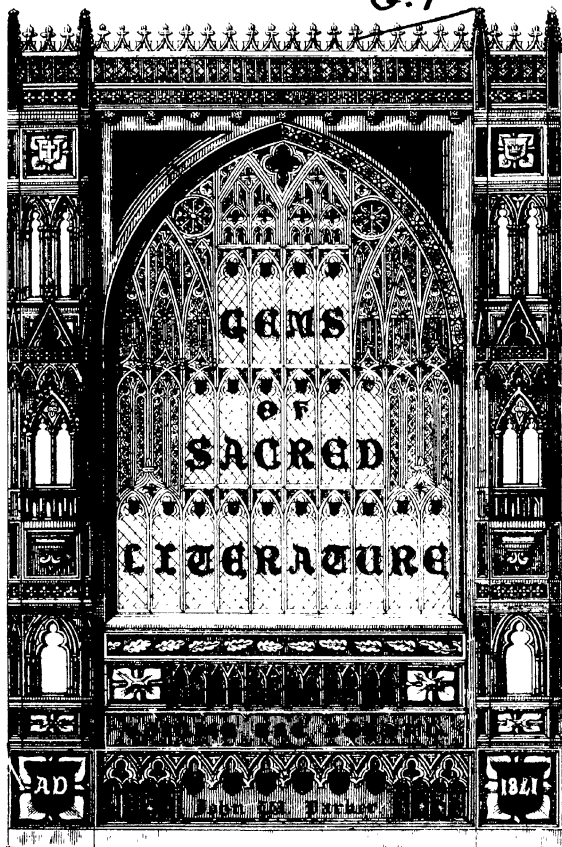


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JAMES HERVEY, M.A.

JAMES HERVEY, the son of a clergyman, was born in 1713, and was educated at Oxford. After serving a curacy in Devonshire, he became incumbent of Weston Favell, Northamptonshire, where the zeal with which he laboured in promoting both the temporal and spiritual welfare of his flock so preyed upon a weak constitution, that he died of consumption, in the year 1758. His private character was most exemplary; and he devoted to charitable purposes all the profits of his works, which were very considerable, as he was a highly popular writer.

Of his *Meditations among the Tombs, Theron and Aspasio*, and others of his works which are still held in repute, the style is too florid, but the sentiments they contain are well calculated to improve the heart. It is said that the sermons of Mr. Hervey were remarkably plain and simple.

THE POWER OF GOD DISPLAYED IN CREATION.

"POWER," saith the Scripture, "belongeth unto God." And in what majestic lines is this attribute of Jehovah written throughout the whole volume of creation! especially through those magnificent pages unfolded in yonder starry regions, which are therefore styled by the sweet and seraphic singer of Israel, "the firmament of his power," because the grand exploits of Omnipotence are there displayed with the utmost pomp, and recorded in the most legible characters.

Who that looks upward to the midnight sky, and with an eye of reason beholds its rolling wonders—who can forbear inquiring of what were those mighty orbs formed? Amazing to relate! they were produced without materials. They sprang from emptiness itself. The stately fabric of universal nature emerged out of nothing. What instruments were used by the supreme Architect to fashion the parts with such exquisite niceness, and give so beautiful a polish to the whole? How was all con-

ned into one finely proportioned and nobly finished structure? A bare fiat accomplished all. Let them be, said God: He added no more, and immediately the marvellous edifice arose, adorned with every beauty, displaying immeasurable perfections, and declaring amidst enraptured seraphs its great Creator's praise. "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth." What forcible machinery fixed some of those ponderous globes on an immoveable basis? What irresistible impulse bowled others through the circuit of the heavens? What coercive energy confined their impetuous courses within limits astonishingly large, yet most minutely true? nothing but his sovereign will. For all things were at first constituted, and all to this day abide, "according to his ordinance."

Without any toilsome assiduity or laborious process, to raise, to touch, to speak such a multitude of immense bodies into being; to launch them through the spaces of the sky as an arrow from the hand of a giant; to impress on such unwieldy masses a motion, far outstripping the swiftness of the winged creation; and to continue them in the same rapid whirl for thousands and thousands of years. What an amazing instance of infinite might is this! Can any thing be impossible to the Lord, the Lord God, the Creator and controller of all the ends of the earth, all the regions of the universe? Rather is not all that we count difficult, perfect ease to that glorious Being, who only spake, and the world was made; who only gave command, and the stupendous axle was lodged fast, the lofty wheels moved complete? What a sure defence, O my soul, is this everlasting strength of thy God! Be this thy continual refuge in the article of danger, this thy never-failing resource in every time of need.

ETERNITY.

O ETERNITY! Eternity! How are our boldest, our strongest thoughts, lost and overwhelmed in thee! Who can set landmarks to limit thy dimensions, or find plummets to fathom thy depths? Arithmeticians have figures to compute all the progressions of time; astronomers have instruments to calculate the distances of the planets; but what numbers can state, what lines can gauge the lengths and breadths of eternity? "It is higher than heaven, what canst thou do? deeper than hell, what canst thou know? The measure thereof is longer than the earth, broader than the sea."

Mysterious mighty existence! a sum not to be lessened by the largest deductions; an extent not to be contracted by all possible diminutions! none can truly say, after the most prodigious waste of ages, "So much of eternity is gone." For, when millions of centuries are elapsed, it is but just commencing; and when millions more have run their ample round, it will be no nearer ending. Yea, when ages, numerous as the bloom of spring, increased by the herbage of summer, both augmented by the leaves of autumn; all multiplied by the drops of rain which drown the winter; when these, and ten thousand times ten thousand more than can be represented by any similitude, or imagined by any conception, when all these are resolved and finished; eternity, vast, boundless, amazing eternity will only be beginning!

What a pleasing yet awful thought is this! Full of delight, and full of dread! Oh! may it alarm our fears, quicken our hopes, and animate all our endeavours! Since we are soon to launch into this endless and inconceivable state, let us give all diligence to secure our entrance into bliss. Now let us give all diligence, because there is no alteration in the scenes of futurity. The wheel never turns! all is steadfast and immoveable beyond the grave.

Whether we are then seated on the throne or stretched on the rack, a seal will be set to our condition by the hand of everlasting mercy, or inflexible justice. The saints always rejoice amidst the smiles of heaven; their harps are perpetually tuned; their triumphs admit of no interruption. The ruin of the wicked is irremediable. The fatal sentence once passed, is never to be repealed; no hope of exchanging their doleful habitations; but all things bear the same dismal aspect for ever and ever.

THE INFANT'S TOMB.

YONDER white stone, emblem of the innocence it covers, informs the beholder of one who breathed out its tender soul almost in the instant of receiving it. There the peaceful infant, without so much as knowing what labour and vexation mean, lies still and is quiet; it sleeps and is at rest. Staying only to wash away its native impurity in the laver of regeneration, it bid a speedy adieu to time and terrestrial things. What did the little sojourner find so forbidding and disgusting in our upper world to occasion its precipitant exit? 'Tis written indeed of its suffering Saviour, that when He had tasted the vinegar mingled with gall, He would not drink. And did our new-come stranger begin to sip the cup of life, but, perceiving the bitterness, turn away its head and refuse the draught? Was this the cause why the wary babe only opened its eyes, just looked on the light, and then withdrew into the more inviting regions of undisturbed repose?

Happy voyager! no sooner launched than arrived at the haven! Highly-favoured probationer! accepted without being exercised! It was thy peculiar privilege not to feel the slightest of those evils which oppressed thy surviving kindred; which frequently fetch groans from the most manly fortitude, or most elevated faith. The arrows of

calamity, barbed with anguish, are often fixed deep in our choicest comforts. The fiery darts of temptation, shot from the hand of hell, are always flying in showers around our integrity. To thee, sweet babe, both these distresses and dangers were alike unknown.

Consider this, ye mourning parents, and dry up your tears. Why should you lament that your little ones are crowned with victory before the sword was drawn or the conflict begun? Perhaps the Supreme Disposer of events foresaw some inevitable snare of temptation forming, or some dreadful storm of adversity impending. And why should you be so dissatisfied with that kind precaution, which housed your pleasant plant, and removed into shelter a tender flower before the thunders roared; before the lightnings flew; before the tempest poured its rage? Oh, remember! they are not lost, but "taken away from the evil to come."

SOLITUDE.

THE world is a troubled ocean; and who can erect stable purposes on its fluctuating waves? The world is a school of wrong; and who does not feel himself warping to its pernicious influences? On this sea of glass, how insensibly we slide from our own steadfastness. Some sacred truth which was struck in lively characters on our souls, is obscured if not obliterated. Some worthy resolution which Heaven had wrought in our breasts, is shaken, if not overthrown. Some enticing vanity which we had solemnly renounced, again practises its wiles, again captivates our affections. How often has an unwary glance kindled a fever of irregular desire in our hearts! How often has a word of applause dropped luscious poison into our ears, or some disrespectful expression raised a gust of passion into our bosoms! Our innocence is of so tender a con-

stitution, that it suffers in the promiscuous crowd. Our purity is of so delicate a complexion, that it scarce touches on the world without contracting a stain. We see, we hear, with peril.

But here safety dwells. Every meddling and intrusive avocation is excluded. Silence holds the door against the strife of tongues, and all the impertinences of idle conversation. The busy swarm of vain images and cajoling temptations, which beset us with a buzzing importunity amidst the gaieties of life, are chased by these thickening shades. Here I may without disturbance commune with my own heart, and learn that best of sciences—to know myself. Here the soul may rally her dissipated powers, and grace recover its native energy. This is the place where I may with advantage apply myself to subdue the rebel within, and be master, not of a sceptre, but of myself. Throng then, ye ambitious, the levees of the powerful; I will be punctual in my assignations with solitude. To a mind intent upon its own improvement, solitude has charms incomparably more engaging than the entertainments presented in the theatre, or the honours conferred in the drawing-room.

I said solitude;—am I then alone? 'Tis true my acquaintance are at a distance. I have stole away from company, and am remote from all human observation. But that is an alarming thought.

Millions of spiritual creatures walk the earth,
Unseen both when we wake and when we sleep.—MILTON.

Perhaps there may be numbers of those invisible beings patrolling this same retreat, and joining with me in contemplating the Creator's works. Perhaps those ministering spirits who rejoice at the conversion of a sinner and hold up the goings of the righteous, may follow us to the lonely recess, and even in our most solitary moments be our constant attendants. What a pleasing awe is awakened

by such a reflection. How venerable it renders my retired walks. I am struck with reverence, as under the roof of some sacred edifice, or in the presence-chamber of some mighty monarch. Oh! may I never bring any pride of imagination, nor indulge the least dissolute affection, where such refined and exalted intelligences exercise their watch.

'Tis possible that I am encompassed with such a cloud of witnesses; but it is certain that God, the infinite, eternal God, is now and ever with me. The great Jehovah, before whom all the angelic armies bow their heads and veil their faces, surrounds me, supports me, pervades me. "In Him I live, move, and have my being." The whole world is his august temple; and in the most sequestered corner, I appear before his adorable Majesty, no less than when I worship in his house or kneel at his altar. In every place, therefore, let me pay Him the homage of a heart cleansed from idols, and devoted to his service. In every circumstance let me feel no ambition but to please Him, nor covet any happiness but to enjoy Him.

BISHOP SHERLOCK.

THIS learned prelate was born in 1678. He was educated at Catharine Hall, Cambridge, of which he became Master. He succeeded his father as the Master of the Temple, and this appointment was held by father and son for more than seventy years. In 1728 Dr. Sherlock was made Bishop of Bangor, in 1734 was translated to Salisbury, and some time after to London. He died in 1761.

Bishop Sherlock has displayed great abilities in vindication of the use and intent of prophecy, in six discourses, delivered at the Temple, and also in an able defence of the miracle of Christ's resurrection, against the objections of a professed infidel, named Woolston; he wrote other controversial works. His sermons are compositions of great elegance and erudition.

CHRIST AND MAHOMET CONTRASTED.

Go to your natural religion, lay before her Mahomet and his disciples arrayed in armour and in blood, riding in triumph over the spoils of thousands and ten thousands, who fell by his victorious sword. Shew her the cities which he set in flames, the countries which he ravaged and destroyed, and the miserable distress of all the inhabitants of the earth. When she has viewed him in this scene, carry her into his retirements, shew her the Prophet's chamber, his concubines and wives, and let her see his adulteries, and hear him allege revelation and his divine commission to justify his lusts and his oppressions. When she is tired with this prospect, then show her the blessed Jesus, humble and meek, doing good to all the sons of men, patiently instructing the ignorant and the perverse. Let her see Him in his retired privacies, let her follow Him to the mount, and hear his devotions and supplications to God. Carry her to his table to view his poor fare and hear his heavenly discourse. Let her see Him injured, but not provoked; let her attend Him to the tribunal, and consider the patience with which He

endured the scoffs and reproaches of his enemies. Lead her to his cross, and let her view Him in the agonies of death, and hear his last prayer for his persecutors, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." When natural religion has viewed both, ask which is the Prophet of God? But her answer we have already had, when she saw part of this scene through the eyes of the centurion who attended at the cross; by him she said, "Truly this was the Son of God."

THE INFORMATION THE GOSPEL GIVES, MOST
DESIRABLE.

THE Christian revelation has such pretences at least, as may make it worthy of a particular consideration; it pretends to come from heaven; to have been delivered by the Son of God; to have been confirmed by undeniable miracles and prophecies; to have been ratified by the blood of Christ and his Apostles, who died in asserting its truth: it can show, likewise, an innumerable company of martyrs and confessors; its doctrines are pure and holy; its precepts just and righteous; its worship is a reasonable service, refined from the errors of idolatry and superstition, and spiritual, like the God who is the object of it; it offers the aid and assistance of heaven to the weakness of nature, which makes the religion of the Gospel to be as practicable as it is reasonable; it promises infinite rewards to obedience, and threatens eternal punishment to obstinate offenders, which makes it of the utmost consequence to us soberly to consider it, since every one who rejects it stakes his own soul against the truth of it. Look into the Gospel; there you will find every reasonable hope of nature, nay, every reasonable suspicion of nature cleared up and confirmed, every difficulty answered and

removed. Do the present circumstances of the world lead you to suspect that God could never be the author of such corrupt and wretched creatures as men now are? Your suspicions are just and well founded. "God made man upright;" but through the temptation of the devil, sin entered, and death and destruction followed after.

Do you suspect from the success of virtue and vice in this world, that the providence of God does not interpose to protect the righteous from violence, or to punish the wicked? The suspicion is not without ground. God leaves his best servants here to be tried oftentimes with affliction and sorrow, and permits the wicked to flourish and abound. The call of the Gospel is not to honour and riches here, but to take up our cross and follow Christ.

Do you judge from comparing the present state of the world with the natural notion you have of God, and of his justice and goodness, that there must needs be another state in which justice shall take place? You reason right, and the Gospel confirms the judgment. God has appointed a day to judge the world in righteousness: then those who mourn shall rejoice, those who weep shall laugh, and the persecuted and afflicted servants of God shall be heirs of his kingdom.

Have you sometimes misgivings of mind? Are you tempted to mistrust this judgment when you see the difficulties which surround it on every side; some which affect the soul in its separate state, some which affect the body in its state of corruption and dissolution? Look to the Gospel: there these difficulties are accounted for; and you need no longer puzzle yourself with dark questions concerning the state, condition, and nature of separate spirits, or concerning the body, however to appearance lost or destroyed, for the body and soul shall once more meet to part no more, but to be happy for ever. In this case the learned cannot doubt, and the ignorant may be

sure, that 'tis the man, the very man himself, who shall rise again : for an union of the same soul and body is as certainly the restoration of the man, as the dividing them was the destruction. Would you know who it is that gives this assurance ? It is one who is able to make good his word : one who loved you so well as to die for you ; yet one too great to be held a prisoner in the grave. No ; He rose with triumph and glory, the first-born from the dead, and will in like manner call from the dust of the earth, all those who put their trust and confidence in Him.

But who is this, you will say, who was subject to death and yet had power over death ? How could so much weakness and so much strength go together ? That God has the power of life we know ; but then He cannot die : that man is mortal we know ; but then he cannot give life.

Consider ; does this difficulty deserve an answer or does it not ? Our blessed Saviour lived among us in a low and poor condition, exposed to much ill treatment from his jealous countrymen. When He fell into their power, their rage knew no bounds ; they reviled Him, insulted Him, mocked Him, scourged Him, and at last nailed Him to a cross, where, by a shameful and wretched death, He finished a life of sorrow and affliction. Did we know no more of Him than this, upon what ground could we pretend to hope that He will be able to save us from the power of death ? We might say with the disciples, " We trusted this had been He who should have saved Israel ; " but He is dead, He is gone, and all our hopes are buried in the grave.

If you think this ought to be answered, and that the faith of a Christian cannot be a reasonable faith, unless it be able to account for this seeming contradiction, I beseech you, then, never more complain of the Gospel for furnishing an answer to this great objection, for removing this stumblingblock out of the way of our faith. He

was a man, and therefore He died ; He was the Son of God, and therefore He rose from the dead, and will give life to all his true disciples. He it was who formed this world and all things in it, and for the sake of man was content to become man, and to taste death for all, that all through Him may live. This is a wonderful piece of knowledge which God has revealed to us in his Gospel ; but He has not revealed it to raise our wonder, but to confirm and establish our faith in Him to whom He hath committed all power, “ whom He hath appointed heir of all things.”

Had the Gospel required of us to expect from Christ the redemption of our souls and bodies, and given us no reason to think that Christ was endowed with power equal to the work, we might justly have complained ; and it would have been a standing reproach that Christians believe they know not what. But to expect redemption from the Son of God, the resurrection of our bodies from the same hand which at first created and formed them, are rational and well-founded acts of faith ; and it is the Christian's glory, that he knows in whom he has believed.

That the world was made by the Son of God, is a proposition with which reason has no fault to find : that He who made the world should have power to renew it to life again, is highly consonant to reason. All the mystery lies in this, that so high and great a Person should condescend to become man, and subject to death, for the sake of mankind. But are we fit persons to complain of this transcendent mysterious love ? or does it become us to quarrel with the kindness of our blessed Lord towards us, only because it is greater than we can conceive ? No ; it becomes us to bless and adore this exceeding love by which we are saved from condemnation, by which we expect to be rescued from death ; knowing that the power of our blessed Lord is equal to his love, and that He is “ able to subdue all things to Himself.”

LAWRENCE STERNE.

THIS writer was born in 1713, and became a clergyman of the Established Church. He wrote books little suitable to such a character, and exhibits a melancholy instance of perverted genius; even his sermons partook of his characteristic oddity. The annexed extract, however, receives no injury in flowing from such a pen; but, on the contrary, it should have additional weight, as the experience of one who had sought happiness in earthly enjoyments, but had sought in vain. He died in 1768.

RELIGION THE ONLY SUPPORT IN TROUBLE.

THERE are no principles but those of religion to be depended on in cases of real stress; and these are able to encounter the worst emergencies, and to bear us up under all the changes and chances to which our life is subject.

Consider, then, what virtue the very first principle of religion has, and how wonderfully it is conducive to this end: That there is a God, a powerful, a wise and good Being, who first made the world, and continues to govern it;—by whose goodness all things are designed, and by whose providence all things are conducted, to bring about the greatest and best ends. The sorrowful and pensive wretch that was giving way to his misfortunes, and mournfully sinking under them, the moment this doctrine comes to his aid, hushes all his complaints, and thus speaks comfort to his soul: “It is the Lord, let Him do what seemeth Him good.” Without his direction I know that no evil can befall me; without his permission, that no power can hurt me;—it is impossible, a Being so wise should mistake my happiness, or that a Being so good should contradict it. If He has denied me riches or other advantages, perhaps He foresees the gratifying my wishes would undo me, and by my own abuse of them, be perverted to

my ruin. If He has denied me the request of children, or in his providence has thought fit to take them from me, how can I say whether He has not dealt kindly with me, and only taken that away which He foresaw would embitter and shorten my days? It does so to thousands, where the disobedience of a thankless child has brought down the parents' grey hairs with sorrow to the grave. Has He visited me with sickness, poverty, or other disappointments?—Can I say but these are blessings in disguise?—so many different expressions of his care and concern to disentangle my thoughts from this world, and fix them upon another—another, a better world beyond this? This thought opens a new face of hope and consolation to the unfortunate: and as the persuasion of a Providence reconciles him to the evils he has suffered,—this prospect of a future life gives him strength to despise them, and esteem the light afflictions of this life as they are,—not worthy to be compared to what is reserved for him hereafter.

Things are great or small by comparison;—and he who looks no further than this world, and balances the account of his joys and sufferings from that consideration, finds all his sorrows enlarged, and at the close of them will be apt to look back, and cast the same sad reflection upon the whole, which the Patriarch did to Pharaoh, “that few and evil had been the days of his pilgrimage.” But let him lift up his eyes towards heaven, and steadfastly behold the life and immortality of a future state, he then wipes away all tears from off his eyes for ever. Like the exiled captive, big with the hopes that he is returning home, he feels not the weight of his chains, nor counts the days of his captivity; but looks forward with rapture towards the country where his heart is fled before.

These are the aids which religion offers us towards the regulation of our spirit under the evils of life,—but, like great cordials, they are seldom used but on great occur-

rences. In the lesser evils of life we seem to stand unguarded—and our peace and contentment are overthrown, and our happiness broken in upon, by a little impatience of spirit, under the cross and untoward accidents we meet with. These stand unprovided for, and we neglect them as we do the slighter indispositions of the body, which we think not worth treating seriously, and so leave them to nature. In good habits of the body this may do,—and I would gladly believe there are such good habits of the temper,—such a complexional ease and health of heart as may often save the patient much medicine. We are still to consider that, however such good frames of mind are got, they are worth preserving by all means. Religion with contentment—which, like the treasure hid in the field, for which a man sold all he had to purchase—is of that price that it cannot be had at too great a purchase, since without it the best condition of life cannot make us happy; and with it, it is impossible we should be miserable, even in the worst.

ARCHBISHOP SECKER.

THOMAS SECKER was born in 1693. He entered himself a gentleman commoner of Exeter College, Oxford, and speedily obtained the degree of B.A. In 1724 he was presented to the living of Houghton-le-Spring, which he exchanged for a prebend of Durham, with the rectory of Ryton. In 1732 he was appointed one of the King's chaplains, and in the following year was presented to the rectory of St. James, Westminster. Shortly after he was raised to the bishopric of Bristol, in 1737 he was translated to the see of Oxford, and in 1758 became archbishop of Canterbury. He died in 1768.

Archbishop Secker was a most learned divine, as his useful writings abundantly testify. Every sentence in them is calculated to improve the heart; and this should be the only aim of a writer of divinity.

CHRISTIAN MORTIFICATION.

EVERY one is bound to employ such means for his preservation from sin, and advancement in piety and virtue, as either God's word hath prescribed, or his own reason and experience recommend. Now some may find rules to be useful or necessary, which to others would be neither. Some again may rashly censure what they would do much better to imitate. And all persons, but especially all who live in ease and plenty, should be attentive to "keep their bodies in subjection:" not harassing them as enemies, but ruling and providing for them as servants, in such manner as to make them both willing to obey and able to perform their work. They should watch over their natural fondness for pleasure, and tendency to follow the customs of the world, not with unreasonable scrupulousness, but with religious prudence: learn to suspect their favourite inclinations, and the opinions that countenance them: check themselves in proportion as they grow eager, stop and look round them with care: never adven-

ture to the extremity of what is lawful, but in all dubious cases lean to the undoubtedly safer side: be moderate in the most allowable gratifications of this world, and delight principally in cultivating and improving those pious and virtuous affections which alone can "make them meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light,"—of a happiness entirely spiritual, and abstracted from flesh and blood.

