such a code as the perfection of wisdom? Do we not, in fact, admire any penal law in proportion as it approximates to such a standard, and condemn it as it recedes from it? May we not, then, rest satisfied in such a government

under the Great Supreme? And can that be any encouragement to folly, vice and sin which assures us, that in proportion to the delinquency will be the suffering? But I have trespassed too long.

STEPHEN FREEMAN.

Norwich, Dec. 5, 1820.

"For the priest's lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth. But ye are departed out of the way, ye have caused many to stumble: therefore have I made you contemptible and base before all the people, according as ye have not kept my ways."—Malachi vii. 7—9.

SIR,

I CANNOT help thinking that your Correspondent Philalethes [pp. 657—662] has been rather unfortunate in the time he has chosen to attempt a vindication of the Established clergy. In all periods of our history their conduct has justly demanded the censure of the impartial historian. They have always been more anxious to curtail the liberties of the people than solicitous to preserve them. Instead of propagating generous notions of freedom, they have constantly endeavoured to instil into the minds of men the most slavish maxims, and taught lessons of the most blind and abject submission. This, at least, is my impression from reading the history of the Church of England. If I am wrong, your Correspondent will be kind enough to point me out the instances in which the clergy, as a body, have stood forth the champions of civil and religious liberty, in which they have been the patrons of any attempt to check superstition and bigotry, or the authors of any plan for promoting that liberal spirit of which he is so zealous an advocate. When he can shew that such has been their conduct, I will readily retract any thing I may have said to their disparagement, and join in those praises which he seems to think so justly their due. But the conduct of the clergy on a recent occasion has not been much calculated to alter my opinion of them. Take, for instance, that of the bishops in the House of Lords, and we find one of them applying the constitutional maxim that "the King can do no wrong" to his private and domestic character! Is this ignorance or hypocrisy? Another employs his learning in translating the most filthy

expressions of one of those wretched witnesses who, to the eternal disgrace of the country, were permitted to vomit out such a tissue of falsehood, fraud and impiety, as the annals of no period can parallel. Look at their explanations and expositions of Matt. v. 32, and tell me if any thing which it is in the power of man to say of them could more effectually "hold them up to contempt"? Look at the speech of another, relative to the divorce clause in the infamous Bill of Pains and Penalties, and see him afterwards sneaking out of the House when he ought to have given his vote. Lastly, remark the conduct of Bishop Van Mildert in throwing every obstacle in the way of Her Majesty's returning her public thanks to God for her signal and happy deliverance, and preventing a clergyman of high rank, of noble family, and of unblemished character, from officiating on that occasion. And such is a fair sample of the general conduct of the clergy of the Church of England.

"The sacred function in such hands is made—

Sad sacrilege—no function, but a trade."

To celebrate the progress of murder, rapine and bloodshed, their pulpits were always open. When tens of thousands of their fellow-creatures were weltering unburied on the plain of slaughter, they could raise the notes of triumph and exultation—they could pray, preach, address, dine, shout, and exhibit every expression of joy; but the peaceful triumph of innocence, the vindication of a persecuted and oppressed female, could find no claim for their sympathy: while the whole nation was thrilling with honest exultation, they could stand by, the sullen and mortified spectators of the triumph, or if they moved, it was to interpose some pitiful obstacle to rejoicing.

Your Correspondent is offended at the language which I have used in reference to these men; I will therefore now content myself with quoting the words of our Saviour as applied to certain characters in his time, and leave your readers to discover if there be no class of persons to whom they are most completely applicable at the present moment:

"Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but

inwardly they are *ravening wolves*. Ye shall know them by their fruits."

"They bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers."

"They shut up the kingdom of heaven against men."

"Woe unto you, for ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayers.—Woe unto you, who make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter, but within are full of extortion and excess.—Woe unto you, for ye have taken away the key of knowledge: ye enter not in yourselves, and them that were entering in ye hindered."

"Many well-intentioned men," I have no doubt, will say of the National Church, "*Esto perpetua*;" but how any Dissenter from principle can join in a prayer for the perpetuity of any established church, I do not understand. The principles of Dissent, if I can understand them, are opposed to all establishments, to all unholy alliances of Church and State, to all creeds, articles and forms of church government which rely for support and protection upon acts of Parliament. I will join as readily as any one in admiration of the virtues and talents of "some eminent prelates." I shall always regard it an honour and a happiness to have known the venerable and truly Christian Bishop of this diocese: but, to the everlasting disgrace of his brethren, those very qualities for which he ought to be most admired and valued, render him an object of their abuse. A time-serving, fawning, bigoted, persecuting, ignorant prelate, they would laud to the skies, whereas the life and character of Dr. Bathurst is a perpetual and standing reproach to them. But from the conduct of this excellent man, are we therefore to infer the beneficial effects of an establishment? Most certainly not. The conduct of the bench, both now and at all times, is quite sufficient to shew how widely different is the Church of England from the Church of Christ, and how unlike are the mitred and courtly prelates of the present day from the bishops we read of in the Epistles.