But then, while we observe this caution in regard to worldly objects, we must be careful also, on the other hand, that we carry it not to dangerous or extravagant lengths; that we seem not unthankful to, or suspicious of, Him "who hath given us all things richly to enjoy;" that we disguise not religion by putting it in a melancholy and forbidding dress; that we be not betrayed by the restraints under which we lay ourselves, either into vain self-opinion and spiritual pride, or a rigidness of temper, being unsuitable to the gentle spirit of the Christian profession; but particularly, that we forbear to condemn or even despise our brethren of more seeming latitude; who, it may be, under the appearance of a freer life, (which was our Saviour's own case, for He "came eating and drinking,") preserve really and inwardly a stricter guard over their thoughts, words, and actions, than we do. And in general, all persons ought to take heed, that while they are watching against the approach of one sort of sins, those of another do not find a ready admission. We are willing enough to keep at ever so great a distance from the faults to which we have little or no inclination, and often affect to make our zeal in that respect remarkable; but then perhaps more favourite vices have easy entrance into our breasts, and take firm possession of them: We are shocked, for instance, and with much cause, at the monstrous and ruinous eagerness for pleasure, the profligate and unprecedented contempt of religion that prevails in the world; our behaviour on these heads is unblameable,

exemplary ; and we value ourselves upon it beyond bounds. Yet possibly, all the while, we indulge ourselves to the full another way ; are unjust and fraudulent, or selfish and unreasonable, or penurious and hard-hearted, or censorious and unforgiving, or peevish and ill-tempered ; make every one about us uneasy, and those chiefly whose happiness ought to be our first care. This is applauding ourselves for being fortified where the enemy is not likely to make an attack, and leaving the places that are most exposed quite undefended. Every one therefore ought to study the weak parts of his own heart and conduct, and spend the main of his attention upon these ; that so, not only a wrong inclination or two may be rooted up, (which if left to themselves would scarce grow,) or may be sacrificed in favour of others as bad ; but the whole “body of sin” be destroyed ; the “flesh,” the principle of evil, with all “its affections and lusts,” nailed to the cross of Christ.

ON THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.

THOUGH the Ten Commandments were given to the Jews particularly, yet the things contained in them are such as all mankind from the beginning were to observe. And therefore under the Mosaic dispensation they, and the tables on which they were engraven, and the ark in which they were put, were distinguished from the rest of God’s ordinances by a peculiar regard, as containing the covenant of the Lord. And though the Mosaic dispensation be now at an end, yet concerning these moral precepts of it our Saviour declares, that not “one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.”

To comprehend the full extent of these commandments, it will be requisite to observe the following rules. Where any sin is forbidden in them, the opposite duty is implicitly enjoined ; and where any duty is enjoined, the

opposite sin is implicitly forbidden. Where the highest degree of any evil is prohibited, whatever is faulty in the same kind, though in a lower degree, is by consequence prohibited. And where one instance of virtuous behaviour is commanded, every other that hath the same nature and the same reason for it, is understood to be commanded too. What we are expected to abstain from, we are expected to avoid, as far as we can, all temptations to it and occasions of it; and what we are expected to practise, we are expected to use all fit means that may better enable us to practise it. All that we are bound to do ourselves, we are bound on fitting occasions to exhort and assist others to do, when it belongs to them; and all that we are not bound to do, we are to tempt nobody else to do, but keep them back from it, as much as we have opportunity. The Ten Commandments, excepting two that required enlargement, are delivered in few words; which brief manner of speaking hath great majesty in it. But explaining them according to these rules, which are natural and rational in themselves, favoured by ancient Jewish writers, authorised by our blessed Saviour, and certainly designed by the makers of our Church Catechism to be used in expounding it, we shall find that there is no part of the moral law but may be fitly ranked under them.

DR. JOHN JORTIN.

DR. JORTIN was a celebrated writer on ecclesiastical history and theological literature. He was a man of great abilities and uncommon erudition, and his style is terse and very correct. He was born in 1698, was educated at Cambridge, and died in 1770.

EXCESSIVE LOVE OF PRAISE.

AN excessive desire of praise, joined as it often is to a fear of ridicule, or to false notions of honour, hath done inconceivable mischief in the world. It hath kept multitudes from receiving or professing Christianity where other religions prevailed. It hath stirred up the ambitious vanity of princes and generals to wage unjust wars, and to spread ruin and desolation far and wide : nor have there been wanting fools or flatterers to call it valour and heroism ; though it deserves no more applause than a pestilence, a famine, a fire, an inundation, or an earthquake. It hath forced many persons to engage in duels, who, though they knew that it was not consistent with Christianity, and that a thousand bad consequences attended it, yet were weak enough to sacrifice all to the senseless tyrant called honour. It hath been the cause why many a young person hath pretended to be worse than he really was, hath talked slightly of religion, hath grown negligent of his duty, and so hath made an unhappy progress in all profaneness and immorality, because he fell into bad company, and took his notions of politeness from them, and feared their contempt, and was desirous to pass with them for a man of wit and taste, and freedom of thought.

He who hath his reputation principally in view, lies often under temptations to play the hypocrite, and to pretend that he possesses every excellence by which he sees

others obtain honour. By this vanity he may be induced to undertake things for which he hath no abilities, and to expose himself to inconveniences, to shame, and contempt. He puts it into the power of a few spiteful, injudicious persons to deprive him of satisfaction, and then may have leisure to repent that he did not set his heart upon better things. A violent desire to be observed and commended will show itself in his discourse and behaviour, and break out in little follies and indecencies, which others will not be inclined to overlook and excuse.

He who loves flattery must be very fortunate if he finds one to counsel him, and very poor if he finds not one to delude him. He will confine his favours to his flatterers; that is, to those who may be secret enemies, but cannot be friends to him: he will shun, and fear, and dislike those from whom he might receive the most benefit; sincerity and plain dealing will be unacceptable to him, reproof will offend him, and good advice will be thrown away upon him. He will think and speak ill of those who take no notice of him, or who are his equals or superiors in useful qualities, or in reputation. The love of praise, when it is discreet and moderate, is always attended with emulation, and a strong desire of excelling: and so long as we can stop here, there is no harm done to ourselves or others; but emulation easily and insensibly degenerates into envy and censoriousness.

The world, with all its faults, is seldom so bad as to applaud vices; and St. Paul exhorts Christians to follow not only whatsoever things are right, but whatsoever things are of good report. The love of reputation, therefore, if it be not joined to a bad disposition, will scarcely of itself lead us to immoral actions. Yet the things which the world usually admires and praises most, are not things in their own nature the most valuable: they are those bright abilities and fair endowments which are exercised about temporal objects; which relate to the present life and ter-

minate with it. Christian virtues are of a more silent, modest, and retired nature. God and good angels approve them ; but the busy world overlooks them. So that he who principally affects popular approbation, runs some danger of living and dying well known to others, and little known to himself ; ignorant of the state of his soul, and forgetful of the account which he has to render up to God.

LORD LYTTTELTON.

GEORGE LORD LYTTTELTON was born in 1709, and was educated at Eton, and Christ Church, Oxford. In the early part of his life he was a sceptic ; but in his mature age he viewed with concern the dangerous tenets of his former companions, and after a studious application he produced, in 1747, *Observations on the Conversion and Apostleship of St. Paul*, a book which infidelity will never be able to answer. It is written with great force and elegance. In it he considers the objection against Christianity, on account of its mysteries, to apply with equal force to natural as to revealed religion. Lord Lyttelton died in 1773.

THE LIGHT OF REASON IMPERFECT.

IF the glorious light of the Gospel be sometimes overcast with clouds of doubt, so is the light of our reason too. But shall we deprive ourselves of the advantage of either, because those clouds cannot perhaps be entirely removed while we remain in this mortal life ? Shall we obstinately and frowardly shut our eyes against that day-spring from on high that has visited us, because we are not as yet able to bear the full blaze of his beams ? Indeed, not even in heaven itself, nor in the highest state of perfection to which a finite being can ever attain, will all the counsels

of Providence, all the height and the depth of the infinite wisdom of God, be ever disclosed or understood. Faith even then will be necessary; and there will be mysteries which cannot be known by him otherwise than from revelation, or believed upon any other ground of assent than a submissive confidence in the Divine wisdom. What, then, shall man presume that his weak and narrow understanding is sufficient to guide him into all truth, without any deed of revelation or faith? Shall he complain that the ways of God are not like his ways, and past his finding out? True philosophy, as well as true Christianity, would teach us a wiser and modester part. It would teach us to be content within those bounds which God has assigned to us, "casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ."

DR. OGDEN.

DR. SAMUEL OGDEN was born at Manchester, in 1710. He became vicar of Damerham, in Wiltshire, was appointed Woodwardian Professor in the University of Cambridge in 1764, and died in 1778.

Dr. Ogden was a divine of much talent; and of his sermons it may be said, that few compositions of the kind have greater merit.

FILIAL DUTY AND GRATITUDE.

As the duty of children to parents is enjoined in the clearest manner, and under the strongest sanctions, by the law of God, so it is also required by what is indeed the law of God too, the voice of nature, reason, and humanity. You observe how the young of animals appear to be committed by nature to the care and protection of their parents;

they have continual recourse to them in their wants and fears, and conform instantly to every intimation of such lawful guides and governors. The parents accordingly, on the other hand, are in a most wonderful manner, both disposed to undertake this trust, and enabled to execute it.

These ties, we see, are first formed by the hand of nature ; and the child that endeavours to break loose from this regular dependence and subjection, opposes the order instituted by Providence and the course of things. We can find no example in any other species to countenance his unnatural wilfulness ; and the voice of every creature upon earth cries out against him, and condemns him.

But reason also, in the human species, is on the same side, and strengthens the ties of nature. Regard to the public and our own welfare, will prescribe the same conduct to which we are already prompted by prior motives ; nor is this argument above the capacity of those it is addressed to. Even a child may soon perceive so much, that he is not so wise as his parents ; that if he follow his own fancy, in opposition to their judgment, it is very likely both that he will do mischief, and cause himself to repent it.

For, together with the superiority of their understanding, he will observe also the tenderness of their affection. Their advice he must soon be sensible is sincere and honest, and disinterested. His other counsellors (and his passions are to be reckoned among their number,) may be his enemies ; and generally they are at best but their own friends. But his parents, he may be very sure, will be faithful to him ; theirs are the counsels of kindness, and their reproofs the effects, and very often the best tokens of it.

There can be no difference between him and them but about the means ; the thing aimed at on both sides is the same ; it is his welfare, honour, and happiness. They would be glad to gratify even his humour, but they prefer

his lasting good. No other consideration but the view of his advantage could prevail with them to offend him.

This affection which your parents bear towards you, and the great good they have done you in consequence of it, give them still another title to your consideration and respect, a right to be regarded by you for their own sake. And if in some instances you were persuaded, and truly too, that their counsels were not the most advantageous, this would not immediately exempt you from all obligation to comply with them. Gratitude and some tenderness surely on your part, for return of so much on theirs, must be allowed to have weight, and come in to supply the place of more selfish considerations. Must your own satisfaction be the end of all your measures? or rather cannot you receive satisfaction from the gratification of others? Will it afford you no pleasure to give it to your best friends and greatest benefactors? You may part with something, were it to the mistakes of such persons; and exchange, with no great loss, your own desires for this pleasure of pleasing.

THE RIGHTEOUS UNDER THE GUIDANCE OF HEAVEN.

GOOD men may be led by the Spirit of God, and yet they themselves not distinguish his holy influence; and be conducted safely in the way to heaven, without discerning the very hand that guides them. How is this incredible? you believe the providence of God: it is the doctrine even of natural religion. Can you distinguish between the acts of God and the course of nature? What is it that God doeth? He doeth all, no doubt: He ruleth in heaven above, and in the earth beneath; but He is invisible to your eyes; nor can you certainly separate, in the transactions that lie before you, human weakness from

omnipotent power, or draw the precise line in any one event which you now see, between God and nature.

He is ever doing good, and almost ever in a manner that exceeds alike our deserts and our understanding. His heavenly hand, like the hidden spring in a machine, works unseen, yet powerful; is little in appearance, but in effect wonderful. He delivers from dangers we never feared, bestows a thousand benefits we knew not that we wanted. "Not a sparrow is forgotten before God: the very hairs of your head are all numbered." In the mean time the original Cause of all is undiscerned; perhaps, alas! is unthought of. He "is about my path, and about my bed;" and yet, "Behold I go forward, but He is not there: and backward, but I cannot perceive Him: on the left hand where He doth work; but I cannot behold Him: He hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot see Him."

"So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground; and should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how. For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear. And when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come." The seed is the word of God; the heart of man is the ground into which it is cast: if this be good, doubt not the care of God; He will cause it to spring and grow up, though we know not how. His Spirit, "which helpeth our infirmities," will shed on it the sweet influences of heaven, support and cherish our tender goodness, defend it from the insects of the earth, and the storms above. The fruit is a life of piety and faith, good works and charity, purity and patience. When this is brought forth, the sickle is in the hand of the angel of death, and the harvest is immortal glory.

CONFORMITY TO THE WILL OF GOD.

THERE are, and will always be, innumerable things in the Divine government impossible for us to comprehend; and as those which are more known to us require our thanks and praise, so the former call for other sentiments and dispositions of mind equally reasonable,—admiration, submission, trust; and all conspire to demand the conformity of our lives to the will of God. In cases which we understand, we see there is great reason for this; and in those we do not, there may be greater.

When we read of the miracles done by the apostles, and find that, in ancient times, the blind received their sight, the deaf heard, the lepers were cleansed, the lame walked, and the very dead were raised at the speaking of a word, we are amazed at the powers bestowed on the first preachers of the Gospel, and should be willing to submit to any degree of rigour in our lives, that ourselves also, if it were now possible, might be honoured with the same signal endowments.

Men may work miracles in support of God's true religion, and yet be found at last to have been the servants of another master; and the preacher of righteousness be condemned for his sins.

There will be found among the workers of wonders, among apostles, prophets, martyrs, who shall be "cut off, and cast into outer darkness;" but of those who love God and keep his commandments, not one shall be lost. The obedient shall all be received into the state of bliss, and be made "kings and priests to God, for ever and ever."

BISHOP WARBURTON.

WILLIAM WARBURTON was born in 1698. He was intended for the law, but forsook that profession, and in 1723 obtained deacon's orders. His first presentation was to the living of Broad Broughton, in Lincolnshire, where he remained some years. He became a prebend of Gloucester in 1753, and in the succeeding year was made chaplain in ordinary to the King. In 1755 he had the honour of a Lambeth degree of D.D. conferred upon him by Archbishop Herring; he was advanced to the deanery of Bristol in 1757, and finally to the see of Gloucester in 1760. He died in 1779.

Bishop Warburton was the author of many valuable works, but that on which his fame as an author principally rests is his *Divine Legation of Moses*. He was a man of vigorous faculties, of a fervid and vehement mind, and of extended and varied knowledge. His works display a fertile fancy, deep learning, powerful reasoning, and keen wit. In him Christianity found a powerful advocate.

THE WANTS OF MAN.

IT is notorious, that man in society is incessantly giving the affront to the public laws; to oppose which, the community is as constantly busied in adding new strength and force to its ordinances. If we inquire into the cause of this perversity, we shall find it no other than the number and the violence of the appetites. The appetites take their birth from our real or imaginary wants: our REAL wants are unalterably the same; and, as arising only from the natural imbecility of our condition, extremely few and easily relieved. Our FANTASTIC wants are infinitely numerous, to be brought under no certain measure or standard; and increasing exactly in proportion to our improvements in the arts of life. But the arts of life owe their original to society: and the more perfect the policy, the higher do those improvements arise; and, with them are our wants, as we say, proportionably increased, and

our appetites inflamed. For the violence of these appetites which seek the gratification of our imaginary wants, is much stronger than that raised by our real wants; not only because those wants are more numerous, which give constant exercise to the appetites; and more unreasonable, which make the gratification proportionably difficult; and altogether unnatural, to which there is no measure; but principally because vicious custom hath affixed a kind of reputation to the gratification of the fantastic wants, which it hath not done to the relief of the real ones. So that when things are in this state, even the most provident laws, without other assistance, are insufficient. But in a state of nature, unconscious of the arts of life, men's wants are only real; and these wants few and easily supplied, for food and covering are all which are necessary to support our being. And Providence is abundant in its provisions for these wants: and while there is more than enough for all, it can hardly be that there should be disputes about each man's share.

PROPAGATION OF CHRISTIANITY BY UNLEARNED MEN.

THE blessed Jesus came down to teach mankind a spiritual religion, offered to their acceptance on the sole force of its own evidence. The propagators of this religion had no need to be endowed with worldly authority or learning; for here was no body of men to be conducted, nor no civil policy or government to be erected or administered. Had Jesus, on the contrary, made choice of the great and learned for this employment, they had discredited their own success. It might be then objected, that the Gospel had made its way by the aid of human power or sophistry. To preserve, therefore, the splendour of its evidence unsullied, the meanest and most illiterate of a barbarous people were

made choice of for the instrument of God's last great revelation to mankind: armed with no other power but of miracles, and that only for the credence of their mission; and with no other wisdom but of truth, and that only to be proposed freely to the understanding of particulars. St. Paul, who had fathomed the mysterious depths of Divine wisdom under each economy, was so penetrated with the view of this last dispensation, that he breaks out into this rapturous and triumphant exclamation, "Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this world? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?"

When Jesus had chosen these mean and weak instruments of his power, He suffered them to continue in their national prejudices concerning his character, the nature of his kingdom, and the extent of his jurisdiction, as the sole human means of keeping them attached to his service, not only during the course of their attendance on his ministry, but for some time after his resurrection, and the descent of the Holy Ghost upon them—that power which was to "lead them into all truth;" but by just and equal steps. Let us see the use of this in the following circumstance: From the order of the whole of God's dispensation to mankind, as laid down in Scripture, we learn that the offer of the Gospel was to be first fairly made to the Jews, and then afterwards to the Gentiles. Now when, soon after the ascension of our Lord, the church was forced, by the persecution of the synagogue, to leave Judea, and to disperse itself through all the regions round about, had the apostles, on this dispersion, been fully instructed in the design of God to call the Gentiles into his church, resentment for their ill usage within Judea, and the small prospect of better success amongst those who were without, while they of Jerusalem had prejudiced against the Gospel, would naturally have disposed them to turn im-

mediately to the Gentiles ; by which means God's purpose, without a supernatural force upon their minds, had been defeated ; as so great a part of the Jews would not have had the Gospel first preached unto them. But now, pushed on by this commodious prejudice, that the benefits belonged properly to the race of Abraham, they directly addressed themselves to their brethren of the dispersion : where meeting with the same ill success, their sense of the desperate condition of the house of Israel would now begin to abate that prejudice in their favour. And then came the time to enlighten them in this matter, without putting too great a force upon their minds, which is not God's way of acting with free agents. Accordingly, his purpose of calling the Gentiles into the church was now clearly revealed to Peter at Joppa ; and a proper subject wherewith to begin this great work was ready provided for him.

REDEMPTION BY CHRIST.

WE learn from sacred writ (what the principles of natural reason do not impeach) that the death of Christ had a retrospect from the fall of Adam ; and that redemption was, from the first, amongst the principal ingredients in God's moral government of man.

Now if the goodness of God thus provided for human redemption, that goodness, joined to his justice, would make the redemption as extensive as the forfeiture. But, in case a retrospect did not take place, it would not be thus extensive. More words would only obscure a truth which the sacred text hath rendered so plain and clear: "Ye were redeemed" says St. Peter "with the precious blood of Christ, fore-ordained from the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you." St. John explains, from the words of Jesus Himself, what is to be

understood by his being fore-ordained, viz. That it was receiving the glory which accompanies the entrance on an high office: "And now, O Father, glorify me with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was. I have manifested thy name unto the men which Thou gavest me out of the world."

St. Peter, in the words above, distinguisheth between the advent of our Redeemer, and the efficacy of his death, in teaching us, that though his manifestation was late, yet the virtue of his fore-ordained redemption operated from the most early times. For it would be trifling to speak of a pre-ordination, which was not to be understood of a pre-operation: since those to whom the apostle wrote well understood, from the attributes of the Godhead, that all things that were had been pre-ordained, in the simple sense of the word. The other sense of a pre-operation St. John more forcibly expresses, by the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

BISHOP NEWTON.

THIS learned prelate was born in 1704. He received his early education at Westminster, whence he removed to Trinity College, Cambridge, his first preferment being that of reader and afternoon preacher at Grosvenor Chapel, South Audley Street. In 1744 he was appointed to the rectory of St. Mary le Bow, in Cheapside, and he was chosen lecturer of St. George's, Hanover Square. In 1757 he was made prebend of Westminster, and in 1761 was consecrated to the see of Bristol. He died in 1782.

Bishop Newton's *Dissertations on the Prophecies* have passed through numerous editions, and have been translated into various languages; their style is clear and forcible, and they have been the happy means of convincing many of the truths of the Christian religion.

FULFILMENT OF THE MOSAICAL PROPHECIES CONCERNING THE JEWS.

IT is observable that the prophecies of Moses abound most in the latter part of his writings. As he drew nearer his end, it pleased God to open to him larger prospects of things. As he was about to take leave of the people, he was enabled to disclose unto them more particulars of their future state and condition. The design of this work will permit us to take notice of such only as have some reference to these latter ages; and we will confine ourselves principally to the 28th chapter of Deuteronomy, the greater part whereof we may see accomplished in the world at the present time. This great prophet and lawgiver is here proposing at large to the people the blessings for obedience and the curses for disobedience; and indeed he had foretold at several times, and upon several occasions, that they should be happy or miserable in the world as they were obedient or disobedient to the law that he had given them. And could there be any stronger evidence of the Divine original of the Mosaical law? And hath not the interposition of Providence been wonderfully remarkable in their good or bad fortune? And is not the truth of the

prediction fully attested by the whole series of their history, from their first settlement in Canaan to this very day? But he is larger and more particular in recounting the curses than the blessings, as if he had a prescience of the people's disobedience, and foresaw that a larger portion and longer continuation of the evil would fall to their share than of the good. I know that some critics make a division of these prophecies, and imagine that one part relates to the former captivity of the Jews, and to the calamities which they suffered under the Romans; but there is no need of such distinction; there is no reason to think that any such was intended by the author. Several prophecies of the one part as well as of the other have been fulfilled at both periods; but they have all more amply been fulfilled during the latter period; and there cannot be a more lively picture than they exhibit of the state of the Jews at present.

We will consider them with a view to the order of time, rather than the order wherein they lie; and we may not begin improperly with this passage (ver. 49): "The Lord shall bring a nation against thee from far, from the end of the earth, as swift as the eagle flieth; a nation whose tongue thou shalt not understand:" and the Chaldeans might be said to come from far in comparison with the Moabites, Philistines, and other neighbours, who used to infest Judea. Much the same description is given of the Chaldeans by Jeremiah (v. 15): "Lo, I will bring a nation upon you from far, O house of Israel, saith the Lord: it is a mighty nation, it is an ancient nation, a nation whose language thou knowest not, neither understandest what they say." He compares them in like manner to eagles (Lam. iv. 19): "Our persecutors are swifter than the eagles of the heaven: they pursued us upon the mountains, they laid wait for us in the wilderness." But this description cannot be applied to any nation with such propriety as the Romans. They were truly brought from

far, from the end of the earth. **Vespasian** and **Adrian**, the two great conquerors and destroyers of the Jews, both came from commanding here in Britain. The Romans, too, for the rapidity of their conquests, might very well be compared to eagles, and perhaps without an allusion to the standard of the Roman armies, which was an eagle: and their language was more unknown to the Jews than the Chaldee.

The enemies of the Jews are farther characterized in the next verse: "A nation of fierce countenance, which shall not regard the person of the old, nor shew favour to the young." Such were the Chaldeans; and the sacred historian saith expressly (2 Chron. xxxvi. 17), "That for the wickedness of the Jews God brought upon them the king of the Chaldees, who slew their young men with the sword in the house of their sanctuary, and had no compassion upon young man or maiden, old man, or him that stooped for age: he gave them all into his hand." Such also were the Romans: for when **Vespasian** entered **Gadara**, **Josephus** saith that he slew man by man, the Romans showing mercy to no age, out of hatred to the nation, and remembrance of their former injuries. The like slaughter was made at **Gamala**, for nobody escaped besides two women, and they escaped by concealing themselves from the rage of the Romans. For they did not so much as spare young children, but every one at that time snatching up many, cast them down from the citadel.

Their enemies were also to besiege and take their cities (ver. 52): "And he shall besiege thee in all thy gates, until thy high and fenced walls come down, wherein thou trustedst, throughout all thy land." "So **Shalmaneser** king of Assyria came up against Samaria, and besieged it, and at the end of three years they took it." So did "**Sennacherib** king of Assyria come up against all the fenced cities of Judah, and took them." (2 Kings xviii. 13.) And **Nebuchadnezzar** and his captains took and spoiled Jerusalem,

burnt the city and temple, "and brake down the walls of Jerusalem round about." (ib. xxv. 10.) So likewise the Romans, as we may read in Josephus' *History of the Jewish War*, demolished several fortified places before they besieged and destroyed Jerusalem. And the Jews may very well be said to have trusted in their high and fenced walls, for they seldom ventured a battle in the open field. They confided in the strength and situation of Jerusalem, as the Jebusites, the former inhabitants of the place, had done before them (2 Sam. v. 6, 7); insomuch that they are represented saying (Jer. xxi. 13), "Who shall come down against us? or who shall enter into our habitation?" Jerusalem was indeed a very strong place, and wonderfully fortified both by nature and art, according to the description of Tacitus as well as of Josephus; and yet how many times was it taken! It was taken by Shishak king of Egypt, by Nebuchadnezzar, by Antiochus Epiphanes, by Pompey, by Sosius, and Herod, before its final destruction by Titus.