There are many parts of your Correspondent's letter which might be easily enough answered, were it worth

while. He calls upon us to refrain from attacking Athanasianism or Transubstantiation, because, "if left to their fate, they would soon be forgotten." It is a pity he did not live in the time of the Reformation, when, if his advice had been followed, we should now very quietly have contented ourselves with believing both the one and the other of these harmless appendages to Christianity. Luther and Cranmer and Wickliffe would have spared themselves their useless and foolish labours, and even Paul, had Philaethes been at his elbow when writing his Epistles, would have saved himself the trouble, since "the effect of controversy is but to increase the irritation and strengthen the prejudices of the contending parties." But I know that to refute such positions as these is but to waste the time of your readers; I conclude, therefore, by subscribing myself,

A NONCONFORMIST.

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

No. CCCLXXIII.

Metaphors and Similitudes taking the place of Reasons.

This has been often exemplified in the history of nations. The defence of the war against the French Revolution was, that when your neighbour's house is on fire, you must put out the flames to save your own dwelling from being burned.

Cardinal Wolsey, with like ingenuity, contrived to embroil Henry VIII. in the contest between the Emperor and the King of France (A. D. 1528). Sir Thomas More, who was one of the Council, tells us, that when the others advised the King to remain at peace, and leave Charles and Francis to quarrel by themselves, the Cardinal always repeated a fable of certain wise men who foresaw that a great rain was coming which would make fools of all whom it should fall upon, and to escape it, hid themselves under ground; but when they came out, they found the fools so numerous, that instead of governing them, they were forced to submit to be governed by them. Whence he inferred, that if the English sate still while the fools fought, the fools would at last unite and fall upon them. "I will not dispute," he adds, "upon his grace's counsayle, and I truste we never made warre but as reason woulde. But yet this fable for hys parte dydde in hys dayes help the King and the realme to spend manye a faire peny. But that geate is passed, and hys grace is gone: our lorde assayle his soule."

OBITUARY.

At *St. Helena*, ANNE, wife of the Rev. James CHATER, one of the missionaries at Ceylon, and sister of Mrs. Sketchley of Liverpool. Mrs. Chater was possessed of talent and much sensibility, and her attention having been directed early in life to the religious state of the Heathen world, by the powerful preaching and conversation of her uncle, the late Rev. John Thomas, founder of the Baptist Mission to the East, (see the "Baptist Periodical Accounts,") she married in 1806 with the express design of becoming personally useful to that Mission, but a fast-increasing family, and a climate destructive to her health and constitution, caused her some disappointment as it regarded the primary object of her voluntary exile; a disappointment of which she speaks in the most pathetic language in some of her private letters. In 1815, she suffered the loss of her two elder sons, on their passage to this country for education, in the *Arniston* sloop of war, which was wrecked on the coast of Africa, and in which perished at the same time Lord and Lady Molesworth, who had taken the children under their protection during the passage. From that period Mrs. Chater's health became so much impaired as to destroy her public usefulness, and oblige her to relinquish a school which she had till then conducted in Columbo for the benefit of the Missionary funds. In March last, having already borne ten children in India, and being again in a state of pregnancy, her physicians recommended her return for one year to her native land, assuring her that they believed two months at sea would restore her to her original health. The embarkation of herself and seven children, leaving her husband at Columbo on account of his Missionary engagements, was the last important effort of her firm and courageous mind. On their arrival at *St. Helena*, being in a state of such extreme debility as to make it necessary to the saving of her life that she should land and await there her delivery, she did so, retaining her two younger children, infants of one and three years, with her, while her five elder ones were separated from her to proceed, under the care of the captain, to England. On the 18th of May, four days after their departure, she was delivered of female twins, and her constitution being now in a state of rapid exhaustion, she expired on the 5th of June, leaving an interesting family of nine children, the eldest of whom is but just turned of nine years. The four infants at *St. Helena* were instantly after her death taken under the protecting care of the Rev. J. B. Vernon, officiating

Episcopal clergyman of that place, whose attention to Mrs. Chater during her last sufferings, and subsequently to her children, and his Christian conduct in other instances of personal suffering abroad, entitle him to the respect and admiration of every Christian community in his native land. The family of Mrs. Chater owe him the most unbounded gratitude, and while they record his name and his deeds in the perishing memorials of earth, they believe them to be already written in heaven. Although Mrs. Chater died in circumstances of almost unparalleled trial, in a land of strangers, and severed from every earthly friend, her lamenting relatives have consolation in believing, that as she lived in the fear and the service of God, she died in the exercise of that faith which, realizing the Divine presence, makes the chamber of death "the gate of heaven."

Sept. 6, at *Billingshurst, Sussex*, the Rev. THOMAS LETTER TAYLOR, minister of the Unitarian Baptist congregation, of apoplexy, in the midst of his career of Christian duty and increasing usefulness, at the early age of 26 years, "leaving a widow, with two infant children, and the prospect of a third, without any means of support. Mrs. Taylor has for some time been in a very weak state of health, which, united with her present situation, will render it impossible for her to use personal exertion for the support of herself and children for a considerable time to come.

"The Society at *Billingshurst* are desirous of raising a fund by subscription, sufficient to provide necessaries and a few comforts for the bereaved widow during the trying scene immediately before her; and they have already entered into a subscription for this purpose to the utmost of their ability, and feel themselves called on to make an appeal to the benevolence of individuals and congregations for aid, in this case of peculiar distress."

Any contribution transmitted to the Rev. Wm. Moon, Union Street, Deptford, or to Mr. G. Smallfield, Printer, Hackney, will be immediately forwarded to the Deacons of the Society for the purposes above-stated.

Nov. 23, at her house in *Hackney*, MARY MYRTILLA JESSER, daughter of the late Wm. Jesser, Esq., of that place. This respectable lady survived but a few weeks her mother, (see p. 553,) to whom she was tenderly attached.

INTELLIGENCE.

DOMESTIC.

RELIGIOUS.

Re-opening of the Presbyterian Meeting-House, Evesham.

ON the 10th instant was re-opened the Presbyterian Meeting-House at Evesham, Worcestershire, after being shut up for two months, in order to add a gallery, and to alter and improve the whole of the interior. The minister, Mr. Davis, preached on the occasion to a full congregation, on the Nature and Importance of Public Worship. The expense of the alterations and improvements was very considerable, as the seats are made to rise gradually on an inclined floor, (which is a great advantage,) but justice and gratitude require it to be recorded, that the whole was generously paid by one individual. May such liberality become more common!

The Rev. Paul Cardale preached his seven sermons, published under the title of "The Gospel Sanctuary," upon the first opening of the place in 1740.

December 14, 1820.

Pastoral Jubilee.—A beautiful piece of sculpture has been erected in *St. John's Church, Manchester*, to commemorate the 50th year of the incumbency, [not surely the "incumbrancy," as the Monthly Magazine reports!] of the Rev. JOHN CLOWES, M. A., the present Rector. It consists of a tablet of white marble, containing ten figures in basso relievo, admirably executed by Mr. Flaxman, and is placed over the Rector's seat. The venerable Rector is represented in the act of instructing a most interesting groupe of children, who are accompanied by their parents and grandsire, to signify the three generations who have attended Mr. Clowes' ministry. Behind the rector stands a guardian angel, bearing a palm-branch, expressive of the Divine protection. Such a memorial as this, is, perhaps, without a parallel. Mr. Clowes is the principal writer, of the present day, on behalf of the doctrines of Swedenborg.

Mr. PILLANS, Rector of the High School, has been appointed Professor of Humanity in the University of Edinburgh. The Magistrates and Council of Edinburgh, (that is, a majority of them,) on the 19th of July, appointed JOHN WILSON, Esq., advocate, to be Professor of

Moral Philosophy, in the University of Edinburgh. This appointment was vehemently resisted, and has occasioned great dissatisfaction in Scotland.

DR. LINDSAY will preach his Annual Sermon to young people at Monkwell Street, on Sunday evening, January 6, 1821, when a collection will be made on behalf of the *Society for the Relief of Aged and Infirm Protestant Dissenting Ministers*.

Ecclesiastical Promotions.

The Rev. JOHN MOORE, M. A., to the Archdeaconry of Exeter, void by the translation of George, Bishop of Exeter, to the See of Lincoln; and the Rev. JAMES WOOD, D. D., to be Dean of Ely, void by the death of Dr. Pearce.