In these sieges they were to suffer much, and especially from famine, "in the straitness wherewith their enemies should distress them." (ver. 53, &c.) And accordingly, when the king of Syria besieged Samaria, "there was a great famine in Samaria; and behold they besieged it, until an ass's head was sold for fourscore pieces of silver, and the fourth part of a cab of doves' dung for five pieces of silver." (2 Kings vi. 25.) And when Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem, "the famine prevailed in the city, and there was no bread for the people of the land." (2 Kings xxv. 3.) And in the last siege of Jerusalem by the Romans, there was a most terrible famine in the city, and Josephus hath given so melancholy an account of it, that we cannot read it without shuddering. He saith particularly, that women snatched the food out of the very mouths of their husbands, and sons of their fathers; and, what is most miserable, mothers of their infants: and in

another place he saith, that in every house, if there appeared any semblance of food, a battle ensued, and the dearest friends and relations fought with one another, snatching away the miserable provisions of life ; so literally were the words of Moses fulfilled (ver. 54, &c.): " The man's eye shall be evil towards his brother, and towards the wife of his bosom, and towards his children, because he hath nothing left him in the siege and in the straitness wherewith thine enemies shall distress thee in all thy gates : and in like manner the woman's eye shall be evil towards the husband of her bosom, and towards her son, and towards her daughter."

Nay, it was expressly foretold, that not only the men, but even the women, should eat their own children. Moses had foretold the same thing before (Lev. xxvi. 29): " Ye shall eat the flesh of your sons, and the flesh of your daughters shall ye eat." He repeats it here (ver. 53): " And thou shalt eat the fruit of thine own body, the flesh of thy sons and of thy daughters." And more particularly (ver. 56, &c.): " The tender and delicate woman among you, who would not adventure to set the sole of her foot upon the ground for delicateness and tenderness, she shall eat her children for want of all things, secretly, in the siege and straitness wherewith thine enemies shall distress thee in thy gates." And it was fulfilled about six hundred years after the time of Moses among the Israelites, when Samaria was besieged by the king of Syria: " And two women agreed together, the one to give up her son to be boiled and eaten to-day, and the other to deliver up her son to be dressed and eaten to-morrow ; and one of them was eaten accordingly." (2 Kings vi. 28, 29.) It was fulfilled again about nine hundred years after the time of Moses, among the Jews, in the siege of Jerusalem, before the Babylonish captivity ; and Baruch thus expresseth it (ii. 1, &c.): " The Lord hath made good his word which He pronounced against us, to bring upon us great plagues,

such as never happened under the whole heaven, as it came to pass in Jerusalem, according to the things that were written in the law of Moses, that a man should eat the flesh of his own son, and the flesh of his own daughter." And Jeremiah thus laments it in his Lamentations (iv. 10): "The hands of the pitiful women have sodden their own children: they were their meat in the destruction of the daughter of my people." And again it was fulfilled above fifteen hundred years after the time of Moses, in the last siege of Jerusalem by Titus; and we read in Josephus particularly of a noble woman killing and eating her own sucking child. Moses saith: "The tender and delicate woman among you, who would not adventure to set the sole of her foot upon the ground for delicateness and tenderness:" and there cannot be a more natural and lively description of a woman who was, according to Josephus, illustrious for her family and riches. Moses saith: "She shall eat them for want of all things;" and according to Josephus, she had been plundered of all her substance and provisions by the tyrants and soldiers. Moses saith that she should do it "secretly;" and according to Josephus, when she had boiled and eaten half, she covered up the rest and kept it for another time. At so many different times and distant periods hath this prophecy been fulfilled; and one would have thought that such distress and horror had almost transcended imagination, and much less that any person could certainly have foreseen and foretold it.

They were to be carried into Egypt, and sold for slaves at a very low price (ver. 68): "And the Lord shall bring thee into Egypt again with ships, and there ye shall be sold unto your enemies for bondmen and bondwomen, and no man shall buy you." They had come out of Egypt triumphant, but now they should return thither as slaves. They had walked through the sea as dry land at their coming out, but now they should return thither in ships. They might be carried thither in the ships of the Tyrian

or Sidonian merchants, or by the Romans, who had a fleet in the Mediterranean; and this was a much safer way of conveying so many prisoners than sending them by land. It appears from Josephus, that in the reigns of the two first Ptolemies many of the Jews were slaves in Egypt; and when Jerusalem was taken by Titus, of the captives who were above seventeen years he sent many bound to the works in Egypt; those under seventeen were sold; but so little care was taken of these captives that eleven thousand of them perished for want. And we learn from St. Jerome, that after their last overthrow by Adrian, many thousands of them were sold, and those who could not be sold were transported into Egypt, and perished by shipwreck or famine, or were massacred by the inhabitants.

They were to be rooted out of their own land (ver. 63): "And ye shall be plucked from off the land whither thou goest to possess it." They were indeed plucked from off their own land, when the ten tribes were carried into captivity by the king of Assyria, and other nations were planted in their stead; and when the two other tribes were carried away captive to Babylon; and when the Romans took away their place and nation; besides other captivities and transportations of the people. Afterwards, when the Emperor Adrian had subdued the rebellious Jews, he published an edict forbidding them, upon pain of death, to set foot in Jerusalem, or even to approach the country round about it. Tertullian and Jerome say that they were prohibited from entering into Judea. From that time to this their country hath been in the possession of foreign lords and masters, few of the Jews dwelling in it, and those only of a low servile condition. Benjamin, of Tudela, in Spain, a celebrated Jew of the twelfth century, travelled into all parts to visit those of his own nation, and to learn an exact state of their affairs; and he hath reported that Jerusalem was almost entirely abandoned by the Jews. He found there not above two hundred persons,

who were for the most part dyers of wool, and who every year purchased the privilege of the monopoly of that trade. They lived all together under David's Tower, and made there a very little figure. If Jerusalem had so few Jews in it, the rest of the Holy Land was still more depopulated. He found two of them in one city, twenty in another, most whereof were dyers. In other places there were more persons; but in Upper Galilee, where the nation was in greatest repute after the ruin of Jerusalem, he found hardly any Jews at all. A very accurate and faithful traveller of our own nation, who was himself also in the Holy Land, saith, that it is for the most part now inhabited by Moors and Arabians; those possessing the valleys, and these the mountains; Turks there be few; but many Greeks, with other Christians of all sects and nations, such as impute to the place an adherent holiness. Here are also some Jews, yet inherit they no part of the land; but in their own country do live as aliens.

But they were not only to be plucked off from their own land, but also to be dispersed into all nations (ver. 25): "And thou shalt be removed in all the kingdoms of the earth;" and again (ver. 64), "And the Lord shall scatter thee among all people, from one end of the earth even unto the other." Nehemiah (i. 8, 9) confesseth that those very words were fulfilled in the Babylonish captivity; but they have been more amply fulfilled since the great dispersion of the Jews by the Romans. What people indeed have been scattered so far and wide as they? and where is the nation which is a stranger to them, or to which they are strangers? They swarm in many parts of the East, are spread through most of the countries of Europe and Africa, and there are several families of them in the West Indies. They circulate through all parts where trade and money circulate, and are, as I may say, the brokers of the whole world.

But though they should be so dispersed, yet they

should not totally be destroyed, but still subsist as a distinct people, as Moses had before foretold (Levit. xxii. 44): "And yet for all that, when they be in the land of their enemies, I will not cast them away, neither will I abhor them to destroy them utterly, and to break my covenant with them." The Jewish nation, like the bush of Moses, hath been always burning, but is never consumed. And what a marvellous thing is it, that after so many wars, battles, and sieges, after so many fires, famines, and pestilences, after so many rebellions, massacres, and persecutions, after so many years of captivity, slavery, and misery, they are not destroyed utterly! and though scattered among all people, yet subsist as a distinct people by themselves. Where is anything comparable to this to be found in all the histories and in all the nations under the sun?

However, they should suffer much in their dispersion, and should not rest long in any place (ver. 65): "And among these nations shalt thou find no ease; neither shall the sole of thy foot have rest." They have been so far from finding rest, that they have been banished from city to city, from country to country. In many places they have been banished, and recalled, and banished again. We will only just mention their great banishments in modern times, and from countries well known. In the latter end of the thirteenth century, they were banished from England by Edward I., and were not permitted to return and settle again till Cromwell's time. In the latter end of the fourteenth century they were banished from France (for the seventh time, says Mezerai,) by Charles VI., and ever since they have been only tolerated; they have not enjoyed entire liberty except at Metz, where they have a synagogue. In the latter end of the fifteenth century they were banished from Spain by Ferdinand and Isabella; and, according to Mariana, there were an hundred and seventy thousand families, or, as some say, eight hundred thousand

persons, who left the kingdom : most of them paid dearly to John II. for a refuge in Portugal ; but within a few years were expelled also from thence by his successor, Emanuel. And in our own time, within these few years, they were banished from Prague by the Queen of Bohemia.

They should be "oppressed and spoiled evermore;" and their "houses" and "vineyards," their "oxen" and "asses," should be taken from them, and they should "be only oppressed and crushed away." (ver. 29, &c.) And what frequent seizures have been made of their effects in almost all countries ! How often have they been fined and fleeced under almost all governments ! How often have they been forced to redeem their lives with what is almost as dear as their lives—their treasure ! Instances are innumerable. We will only cite an historian of our own, who says that Henry III. always polled the Jews at every low ebb of his fortunes. One Abraham, who was found delinquent, was forced to pay seven hundred marks for his redemption. Aaron, another Jew, protested that the king had taken from him, at times, thirty thousand marks of silver, besides two hundred marks of gold, which he had presented to the queen. And in like manner he used many others of the Jews. And when they were banished in the reign of Edward I., their estates were confiscated, and immense sums thereby accrued to the crown.

"Their sons and their daughters should be given unto another people." (ver. 32.) And in several countries, in Spain and in Portugal particularly, their children have been taken from them by order of the government, to be educated in the Popish religion. The Fourth Council of Toledo ordered that all their children should be taken from them, for fear they should partake of their errors, and that they should be shut up in monasteries, to be instructed in the Christian truths. And when they were banished from Portugal, the king, says Mariana, ordered

all the children under fourteen years of age to be taken from them and baptized; a practice not at all justifiable, adds the historian, because none ought to be forced to become Christians, nor children to be taken from their parents.

“ They should be mad for the sight of their eyes which they should see.” (ver. 34.) And into what madness, fury, and desperation, have they been pushed, by the cruel usage, extortions, and oppressions which they have undergone ! I will allege only two similar instances, one from ancient and one from modern history. After the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, some of the worst of the Jews took refuge in the castle of Masada, where being closely besieged by the Romans, they, at the persuasion of Eleazar their leader, first murdered their wives and children ! then ten men were chosen by lot to slay the rest : this being done, one of the ten was chosen, in like manner, to kill the other nine, which having executed, he set fire to the place, and then stabbed himself. There were nine hundred and sixty who perished in this miserable manner, and only two women and five boys escaped by hiding themselves in the aqueducts underground. Such another instance we have in our English history. For in the reign of Richard I., when the people were in arms to make a general massacre of them, fifteen hundred of them seized on the city of York to defend themselves ; but being besieged, they offered to capitulate, and to ransom their lives with money. The offer being refused, one of them cried in despair, that it was better to die courageously for the Law, than to fall into the hands of Christians. Every one immediately took his knife, and stabbed his wife and children. The men afterwards retired into the king's palace, which they set on fire, in which they consumed themselves, with the palace and furniture.

“ They should serve other gods, wood and stone” (ver. 36): and again (ver. 64), “ They should serve other gods,

which neither they nor their fathers had known, even wood and stone." And is it not too common for the Jews in popish countries to comply with the idolatrous worship of the Church of Rome, and to bow down to stocks and stones, rather than their effects should be seized and confiscated? Here again we must cite the author who hath most studied and best written their modern history, and whom we have had occasion to quote several times in this discourse. The Spanish and Portugal inquisitions, saith he, reduce them to the dilemma of being either hypocrites or burnt. The numbers of these dissemblers is very considerable; and it ought not to be concluded that there are no Jews in Spain and Portugal because they are not known: they are so much the more dangerous, for not only being very numerous, but confounded with the ecclesiastics, and entering into all ecclesiastical dignities. In another place he saith, The most surprising is, that this religion spreads from generation to generation, and still subsists in the person of dissemblers in a remote posterity. In vain the great lords of Spain make alliance, change their names, and take ancient scutcheons; they are still known to be of Jewish race and Jews themselves. The convents of monks are full of them. Most of the canons, inquisitors, and bishops, proceed from this nation. This is enough to make the people and clergy of this country tremble, since such sort of churchmen can only profane the sacraments, and want intention in consecrating the host they adore¹. In the mean time, Orobio, who relates the fact, knew these dissemblers. He was one of them himself, and bent the knee before the sacrament. Moreover, he brings proof of his assertion, in maintaining that there are in the synagogue of Amsterdam brothers and

¹ The Church of Rome holds that the efficacy of the sacraments depends upon the intention with which the priest celebrates them, and his own moral purity: Protestants, on the contrary, are assured that they are effectual where rightly received, "because of Christ's institution and promise, although they be ministered by evil men."—Article XXVI.

sisters and near relations to good families of Spain and Portugal, and even Franciscan monks, Dominicans, and Jesuits, who come to do penance, and make amends for the crime they have committed in dissembling.

“They should become an astonishment, a proverb, and a bye-word among all nations.” (ver. 37.) And do we not hear and see this prophecy fulfilled almost every day? Is not the avarice, usury, and hard-heartedness of a Jew, grown proverbial? and are not their persons generally odious among all sorts of people? Mohammedans, Heathens, and Christians, however they may disagree in other points, yet generally agree in vilifying, abusing, and persecuting the Jews. In most places where they are tolerated they are obliged to live in a separate quarter by themselves, (as they did here in the Old Jewry,) and to wear some badge of distinction. Their very countenances distinguish them from the rest of mankind. They are in all respects treated as if they were of another species. And when a great master of nature would draw the portrait of a Jew, how detestable a character hath he represented in the person of his Jew of Venice!

Finally, “Their plagues should be wonderful, even great plagues and of long continuance.” (ver. 59.) And have not their plagues continued now these seventeen hundred years? Their former captivities were very short in comparison, and Ezekiel and Daniel prophesied in the land of the Chaldeans: but now they have no true prophet to foretel an end of their calamities; they have only false Messiahs to delude them and aggravate their misfortunes. In their former captivities they had the comfort of being conveyed to the same place; they dwelt together in the land of Goshen; they were carried together to Babylon; but now they are dispersed all over the face of the earth. What nation hath suffered so much, and yet endured so long? What nation hath subsisted as a distinct people in their own country so long as these have done in their dispersion into all countries? And

what a standing miracle is this exhibited to the view and observation of the whole world.

Here are instances of prophecies, of prophecies delivered above three thousand years ago, and yet, as we see, fulfilling in the world at this very time : and what stronger proofs can we desire of the divine legation of Moses ? How these instances may affect others I know not ; but for myself I must acknowledge they not only convince, but amaze and astonish me beyond expression. They are truly, as Moses foretold they would be, “a sign and a wonder for ever,” (ver. 45, 46) : “Moreover all these curses shall come upon thee, and shall pursue thee and overtake thee, till thou be destroyed, because thou hearkenedst not unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to keep his commandments, and his statutes which he commanded thee : and they shall be upon thee for a sign, and for a wonder, and upon thy seed for ever.”

BISHOP HORNE.

THIS excellent prelate was born in 1730. At the age of fifteen he was sent to University College, Oxford, where he pursued his studies with great assiduity, and he was at length chosen President of Magdalen College. In 1771 he was appointed chaplain in ordinary to the King, and officiated in that capacity for ten years. In 1790 he was consecrated bishop of Norwich, but died in 1792.

Several volumes of the discourses of Dr. Horne were published, but his chief work is his *Commentary on the Book of Psalms*, which displays great learning and genius as well as fervent piety, and is deservedly held in very high estimation.

BEAUTIES OF THE PSALMS.

THE Psalms are an epitome of the Bible adapted to the purposes of devotion. They treat occasionally of the creation and formation of the world ; the dispensations of providence, and the economy of grace ; the transactions of the

patriarchs, the exodus of the children of Israel ; their journey through the wilderness and settlement in Canaan ; their law, priesthood, and ritual ; the exploits of their great men wrought through faith ; their sins and captivities ; their repentances and restorations ; the sufferings and victories of David ; the peaceful and happy reign of Solomon ; the advent of Messiah, with its effects and consequences ; his incarnation, birth, life, passion, death, resurrection, ascension, kingdom, and priesthood ; the effusion of the Spirit ; the conversion of the nations ; the rejection of the Jews ; the establishment, increase, and perpetuity of the Christian Church ; the end of the world ; the general judgment, the condemnation of the wicked, and the final triumph of the righteous with their Lord and King. These are the subjects here presented to our meditations. We are instructed how to conceive of them aright, and to express the different affections which, when so conceived, they must excite in our minds. They are for this purpose adorned with the figures, and set off with all the graces of poetry ; and poetry itself is designed yet farther to be recommended by the charms of music thus consecrated to the service of God : that to delight may prepare the way for improvement, and pleasure become the handmaid of wisdom ; while every turbulent passion is calmed by sacred melody, and the evil spirit is still dispossessed by the harp of the son of Jesse. This little volume, like the paradise of Eden, affords us in perfection, though in miniature, every thing that groweth elsewhere, "every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food ;" and above all, what was there lost but is here restored, "The tree of life in the midst of the garden." That which we read as matter of speculation in the other Scriptures, is reduced to practice when we recite it in the Psalms : in those repentance and faith are described, but in these they are acted ; by a perusal of the former we learn how others served God, but by using the latter we serve Him ourselves. "What is there necessary for man to know," says

the pious and judicious Hooker, "which the Psalms are not able to teach? They are to beginners an easy and familiar introduction, a mighty augmentation of all virtue and knowledge in such as are entered before, a strong confirmation to the most perfect among others. Heroical magnanimity, exquisite justice, grave moderation, exact wisdom, repentance unfeigned, unwearied patience, the mysteries of God, the sufferings of Christ, the terrors of wrath, the comforts of grace, the works of providence, over this world, and the promised joys of that world which is to come;—all good necessarily to be either known, or done, or had, this one celestial fountain yieldeth. Let there be any grief or disease incident unto the soul of man, any wound or sickness named, for which there is not in this treasure-house a present comfortable remedy at all times ready to be found." In the language of this Divine book, therefore, the prayers and praises of the Church have been offered up to the throne of grace from age to age. And it appears to have been the manual of the Son of God in the days of his flesh; who, at the conclusion of His last supper, is generally supposed, and that upon good grounds, to have sung an hymn taken from it; who pronounced on the cross the beginning of the 22d Psalm: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" and expired with a part of the 31st Psalm in his mouth: "Into thy hands I commend my Spirit." Thus He who had not the spirit by measure, in whom were hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, and who spake as never man spake, chose to conclude his life, to solace himself in his greatest agony, and at last to breathe out his soul in the Psalmist's form of words rather than his own. No tongue of man, or angel, as Dr. Hammond justly observes, can convey an higher idea of any book, and of their felicity who use it aright.

Greatness confers no exemption from the cares and sorrows of life; its share of them frequently bears a melan-

choly proportion to its exaltation. This the Israelitish monarch experienced. He sought in piety that peace which he could not find in empire, and alleviated the disquietude of state with the exercises of devotion. His invaluable Psalms convey those comforts to others which they afforded to himself; composed upon particular occasions, yet designed for general use; delivered out as services for Israelites under the law, yet no less adapted to the circumstances of Christians. Under the Gospel they present religion to us in the most engaging dress; communicating truths which philosophy could never investigate, in a style which poetry can never equal; while history is made the vehicle of prophecy, and creation lends all its charms to paint the glories of redemption. Calculated alike to profit and to please, they inform the understanding, elevate the affections, and entertain the imagination. Indited under the influence of Him to whom all hearts are known and all events foreknown, they suit mankind in all situations; grateful as the manna, which descended from above, and conformed itself to every palate. The fairest productions of human wit after a few perusals, like gathered flowers, wither in our hands, and lose their fragranc; but these unfading plants of paradise become, as we are accustomed to them, still more and more beautiful; their blossoms appear to be daily heightened, fresh odours are emitted, and new sweets extracted from them. He who hath once tasted their excellences will desire to taste them yet again; and he who tastes them oftenest will relish them best.

THE APOSTLES' COMMISSION.

To combat the vain wisdom of the Greek, and the self-justifying arrogance of the Jew, the Apostles were sent forth. The Philistine held not David in greater contempt than was poured upon them by the scribe and the dis-

puter of this world. But they went to the attack as David did, in the name of the Lord of hosts; and therefore the spear and the shield were of no account against them. God was with them no less than with Israel before Jericho. Again the trumpet sounded; the walls again fell flat. The strongholds of false knowledge could not stand before the Gospel, and human imagination was soon captivated to the obedience of Christ. Blasted by the lightning of inspired eloquence, the arm of false philosophy withered, and lost all its hold on the minds of men. The Roman empire wondered to see itself Christian; to see the cross exalted in triumph over the globe, and the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ. But what was it that gained this victory over the pride of earth and hell? What but the same all-suffering and therefore all-subduing charity which taught the disciples of a crucified Jesus, after his example, to endure all things for the salvation of their brethren? Inspired by that love, they counted all things which the world could give them but loss, that they might win souls to Christ. They renounced all riches but the riches of grace; they sought no pleasure but that of doing their duty, and thought it honour sufficient to serve God. Labour with persecution they chose for their portion on earth, and looked for their advancement with their Master in the kingdom of heaven. The lamp kindled in their hearts by the celestial fire of charity never went out; the many waters of affliction could not quench it, neither could the floods of persecution drown it; and when the fury of the oppressor broke the earthen vessel that contained it, then was their victory, like that of Gideon, complete.

WILLIAM ROMAINE, M.A.

THIS eminent divine was born in 1714, and was educated at Oxford. He first officiated as a curate in Devonshire, but afterwards became rector of St. Aune and St. Andrew, Blackfriars, London, where he died, in 1795.

The publications of Mr. Romaine are numerous, and much esteemed. His sermons, in particular, are exceedingly impressive, enforcing the claims of religion in a manner that cannot be too highly commended.

CHRISTIAN WATCHFULNESS.

I DEFINE watchfulness to be that ready and prepared temper of mind with which the believer is always waiting for his being called out of this world. He watches, and is ready and prepared, because he knows that he shall be called soon. If no judgment should cut him off before he reach to the full age of man, yet he sees death approaching; and put it at the greatest distance, yet the eye of faith can bring it near; for what are threescore years and ten? Compared with eternity they are but a mere point of time. All men know this truth, but the believer alone knows it practically. He has learnt the true value of this short life, and is assured that it cannot be long before he must enter into the eternal world. He is convinced of the vast importance of being ready and prepared for his great change, because death will fix his condition for ever and ever, either in happiness or misery; and therefore he resolves, with holy Job, "All the days of my appointed time will I wait till my change come." He will wait all the days of his appointed time, lest death should surprise him. He knows that the sting of death is sin, and consequently he watches against sin, that, whenever death comes, it may come unarmed of its sting, and therefore without any power to hurt or terrify. Sin is his most deadly enemy, because it stirred up all his other enemies against him; he is in

arms and at open war against it—he is ever upon his guard; and he does not trust to his own strength, but he takes to himself the whole armour of God, that he may fight manfully against sin, and all the allies of sin. And being strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might, he goes on conquering and to conquer, watching and praying, and fighting, until death come to put an end to the engagement, and to proclaim the glad tidings of everlasting peace.