LITERARY.

WE have unfeigned pleasure in being able to announce that Mr. JOHN BOWRING, of Hackney, has in the press a volume of *Translations from the Russian*, with preliminary remarks on the language and poetical literature of Russia. This is quite a new field of literature, and no one is better qualified than this gentleman to labour in it with success. His many valuable contributions to this work, in both prose and poetry, will have prepared our readers to welcome with eagerness every production of his pen.

Law Proceedings.

CASE OF MR. TWIGHT.

(From the Traveller.)

SUFFOLK COUNTY SESSIONS.

Held at Bury St. Edmunds, October 23, before T. S. Gooch, Esq., and a Bench of Magistrates.

Considerable interest was excited at these sessions, by the trial of Mr. Francis Twight, a farmer, for repeating in open church, at Whepstead, in this county, (after the blessing implored for the King,) "and God bless the Queen too." For this exclamation he was summoned by the reverend vicar of the parish, Mr. Image, before the magistrates, and convicted in the penalty of £20, which refusing to pay, he was ordered to be committed to prison until the ensuing sessions, or find bail; the latter, however, he declined, though pressed so to do, not only by the most respectable inha-

bitants of the parish, who offered to become bail, but by the magistrates themselves. A jury, after several challenges, were sworn: the clerk then read over the indictment, containing no less than eight counts, which charged that the defendant Twight, on the 17th of September last, in the parish church of Whepstead, "willingly, and of purpose, maliciously and contemptuously did interrupt and disturb the congregation there assembled." When the defendant was asked in common form whether he pleaded guilty or not guilty, no little consternation pervaded the court and auditors, to hear him reply "guilty." Mr. Cooper, one of his counsel, immediately arose, and said that the defendant certainly laboured under a misapprehension, and Twight added, he said the words, but pleaded guilty to them as "no crime."

Mr. Storks then addressed the jury:—"After a very anxious attention to this case, and a firm persuasion in my own mind, from the finding of the grand jury, as to its result, I yield myself reluctantly to the wishes of my client, who has felt it his duty not to have permitted in his church, that which would not have been permitted in another—an attempt to disturb a Christian congregation. He has felt for the infatuation of the defendant, and is satisfied with the punishment of the defendant, who has thought proper to lay (lie) in gaol ever since the 27th of September last, which he trusts will be an example to him and to all others. I say," continued the learned gentleman, "that my client, impelled by this Christian spirit of charity, wishes to put an end to this case, and to leave it at this stage of the proceedings, by not producing any evidence. If my learned friends choose to accept this offer, I shall set myself down; but if it be not accepted, I shall discharge my duty as a zealous advocate in prosecuting this case, and I have no doubt as to its result."

A pause here ensued. No answer was made by defendant's counsel, when the chairman said, as no evidence is brought forward, the jury must find an acquittal, and they instantly returned a verdict of *Not guilty*. The chairman observed, "You ought to be very much obliged," when Twight said loudly, "I do not feel so at all," or "I do not thank you for it" (we could not exactly catch the expression). General applause, upon hearing the verdict, immediately ensued, when the chairman, with great warmth, desired the constables to take the offenders into custody, and if they did not do their duty he would do his by apprehending the first man guilty of such behaviour.

A correspondent of *The Huntingdon Gazette* observes, that the friends of

Twight are sorry the case was not proceeded in, as they firmly relied on a triumphal acquittal; for it was with great difficulty the grand jury could find a bill. The result has given great satisfaction to every friend of civil and religious liberty in this neighbourhood; for the charitable conduct of this reverend divine, in instituting these proceedings, is universally condemned by all parties. A subscription is set on foot, confining it to the sum of 1s. each, to defray the expenses of the trial, and the subscriptions flow in freely. The defendant only laughed at the proffered mercy, and he intends instituting proceedings against the reverend vicar.

FOREIGN.

FRANCE.

The Two Religions.—During the sitting of the Chamber of Deputies, on Friday the 22d June, the state of the clergy in France was made the subject of discussion. The estimates for the Established Clergy of the Church of Rome amounts to 22,600,000 francs, (£941,000,) which was granted by the Chamber. The Minister of the Interior then demanded the sum of 60,000 francs (£2,500) for the Protestant Clergy, and further required, that the estimate should be augmented to the sum of 60,000 francs (£2,500) for the repair of Protestant Churches. He stated that "the Protestant religion is organized in fifty departments of France: it is celebrated in 200 churches or places of worship, the greater part of which are in want of repair. There are many places where, for want of churches, the service of religion is celebrated in the open air." This estimate was granted without the slightest opposition.