No person can watch in this manner but the Christian; and I make it the principal part of the definition of watchfulness, that it is the readiness and preparation wherewith the believer always waits for his being called out of this world. This watchfulness is to be found nowhere but among believers; because, without the true living faith, it is impossible to watch. The unbeliever denies the matter of fact upon which watchfulness is grounded; Christ's coming in the glory of the Godhead to judgment makes no part of his creed. And every sinner who admits the fact must fear and dread Christ's coming, and can have no motive to watch for it, until he believes that the Almighty Judge is his friend. When faith assures him of this, then he begins to lift up his eyes with joy, and to look for the coming of his Judge and Saviour. And this faith is wrought in all the children of God by the operation of the Holy Spirit, who gives them joy and peace in believing. He sheds abroad the love of God in their hearts, and thereby takes out the fear of death and judgment. Then watchfulness becomes pleasant. To be always ready and prepared to meet his God, is the happy frame and temper of mind which is formed in the believer by faith working by love. He believes, therefore he watches: his faith is operative, therefore it keeps him watchful. It is a faith working by love, therefore it makes him love to watch. He loves God, and finds a heaven of joy in loving Him; and therefore he waits with steadfast hope for the blessed time when he shall be filled

with love. Oh! what must it be to see and to love God in glory, when but a ray of Divine love darted into the soul at present brings with it such pure and spiritual delight, as makes all the joys of the world fade away into nothing; yea, even to become vanity itself. Therefore, happy is he who watches—more happy the believer who loves to watch—but thrice happy is that faithful and wise servant whom his Lord, when he cometh, shall find so doing.

ON JUSTIFICATION.

JUSTIFICATION is a law term derived from judicial proceedings, and is opposed to condemnation. When applied to persons in this life, it anticipates the idea of a day of judgment, and declares the happy issue of a certain process supposed to be carried on in the court of conscience between God and the soul.

This being the case, when a person is brought to the bar, and acquitted by his judge, he is then said to be justified; that is, he is declared to be just or innocent in regard to the charge laid against him. But there is this circumstance in the Christian, wherein it differs from all other justification, viz. that the justified person is not only acquitted but rewarded; and this reward is an eternal weight of glory.

Therefore take notice, that the first indictment against you in the court of conscience is,—that you have sinned, and thereby broke the law of God: and against this indictment you can make no defence, but must be infallibly cast and condemned. For all the world are become guilty; all having sinned and come short of the glory of God. But Christ's merits are here pleadable in arrest of judgment: for when you can make no defence of your own, and would otherwise be necessarily condemned, you can plead the merits of your Saviour; and assert that, as far as relates

to the covenant of works, or the covenant of a never-failing obedience, you are freed from the curse and sentence attending the breach of it, by the mediation of Christ, and the imputation of his righteousness. You can assert also, that this mediation, and these merits, have obtained for you a covenant of better hopes, one more gracious in its nature, being attended with the assistance of God's Holy Spirit, and upon all accounts more easy for you to perform, viz. the covenant of faith and repentance; to the performance of which a free promise of immortal happiness is annexed. The man is therefore brought to the bar a second time, and is then to be tried upon the terms of this new and better covenant, viz. whether he has so co-operated with Divine grace, and so improved his talent, as to have repentance and present obedience towards God, and faith and gratitude towards our Lord Jesus Christ. If he has these qualifications, his plea is allowed of, his person accepted, and he is justified: so that were he to die that moment, he would be secure in the inheritance of eternal glory. But if he is found destitute of true faith and sincere repentance, his mouth is stopped, and he has no plea to make, nor apology to offer. As to the sacrifice and satisfaction of Christ, his merits, his obedience, or imputed righteousness, the consideration of them will only serve to aggravate his guilt, and increase his punishment, instead of lessening them; because these things were never intended to supersede the necessity of repentance and a return to obedience, but, on the contrary, to make this repentance and this return to duty become valid and acceptable in the sight of God; and to purchase for them that reward of immortal happiness, to which the most perfect obedience (supposing such an obedience possible) could have no right or claim, without the free promises of God in Christ.

WILLIAM MELMOTH.

WILLIAM MELMOTH, an elegant English writer, was born in 1710. He was bred to the law, but the greater part of his life was spent in retirement. He was the author of several works in polite literature, but is here noticed as having written an esteemed *Treatise on the Truth of the Christian Religion*. His work *On Friendship* is also a masterly performance. In this he refutes Lord Shaftesbury, who had imputed it as a defect to Christianity, that it gave no precepts in favour of friendship ; and Soame Jenyns, who had represented that very omission as a proof of its Divine origin. Melmoth died in 1799.

BEAUTIFUL INSTANCES OF FRIENDSHIP IN THE SCRIPTURES.

ONE of the strongest and most affecting instances of a faithful attachment to be met with in history occurs in the friendship which subsisted between two females. The instance alluded to is recorded in the Jewish annals, and most pathetically related by one of the sacred penmen. The reader need not be told that this is the friendship of Naomi and Ruth.

Two very remarkable instances of friendship occur in the history of our Saviour's life: it may not perhaps be altogether unnecessary to state them in all their striking circumstances.

The Evangelist, in relating the miracles which Christ performed at Bethany, by restoring a person to life who had lain some days in the grave, introduces his narrative by emphatically observing, that "Jesus loved Lazarus;" intimating, it should seem, that the sentiments which Christ entertained of Lazarus were a distinct and peculiar species of that general benevolence with which He was actuated towards all mankind. Agreeably to this explication of the sacred historian's meaning, when the sisters of Lazarus sent to acquaint Jesus with the state in which their brother lay, they did not even mention his name; but pointed him out

by a more honourable and equally notorious designation ; the terms of their message were, " Behold ! he whom thou lovest is sick !" Accordingly, when he informs his disciples of the notice he had thus received, his expression is, " Our friend Lazarus sleepeth." Now that Christ did not, upon this occasion, use the word friend in its loose undistinguishing acceptation, but in a restrained and strictly appropriated sense, is not only manifest from this plain account of the fact itself, but appears farther evident from the sequel. For, as He was advancing to the grave, accompanied with the relations of the deceased, He discovered the same emotions of grief as swelled the bosoms of those with whom Lazarus had been most intimately connected ; and sympathizing with their common sorrow, He melted into tears. This circumstance was too remarkable to escape particular observation ; and it drew from the spectators, what one should think it must necessarily draw from every reader, this natural and obvious reflection, " Behold ! how He loved him."

But in the concluding catastrophe of our Saviour's life, He gave a still more decisive proof that sentiments of the strongest personal attachment and friendship were not unworthy of being admitted into his sacred bosom. They were too deeply, indeed, impressed to be extinguished even by the most excruciating torments. In those dreadful moments, observing among the afflicted witnesses of his painful and ignominious sufferings, that faithful follower who is described by the historian as " the disciple whom he loved," He distinguished him by the most convincing instance of superior confidence, esteem, and affection, that ever was exhibited to the admiration of mankind. For, under circumstances of the most agonizing torments, when it might be thought impossible for human nature to retain any other sensibility but that of its own inexpressible sufferings ; He recommended to the care and protection of this his tried and approved friend, in terms of peculiar

regard and endearment, the most tender and sacred object of his private affections. But no language can represent this pathetic and affecting scene, with a force and energy equal to the sublime simplicity of the Evangelist's own narrative: "Now there stood by the cross of Jesus his mother and his mother's sister, and Mary Magdalene. When Jesus saw his mother, and the disciple standing by, whom he loved, he saith to his mother, Behold thy Son! Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother! And from that hour that disciple took her to his own home."

It may safely be asserted, that among all those memorable examples of friendship, which have been celebrated with the highest encomiums by the ancients, there cannot be produced a single instance in which the most distinguishing features of exalted amity are so strikingly displayed, as in the foregoing relation. The only one, perhaps, that bears even a faint resemblance to it, is that famous transaction recorded by Lucian in his dialogue entitled *Ioxaris*. Eudamidas being on his death-bed, made his will, by which he bequeathed his aged mother to the care and protection of Aretheus, and his daughter to Charixenus, to be disposed of in marriage according to his discretion; enjoining him, at the same time, to give her as ample a portion as his circumstances would admit. He added, that in case either of the legatees should happen to die, he substituted the survivor in his stead. Charixenus died very soon after the testator; in consequence of which, Aretheus took each of these singularly confidential legacies to himself; and celebrating the marriage of his only daughter and that of his friend, on the same day, he divided his fortune equally between them.

When the very different circumstances attending these respective examples are duly considered, it must be acknowledged that the former rises as much above the latter in the proof it exhibits of sublime friendship, as it does in the dignity of the characters concerned. Upon the

whole then it appears, that the Divine Founder of the Christian Religion, as well by his own example, as by the spirit of his moral doctrine, has not only encouraged but consecrated friendship.

DR. BLAIR.

HUGH BLAIR, an elegant scholar and exemplary clergyman, was born in 1718, and was educated at the University of Edinburgh. In 1741 he was admitted second minister in a church in Edinburgh; in 1754 he was translated to the church in Edinburgh called Lady Yester's, and from thence to the High Church, in 1758. In 1760 he was appointed Professor of Rhetoric by the town council of Edinburgh; the Lectures which he delivered in that capacity are much esteemed. He died in 1800.

The Sermons of Dr. Blair have enjoyed a great degree of popularity: their language is elegant, and the great doctrines they inculcate are set forth in a most engaging manner.

MORALITY WITHOUT DEVOTION, DEFECTIVE.

WITH many virtue is, or at least is pretended to be, a respectable and an honoured name, while piety sounds meanly in their ears. They are men of the world, and they claim to be men of honour. They rest upon their humanity, their public spirit, their probity, and their truth; they arrogate to themselves all the manly and the active virtues. But devout affections, and religious duties, they treat with contempt, as founded on shadowy speculations, and fit to employ the attention only of weak and superstitious minds. Now, in opposition to such persons, I contend that this neglect of piety argues depravity of heart; and that it infers an irregular discharge of the duties of morality.

First, it argues internal depravity; for it discovers a cold and a hard heart. If there be any impression which man is formed by nature to receive, it is a sense of religion,

As soon as his mind opens to observation and reflection, he discerns innumerable marks of his dependent state. He finds himself placed by some superior power in a vast world, where the wisdom and goodness of the Creator are conspicuous on every side. The magnificence, the beauty, and order of nature, excite him to admire and adore. When he looks up to that Omnipotent hand which operates throughout the universe, he is impressed with reverence. When he receives blessings which he cannot avoid ascribing to Divine goodness, he is prompted to gratitude. The expressions of those affections, under the various forms of religious worship, are no other than the native effusions of the human heart. Ignorance may mislead, and superstition may corrupt them; but their origin is derived from sentiments that are essential to man.

Cast your eyes over the whole earth. Explore the most remote quarters of the east or the west. You may discover tribes of men without policy, or laws, or cities, or any of the arts of life; but nowhere will you find them without some form of religion. In every region you behold the prostrate worshipper, the temple, the altar, and the offering. Wherever men have existed, they have been sensible that some acknowledgment was due on their part to the Sovereign of the world. If in their rudest and most ignorant state this obligation has been felt, what additional force must it acquire by the improvements of human knowledge, but especially by the great discoveries of the Christian revelation! Whatever, either from reverence or from gratitude, can excite men to the worship of God, is by this revelation placed in such a light as one should think were sufficient to overawe the most thoughtless, and to melt the most obdurate mind.

Canst thou, then, pretend to be a man of reason, nay, a man of virtue, and yet continue regardless of the first and chief dictates of human nature? Where is thy sensibility to what is right and fit, if that loud voice which

calls all nations throughout the earth to religious homage has never been heard by thee? or if it has been heard, by what strange and false refinements hast thou stifled those natural sentiments which it tends to awaken? Can it be consistent with true virtue or honour to value thyself upon thy regard to inferior obligations, and yet to violate that which is the most sacred and ancient of all? When simple instinct teaches the Tartar and the Indian, together with his alms and good works, to join his prayers to that Power whom he considers as the source of good, shall it be no reproach in the most enlightened state of human nature, and under the purest dispensation of religion, to have extinguished the sense of gratitude to heaven, and to slight all acknowledgment of the great and the true God? What does such conduct imply, but either an entire want, or a wilful suppression of some of the best and most generous affections belonging to human nature? Surely there must be an essential defect in that heart which remains cold and insensible where it ought to be affected most warmly. Surely such a degree of depravity must be lodged there as is sufficient to taint all the other springs of pretended virtue.

But, besides this, I must contend, that where religion is neglected, there can be no regular nor steady practice of the duties of morality. The character will be often inconsistent; and virtue, placed on a basis too narrow to support it, will be always loose and tottering. For such is the propensity of our nature to vice, so numerous are the temptations to a relaxed and immoral conduct, that stronger restraints than those of mere reason are necessary to be imposed on man. The sense of right and wrong, the principle of honour, or the instinct of benevolence, are barriers too feeble to withstand the strength of passion. In the tranquil seasons of life, these natural principles may, perhaps, carry on the ordinary course of social duties with some regularity. But wait until some trying

emergence come. Let the conflict of passions arise. Let the heart be either wounded by some distress, or agitated by violent emotions, and you shall presently see that virtue without religion is inadequate to the government of life. It is destitute of its proper guard, of its firmest support, of its chief encouragement; it will sink under the weight of misfortune, or will yield to the solicitation of guile.

The great motives that produce constancy and firmness of action must be of a palpable and striking kind. A Divine Legislator uttering his voice from heaven, an Omniscient Witness beholding us in all our retreats, an Almighty Governor stretching forth his arm to punish or reward, disclosing the secrets of the invisible world, informing us of perpetual rest prepared hereafter for the righteous, and of indignation and wrath awaiting the wicked: these are the considerations which overawe the world, which support integrity and check guilt. They add to virtue that solemnity which should ever characterise it. To the admonitions of conscience they give the authority of a law. Co-operating with all the good dispositions of a pious man, they strengthen and insure their influence. On his alms you can have no certain dependence who thinks not of God, nor has joined prayer to his charitable deeds. But when humanity is seconded by piety, the spring from which it flows is rendered, of course, more regular and constant. In short, withdraw religion, and you shake all the pillars of morality. In every heart you weaken the influence of virtue: and among the multitude, the bulk of mankind, you overthrow its power.

PRAYER WITHOUT ALMS, DEVOTION WITHOUT
MORALITY.

IN every age the practice has prevailed of substituting certain appearances of piety, in the place of the great duties of humanity and mercy. Too many there have always been who flatter themselves with the hope of obtaining the friendship of their Creator, though they neglect to do justice to their fellow-creatures. But such persons may be assured that their supposed piety is altogether of a spurious kind. It is an invention of their own, unknown to reason, unknown to the word of God. In Scripture we are ever directed to try our faith by our works, our love of God by our love of men. We are directed to consider piety as a principle which regenerates the heart, and forms it to goodness. We are taught that in vain we address any acts of homage to Christ unless we do the things which He saith; and that love, peace, gentleness, goodness, meekness, and temperance, are not only the injunctions of his law, but the native fruits of his Spirit. If therefore, while piety seems ardent, morality shall decline, you have full reason to believe that into that piety some corrupting ingredients have entered. And if ever your regard to morality shall totally fail; if while you make many prayers you give no alms; if while you appear to be zealous for God you are false or unjust to men; if you are hard or contracted in heart, severe in your censures, or oppressive in your conduct, then conclude with certainty, that what you had termed piety was no more than an empty name. For as soon, according to the Scripture similitude, will "bitter waters flow from a sweet fountain," as such effects be produced by genuine piety.

What you have called by that name, resolves itself into one or other of these three things. Either it is a hypocritical form of godliness, assumed in order to impose on the world; or, which is the most favourable supposition,

it is a transient impression of seriousness, an accidental melting of the heart, which passes away "like the morning cloud and the early dew;" or, which I am afraid is too often the case, it is the deliberate refuge of a deluded and superstitious, but at the same time a corrupted mind. For all men, even the most depraved, are subject, more or less, to compunctions of conscience. It has never been in their power to withdraw totally beyond the reach of that warning voice which tells them that something is necessary to be done in order to make their peace with the Ruler of the world. But, backward at the same time to resign the gains of dishonesty, or the pleasures of vice; averse from submission to that sacred law which enjoins righteousness in its whole extent, they have often attempted to make a sort of composition with heaven, a composition which, though they dare not avow it in words, lurks in secret at the bottom of many a heart. If God will only dispense with some articles of obedience, they will repay Him with abundant homage. If they fail in good practice, they will study to be sound in belief, and by the number of their prayers will atone, in some measure, for their deficiency in charitable deeds.

But the attempt is as vain as it is impious. From the simplest and plainest principles of reason it must appear that religious worship, disjoined from justice and virtue, can upon no account whatever find acceptance with the Supreme Being. "To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the Lord." "Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me; the new moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with; it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting." Cease, foolish and impious man! Cease to consider the Almighty as a weak or vainglorious being, who is to be appeased by thy devout prostrations and thy humble words; or to be gratified by the parade and ostentation of external worship. What is all thy worship to Him? "Will He eat

the flesh of thy sacrifices, or drink the blood of offered goats?" Was worship required of thee, dost thou think, upon His account, that thou mightest bring an increase to His glory and felicity by thy weak and insignificant praises? Sooner mightest thou increase the splendour of the sun by a lighted taper, or add to the thunder by thy voice. No ! it is for the sake of man, not of God, that worship and prayers are required ; not that God may be rendered more glorious, but that man may be made better, that he may be confirmed in a proper sense of his dependent state, and acquire those pious and virtuous dispositions in which his highest improvement consists.

TRUE GENTLENESS.

TRUE gentleness is founded on a sense of what we owe to Him who made us, and to the common nature of which we all share. It arises from reflection on our own failings and wants ; and from just views of the condition and the duty of man. It is native feeling heightened and improved by principle. It is the heart which easily relents, which feels for every thing that is human, and is backward and slow to inflict the least wound. It is affable in its address and mild in its demeanour, ever ready to oblige and willing to be obliged by others, breathing habitual kindness towards friends, courtesy to strangers, longsuffering to enemies. It exercises authority with moderation, administers reproof with tenderness, confers favour with ease and modesty. It is unassuming in opinion, and temperate in zeal. It contends not eagerly about trifles, is slow to contradict, and still slower to blame ; but prompt to allay dissension and to restore peace. It neither intermeddles unnecessarily with the affairs, nor pries inquisitively into the secrets, of others. It delights, above all things, to alleviate distress, and if it cannot dry up the falling tear, to soothe at least the

grieving heart. Where it has not the power of being useful it is never burdensome; it seeks to please rather than to shine and dazzle, and conceals with care that superiority either of talent or of rank which is oppressive to those who are beneath it. In a word, it is that spirit, and that tenor of manners, which the Gospel of Christ enjoins when it commands us to "bear one another's burdens;" "to rejoice with those who rejoice, and to weep with those who weep;" "to please every one his neighbour for his good;" "to be kind and tenderhearted;" "to be pitiful and courteous;" "to support the weak, and to be patient towards all men."

ON FUTURITY.

BUILD your hopes of happiness on somewhat more solid and lasting than what either to-day or to-morrow are likely to produce. This life, by means of wisdom and virtue, may be rendered to a good man, a tolerable, nay, a comfortable state; but he who expects complete happiness from it will be greatly deceived. Man in his most flourishing condition were much to be pitied if he was destitute of any higher hope. Rolling from change to change throughout all the days of his life, with a dark and unknown prospect always before him in futurity, what would avail a few short interrupted glimpses of happiness, which from time to time he was permitted to enjoy? Can we believe, that only for such a state as this man was designed by his great and good Creator. No! let us "bless the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away." Here is the rock on which the mind, however tossed by the storms of life,

can securely rest. Here is the object to which a wise man will bend his chief attention, that, after having acted his part on earth with fidelity and honour, he may be enabled, through the merits of his Saviour, to look for a place in the mansions of eternal and untroubled peace. The prospect is the great corrective of the present vanity of human life ; it gives significancy and importance to its most transitory scenes, and, in the midst of its mutability, discovers one fixed point of rest. He who is habitually influenced by the hope of immortality will be able to look without dismay on the changes of the world. He will neither boast of to-morrow, nor be afraid of it ; but will pass through the varieties of life with a manly and unbroken mind ; with a noble superiority to those fears and expectations, those cares and sorrows, which agitate the multitude. Such are the native effects of Christian faith and hope. To them alone it belongs to surmount all the discouragements to which we are now exposed ; to render our life comfortable, and our death blessed ; nay, to make "the day of our death better than the day of our birth."

THE NECESSITY OF THE EARLY FORMATION OF RELIGIOUS PRINCIPLES.

As soon as you are capable of reflection you must perceive that there is a right and a wrong in human actions. You see that those who are born with the same advantages of fortune are not all equally prosperous in the course of life. While some of them by wise and steady conduct attain distinction in the world, and pass their days with comfort and honour, others of the same rank, by mean and vicious behaviour, forfeit the advantages of their birth, involve themselves in much misery, and end in being a disgrace to their friends, and a burden on society. Early, then,

you may learn that it is not on the external condition in which you find yourself placed, but on the part which you are to act, that your welfare or unhappiness, your honour or infamy, depend. Now, when beginning to act that part, what can be of greater moment than to regulate your plan of conduct with the most serious attention, before you have committed any fatal or irretrievable errors? If, instead of exerting reflection for this valuable purpose, you deliver yourselves up at so critical a time to sloth and pleasure; if you refuse to listen to any councillor but humour, or to attend to any pursuit except that of amusement; if you allow yourselves to float loose and careless on the tide of life, ready to receive any direction which the current of fashion may chance to give you; what can you expect to follow from such beginnings? While so many around you are undergoing the sad consequences of a like indiscretion, for what reason shall not these consequences extend to you? Shall you only attain success without that preparation, and escape danger without that precaution, which is required of others? Shall happiness grow up to you of its own accord and solicit your acceptance, when to the rest of mankind it is the fruit of long cultivation, and the acquisition of labour and care? Deceive not yourselves with such arrogant hopes. Whatever be your rank, Providence will not for your sake reverse its established order. By listening to wise admonitions, and tempering the vivacity of youth with a proper mixture of serious thought, you may ensure cheerfulness for the rest of your life; but by delivering yourselves up at present to giddiness and levity, you lay the foundation of lasting heaviness of heart.

THE SLAVERY OF VICE.

RELIGION and virtue confer on the mind principles of noble independence. "The upright man is satisfied from himself." He despises not the advantages of fortune, but he centres not his happiness in them. With a moderate share of them he can be contented, and contentment is felicity. Happy in his own integrity, conscious of the esteem of good men, reposing firm trust in the Providence and promises of God, he is exempted from servile dependence on other things. He can wrap himself up in a good conscience, and look forward without terror to the change of the world. Let all things shift around him as they please, he believes that by Divine ordination they shall be made to work together in the issue for his good; and, therefore, having much to hope from God, and little to fear from the world, he can be easy in every state. One who possesses within himself such an establishment of mind is truly free. But shall I call that man free, who has nothing that is his own, no property assured, whose very heart is not his own, but rendered the appendage of external things, and the sport of fortune? Is that man free, let his outward condition be ever so splendid, whom his imperious passions detain at their call, whom they send forth at their pleasure to drudge and toil, and to beg his only enjoyment from the casualties of the world? Is he free, who must flatter and lie to compass his ends; who must bear with this man's caprice and that man's scorn; must profess friendship where he hates, and respect where he contemns; who is not at liberty to appear in his own colours, nor to speak his own sentiments; who dares not be honest lest he should be poor? Believe it, no chains bind so hard, no fetters are so heavy, as those which fasten the corrupted heart to this treacherous world; no dependence is more contemptible than that under which the voluptuous, the covetous, or the

ambitious man lies to the means of pleasure, gain, or power. Yet this is the boasted liberty which vice promises, as the recompense of setting us free from the salutary restraints of virtue.

DR. BEATTIE.

JAMES BEATTIE was born in 1735. He was educated at the university of Aberdeen, of which he afterwards became a distinguished ornament. For some time he taught a parochial school, and afterwards was usher of the grammar school at Aberdeen. In 1760 he was appointed Professor of Moral Philosophy and Logic in the Marischal College, at Aberdeen; and in 1776 he published an answer to the celebrated Hume, entitled, *An Essay on the Nature and Immutability of Truth*. This brought him into notice, and the University of Oxford conferred on him the degree of LL.D. He died in 1803.

Besides the work just named, Dr. Beattie published two little volumes, on the *Evidences of Christianity*; which display great originality of thought, and an intimate acquaintance with the doctrines of our most holy religion.

THE PSALMS CONSIDERED AS POETIC COMPOSITIONS.

POETRY is sublime when it awakens in the mind any great and good affection, as piety or patriotism. This is one of the noblest effects of the art. The Psalms are remarkable beyond all other writings for their power of inspiring devout emotions. But it is not in this respect only that they are sublime. Of the Divine nature they contain the most magnificent descriptions that the soul of man can comprehend. The hundred and fourth Psalm, in particular, displays the power and goodness of Providence, in creating and preserving the world, and the various tribes of animals in it, with such majestic brevity and beauty as it is vain to look for in any human composition.

FINE MORALITY OF THE GOSPEL.

Is it bigotry to believe the sublime truths of the Gospel with full assurance of faith? I glory in such bigotry: I would not part with it for a thousand worlds: I congratulate the man who is possessed of it; for, amidst all the vicissitudes and calamities of the present state, that man enjoys an inexhaustible fund of consolation, of which it is not in the power of fortune to deprive him.

There is not a book on earth so favourable to all the kind, and all the sublime affections, or so unfriendly to hatred and persecution, to tyranny, injustice, and every sort of malevolence, as the Gospel. It breathes nothing throughout but mercy, benevolence, and peace.

Such of the doctrines of the Gospel as are level to human capacity appear to be agreeable to the purest truth and the soundest morality. All the genius and learning of the heathen world, all the penetration of Pythagoras, Socrates, and Aristotle, had never been able to produce such a system of moral duty, and so rational an account of providence and of man, as is to be found in the New Testament. Compared, indeed, to this, all other moral and theological wisdom

Loses, discountenanced, and like folly shews.

CHRISTIANITY THE SCHOOL OF URBANITY.

OF sympathy all men are not equally susceptible. They who have a lively imagination, keen feelings, and what we call a tender heart, are most subject to it. Habits of attention, the study of the works of nature, and of the best performances in art, experience of adversity, the love of virtue and of mankind, tend greatly to cherish it; and those passions whereof self is the object, as pride, self-conceit, the love of money, sensuality, envy, vanity, have

a tendency no less powerful to destroy it. Nothing renders a man more amiable or more useful than a disposition to rejoice with them that rejoice, and to weep with them that weep; to enter heartily, not officiously, into the concerns of his fellow-creatures, to comply with the innocent humour of his company, more attentive to them than to himself, and to avoid every occasion of pain or offence. A modest man who sympathetically attends to the condition and sentiment of others will, of his own account, make those allowances in their favour which he wishes to be made in his own; and will think it as much his duty to promote their happiness, as he thinks it theirs to promote his. And such a man is well principled in equity as in good breeding; and though from an imperfect knowledge of forms, and from his having had but few opportunities to put them in practice, his manner may not be so graceful or so easy as could be wished, he will never give offence to any person of penetration and good nature.

The meek and benevolent spirit of our religion has had a powerful influence in sweetening and refining all the comforts of human society, and conversation among the rest.

That humility, gentleness, and kind affection, whereof good-breeding ever assumes the outward form, Christianity establishes in the heart, as a permanent principle of indispensable obligation. That generous love of human kind which prompts the Christian to watch for the good of others, and embrace every opportunity of promoting not only their welfare, but their virtue, taking care never to offend, and avoiding even the appearance of evil—would not the man of taste acknowledge to be the very perfection and heroism of polite behaviour? Must not the affecting view that true religion exhibits, of all mankind bearing to one another the relation of brethren, impart keenness and activity to those tender sympathies of our social nature, whereof the language of good-breeding is so remarkably expressive.

Christianity commands not the suppression only, but the extinction, of every indelicate thought, arrogant emotion, and malevolent purpose; would conversation stand in need of any farther refinement, if this law were as punctually fulfilled as it is earnestly recommended? What is more efficacious than habitual good humour in rendering the intercourse of society agreeable, and in keeping at a distance all intemperate passion, and all harshness of sentiment and language?

In a word, true Christianity alone and at once transforms a barbarian into a man, a brutal, selfish, and melancholy savage into a kind, a generous, and a cheerful associate.

WILLIAM GILPIN, M.A.

MR. GILPIN was a worthy descendant of the venerable Bernard Gilpin, and a clergyman of refined taste, as well as of exemplary piety and charity. His religious works consist of sermons, lectures, and an *Exposition of the New Testament*, all of them valuable for their elegance of style, for the fervent piety they breathe, and the great learning they display. He was born in 1724, was for many years a schoolmaster near London, and afterwards became vicar of Boldre, in Hampshire, where he died in 1804.

THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM.

THE inward grace or thing signified, we are told, is "a death unto sin, and a new birth unto righteousness;" by which is meant that great renovation of nature, that purity of heart, which the Christian religion is intended to produce. And surely there cannot be a more significant sign of this than water, on account of its cleansing nature. As water refreshes the body, and purifies it from all contracted filth, it aptly represents that renovation of nature which cleanses the soul from the impurities of sin. Water indeed among the ancients was more adapted to the thing signified than it is at present among us. They used

immersion in baptizing, so that the child being dipped into the water, and raised out again, baptism with them was more significant of a new birth unto righteousness. But though we, in these colder climates, think immersion an unsafe practice, yet the original meaning is still supposed.

It is next asked, what is required of those who are baptized? to this we answer, "repentance, whereby they forsake sin, and faith, whereby they stedfastly believe the promises of God made to them in that sacrament."

The primitive church was extremely strict on this head. In those times before Christianity was established, when adults offered themselves to baptism, no one was admitted till he had given a very satisfactory evidence of his repentance, and till on good grounds he could profess his faith in Christ; and it was afterwards expected from him that he should prove his faith and repentance, by a regular obedience during the future part of his life.

If faith and repentance are expected at baptism, it is a very natural question, why then are infants baptized when by reason of their tender age they can give no evidence of either?

Whether infants should be admitted to baptism, or whether that sacrament should be deferred till years of discretion, is a question in the Christian church which hath been agitated with some animosity. Our church by no means looks upon baptism as necessary to the infant's salvation. No man acquainted with the spirit of Christianity can conceive that God will leave the salvation of so many innocent souls in the hands of others. But the practice is considered as founded upon the usage of the earliest times; and the church, observing that circumcision was the introductory rite to the Jewish covenant, and that baptism was intended to succeed circumcision, it naturally supposes that baptism should be administered to infants, as circumcision was.

THE SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER.

THE first question is, an inquiry into the origin of the institution. "Why was the sacrament of the Lord's Supper ordained?"

It was ordained, we are informed, "for the continual remembrance of the sacrifice of the death of Christ, and of the benefits which we receive thereby."

In examining a sacrament in general, we have already seen, that both baptism and the Lord's Supper were originally instituted as the "means of receiving the grace of God, and as pledges to assure us thereof."

But besides these primary ends, they have each a secondary one; in representing the two most important truths of religion, which gives them more force and influence. Baptism, we have seen, represents that renovation of our sinful nature which the Gospel was intended to introduce; and the peculiar end which the Lord's Supper had in view, was the sacrifice of the death of Christ, with all the benefits which arise from it—the remission of our sins, and the reconciliation of the world to God. "This do," said our Saviour, alluding to the passover, which the Lord's Supper was designed to supersede, not as hitherto, in memory of your deliverance from Egypt, but in memory of that greater deliverance, of which the other was only a type, "Do it in remembrance of me."

The outward part of the Lord's Supper is "bread and wine." The things signified are the "body and blood of Christ." In examining the sacrament of baptism, I endeavoured to shew how very apt a symbol water is in that ceremony. Bread and wine also are symbols equally apt in representing the body and blood of Christ; and in the use of these particular symbols, it is reasonable to suppose that our Saviour had an eye to the Jewish passover, in which it was a custom to drink wine and to eat

bread. He might have instituted any other apt symbols for the same purpose; but it was his usual practice, through the whole system of his institution, to make it in every part as familiar as possible; and for this reason he seems to have chosen such symbols as were then in use, that he might give as little offence as possible in a matter of indifference.

As our Saviour in the institution of his Supper ordered both the bread and the wine to be received, it is certainly a great error in the papists to deny the cup to the laity. They say, indeed, that as both flesh and blood are united in the substance of the human body, so are they in the sacramental bread; which, according to them, is changed, or, as they phrase it, transubstantiated into the real body of Christ. If they have no other reason, why do they administer wine to the clergy? The clergy might participate equally of both in the bread. But, the plain truth is, they are desirous by this invention to add an air of mystery to the sacrament, and a superstitious reverence to the priest, as if he, being endowed with some peculiar holiness, might be allowed the use of both.

There is a difficulty in this part of the Catechism, which should not be passed over. We are told, that "The body and blood of Christ are verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful in the Lord's Supper." This expression sounds very like the popish doctrine just mentioned of transubstantiation. The true sense of the words undoubtedly is, that the faithful believer only verily and indeed receives the benefit of the sacrament; but the expression must be allowed to be inaccurate, as it is capable of an interpretation so entirely opposite to that which the Church of England hath always professed. I would not willingly suppose, as some have done, that the compilers of the Catechism meant to manage the affair of transubstantiation with the papists. It is one thing to shew a liberality of sentiment in matters of indifference,

and another to speak timidly and ambiguously where essentials are concerned.

It is next asked, "What benefits we receive from the Lord's Supper?" To which it is answered, "The strengthening and refreshing of our souls by the body and blood of Christ, as our bodies are by the bread and wine." As our bodies are strengthened and refreshed in a natural way by bread and wine, so should our souls be in a spiritual way by a devout commemoration of the passion of Christ. By gratefully remembering what He suffered for us, we should be excited to a greater abhorrence of sin, which was the cause of his sufferings. Every time we partake of this sacrament, like faithful soldiers, we take a fresh oath to our Leader, and should be animated anew by his example, to persevere in the spiritual conflict in which under Him we are engaged. It is lastly asked, "What is required of them who come to the Lord's Supper?" To which we answer, "That we should examine ourselves, whether we repent us truly of our former sins, stedfastly purposing to lead a new life; have a lively faith in God's mercy through Christ, with a thankful remembrance of his death; and be in charity with all men."

That pious frame of mind is here in very few words pointed out which a Christian ought to cherish and cultivate in himself at all times, but especially upon the performance of any solemn act of religion. Very little, indeed, is said in Scripture of any particular frame of mind which should accompany the performance of this duty, but it may easily be inferred from the nature of the duty itself.

In the first place, "we should repent us truly of our former sins, stedfastly purposing to lead a new life." *He who performs a religious exercise without being earnest in this point, adds only a pharisaical hypocrisy to his other sins. Unless he seriously resolve to lead a good life,*

he had better be all of a piece, and not pretend, by receiving the sacrament, to a piety which he does not feel.

These "stedfast purposes of leading a new life," form a very becoming exercise to Christians. The lives even of the best of men afford only a mortifying retrospect; though they may have conquered some of their worst propensities, yet the triumphs of sin over them at the various periods of their lives will always be remembered with sorrow, and may always be remembered with advantage; keeping them on their guard for the future, and strengthening them more and more in all their good resolutions of obedience; and when can these meditations arise more properly than when we are performing a rite, instituted on purpose to commemorate the great atonement for sin? To our repentance and resolutions of obedience we are required to add, "a lively faith in God's mercy through Christ, with a thankful remembrance of his death." We should impress ourselves with the deepest sense of humility, totally rejecting every idea of our own merit; hoping for God's favour only through the merits of our great Redeemer, and with hearts full of gratitude trusting only to his all-sufficient sacrifice.

Lastly, we are required at the celebration of this great rite, "to be in charity with all men." It commemorates the greatest instance of love that can be conceived; and should therefore raise in us correspondent affections. It should excite in us that constant flow of benevolence in which the spirit of religion consists, and without which indeed we can have no religion at all. Love is the very distinguishing badge of Christianity: "By this," said our great Master, "shall all men know that ye are my disciples."

One species of charity should at this time never be forgotten, and that is, the forgiveness of others. No acceptable gift can be offered at this altar but in the spirit of reconciliation. Hence it was that the ancient Chris-

tians instituted at the celebration of the Lord's Supper what they called Love Feasts. They thought they could not give a better instance of their being in perfect charity with each other, than by joining all ranks together in one common meal. By degrees, indeed, this well-meant custom degenerated; and it may not be amiss to observe here, that the passages (1 Cor. xi.) in which these enormities are rebuked have been variously misconstrued, and have frightened many well-meaning persons from the sacrament. Whereas what the Apostle here says hath no relation to this rite, than as it was attended by a particular abuse in receiving it; and as this is a mode of abuse which doth not now exist, the Apostle's reproof seems not to affect the Christians of this age.

What the primary and what the secondary ends in the two sacraments were, I have endeavoured to explain. But there might be others.

God might intend them as trials of our faith. The divine truths of the Gospel speak for themselves; but the performance of a positive duty rests only on faith.

These institutions are also strong arguments for the truth of Christianity. We trace the observance of them into the very earliest times of the Gospel. We can trace no other origin than what the Scriptures give us. These rites, therefore, greatly tend to corroborate the Scriptures.

God also, who knows what is in man, might condescend so far to his weakness as to give him these external badges of religion, to keep the spirit of it more alive. And it is indeed probable that nothing has contributed more than these ceremonies to preserve a sense of religion among mankind. It is a melancholy proof of this, that no contentions in the Christian church have been more violent, nor carried on with more acrimony and unchristian zeal, than the contentions about Baptism and the Lord's Supper; as if the very essence of religion consisted in this or that mode of observing these rites. But this is the abuse of them.

Let us better be taught ; let us receive these sacraments for the gracious purposes for which our Lord enjoined them, with gratitude and with reverence. But let us not lay a greater stress upon them than our Lord intended. Heaven, we doubt not, may be gained when there have been the means of receiving neither the one sacrament nor the other. But unless our affections are right, and our lives answerable to them, we can never please God, though we perform the externals of religion with ever so much exactness. We may err in our notions about the sacraments : the world has been long divided on these subjects ; and a gracious God, it may be hoped, will pardon our errors. But in matters of practice we have no apology for error. The great lines of our duty are drawn so strong, that a deviation here is not error, but guilt.

Let us, then, to conclude from the whole, make it our principal care to purify our hearts in the sight of God. Let us beseech him to increase the influence of his Holy Spirit within us, that our faith may be of that kind "which worketh by love," that all our affections, and from them our actions, may flow in a steady course of obedience ; that each day may correct the last by a sincere repentance of our mistakes in life ; and that we may continue gradually to approach nearer the idea of Christian perfection. Let us do this, disclaiming after all any merits of our own, and not trusting in outward observances, but trusting in the merits of Christ, and we need not fear our acceptance with God.

ON BEARING MALICE AND HATRED.

MALICE and hatred arise in our hearts, in the first place, from injurious treatment ; and surely no man, when he is injured, can at first help feeling that he is so. But Christianity requires that we should subdue these feelings as soon as possible, "and not suffer the sun to go down upon our wrath." Various are the passages of Scripture

which inculcate the forgiveness of injuries. Indeed no point is more laboured than this ; and with reason, because no temper is more productive of evil, both to ourselves and others than a malicious one. The sensations of a mind burning with revenge are beyond description ; and as we are at these seasons very unable to judge coolly, and of course liable to carry our resentment too far, the consequence is, that in our rage we may do a thousand things which can never be atoned for, and of which we may repent as long as we live.

Besides, one act draws on another, and retaliation keeps the quarrel alive. The Gospel, therefore, ever gracious and kind to man, in all its precepts, enjoins us to check all those violent emotions, and to leave our cause in the hands of God. " Vengeance is mine, I will repay," saith the Lord ; and he who, in opposition to this precept, takes vengeance into his own hands, and cherishes the malice and hatred of his heart, may assure himself that he has not yet learned to be a Christian. These principles, perhaps, may not entirely agree with the modern principles of honour : but let the man of honour see to that. The maxims of the world cannot change the truth of the Gospel.

Nay, even in recovering our just right, or in pursuing a criminal to justice, we should take care that it be not done in the spirit of retaliation and revenge. If these be our motives, though we make the law our instrument, we are equally guilty.

But besides injurious treatment, the malice and hatred of our hearts, have often another source, and that is, envy ; and thus in the Litany, " Envy, malice, and hatred," are all joined together with great propriety. The emotions of envy are generally cooler and less violent than those which arise from the resentment of injury. So that envy is seldom so mischievous in its effects as revenge ; but with regard to ourselves it is altogether as bad, and full as destructive

of Christianity. What is the religion of that man, who, instead of thanking heaven for the blessings he receives, is fretting himself continually with a disagreeable comparison between himself and some other? He cannot enjoy what he has, because another has more wealth, a fairer fame, or perhaps more merit than himself. He is miserable because others are happy.

But, to omit the *wickedness* of envy, how absurd and how foolish is it in a world where we must necessarily expect much real misery, to be perniciously inventive in producing it.

Besides, what ignorance! We see only the glaring outside of things. Under all that envied glare, many unseen distresses may lurk, from which our station may be free: for our merciful Creator seems to have bestowed happiness, as far as station is concerned, with great equality among all his creatures.

In conclusion, therefore, let it be the great object of our attention, and the subject of our prayers, to rid our minds of all this cursed intrusion of evil thoughts, whether they proceed from malice or from an envious temper. Let all our malicious thoughts soften into charity and benevolence; and let us forgive one another, as God, for Christ's sake, has forgiven us. As for our envious thoughts, as far as relates to externals, let them subside in humility, acquiescence, and submission to the will of God. And when we are tempted to envy the good qualities of others, let us spurn so base a conception, and change it into a generous emulation—into an endeavour to raise ourselves to an equality with our rival, not to depress him to a level with

ARCHDEACON PALEY.

WILLIAM PALEY was born in 1743. He was admitted a sizar of Christ's College, Cambridge, in 1758, and in the year following became resident member of that college. In 1761 he took his degree of B.A., and after leaving the university he engaged as second assistant at an academy at Greenwich. In 1766 he was elected a Fellow on the foundation of Christ's College, and he soon after obtained the vicarage of Dalston, in Cumberland, which he exchanged for the more valuable one of Appleby. In 1780 he was installed a prebendary of Carlisle, and two years afterwards he became archdeacon of that city, to which the rectory of Great Salkeld was annexed. The Bishop of Durham entertaining great respect for him, presented him with the rectory of Bishop-Wearmouth. He was also a sub-dean of Lincoln, and a prebend of St. Paul's, London, and died in 1805.

Though Dr. Paley obtained great honours in the Church, his highest honours are his works. He was one of the first writers of any age, or any country, in defence of Christianity. His *Evidences of Christianity* is a very elaborate and successful performance; as are also his *Natural Theology*, and his *Horæ Paulinæ*, which, taken together, amply prove the truth of religion, natural and revealed.

CHARACTER OF OUR LORD.

WHEN we consider Christ as a moral teacher, (remembering that this was only a secondary part of his office,) and that morality, by the nature of the subject, does not admit of discovery properly so called; when we consider either what He taught, or what He did not teach, either the substance or the manner of his instruction; his preference of solid to popular virtues; of a character which is commonly despised to a character which is universally extolled; his placing in our licentious vices the check in the right place, viz. upon the thoughts; his collecting of human duty into two well-devised rules; his repetition of those rules; the stress He laid upon them, especially in comparison with positive duties, and his fixing thereby the sentiments of his followers; his exclusion of all regard to reputation in our devotions, and alms, and, by parity

of reason, in other virtues ; when we consider that his instructions were delivered in a form calculated for impression, the precise purpose in his situation to be consulted ; and that they were illustrated by parables, the choice and structure of which would have been admired in any composition whatever ; when we observe Him free from the usual symptoms of enthusiasm, heat, and vehemence in devotion, austerity in institutions, and a wild particularity in the description of a future state ; free also from the depravities of his age and country ; without superstition amongst the most superstitious of men, yet not decrying positive distinctions, or external observances, but soberly calling them to the principle of their establishment, and to their place in the scale of human duties ; without sophistry or trifling, amidst teachers remarkable for nothing so much as frivolous subtleties and quibbling expositions ; candid and liberal in his judgment of the rest of mankind, although belonging to a people who affected a separate claim to divine favour, and, in consequence of that opinion, prone to uncharitableness, partiality, and ostentation. When we find in his religion no scheme of hierarchy, or of ministering to the views of human government ;—in a word, when we compare Christianity as it came from its author, either with other religions, or with itself in other hands, the most reluctant understanding will be induced to acknowledge the probity, I think, also, the goodness of those to whom it owes its origin, and that some regard is due to the testimony of such men, when they declare their knowledge that the religion proceeded from God ; and when they appeal for the truth of their assertion to miracles which they wrought, and which they saw.

Perhaps the qualities which we observe in the religion, may be thought to prove something more. They would have been extraordinary had the religion come from any person ; from the person from whom it did come, they are exceedingly so. What was Jesus in external appearance ?

A Jewish peasant, the son of a carpenter, living with his father and mother in a remote province of Palestine, until the time that He produced himself in his public character. He had no master to instruct or prompt him ; He had read no books but the works of Moses and the prophets ; He had visited no polished cities ; He had received no lessons from Socrates or Plato ; nothing to form in Him a taste or judgment different from that of the rest of his countrymen, and of persons of the same rank of life with Himself. Supposing it to be true, which it is not, that all his points of morality might be picked out of Greek and Roman writings, they were writings which *He* had never seen. Supposing them to be no more than what some or other had taught in various times and places, He could not collect them together.

Who were his coadjutors in the undertaking—the persons into whose hands the religion came after his death ? A few fishermen upon the lake of Tiberias ; persons just as uneducated, and, for the purpose of framing rules of morality, as unpromising as Himself. Suppose the mission to be real, all this is accounted for ; the unsuitableness of the authors to the production, or the characters to the undertaking, no longer surprises us ; but without reality, it is very difficult to explain how such a system should proceed from such persons. Christ was not like any other carpenter ; the apostles were not like any other fishermen.

But the subject is not exhausted by these observations. That portion of it which is most reducible to points of argument has been stated, and, I trust, truly. There are, however, some topics of a more diffuse nature, which yet deserve to be proposed to the reader's attention.

The character of Christ is a part of the morality of the Gospel ; one strong observation upon which is, that neither, as represented by his followers, nor as attacked by his enemies, is He charged with any personal vice. This remark is as old as Origen : “ Though innumerable lies

and calumnies had been forged against the venerable Jesus, none had dared to charge him with an intemperance." Not a reflection upon his moral character, not an imputation or suspicion of any offence against purity and chastity, appears for five hundred years after his birth. This faultlessness is more peculiar than we are apt to imagine. Some stain pollutes the morals or morality of almost every other teacher, and of every other lawgiver. Zeno the stoic, and Diogenes the cynic, fell into the foulest impurities; of which also Socrates himself was more than suspected. Lycurgus tolerated theft as a part of education. Plato recommended a community of women. Aristotle maintained the general right of making war upon barbarians. The elder Cato was remarkable for the ill usage of his slaves; the younger gave up the person of his wife. One loose principle is found in almost all the Pagan moralists; is distinctly, however, perceived in the writings of Plato, Xenophon, Cicero, Seneca, Epictetus; and that is the allowing, and even the recommending to their disciples, a compliance with the religion and with the religious rites of every country into which they came. In speaking of the founders of new institutions we cannot forget Mahomet. His licentious transgressions of his own rules; his abuse of the character which he assumed, and of the power which he had acquired, for the purposes of personal and privileged indulgence; his avowed claim of a special permission from heaven of unlimited sensuality, is known to every reader, as it is confessed by every writer of the Moslem story.

Secondly, in the histories which are left us of Jesus Christ, although very short, and although dealing in narrative, and not in observation or panegyric, we perceive, beside the absence of every appearance of vice, traces of devotion, humility, benignity, mildness, patience, prudence. I speak of traces of these qualities, because the qualities themselves are to be collected from incidents; inasmuch as

the terms are never used of Christ in the gospels, nor is any formal character drawn in any part of the New Testament.

Thus we see the devoutness of his mind, in his frequent retirement to solitary prayer; in his habitual giving of thanks; in his reference of the beauties and operations of nature to the bounty of Providence; in his earnest addresses to his Father; more particularly that short but solemn one before the raising of Lazarus from the dead; and in the deep piety of his behaviour in the garden, on the last evening of his life; his humility in his constant reproof of contentions for superiority; the benignity and affectionateness of his temper in his kindness to children; in the tears which He shed over his fallen country, and upon the death of his friend; in his noticing of the widow's mite; in his parables of the good Samaritan, of the ungrateful servant, and of the Pharisee and publican; of which parables no one but a man of humanity could have been the author. The mildness and lenity of his character is discovered in his rebuke of the forward zeal of his disciples at the Samaritan village; in his expostulation with Pilate; in his prayer for his enemies at the moment of his suffering, which, though it has been since very properly and frequently imitated, was then, I apprehend, new. His prudence is discerned where prudence is most wanted, in his conduct on trying occasions and in answers to artful questions, of these the following are examples:—His withdrawing in various instances from the first symptoms of tumult, and with the express care, as appears from St. Matthew, of carrying on his ministry in quietness; his declining of every species of interference with the civil affairs of the country, which disposition is manifest in his behaviour in the case of the woman caught in adultery, and in his repulse of the application which was made to him, to interpose his decision about a disputed inheritance; his judicious, yet, as it should seem, unpre-

pared answers, will be confessed in the case of the Roman tribute; in the difficulty concerning the interfering relations of a future state, as proposed to him in the instance of a woman who had married seven brethren; and more especially in his reply to those who demanded from him an explanation of the authority by which he acted, which reply consisted in propounding a question to them, situated between the very difficulties into which they were insidiously endeavouring to draw him.