The Protestants of France propose to publish a collection of Portraits, &c., entitled *Musée des Protestans Célèbres*, &c. "Museum of celebrated Protestants who have appeared from the commencement of the Reformation to the present day." The work will consist of lithographic portraits of the earliest Reformers, and others distinguished by their rank, their talents and their sufferings, with short memoirs of their lives; and it is proposed to extend this collection to about 150 portraits. It will be published at the Protestant Library in the Place du Louvre.

Two warriors of the Revolution, Marshals KELLERMAN, Duke of Valmy, and LEFEBVRE, Duke of Dantsic, are lately deceased. Kellerman's heart is to be buried at his own request at Valmy, the scene

of the first victory of the French Revolutionists, Sept. 20, 1792, in which he bore command. At his interment in Paris, his brother-in-law, Count Marbois, pronounced a funeral oration, which is said to have drawn tears from every eye.

DENMARK.

According to letters from *Copenhagen* received at *Hamburg*, the populace of the former city have attempted to renew the disgraceful outrages of last year against the houses and persons of the Jews; but the prompt intervention of the police instantly restored tranquillity, and defeated the plan of the ill-disposed persons.

RUSSIA.

"In 1818, a subject of Russia was condemned to death for forging Bank-notes, and had his punishment commuted into hard labour for life by the Emperor. While suffering this sentence, he was again guilty of the same crime, condemned again to death, and again had his life spared by Alexander, who ordered him to be kept confined for life in a fortress, under strict guard." — *Hambro' paper*.

The consecration of a place of worship, recently built for the German Protestant Church at *Moscow*, took place on the 11th of September, 1819. The ceremony was conducted by the pastors *Gœring* and *Dommes*.

CHINA.

A Brussels paper of November 6, states that the Chinese government has prohibited the importation of *opium* into its dominions. The same jealous and persecuting government is also said to have ordered Father AMIOT, the only missionary who was still at *Pekin*, to quit China; and to have inhumanly strangled at *Canton*, an old French priest of great age, who had secretly inhabited China for a great number of years.

It appears that the herculean labour of translating the BIBLE into the CHINESE LANGUAGE has at length been accomplished through the perseverance and ability of Mr. Milne and Dr. Morrison, to whom, under God, the warmest thanks of the Christian world are most justly due. In a letter, dated *Canton*, Nov. 25, 1819, Dr. Morrison writes thus to the Committee of the Bible Society: "Thus we possess in *Chinese*, a complete version of all the canonical books of Sacred Scrip-

ture. The qualities at which I have aimed in my translations, are fidelity, perspicuity and simplicity; and when the difficulty of the task, the circumstances in which the translation has been placed, and the few helps afforded for a first attempt, are considered, I am sure that every candid man, and the Committee of the Bible Society, will not lay stress on trivial objections. It will be our study to revise the whole, alone and together, and to collate every part with each other, in order to render names of persons and places uniform; and we shall avail ourselves of any criticisms that may reach us from any quarter: and may that gracious Providence that has preserved our lives to complete the Translation, yet spare us to revise and print the whole! The light of revelation will, by the mercy of God, illumine this dark and idolatrous land in the appointed season. The printing of the edition of the New Testament, before decided on, is proceeding gradually at *Malacca*; and it will be necessary to print the edition of the whole Bible, which I now project, at the same place. May the Divine blessing rest on all the members and friends of the Bible Society!"

The Emperor of China has received an "Ode to the Supreme Being," written in Russian by Gabriel Romanowtcht, a Russian poet, which he has caused to be translated into both languages, (the Chinese and the Tartar,) to be written on a piece of rich silk, and suspended in the interior of his palace.

The English newspapers of this day (Dec. 26th) announce the *Emperor of China's death*, on the authority of letters from *Petersburgh*.

EAST INDIES.

Consistorial Court at Calcutta.—This Court was announced by public advertisement, dated Sept. 8, 1819, under the title of "The Consistory Court within and for the Archdeaconry of Calcutta, in the Diocese of Calcutta." The Bishop's address on opening the Court is a pleasing proof that ecclesiastical authority cannot become oppressive in Hindostan. A great part of the business incident to the Consistory Courts in England, is granted by His Majesty's Charter of Justice to the Supreme Court of Judicature at Calcutta. The Bishop's Court has to look after the clergy; to see that they use the Liturgy, the whole Liturgy, and nothing but the Liturgy; and to superintend the registry of baptisms.