THE BEING OF GOD DEMONSTRATED FROM THE
ANATOMY OF THE HUMAN FRAME.

THE wisdom of the Creator in the construction of animal bodies is seen not so much in the separate, as in the collective action of the bones, muscles, and their vessels; in their mutual subserviency and dependence; and in their contributing together to one effect, and one use.

It has been said, that a man cannot lift his hand to his head without finding reason enough to convince him of the existence of a God; and it is well said: for he has only to reflect, familiar as this action is, and simple as it seems to be, how many things are requisite for the performing of it: first, a long, hard, strong cylinder, in order to give to the arm its firmness and tension; but which being rigid, and in its substance inflexible, can only turn upon joints.

Secondly, therefore joints for this purpose, one at the shoulder to raise the arm, another at the elbow to bend it: these joints, continually fed with a soft mucilage, to make the parts slip easily one upon another, and held together by strong braces, to keep them in their position; then, thirdly, strings and wires, that is, muscles and tendons, artificially inserted for the purpose of drawing the bones in the directions in which the joints allow them to move.

Hitherto we understand the mechanism pretty well, yet we have hitherto only a machine standing still—a dead organization, an apparatus. To put the system into a state of activity, to set it at work, a further provision is necessary, viz—a communication with the brain by means of nerves. We know the existence of this communication, because we can see the communicating threads, and can trace them to the brain ; its necessity we also know, because if the thread be cut, if the communication be intercepted, the muscle becomes paralytic ; but beyond this, we know little, the organization being too minute and subtle for our inspection.

To what has been enumerated, as officiating in the single act of a man's raising his hand to his head, must be added likewise, all that is necessary, and all that contributes to the growth, nourishment, and sustentation of the limb, the repair of its waste, the preservation of its health, and the circulation of the blood through every part of it.

All these share in the result—join in the effect : and how all these, or any of them, come together without a designing, disposing intelligence, it is utterly impossible to conceive.

RESURRECTION.

ABOVE every other article of revealed religion, does the anterior belief of a Deity bear with the strongest force upon that grand point which gives indeed interest and importance to all the rest, the resurrection of the human dead. The thing might appear hopeless, did we not see a power at work adequate to the effect, a power under the guidance of an intelligent will, and a power penetrating the inmost recesses of all substance. I am far from justifying the opinion of those who “thought it a thing incre-

dible that God should raise the dead :” but I admit, that it is first necessary to be persuaded that there is a God to do so. This being thoroughly settled in our minds, there seems to be nothing in this process (concealed as we confess it to be) which need to shock our belief. They who have taken up the opinion, that the acts of the human mind depend upon organization, that the mind itself, indeed, consists in organization, are supposed to find a greater difficulty than others do in admitting a transition by death to a new state of sentient existence, because the old organization is apparently dissolved. But I do not see that any impracticability need be apprehended even by these, or that the change, even upon their hypothesis, is far removed from the analogy of some other operations which we know with certainty that the Deity is carrying on. In the ordinary derivation of plants and animals from one another, a particle, in many cases minuter than all assignable, all conceivable dimensions—an aura, an effluvium, an infinitesimal—determines the organization of a future body : does no less than fix whether that which is about to be produced shall be a vegetable, a merely sentient, or a rational being : an oak, a frog, or a philosopher : makes all these differences, gives to the future body its qualities, and nature, and species. And this particle, from which springs, and by which is determined a whole future nature itself, proceeds from and owes its constitution to a prior body ; nevertheless, which is seen in plants most decisively, the incepted organization, though formed within, and through, and by a preceding organization, is not corrupted by its corruption, or destroyed by its dissolution ; but on the contrary, is sometimes extricated and developed by those very causes ; survives and comes into action when the purpose for which it was prepared requires its use. Now an economy which nature has adopted, when the purpose was to transfer an organization from one individual to another, may have something analogous to it, when the

purpose is to transmit an organization from one state of being to another state, and they who found thought in organization, may see something in this analogy applicable to their difficulties ; for whatever can transmit a similarity of organization will answer their purpose, because, according even to their own theory, it may be the vehicle of consciousness, and because consciousness carries identity and individuality along with it through all changes of form, or of visible qualities. In the most general case, that, as we have said of the derivation of plants and animals from one another, the latent organization is either itself similar to the old organization, or has the power of communicating to new matter the old organic form. But it is not restricted to this rule. There are other cases, especially in the progress of insect life, in which the dormant organization does not much resemble that which incloses it, and still less suits with the situation in which the inclosing body is placed, but suits with a different situation to which it is destined. In the larva of the libellula, which lives constantly and has still long to live under water, are described the wings of a fly which two years afterwards is to mount into the air. Is there nothing in this analogy ? It serves at least to show, that even in the observable course of nature organizations are formed one beneath another ; and, amongst a thousand other instances, it shows completely, that the Deity can mould and fashion the parts of material nature so as to fulfil any purpose whatever which He is pleased to appoint. They who refer the operations of mind to a substance totally and essentially different from matter, (as most certainly these operations, though affected by material causes, hold very little affinity to any properties of matter with which we are acquainted,) adopt, perhaps, a juster reasoning and a better philosophy, and by these the considerations above suggested are not wanted, at least in the same degree. But to such as find, which some persons do find, an insuperable difficulty in

shaking off an adherence to those analogies which the corporeal world is continually suggesting to their thoughts, to such, I say, every consideration will be a relief which manifests the extent of that intelligent power which is acting in nature, the fruitfulness of its resources, the variety, and aptness, and success of its means; most especially every consideration which tends to show that, in the translation of a conscious existence there is not, even in their own way of regarding it, any thing greatly beyond, or totally unlike what takes place in such parts (probably small parts) of the order of nature as are accessible to our observation.

Again; if there be those who think, that the contractedness and debility of the human faculties in our present state seem ill to accord with the high destinies which the expectations of religion point out to us; I would only ask them, whether any one who saw a child two hours after its birth, could suppose that it would ever come to understand fluxions? or who then shall say, what farther amplification of intellectual powers, what accession of knowledge, what advancement and improvement, the rational faculty, be its constitution what it will, may not admit of, when placed amidst new objects, and endowed with a sensorium adapted as it undoubtedly will be, and as our present senses are, to the perception of those substances and of those properties of things with which our concern may lie?

Upon the whole, in every thing which respects this awful, but, as we trust, glorious change, we have a wise and powerful Being, (the Author in nature of infinitely various expedients, for infinitely various ends) upon whom to rely for the choice and appointment of means adequate to the execution of any plan which his goodness or justice may have formed for the moral and accountable part of his terrestrial creation. That great office rests with *Him*; be it *ours* to hope, and to prepare, under a firm and settled

persuasion, that, living and dying, we are his ; that life is passed in his constant presence ; that death resigns us to his merciful disposal.

PRAYER.

LET it be well observed, that whensoever the Scripture speaks of prayer, whensoever it uses that term, or other terms equivalent to it, it means prayer, sincere and earnest, in the full and proper sense of these words ; prayer proceeding from the heart and soul. It does not mean any particular form of words whatever ; it does not mean any service of the lips, any utterance or pronunciation of prayer, merely as such ; but supplication, actually and truly, proceeding from the heart. Prayer may be solemn without being sincere : every decency, every propriety, every visible mark and token of prayer may be present, yet the heart not engaged. This is the requisite which must make prayer availing. This is the requisite indeed, which must make it that which the Scripture means, whenever it speaks of prayer. Every outward act of worship without this participation of the heart, fails ; not because men do not pray sincerely, but because, in Scripture sense, they do not pray at all.

HUMILITY.

I CALL humility not only a duty, but a principle. Humble-mindedness is a christian principle, if there be one ; above all, humble-mindedness towards God. The servants, to whom our Lord's expression refers, were to be humble-minded, we may presume, towards one another ; but towards their Lord, their only thought, their only sentiment was to be, " We are unprofitable servants." And who were

they that were to bear constantly this reflection about with them? Were they grievous or notorious sinners? Nay, the very contrary; they were persons "who had done all those things that were commanded them!" This is precisely the description which our Lord gives of the persons to whom his lesson was directed. Therefore, you see that an opinion of merit is discouraged even in those who had the best pretensions to entertain it, if any pretensions were good. But an opinion of merit, an overweening opinion of merit, is sure to grow up in the heart, whenever we accustom ourselves to think much of our virtues, and little of our vices. It is thus generated, fostered, and cherished. It cannot be otherwise: and if we would repress it; if we would correct ourselves in this respect; if we would bring ourselves into a capacity of complying with our Saviour's rule; we must alter our turn of thinking; we must reflect more upon our vices, and less upon our virtues. Depend upon it that we shall view our characters more truly; we shall view them much more safely, when we view them in their defects, and faults, and infirmities, than when we view them only, or principally, on the side of their good qualities, even when these good qualities are real.

The custom of viewing our virtues has a strong tendency to fill us with fallacious notions of our own state and condition: one, almost constant, deception is this, viz. that in whatever quality we have pretensions, or believe that we have pretensions to excel, that quality we place at the head of all other virtues. If we be charitable, then "charity covereth a multitude of sins." If we be strictly honest, then strict honesty is no less the bond which keeps society together; and, consequently, is that, without which other virtues would have no worth, or rather no existence. If we be temperate and chaste, then self-government, being the hardest of all duties, is the surest test of obedience. Now every one of these propositions is true; but the misfortune is that only one of them is

thought of at the time, and that the one which favours our own particular case and character. The comparison of different virtues, as to their price and value, may give occasion to many nice questions; and some rules might be laid down upon the subject; but I contend that the practice itself is useless, and not only useless, but delusive. Let us leave, as I have already said, our virtues to themselves; not engaging our minds in appreciating either their intrinsic or comparative value; being assured that they will be weighed in unerring scales: our business is with our sins.

Again; the habit of contemplating our spiritual acquisitions, our religious or moral excellences, has very usually, and, I think, almost unavoidably, an unfavourable effect upon our disposition towards other men. A man who is continually computing his riches, almost in spite of himself, grows proud of his wealth. A man who accustoms himself to read, and inquire, and think a great deal about his family, becomes vain of his extraction. A man who has his titles sounding in his ears, or his state much before his eyes, is lifted up by his rank—these are effects which every one observes, and no inconsiderable degree of the same effect springs from the habit of meditating upon our virtues. Now humblemindedness is a Christian duty, if there be one. It is more than a duty; it is a principle; and its influence is exceedingly great, not only upon our religious but our social character. They who are truly humbleminded have no quarrels, give no offence, contend with no one in wrath and bitterness; still more impossible is it for them to insult any man under any circumstances. But the way to be humbleminded is the way I am pointing out, viz. to think less of our virtues and more of our sins. In reading the parable of the Pharisee and the publican, if we could suppose them to be real characters, I should say of them, that the one had first come from ruminating upon his

virtues, the other from meditating upon his sins; and mark the difference, first, in their behaviour; next, in their acceptance with God. The Pharisee is all loftiness, and contemptuousness, and recital, and comparison; full of ideas of merit; views the poor publican, although withdrawn to a distance from him, with eyes of scorn. The publican, on the contrary, enters not into competition with the Pharisee, or any one. So far from looking round, he durst not so much as *lift up* his eyes, but casts himself, hardly indeed presumes to cast himself, not upon the justice, but wholly and solely upon the mercies of his Maker—"God be merciful to me a sinner." We know the judgment which our Lord himself pronounced upon the case: "I tell you this man went down to his house justified rather than the other." The more, therefore, we are like the publican, and the less we are like the Pharisee, the more we come up to the genuine temper of Christ's religion.

ADVANTAGE OF A DEVOTIONAL SPIRIT.

A SPIRIT of devotion is one of the greatest blessings, and by consequence, the want of it one of the greatest misfortunes, which a Christian can experience. When it is present it gives life to every act of worship which we perform; it makes every such act interesting and comfortable to ourselves. It is felt in our most retired moments; in our beds, our closets, our rides, our walks. It is stirred within us when we are assembled with our children and servants in family prayer. It leads us to church, to the congregation of our fellow Christians there collected; it accompanies us in our joint offices of religion in an especial manner, and it returns us to our homes holier, and happier, and better; and lastly, what greatly enhances its value to every anxious Christian, it

affords to himself a proof that his heart is right towards God : when it is followed up by a good life, by abstinence from sin, and endeavours after virtue, by avoiding evil and doing good, the proof and the satisfaction to be drawn from it are complete.

NEGLECT OF WARNINGS.

THERE is one great sin, which nevertheless may not be amongst the number of those of which we are sensible, and of which our own consciences accuse us ; and that sin is, the neglect of warnings.

It is our duty to consider this life throughout as a probationary state : nor do we ever think truly or act rightly but so long as we have this consideration fully before our eyes. Now one character of a state suited to qualify and prepare rational and improvable creatures for a better state, consists in the warnings which it is constantly giving them ; and the providence of God, by placing us in such a state, becomes the author of these warnings. It is his paternal care which admonishes us by and through the events of life and death that pass before us ; therefore it is a sin against Providence to neglect them. It is hardness and determination in sin ; or it is blindness, which in whole or in part is wilful ; or it is giddiness, and levity, and contemptuousness, in a subject which admits not of these dispositions towards it without great offence to God.

A serious man hardly ever passes a day, never a week, without meeting some warning to his conscience ; without something to call to his mind his situation with respect to his future life. And these warnings, as perhaps was proper, come the thicker upon us the farther we advance in life. The dropping into the grave of our acquaintance and friends and relations ; what can be better

calculated, not to prove, for we do not want the point to be proved, but to possess our hearts with a complete sense and perception of the extreme peril and hourly precariousness of our condition; viz. to teach this momentous lesson, that when we preach to you concerning heaven and hell, we are not preaching concerning things at a distance, things remote, things long before they come to pass; but concerning things near, soon to be decided, in a very short time to be fixed one way or the other. This is a truth of which we are warned by the course of mortality; yet, with this truth confessed, with these warnings before us, we venture upon sin. But it will be said, that the events which ought to warn us are out of our mind at the time. But this is not so. Were it that these things came to pass in the wide world only at large, it might be that we should seldom hear of them, or soon forget them. But the events take place when we ourselves are within our own doors; in our own families; amongst those with whom we have the most constant correspondence, the closest intimacy, the strictest connexion. It is impossible to say that such events can be out of our minds; nor is it the fact. The fact is, that knowing them we act in defiance of them; which is neglecting warnings in the worst sense possible. It aggravates the daringness; it aggravates the desperateness of sin; but it is so, nevertheless. Supposing these warnings to be sent by Providence, or that we believe, and have reason to believe, and ought to believe, that they are so sent, then the aggravation is very great.

We have warnings of every kind. Even youth itself is continually warned that there is no reliance to be placed either on strength, or constitution, or early age: that if they count upon life as a thing to be reckoned secure for a considerable number of years, they calculate most falsely; and if they act upon this calculation, by allowing themselves in the vices which are incidental to their years,

under a notion that it will be long before they shall have to answer for them, and before that time come they shall have abundant season for repenting and amending ; if they suffer such arguments to enter into their minds, and act upon them, then are they guilty of neglecting God in his warnings. They not only err in point of just reasoning, but they neglect the warnings which God has expressly set before them. Or if they take upon themselves to consider religion as a thing not made or calculated for them, as much too serious for their years ; as made and intended for the old and the dying ; at least, as what is unnecessary to be entered upon at present ; as what may be postponed to a more suitable time of life ; whenever they think thus they think very presumptuously ; they are justly chargeable with neglecting warnings. And what is the event ? These postponers never enter upon religion at all in earnest or effectually ; that is the end and event of the matter. To account for this shall we say, that they have so offended God, by neglecting his warnings, as to have forfeited his grace ? Certainly, we may say, that this is not the method of obtaining his grace ; that his grace is necessary to our conversion ; neglecting warnings is not the way to obtain God's grace ; and God's grace is necessary to conversion. The young, I repeat again, want not warnings. Is it new ? Is it unheard of ? Is it not, on the contrary, the intelligence of every week, the experience of every neighbourhood, that young men and young women are cut off. Man is, in every sense, a flower of the field. The flower is liable to be cut down in its bloom and perfection, as well as in its witherings and decays. So is man ; and one probable cause of this ordination of providence is, that no one of any age may be so confident of life, as to allow himself to transgress God's laws ; that all of every age may live in constant awe of their Maker.

THE GOODNESS OF GOD.

WHEN God created the human species, either He wished their happiness, or He wished their misery, or He was indifferent and unconcerned about both. If He wished our misery, He might have made sure of his purpose, by forming our senses to be so many sores and pains to us, as they are now instruments of gratification and enjoyment; or by placing us amidst objects so ill suited to our perceptions, as to have continually offended us, instead of ministering to our refreshment and delight. He might have made, for example, every thing we tasted bitter, every thing we saw loathsome, every thing we touched a sting, every smell a stench, every sound a discord. If He had been indifferent about our happiness or misery, we must impute to our good fortune, (as all design by this supposition is excluded,) both the capacity of our senses to receive pleasure, and the supply of external objects fitted to produce it. But either of these, (and still more both of them,) being too much to be attributed to accident, nothing remains but the first supposition, that God when He created the human species wished their happiness, and made for them the provision which He has made, with that view and for that purpose. Contrivance proves design, and the predominate tendency of the contrivance indicates the disposition of the designer. The world abounds with contrivances, and all the contrivances which we are acquainted with are directed to beneficial purposes; evil no doubt exists, but is never, that we can perceive, the object of contrivance. Teeth were contrived to eat, not to ache; their aching now and then is incidental to the contrivance, perhaps inseparable from it; or even if you will, let it be called a defect in the contrivance, but not the object of it. You would hardly say that the sickle was made to cut the reaper's fingers, though from the construction of the instrument, and the manner of using it, this mischief often happens. We never discover a

train of contrivance to bring about an evil purpose. Since then God has called forth his consummate wisdom to contrive and provide for our happiness, and the world appears to have been constituted with this design at first, so long as this constitution is upholden by Him, we must in reason suppose the same design to continue. We conclude therefore that God wills and wishes the happiness of his creatures.

BISHOP HORSLEY.

SAMUEL HORSLEY was born in 1733. He was educated at Trinity College, Cambridge, and after some minor preferments, was appointed Bishop of St. David's, in 1788; after which he was translated successively to the sees of Rochester and St. Asaph. He died in 1806.

Bishop Horsley was the author of *Critical Disquisitions on the 18th Chapter of Isaiah*, and of a translation of the Prophet Hosea, as well as of Sermons and controversial and scientific tracts, all of which display a cultivated and active mind, and a polished style.

ON ETERNAL PUNISHMENT.

THE question concerning the eternity of punishment (like some others, which, considered merely as questions of philosophy, may be of long and difficult discussion,) might be brought to a speedy determination, if men, before they heat themselves with argument, would impartially consider how far reason, in her natural strength, may be competent to the inquiry. I do not mean to affirm generally that reason is not a judge in matters of religion: but I do maintain, that there are certain points concerning the nature of the Deity and the schemes of providence, upon which reason is dumb, and revelation is explicit; and that, in these points, there is no certain guide but the plain obvious meaning of the written word. The question concerning the eternal duration of the torments of the wicked is one of these. From any natural knowledge that we have of

the Divine character, it never can be proved that the scheme of eternal punishment is unworthy of Him.

It cannot be proved that this scheme is inconsistent with his natural perfections—his essential goodness. What is essential goodness? It is usually defined by a single property—the love of virtue, for its own sake. The definition is good as far as it goes; but is it complete? Does it comprehend the whole of the thing intended? Perhaps not. Virtue and vice are opposites; love and hate are opposites. A consistent character must bear opposite affections toward opposite things. To love virtue therefore for its own sake, and to hate vice for its own sake, may equally belong to the character of essential goodness; and thus as virtue in itself, and for its own sake, must be the object of God's love and favour, so incurable vice in itself, and for its own sake, may be the object of his hatred and persecution.

Again, it cannot be proved that the scheme of eternal punishment is inconsistent with the relative perfections of the Deity—with those attributes which are displayed in his dealings with the rational part of his creation: for who is he that shall determine in what proportions the attributes of justice and mercy, forbearance and severity, ought to be mixed up in the character of the Supreme Governor of the universe?

Nor can it be proved that eternal punishment is inconsistent with the schemes of God's moral government: for who can define the extent of that government? Who among the sons of men hath an exact understanding of its ends, a knowledge of its various parts, and of their mutual relations and dependencies? Who is he that shall explain by what motives the righteous are to be preserved from falling from their future state of glory? That they shall not fall, we have the comfortable assurance of God's word. But by what means is their security to be effected? Unquestionably by the influence of moral motives upon

the minds of free and rational agents. But who is so enlightened as to foresee what particular motives may be the fittest for the purpose? Who can say these might be sufficient—these are superfluous? Is it impossible that, among other motives, the sufferings of the wicked may have a salutary effect? And shall God spare the wicked, if the preservation of the righteous should call for the perpetual example of their punishment? Since, then, no proof can be deduced from any natural knowledge that we have of God, that the scheme of eternal punishment is unworthy of the Divine character,—since there is no proof that it is inconsistent either with the natural perfections of God, or with his relative attributes—since it may be necessary to the ends of his government—upon what grounds do we proceed when we pretend to interpret, to qualify, and to extenuate the threatenings of Holy Writ?

FAITH AND PRACTICE.

THAT faith and practice are separable things, is a gross mistake, or rather a manifest contradiction. Practical holiness is the end, faith is the means; and to suppose faith and practice separable, is to suppose the end attainable without the use of the means. The direct contrary is the truth. The practice of religion will always thrive in proportion as its doctrines are generally understood and firmly received; and the practice will degenerate and decay in proportion as the doctrine is misunderstood and neglected. It is true, therefore, that it is the great duty of a preacher of the Gospel to press the practice of its precepts upon the consciences of men; but then it is equally true, that it is his duty to enforce this practice in a particular way, namely, by inculcating its doctrines. The motives which the revealed doctrines furnish are the only motives he has to do with, and the only motives by which religious duty can be effectually enforced.

THE DOCTRINE OF CHRIST ADAPTED TO THE MEANEST CAPACITY.

I AM aware that it has been very much the fashion to suppose a great want of capacity in the common people to be carried any great length in religious knowledge, more than in the abstruse sciences. That the world and all things in it had a Maker; that the Maker of the world made man, and gave him the life which he now enjoys; that He who first gave life can at any time restore it; that He can punish in a future life crimes which He suffers to be committed with impunity in this;—some of the first principles of religion, the vulgar, it is supposed, may be brought to comprehend. But the peculiar doctrines of revelation, the Trinity of Persons in the undivided Godhead; the Incarnation of the Second Person; the expiation of sin by the Redeemer's sufferings and death; the efficacy of his intercession; the mysterious commerce of the believer's soul with the Divine Spirit;—these things are supposed to be far above their reach. If this were really the case, the condition of man would indeed be miserable, and the proffer of mercy in the Gospel little better than a mockery of their woe; for the consequence would be, that the common people could never be carried beyond the first principles of what is called natural religion. Of the efficacy of natural religion, as a rule of action, the world has had the long experience of sixteen hundred years. For so much was the interval between the institution of the Mosaic church and the publication of the Gospel. During that interval, certainly, if not from an earlier period, natural religion was left to try its powers on the heathen world. The result of the experiment is, that its powers are of no avail. Among the vulgar, natural religion never produced any effect at all; among the learned, much of it is to be found in their writings, little in their lives. But if this natural religion,

a thing of no practical efficacy, as experiment has demonstrated, be the utmost of religion which the common people can receive, then is our preaching vain, Christ died in vain, and man must still perish. Blessed be God ! the case is far otherwise. As we have on the one side experimental proof of the insignificance of what is called natural religion ; so, on the other, in the success of the first preachers of Christianity we have an experimental proof of the sufficiency of revealed religion to those very ends in which natural religion failed. In their success we have experimental proof, that there is nothing in the great mystery of godliness which the vulgar, more than the learned, want capacity to apprehend, since, upon the first preaching of the Gospel, the illiterate, the scorn of pharisaical pride, who knew not the law, and were therefore deemed accursed, were the first to understand and to embrace the Christian doctrine.

JOHN NEWTON, M.A.

THIS pious man was for many years Rector of Olney, Bucks, and afterwards of St. Mary Woolnoth and St. Mary Woolchurch Haw, London. In early life he had been an infidel and a blasphemer; but, brought out of darkness into light, he became a zealous preacher of that Gospel he once despised, and a zealous defender of the truth by his writings. These, which are in wide circulation, possess great originality, and may truly be said to speak the language of the heart, and show a deep experience of its feelings. Much of his correspondence with his friends has been preserved, and it will always be read with profit and delight by the religious world. Newton was the intimate friend of the poet Cowper. He was born in 1725, and died in 1807.

ON SOME BLEMISHES IN CHRISTIAN CHARACTERS.

“Whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, think on these things.”—PHIL. iv. 8.

DEAR SIR,

THE precept which I have chosen for my motto is applicable to many particulars which are but seldom and occasionally mentioned from the pulpit. There are improprieties of conduct, which, though usually considered as foibles that hardly deserve a severe censure, are properly sinful; for though some of them may not seem to violate any express command of Scripture, yet they are contrary to that accuracy and circumspection which become our profession. A Christian by the tenor of his high calling is bound to avoid even the appearance of evil; and his deportment should not only be upright as to his leading principles, but amiable and engaging, and as free as possible from every inconsistency and blemish. The characters of some valuable persons are clouded, and the influence they might otherwise have, greatly counteracted by comparatively small faults; yet faults they certainly are; and it would be well if they could be made sensible of them, and of their ill effects, as that they might earnestly watch,

and strive and pray against them. I know not how to explain myself better than by attempting the outlines of a few portraits, to each of which I apprehend some strong resemblances may be found in real life. I do not wish to set my readers to work to find out such resemblances among their neighbours, but would advise them to examine carefully whether they cannot, in one or other of them, discover some traces of their own features. And though I speak of men only, counterparts to the several characters may doubtless be found here and there among the women: for the imperfections and evils of a fallen nature are equally entailed upon both sexes.

Austerus is a solid and exemplary Christian. He has a deep and experimental knowledge of divine things. Inflexibly and invariably true to his principles, he stems with a noble singularity the torrent of the world, and can neither be bribed nor intimidated from the path of duty. He is a rough diamond, of great intrinsic value, and would sparkle with a distinguished lustre if he were more polished. But though the Word of God is his daily study, and he prizes the precepts, as well as the promises, more than thousands of gold and silver, there is one precept he seems to have overlooked: I mean that of the Apostle, "Be courteous." Instead of that gentleness and condescension which will always be expected from a professed follower of the meek and lowly Jesus, there is a harshness in his manner which makes him more admired than beloved; and they who truly love him often feel more constraint than pleasure when in his company. His intimate friends are satisfied that he is no stranger to true humility of heart; but these are few. By others he is thought proud, dogmatic, and self-important; nor can this prejudice against him be easily removed until he can lay aside that cynical air which he has unhappily contracted.

Humanus is generous and benevolent. His feelings are lively, and his expression of them strong. No one

is more distant from sordid views, or less influenced by a selfish spirit. His heart burns with love to Jesus, and he is ready to receive with open arms all who love his Saviour. Yet, with an upright and friendly spirit, which entitles him to the love and esteem of all who know him, he has not everything we would wish in a friend. In some respects, though not in the most criminal sense, he "bridleth not his tongue." Should you without witness or writing entrust him with untold gold, you would run no risk of loss; but if you entrust him with a secret, you thereby put it in the possession of the public. Not that he would wilfully betray you, but it is his infirmity. He knows not how to keep a secret; it escapes from him before he is aware. So likewise as to matters of fact; in things which are of great importance, and where he is sufficiently informed, no man has a stricter regard to truth; but in the smaller concerns of life, whether it be from credulity, or from a strange and blamable inadvertency, he frequently grieves and surprises those who know his real character by saying the thing that is not. Thus they to whom he opens his very heart dare not make him returns of equal confidence; and they who, in some cases, would venture their lives upon his word, in others are afraid of telling a story after him. How lamentable are such blemishes in such a person!

Prudens, though not of a generous natural temper, is a partaker of that grace which opens the heart, and inspires a disposition to love and to good works. He bestows not his alms to be seen of men; but they who have the best opportunity of knowing what he does for the relief of others, and of comparing it with his ability, can acquit him in good measure of the charge which another part of his conduct exposes him to. For Prudens is a great economist; and though he would not willingly wrong or injure any person, yet the meanness to which he will submit, even to gain a penny in what he accounts

an honest way, is a great discredit to his profession. He is punctual in fulfilling his engagements; but exceedingly hard, strict, and suspicious, in making his bargains. And in his dress, and every article of his personal concerns, he is content to be so much below the station in which the providence of God has placed him, that to those who are not acquainted with his private benefactions to the poor, he appears under the hateful character of a miser, and to be governed by that love of money which the Scriptures declare to be the root of all evil, and inconsistent with the true love of God, and of the saints.

Volatilis is sufficiently exact in performing his promises in such instances as he thinks of real importance. If he bids a person depend upon his assistance he will not disappoint his expectations. Perhaps he is equally sincere in all his promises at the time of making them; but for want of method in the management of his affairs he is always in a hurry, always too late, and has always some engagement upon his hands with which it is impossible he can comply. Yet he goes on in this way exposing himself and others to continual disappointments. He accepts without a thought proposals which are incompatible with each other, and will perhaps undertake to be at two or three different and distant places at the same hour. This has been so long his practice that nobody now expects him till they see him. In other respects he is a good sort of man; but this want of punctuality, which runs through his whole deportment, puts every thing out of course in which he is concerned, abroad and at home. Volatilis excuses himself as well as he can, and chiefly by alleging that the things in which he fails are of no great consequence. But he would do well to remember that truth is a sacred thing, and ought not to be violated in the smallest matters, without an unforeseen and unavoidable prevention. Such a trifling turn of spirit lessens the weight of a person's character, though he makes

no pretensions to religion, and is still a greater blemish in a professor.

Cessator is not chargeable with being busied in the cares and business of the present life, to the neglect of the one thing needful; but he greatly neglects the duties of his station. Had he been sent into the world only to read, pray, hear sermons, and join in religious conversation, he might pass for an eminent Christian. But though it is to be hoped that his abounding in these exercises springs from a heart-attachment to Divine things, his conduct evidences that his judgment is weak, and his views of his Christian calling are very narrow and defective. He does not consider that waiting upon God in the public and private ordinances is designed not to excuse us from a discharge of the duties of civil life, but to instruct, strengthen, and qualify us for their performance. His affairs are in disorder, and his family and connexions are likely to suffer by his indolence. He thanks God that he is not worldly-minded; but he is an idle and unfaithful member of society, and causes the way of truth to be evil spoken of. Of such the Apostle has determined, that "if any man will not work, neither should he eat."

Curiosus is upright and unblamable in his general deportment, and no stranger to the experiences of a Christian. His conversation upon these subjects is often satisfactory and edifying. He would be a much more agreeable companion were it not for an impertinent desire of knowing every body's business, and the grounds of every hint that is occasionally dropped in discourse where he is present. This puts him upon asking a multiplicity of needless and improper questions, and obliges those who know him to be continually upon their guard, and to treat him with reserve. He catechises even strangers, and is unwilling to part with them till he is punctually informed of all their connexions, employments, and designs. For this idle curiosity he is marked and avoided as a busy-body;

and they who have the best opinion of him cannot but wonder that a man, who appears to have so many better things to employ his thoughts, should find leisure to amuse himself with what does not at all concern him. Were it not for the rules of civility he would be affronted every day; and if he would attend to the cold and evasive answers he receives to his inquiries, or even to the looks with which they are accompanied, he might learn that though he means no harm he appears to a great disadvantage, and that this prying disposition is very displeasing.

Querulus wastes much of his precious time in declaiming against the management of public affairs; though he has neither access to the springs which move the wheels of government, nor influence either to accelerate or retard their motions. Our national concerns are no more affected by the remonstrances of Querulus than the heavenly bodies are by the disputes of astronomers. While the newspapers are the chief sources of his intelligence, and his situation precludes him from being a competent judge, either of matters of fact or matters of right, why should Querulus trouble himself with politics? This would be a weakness, if we consider him only as a member of society; but if we consider him as a Christian it is worse than weakness—it is a sinful conformity to the men of the world, who look no farther than to second causes, and forget that the Lord reigns. If a Christian be placed in a public sphere of action he should undoubtedly be faithful to his calling, and endeavour by all lawful methods to transmit our privileges to posterity; but it would be better for Querulus to let the dead bury their dead. There are people enough to make a noise about political matters, who know not how to employ their time to better purpose. Our Lord's kingdom is not of this world; and most of his people may do their country much more essential service by pleading for it in prayer, than by finding fault with things which they have no power to alter. If

Querulus had opportunity of spending a few months under some of the governments upon the Continent, I may indeed say any of them, he would probably bring home a more grateful sense of the Lord's goodness to him in appointing his lot in Britain. As it is, his zeal is not only unprofitable to others, but hurtful to himself. It embitters his spirit, it diverts his thoughts from things of greater importance, and prevents him from feeling the value of those blessings, civil and religious, which he actually possesses; and could he as he wishes prevail on many to act in the same spirit, the governing powers might be irritated to take every opportunity of abridging that religious liberty which we are favoured with above all the nations upon the earth. Let me remind Querulus that the hour is approaching, when many things which at present too much engross his thoughts and inflame his passions, will appear as foreign to him as what is now transacting among the Tartars or Chinese. Other improprieties of conduct, which lessen the influence, and spot the profession of some who wish well to the cause of Christ, might be enumerated; but these may suffice for a specimen.

I am, &c.

ON GOSPEL ILLUMINATION.

DEAR SIR,

THE day is now breaking: how beautiful its appearances! how welcome the expectation of the approaching sun! It is this thought makes the dawn agreeable, that it is the approach of a better light; otherwise, if we expect no more day than it is this minute, we should rather complain of darkness than rejoice in the early beauties of the morning. Thus the life of grace is the dawn of immortality; beautiful beyond expression if compared with the night and thick darkness which formerly

covered us, yet faint, indistinct, and unsatisfying, in comparison of the glory which shall be revealed.

It is, however, a sure earnest. So surely as we now see the light of the Sun of Righteousness, so surely shall we see the Sun himself, Jesus the Lord, in all his glory and lustre. In the mean time, we have reason to be thankful for a measure of light to walk and work by, and sufficient to shew us the pits and snares by which we might be endangered: and we have a promise that our present light shall grow stronger and stronger, if we are diligent in the use of the appointed means, till the messenger of Jesus shall lead us within the vail; and then farewell shades and obscurity for ever! I can now almost see to write, and shall soon put the extingisher on my candle. I shall do this without the least reluctance when I enjoy a better light, but I should have been unwilling half an hour ago. Just thus, methinks, when the light of the glorious Gospel shines into the heart, all our former feeble lights, our apprehensions and our contrivances, become at once unnecessary and unnoticed. How cheerfully did the Apostle put out the candle of his own righteousness, attainments, and diligence, when the true Sun arose upon him. (Phil. iii. 7, 8.) Your last letter is as a comment upon his determination. Adored be the grace that has given us to be likeminded, even to "account all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord."

While I am writing, a new lustre, which gilds the house on the hill opposite to my study-window, informs me that the sun is now rising: he is rising to others, but not yet to me; my situation is lower, so that they enjoy a few gleams of sunshine before me; yet this momentary difference is inconsiderable, when compared to the duration of a whole day. Thus some are called by grace earlier in life, and some later; but the seeming difference will be lost and vanish when the great day of eternity comes on. There

is a time, the Lord's appointed time, when He will arise and shine upon many a soul that now sits "in darkness, and in the region of the shadow of death."

I have been thinking on the Lord's conference with Nicodemus; it is a copious subject, and affords room in one part or other for the whole round of doctrinal or experimental topics. Nicodemus is an encouraging example to those who are seeking the Lord's salvation. He had received some favourable impressions of Jesus, but he was very ignorant, and much under the fear of man. He durst only come by night, and at first, though he heard, he understood not; but He, who opens the eyes of the blind, brought him surely, though gently, forward. The next time we hear of him he durst put in a word in behalf of Christ, even in the midst of his enemies (John vii.); and at last he had the courage openly and publicly to assist in preparing the body of his Master for its funeral, at a time when our Lord's more avowed followers had all forsaken Him and fled. So true is that, "Then shall ye know if ye follow on to know the Lord." And again, "He giveth power to the faint, and to them that have no might He increaseth strength."

Hope, then, my soul, against hope; though thy graces are faint and languid, He who planted them will water his own work, and not suffer them wholly to die. He can make a little one as a thousand; at his presence mountains sink into plains, streams gush out of the flinty rock, and the wilderness blossoms as the rose. He can pull down what sin builds up, and build up what sin pulls down. That which was impossible to us is easy to Him, and He has bid us expect seasons of refreshment from his presence. Even so come, Lord Jesus.

I am, &c.

THE TITLE OF REDEEMER.

THERE is no name of Messiah more significant, comprehensive, or endearing, than the name of Redeemer. The name of Saviour expresses what He does for sinners. He saves them from guilt and wrath, from sin, from the present evil world, from the powers of darkness, and all their enemies; He saves them with an everlasting salvation. But the word Redeemer intimates likewise the manner in which He saves them. For it is not merely by the word of his power, as He saved his disciples when in jeopardy upon the lake, by saying to the winds and the seas, "Peace, be still! and there was a great calm;" but by price, by paying a ransom for them, and pouring out the blood of his heart as an atonement for their sins. The Hebrew word for Redeemer, *Goel*, primarily signifies a near kinsman, or, the next of kin, he with whom the right of redemption lay (Numbers xxxv. 19, 21; Ruth iv. 1—3), and who by virtue of his nearness of relation was the legal avenger of blood. Thus Messiah took upon Him our nature, and by assuming our flesh and blood, became nearly related to us that He might redeem our forfeited inheritance, restore us to liberty, and avenge our cause against Satan, the enemy and murderer of our souls. But thus He made himself also responsible for us, to pay our debts, and answer the demands of the justice and law of God on our behalf. He fulfilled his engagement. He suffered and died on this account. But our Redeemer, who was once dead is now alive, and liveth for evermore, and has the keys of death and of hades. (Rev. 1—8). This is He of whom Job saith, I know that He liveth (was then living), though He was not to stand upon the earth till the latter day. He is the living one, having life in Himself; the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. (Heb. xiii. 8). Such was his own language to the Jews: "Before Abraham was, I am." (John viii. 58). Therefore the

Redeemer is mighty, and his redemption is sure. He is able to save to the uttermost. His power is unlimited, and his official authority, as Mediator, is founded in a covenant ratified by his own blood, and by the oath of the unchangeable God. (Ps. cx. 4).

SCRIPTURE COMPARISONS.

COMPARISONS in the Scripture are frequently to be understood with great limitation ; perhaps out of many circumstances one only is justly applicable to the case. Thus when our Lord says, " Behold, I come as a thief," common sense will fix the resemblance to a single point, that He will come suddenly and unexpected. So when wandering sinners are compared to wandering sheep, we have a striking image of the danger of their state, and of their inability to recover themselves. Sheep wandering without a shepherd are exposed a defenceless and easy prey to wild beasts and enemies, and liable to perish for want of pasture ; for they are not able to provide for themselves, or find their way back to the place from whence they strayed. Whatever they suffer, they continue to wander, and if not sought out will be lost. Thus far the allusion holds. But sheep in such a situation are not the subjects of blame. They would be highly blamable if we could suppose them rational creatures ; if they had been under the eye of a careful and provident shepherd, had been capable of knowing him, had wilfully and obstinately renounced his protection and guidance, and voluntarily chosen to plunge themselves into danger, rather than to remain with him any longer. Thus it is with man. His wandering is rebellious : God made him upright, but he has sought out to himself many inventions. (Eccl. vii. 29). God has appointed for mankind a safe and pleasant path, by walking in which they shall find rest to their souls ; but they say, We will not walk therein. (Jer. vi. 16). They

were capable of knowing the consequences of going astray, were repeatedly warned of them, were fenced in by wise and good laws, which they presumptuously broke through. And when they had wandered from Him, they were again and again invited to return to Him, but they refused. They mocked his messages and his messengers, and preferred the misery they had brought upon themselves to the happiness of being under his direction and care. Surely He emphatically deserves the name of the Good Shepherd, who freely laid down his life to restore sheep of this character.

BISHOP HURD.

RICHARD HURD was born in 1720. He obtained a fellowship in Emmanuel College, Cambridge, in 1742; in 1775 was promoted to the bishopric of Lichfield and Coventry, in 1781 was translated to the see of Worcester, and died in 1808. Besides several critical and literary works, he published an *Introduction to the Study of the Prophecies concerning the Christian Church*, a performance of great merit.

THE EXTENT, OBJECT, AND END OF THE PROPHEPIC SCHEME.

IF we look into the writings of the Old and New Testament, we find, first, that prophecy is of a prodigious extent; that it commenced from the lapse of man, and reaches to the consummation of all things; that for many ages it was delivered darkly, to few persons, and with large intervals from the date of one prophecy to that of another; but at length became more clear, more frequent, and was uniformly carried on in the line of one people, separated from the rest of the world: among other reasons assigned for this, principally to be the repository of the Divine oracles; that, with some intermission, the spirit of prophecy subsisted among that people to the coming of Christ; that He himself, and his Apostles, exercised this power in the most conspicuous

manner, and left behind them many predictions, recorded in the books of the New Testament, which profess to respect very distant events, and even run out to the end of time, or, in St. John's expression, to that period when the mystery of God shall be perfected.

Further ; besides the extent of this prophetic scheme, the dignity of the person whom it concerns deserves our consideration. He is described in terms which excite the most august and magnificent ideas. He is spoken of indeed sometimes as being " the seed of the woman," and as " the son of man," yet so as being at the same time of more than mortal extraction. He is even represented to us as being superior to men and angels ; as far above all principality and power ; above all that is accounted great, whether in heaven or in earth ; as the Word and Wisdom of God ; as the Eternal Son of the Father ; as " the heir of all things, by whom He made the worlds ;" as " the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person."

We have no words to denote greater ideas than these ; the mind of man cannot elevate itself to nobler conceptions. Of such transcendent worth and excellence is that Jesus said to be to whom all the prophets bear witness.

Lastly ; the declared purpose for which the Messiah, pre-figured by so long a train of prophecy, came into the world, corresponds to all the rest of the representation. It was not to deliver an oppressed nation from civil tyranny, or to erect a great civil empire, that is, to achieve one of those acts which history accounts most heroic. No ; it was not a mighty state, a victor people, it was not the destruction of the Roman empire, that was worthy to enter into the contemplation of this Divine person. It was another and far sublimer purpose which He came to accomplish ; a purpose in comparison of which all our policies are poor and little, and all the performances of man are nothing. It was to deliver a world from ruin ; to abolish sin and death ; to purify and immortalize human nature ; and thus, in the most exalted

sense of the words, to be the Saviour of all men, and the blessing of all nations.

There is no exaggeration in this account. I deliver the undoubted sense, if not always the very words, of Scripture. Consider then to what this representation amounts. Let us unite the several parts of it, and bring them to a point. A spirit of prophecy, pervading all time, characterizing one person of the highest dignity, and proclaiming the accomplishment of one purpose, the most beneficent, the most divine, that imagination itself can project. Such is the scriptural delineation, whether we will receive it or no, of that economy which we call prophetic.

And now then (if we must be reasoning from our ideas of fit and right to the rectitude of the Divine conduct,) let me ask, in one word, whether, on the supposition that it should ever please the moral Governor of the world to reveal Himself by prophecy at all, we can conceive him to do it, in a "manner," or for "ends," more worthy of Him. Does not the "extent" of the scheme correspond to our best ideas of that infinite Being, to whom all duration is but a point, and to whose view all time is equally present? Is not the "object" of this scheme—"The Lamb of God that was slain from the foundation of the world," worthy, in our conceptions, of all the honour that can be reflected upon Him by so vast and splendid an economy? Is not the "end" of this scheme such as we should think most fit for such a scheme of prophecy to predict, and for so divine a person to accomplish?

You see every thing here is of a piece; all the parts of this dispensation are astonishingly great, and perfectly harmonize with each other.

DR. GEORGE GREGORY.

DR. GREGORY was born in Ireland in the year 1754, and died in 1808. Besides many works in scientific and general literature, he wrote a *History of the Christian Church*, and a number of Sermons, which have a very high degree of merit.

ON RELIGIOUS PRINCIPLES AND BEHAVIOUR.

RELIGION is rather a matter of sentiment than reasoning. The important and interesting articles of faith are sufficiently plain. Fix your attention on these, and do not meddle with controversy. If you get into that, you plunge into a chaos from which you will never be able to extricate yourselves. It spoils the temper, and, I suspect, has no good effect on the heart.

Avoid all books and all conversation that tend to shake your faith on those great points of religion which should serve to regulate your conduct, and on which your hopes of future and eternal happiness depend.

Never indulge yourselves in ridicule on religious subjects, nor give countenance to it in others, by seeming diverted with what they say. This, to people of good breeding, will be a sufficient check.

I wish you to go no farther than the Scriptures for your religious opinions. Embrace those you find clearly revealed. Never perplex yourselves about such as you do not understand, but treat them with silent and becoming reverence.

I would advise you to read only such religious books as are addressed to the heart, such as inspire pious and devout affections, such as are proper to direct you in your conduct; and not such as tend to entangle you in the endless maze of opinions and systems.

Be punctual in the stated performance of your private devotions, morning and evening. If you have any sensibility or imagination, this will establish such an intercourse

between you and the Supreme Being as will be of infinite consequence to you in life. It will communicate an habitual cheerfulness to your temper, give a firmness and steadiness to your virtue, and enable you to go through all the vicissitudes of human life with propriety and dignity.

I wish you to be regular in your attendance on public worship, and in receiving the communion. Allow nothing to interrupt your public or private devotions, except the performance of some active duty in life, to which they should always give place. In your behaviour at public worship observe an exemplary attention and gravity.

That extreme strictness which I recommend to you in these duties will be considered by many of your acquaintance as a superstitious attachment to forms; but in the advice I give you on this and other subjects, I have an eye to the spirit and manners of the age. There is a levity and dissipation in the present manners, a coldness and listlessness in whatever relates to religion, which cannot fail to infect you, unless you purposely cultivate in your minds a contrary bias, and make the devotional one habitual.

COMFORTS OF RELIGION.

THERE are many who have passed the age of youth and beauty, who have resigned the pleasures of that smiling season, who begin to decline into the vale of years, impaired in their health, depressed in their fortunes, stripped of their friends, their children, and perhaps still more tender connections. What resource can this world afford them? It presents a dark and dreary waste, through which there does not issue a single ray of comfort. Every delusive prospect of ambition is now at hand; every experience of mankind, an experience very different from what the open and generous soul of youth had fondly dreamt of, has rendered the heart almost inaccessible to new friendships. The

principal sources of activity are taken away, when those for whom we labour are cut off from us ; those who animated, and those who sweetened, all the toils of life. Where then can the soul find refuge but in the bosom of religion ? There she is admitted to those prospects of providence and futurity which alone can warm and fill the heart. I speak here of such as retain the feelings of humanity, whom misfortunes have softened, and perhaps rendered more delicately sensible ; not of such as possess that stupid insensibility which some are pleased to dignify with the name of philosophy.

It might be expected that those philosophers who stand in no need themselves of the assistance of religion to support their virtue, and who never feel the want of its consolations, would yet have the humanity to consider the very different situation of the rest of mankind, and not endeavour to deprive them of what habit, at least, if they will not allow it to be nature, has made necessary to their morals, and to their happiness. It might be expected, that humanity would prevent them from breaking into the last retreat of the unfortunate, who can no longer be objects of their envy or resentment, and tearing them from their only remaining comfort. The attempt to ridicule religion may be agreeable to some, by relieving them from restraint upon their pleasures, and may render others very miserable, by making them doubt those truths in which they were most deeply interested ; but it can convey real good and happiness to no one individual.

BISHOP PORTEUS.

THIS learned and amiable prelate was born in 1731. At an earlier age than usual he was admitted sizar at Christ's College, Cambridge; he took his Bachelor's degree in 1752, and when twenty-six years of age he entered holy orders. In 1762 he was appointed by Archbishop Secker one of his domestic chaplains, and went to reside at Lambeth. In 1765 he was presented by the Archbishop to the two small livings of Rucking and Wittersham, which he soon resigned for that of Hunton, in addition to a prebend at Peterborough. In 1767 he obtained the rectory of Lambeth, and soon after this he took the degree of D.D. His next preferment was to the see of Chester; and, upon the death of Dr. Lowth, he was translated from that diocese to that of London. He died in 1809.

The one great aim of Bishop Porteus through life was to advance religion and morality. This he did, not only by his ministerial labours, but by his writings, which, though not numerous, are of great value. They display the mind of a true Christian who felt and wished others to feel what he wrote.

VARIOUS REASONINGS IN FAVOUR OF CHRISTIANITY.

GOD only knows and God only can tell whether He will forgive, and upon what terms He will forgive, the offences done against Him; what mode of worship He requires; what help He will afford us; and what condition He will place us in hereafter. All this God actually has told us in the Gospel. It was to tell us this He sent his Son into the world, whose mission was confirmed by the highest authority, by signs from heaven, and miracles on earth; whose life and doctrine are delivered down to us by the most unexceptionable witnesses, who sealed their testimony with their blood; who were too curious and incredulous to be themselves imposed upon; too honest and sincere, too plain and artless, to impose upon others.

What, then, can be the reason that men still refuse to see, and persist in "loving darkness rather than light?" They will tell you, perhaps, that it is because the Gospel is full of incredible mysteries; but our Saviour

tells you that it is "because their deeds are evil." The mysteries and difficulties of the Gospel can be no real objection to any man that considers what mysteries occur, and what insuperable objections may be started, in almost every branch of human knowledge; and how often we are obliged, in our most important concerns, to decide and to act upon evidence incumbered with far greater difficulties than any that are to be found in Scripture. If we can admit no religion that is not free from mystery, we must, I doubt, be content without any religion. Even the religion of nature itself, the whole constitution both of the natural and the moral world, is full of mystery; and the greatest mystery of all would be, if, with so many irresistible marks of truth, Christianity should at last prove false. It is not, then, because the Gospel has too little light for these men that they reject it; but because it has too much: "For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reprov'd." The light of the Gospel is too prying and inquisitive for such an one. It reveals certain things which he could wish to conceal from all the world, and, if possible, from himself. Nor is this all; it not only reveals but reproveth them. It strikes him with an evidence he cannot bear; an evidence not only of its own truth, but of his unworthy conduct. The Gospel does indeed offend him, but it is not his understanding, but his conscience, that is shocked; he could easily credit what it requires him to believe; but he cannot, or rather he will not, practise what it commands him to do.

It is plain that such a man cannot possibly admit a revelation that condemns him; and it is as plain that the man of virtue cannot spurn the hand that is graciously stretched out to reward him. If he is a truly virtuous man, that is, one who sincerely labours to know his duty, and sincerely intends to perform it, he cannot but wish for more light to guide him in the investigation, more

assistance to support him in the discharge of it, more happiness to crown his perseverance in it, than bare reason alone can afford him. This is what all the best and wisest heathens most ardently desired, what nature has been continually looking out for with the utmost earnestness of expectation. When with a mind thus disposed he sits down to examine the Gospel, suggest to me the least shadow of a reason why he should regret it. He finds in it a religion, pure, holy, and benevolent as the God that gave it. He finds not only its moral precepts but even its sublimest mysteries calculated to promote internal sanctity, vital piety, universal philanthropy. He finds it throughout so great and noble, so congenial to the finest feelings and most generous sentiments of his soul; that he cannot but wish it may be true, and never yet, I believe, did any good man wish it to be true, but he actually found it so. He sees in it, every expectation of nature answered, every infirmity supported, every want supplied, every terror dissipated, every hope confirmed; nay, he sees that God "has done exceeding abundantly above all that he could either ask or think," that he has given him what reason could hardly have an idea of, eternal happiness in a life to come.

It is not a matter of indifference whether you embrace Christianity or not. Though reason could answer all the purposes of revelation, which is far, very far from being the case, yet you are not at liberty to make it your sole guide, if there be such a thing as a true revelation. We are the subjects of the Almighty; and whether we will acknowledge it or not, we live, and cannot but live, under his government. His will is the law of his kingdom. If He has made no express declaration of his will, we must collect it as well as we can from what we know of his nature and our own. But if He has expressly declared his will, that is the law we are to be governed by. We may indeed refuse to be governed by it; but it is at our peril if we do, for if

it proves to be a true declaration of his will, to reject it is rebellion.

But to reject or receive it you may allege is not a thing in your own power. Belief depends not on your will, but your understanding. And will the righteous Judge of all the earth condemn you for want of understanding? No; but He may and will condemn you for the wrong conduct of your understanding. It is not indeed in your power to believe whatever you please, whether credible or incredible; but it is in your power to consider thoroughly whether a supposed incredibility be real or only apparent. It is in your power to examine it with an earnest desire to find out the truth, and a firm resolution to embrace it wherever you do find it; or, on the contrary, to bring with you a heart full of incorrigible depravity, or invincible prepossessions. Have you then truly and honestly done every thing that is confessedly in your power towards forming a right judgment of Revelation? Have you ever laid before yourself, in one view, the whole collective evidence of Christianity? The consistence, harmony, and connexion of all its various parts; the long chain of prophecies undeniably completed in it; the astonishing and well-attested miracles that attended it; the perfect sanctity of its Author; the purity of its precepts; the sublimity of its doctrines; the amazing rapidity of its progress; the illustrious company of confessors, saints, and martyrs, who died to confirm its truth; together with an infinite number of collateral proofs and subordinate circumstances, all concurring to form such a body of evidence as no other truth in the world can shew; such as must necessarily beat down, by its own weight and magnitude, all trivial objections to particular parts? Surely these things are not trifles; surely they at least demand seriousness and attention. Have you then done the Gospel this common piece of justice? Have you ever sat down to consider it with impartiality and candour; without any favourite vice or early prejudice, without any fondness for

applause, or novelty, or refinement, to mislead you? Have you examined it with the same care and diligence that you would examine a title to an estate? Have you inquired for proper books? Have you read the defences of Revelation, as well as the attacks upon it? Have you in difficult points applied for the opinion of wise and learned friends; just as you would consult the ablest lawyers when your property was concerned, or the most skilful physician when your life was at stake? If you can truly say that you have done all these things; if you have faithfully bestowed on all these inquiries all the leisure and abilities you are master of, and called in every help within your reach, there is little danger of any material doubts remaining upon your mind.

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St. John's affection for his departed friend did not terminate with his life. It was continued after his crucifixion, to his memory, his character, and his religion. After a long life, spent in teaching and suffering for that religion, he concluded it with a work of infinite utility,—the revisal of the three gospels already written, and the addition of his own to supply what they had omitted. With this view, principally, he gives us several of our Saviour's discourses with his disciples, which are nowhere else to be met with; and it is very observable that these, as well as the many other occurrences of his life, which he introduces as supplemental to the other Evangelists, are such as set his beloved Master in the most amiable and graceful point of view, such as a favourite disciple would be most likely to select, and most disposed to enlarge upon. Of this kind, for instance, are our Saviour's discourses with the woman of Samaria; the cure of the infirm man at the pool of Bethesda; the acquittal of the woman taken in adultery; the description of the good shepherd and his sheep; the affecting history of Lazarus; the condescending and expressive act of washing his disciples' feet; his inimitably

tender and consolatory discourse to them just before his suffering ; his most admirable prayer on the same occasion ; and his pathetic recommendation of his sheep to St. Peter, after his resurrection. These passages are to be found only in St. John's gospel ; and whoever reads them with attention will discover in them plain indications, not only of a heaven-directed hand, but of a feeling and grateful heart, smitten with the love of a departed friend ; penetrated with a sense of his distinguished kindness ; perfectly well informed, and thoroughly interested, in every tender scene that it describes ; soothing itself with the recollection of little domestic incidents and familiar conversations ; and tracing out not only the larger and more obvious features of the favourite character, but even those finer and more delicate strokes in it, which would have eluded a less observing eye, or less faithful memory, than those of a beloved companion and friend.

Our Divine Lawgiver showed his wisdom equally in what He enjoined and what He left unnoticed. He knew exactly, what no pagan philosopher ever knew, where to be silent, and where to speak.

That which principally attracts our notice in St. John's writings, and in his conduct, is, a simplicity and singleness of heart, a fervent piety, and unbounded benevolence, an unaffected modesty, humility, meekness, and gentleness of disposition. These are evidently the great characteristic virtues that took the lead in his soul, and break forth in every page of his gospel and his epistles. To know what friendship really is, we must look for it in that sacred repository of every thing great and excellent, the Gospel of Christ.

Our Saviour has assured us that He will consider every real Christian as united to Him by closer ties than even those of friendship. This assurance is given us in one of those noble strains of eloquence which are so common in the sacred writings. Our Lord, being told that his

mother and his brethren stood without, desiring to speak with Him, he gives a turn to this little incident, perfectly new, and inexpressibly tender and affectionate: "Who is my mother, and who are my brethren? And he stretched forth his hands towards his disciples and said, Behold my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother."

THE MEEK, INHERITORS OF THE EARTH.

MATTHEW V. 5.

THAT the meek, of all others, should be destined to inherit the earth, is what one should not naturally have expected. If we may judge from what passes in the world, it is those of a quite opposite character, the bold, the forward, the active, the enterprising, the rapacious, the ambitious, that are best calculated to secure to themselves that inheritance; and, undoubtedly, if by inheriting the earth is meant acquiring the earth—the grandeur, the power, the prosperity of the earth—these are the persons who generally seize on a large proportion of those good things, and leave the meek and gentle far behind them in this unequal contest for such advantages. But it was far other things than these our Lord had in view. By inheriting the earth He meant inheriting those things which are, without question, the greatest blessings upon earth, calmness and composure of spirit, tranquillity, cheerfulness, peace, and comfort of mind. Now these, I apprehend, are the peculiar portion and recompense of the meek. Unassuming, gentle, and humble in their deportment, they give no offence, they create no enemies, they provoke no hostilities; and thus escape all that large proportion of human misery which arises from dissensions and disputes. If differences do unexpectedly start up, by patience, mildness, and prudence, they disarm

their adversaries, they soften resentment, they court reconciliation, and seldom fail of restoring harmony and peace. Having a very humble opinion of themselves, they see others succeed without uneasiness, without envy ; having no ambition, no spirit of competition, they feel no pain from disappointment, no mortification from defeat. By bending under the storms that assail them, they greatly mitigate their violence, and see them pass over their heads almost without feeling their force. Content and satisfied with their lot, they pass quietly and silently through the crowds that surround them ; and encounter much fewer difficulties and calamities in their progress through life than more active and enterprising men. This even tenour of life may indeed be called, by men of the world, flat, dull, and insipid. But the meek are excluded from no rational pleasure, no legitimate delight ; and as they are more exempt from anxiety and pain than other men, their sum total of happiness is greater ; and they may, in the best sense of the word, be fairly said to inherit the earth.

BENEVOLENCE.

LET no one indulge the vain imagination that a just, and generous, and compassionate conduct towards his fellow-creatures, constitutes the whole of his duty, and will compensate for the breach of every other Christian virtue.

This is a most fatal delusion ; and yet, in the present times, a very common one. Benevolence is the favourite, the fashionable virtue of the age ; it is universally cried up by infidels and libertines as the first and only duty of man : and even many who pretend to the name of Christianity are too apt to rest upon it as the most essential part of their religion, and the chief basis of their title to the rewards of the Gospel. But that Gospel prescribes to us several other duties which require from us the same attention as those

we owe to our neighbour; and if we fail in any of them, we can have no hope of sharing in the benefits procured for us by the sacrifice of our Redeemer. What then God and nature, as well as Christ and his apostles, have joined together, let no man dare to put asunder. Let no one flatter himself with obtaining the rewards, or even escaping the punishments of the Gospel, by performing only one branch of his duty: nor let him ever suppose, that under the shelter of benevolence, he can either on the one hand evade the first and great command, the love of his Maker; or, on the other hand, that he can securely indulge his favourite passions—can compound, as it were, with God, for his sensuality by acts of generosity, and purchase by his wealth a general license to sin. This may be very good Pagan morality, may be very good modern philosophy, but it is not Christian godliness.

BISHOP WATSON.

THIS eminent prelate was born in 1737. He received his early education at Heversham school, where his father was head-master, and afterwards he went to Trinity College, Cambridge. In 1771 he obtained the King's mandate for a Doctor's degree, and he was unanimously elected Regius Professor of Divinity. He subsequently became rector of Knaptoft, Leicestershire, and finally bishop of Landaff. He died in 1816.

The principal works of Bishop Watson are, his *Apology for Christianity*, in answer to the scepticism of Gibbon, and an *Apology for the Bible*, an answer to the infidelity of Paine. These display a closeness of reasoning that none can gainsay; and they have been a great means of successfully opposing the torrent of infidelity which then threatened the nation.

TO SCEPTICS AND INFIDELS.

SUPPOSE the mighty work accomplished, the cross trampled upon, Christianity everywhere proscribed, and the religion of nature once more become the religion of

Europe ; what advantage will you have derived to your country or to yourselves from the exchange ? I know your answer—you will have freed the world from the hypocrisy of priests and the tyranny of superstition. No ; you forget that Lycurgus, and Numa, and Odin, and Mango Capac, and all the great legislators of ancient or modern story, have been of opinion, that the affairs of civil society could not well be conducted without some religion ; you must of necessity introduce a priesthood, with, probably, as much hypocrisy ; a religion, with, assuredly, more superstition, than that which you now reprobate with such indecent and ill-grounded contempt. But I will tell you, from what you will have freed the world ; you will have freed it from its abhorrence of vice, and from every powerful incentive to virtue ; you will, with the religion, have brought back the depraved morality of Paganism ; you will have robbed mankind of their firm assurance of another life ; and thereby you will have despoiled them of their patience, of their humility, of their charity, of their chastity, of all those mild and silent virtues, which (however despicable they appear in your eyes) are the only ones which meliorate and sublime our nature ; which Paganism never knew, which spring from Christianity alone ; which do or might constitute our comfort in this life, and without the possession of which, another life, if after all there should happen to be one, must be more vicious and more miserable than this is, unless a miracle be exerted in the alteration of our disposition.

Perhaps you will contend that the universal light of reason, that the truth and fitness of things, are of themselves sufficient to exalt the nature, and regulate the manners of mankind. Shall we never have done with this groundless commendation of natural law ? Look into the first chapter of Paul's Epistle to the Romans, and you will see the extent of its influence over the Gentiles of those days ; or, if you dislike Paul's authority, and the manners

of antiquity, look into the more admired accounts of modern voyagers, and examine its influence over the Pagans of our own times, over the sensual inhabitants of Otaheite, over the cannibals of New Zealand, or the remorseless savages of America. But these men are barbarians. Your law of nature, notwithstanding, extends even to them :—but they have misused their reason ;—they have then the more need of, and would be the more thankful for, that revelation which you, with an ignorant and fastidious self-sufficiency, deem useless. But they might of themselves, if they thought fit, become wise and virtuous. I answer with Cicero : “ As there is no difference between a person’s not being in health and his not being able to be in health ; so, I do not understand what difference there can be between a person’s not being wise and his not being able to be wise.”

These, however, you will think, are extraordinary instances, and that we ought not from these to take our measure of the excellency of the law of nature ; but rather from the civilized states of China and Japan, or from the nations which flourished in learning and in arts before Christianity was heard of in the world. You mean to say, that by the law of nature, which you are desirous of substituting in the room of the Gospel, you do not understand those rules of conduct which an individual, abstracted from the community, and deprived of the institution of mankind, could excogitate for himself ; but such a system of precepts as the most enlightened men of the most enlightened ages have recommended to our observance. Where do you find this system ? We cannot meet with it in the words of Stobæus, or the Scythian Anacharsis ; nor in those of Plato, or of Cicero ; nor in those of the Emperor Antoninus, or the slave Epictetus ; for we are persuaded that most animated considerations of the beauty of virtue and the fitness of things, are not able to furnish, even a Brutus himself, with permanent principles of action ; much less are they able to purify the polluted recesses of a vitiated heart,

to curb the irregularities of appetite, or restrain the impetuosity of passion in common men. If you order us to examine the works of Grotius, or Puffendorf, or Burlamaqui, or Hutchinson, for what you understand by the law of nature; we apprehend that you are in a great error, in taking your notions of natural law, as discoverable by natural reason, from the elegant systems of it which have been drawn up by Christian philosophers; since they have all laid their foundations, either tacitly or expressly, upon a principle derived from revelation, a thorough knowledge of the being and attributes of God; and even those amongst yourselves, who, rejecting Christianity, still continue Theists, are indebted to revelation (whether you are either aware of, or disposed to acknowledge the debt, or not) for those sublime speculations concerning the Deity which you have fondly attributed to the excellency of your own unassisted reason. If you would know the real strength of natural reason, and how far it can proceed in the investigation or enforcement of moral duties, you must consult the manners and the writings of those who have never heard of either the Jewish or the Christian dispensation, or of those other manifestations of Himself which God vouchsafed to Adam and to the patriarchs, before and after the flood. It would be difficult, perhaps, anywhere to find a people entirely destitute of traditionary notices concerning a Deity, and of traditionary fears or expectations of another life; and the morals of mankind may have, perhaps, been nowhere quite so abandoned as they would have been had they been left wholly to themselves in these points; however, it is a truth, which cannot be denied, how much soever it may be lamented, that though the generality of mankind have always had some faint conceptions of God and his providence, yet they have been always greatly inefficacious in the production of good morality, and highly derogatory to his nature, amongst all the people of the earth, except the Jews and Christians, and some may, perhaps, be desirous

of excepting the Mahometans, who derive all that is good in their Koran from Christianity.

The laws concerning justice, and the reparation of damage, concerning the security of property, and the performance of contracts,—concerning, in short, whatever affects the well-being of civil society, have been everywhere understood with sufficient precision; and if you choose to style Justinian's code a code of natural law, though you will err against propriety of speech, yet you are so far in the right, that natural reason discovered, and the depravity of human nature compelled, human kind to establish, by proper sanctions, the laws therein contained; and you will have, moreover, Carneades, no mean philosopher, on your side; who knew of no law of nature different from that which men had instituted for their common utility, and which was varied according to the manners of men in different climates, and changeable with a change of times in the same. And, in truth, in all countries where Paganism has been the established religion, though a philosopher may now and then have stepped beyond the paltry prescription of civil jurisprudence in his pursuit of virtue, yet the bulk of mankind have ever been contented with that scanty pittance of morality which enabled them to escape the lash of civil punishment. I call it a scanty pittance, because a man may be intemperate, iniquitous, impious, a thousand ways a profligate and a villain, and yet elude the cognizance, and avoid the punishment of civil laws.

I am sensible you will be ready to say, What is all this to the purpose? Though the bulk of mankind may never be able to investigate the laws of natural religion, nor disposed to reverence their sanctions when investigated by others, nor solicitous about any other standard of moral rectitude than civil legislation, yet the inconveniences which may attend the extirpation of Christianity can be no proof of its truth. I have not produced them as a proof of its truth, but they are a strong conclusive proof, if not of its

truth, at least of its utility ; and the consideration of its utility may be a motive to yourselves for examining whether it may not chance to be true ; and it ought to be a reason with every good citizen, and with every man of sound judgment, to keep his opinion to himself, if from any particular circumstances in his studies or in his education he should have the misfortune to think it is not true. If you can discover to the rising generation a better religion than the Christian, one that will more effectually animate their hopes, and subdue their passions, make them better men, or better members of society, we importune you to publish it for their advantage ; but till you can do that, we beg of you not to give the reins to their passions, by instilling into their unsuspicious minds your pernicious prejudices. Even now, men scruple not, by their lawless lust, to ruin the repose of private families, and to fix a stain of infamy on the noblest ; even now they hesitate not in lifting up a murderous arm against the life of their friend, or against their own, as often as the fever of intemperance stimulates their resentment, or the satiety of a useless life excites their despondency ; even now, whilst we are persuaded of a resurrection from the dead, and of a judgment to come, we find it difficult enough to resist the solicitations of sense, and to escape unspotted from the licentious manners of the world. But what will become of our virtue ; what of the consequent peace and happiness of society, if you persuade us that there are no such things ? In two words : you may ruin yourselves by the attempt, and you will certainly ruin your country by your success.

But the consideration of the inutility of your design, is not the only one which should induce you to abandon it ; the argument *a tuto* ought to be warily managed, as it may tend to the silencing our opposition to any system of superstition which has had the good fortune to be sanctified by public authority ; it is, indeed, liable to no objection in the present case ; we do not, however, rely upon its cogency. It

is not contended that Christianity is to be received merely because it is useful, but because it is true. This you deny, and think your objections well grounded ; we conceive them originating in your vanity, your immorality, or your misapprehension. There are many worthless doctrines, many superstitious observances, which the fraud or folly of mankind have everywhere annexed to Christianity (especially in the Church of Rome,) as essential parts of it. If you take these sorry appendages to Christianity for Christianity itself, as preached by Christ and by the Apostles ; if you confound the Roman with the Christian religion, you quite misapprehend its nature, and are in a state similar to that of men, (mentioned by Plutarch in his treatise *Of Superstition*,) who, flying from superstition, leapt over religion, and sunk into downright atheism. Christianity is not a religion very palatable to a voluptuous age ; it will not conform its precepts to the standard of fashion ; it will not lessen the deformity of vice by lenient appellations ; but calls keeping, whoredom ; intrigue, adultery ; and duelling, murder : it will not pander to the lust, it will not license the intemperance of mankind ; it is a troublesome monitor to a man of pleasure ; and your mode of living may have made you quarrel with your religion.

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The main stress of your objections rests not upon the insufficiency of the external evidence of the truth of Christianity ; for few of you, though you may become the future ornaments of the senate, or of the bar, have even employed an hour in its examination ; but it rests upon the difficulty of the doctrines contained in the New Testament ; they exceed, you say, your comprehension ; and you felicitate yourselves that you are not yet arrived at the true standard of orthodox faith,—*Credo quia impossibile*¹. You think it would be taking a superfluous trouble to inquire into the nature of the external proofs by which Christianity

¹ I believe it, because it is impossible.

is established, since, in your opinion, the book itself carries with it its own refutation.

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But what if there should be some incomprehensible doctrines in the Christian religion ; some circumstances which, in their causes or their consequences, surpass the reach of human reason ; are they to be rejected upon that account ? You are, or would be thought, men of reading and knowledge, and enlarged understandings ; weigh the matter fairly, and consider whether revealed religion be not, in this respect, just upon the same footing with every other object of your contemplation. Even in mathematics, the science of demonstration itself, though you get over its first principles, and learn to digest the idea of a point without parts, a line without breadth, and a surface without thickness ; yet you will find yourselves at a loss to comprehend the perpetual approximation of lines which can never meet ; the doctrine of incommensurables, and of an infinity of infinities, each infinitely greater or infinitely less, not only than any finite quantity, but than each other. In physics, you cannot comprehend the primary cause of anything ; not of the light by which you see, nor of the elasticity of the air by which you hear, nor of the fire by which you are warmed. In physiology, you cannot tell what first gives motion to the heart, nor what continues it ; nor why its motion is less voluntary than that of the lungs ; nor why you are able to move your arm to the right or left by a simple volition : you cannot explain the cause of animal heat ; nor comprehend the principles by which your body was at first formed, nor by which it is sustained, nor by which it will be reduced to earth. In natural religion, you cannot comprehend the eternity or omnipresence of the Deity ; nor easily understand how his prescience can be consistent with your freedom, or his immutability with his government of moral agents ; nor why He did not make all his creatures equally perfect, nor why

He did not create them sooner : in short, you cannot look into any branch of knowledge but you will meet with subjects above your comprehension. The fall and redemption of human kind are not more incomprehensible than the creation and conservation of the universe ; the infinite Author of the works of providence and of nature is equally inscrutable, equally past our finding out in them both.

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Plato mentions a set of men, who were very ignorant, and thought themselves supremely wise ; and who rejected the argument for the being of a God, derived from the harmony and order of the universe, as old and trite. There have been men, it seems, in all ages, who, in affecting singularity, have overlooked truth : an argument, however, is not the worse for being old ; and surely it would have been a more just mode of reasoning, if you had examined the external evidence for the truth of Christianity, weighed the old arguments from miracles and from prophecies, before you had rejected the whole account, from the difficulties you meet with in it. You would laugh at an Indian, who, in peeping into an history of England, and meeting with a mention of the Thames being frozen, or of a shower of hail or of snow, should throw the book aside as unworthy of further notice, from his want of ability to comprehend these phenomena.

In considering the argument from miracles, you will soon be convinced that it is possible for God to work miracles ; and you will be convinced, that it is as possible for human testimony to establish the truth of miraculous as of physical or historical events ; but before you can be convinced that the miracles in question are supported by such testimony as deserves to be credited, you must inquire at what period, and by what persons, the books of the Old and New Testaments were composed : if you reject the account without making this examination, you reject it from prejudice, not from reason.

There is, however, a short method of examining this argument, which may, perhaps, make as great an impression on your minds as any other. Three men of distinguished abilities rose up at different times, and attacked Christianity with every objection which their malice could suggest, or their learning devise; but neither Celsus in the second century, nor Porphyry in the third, nor the Emperor Julian himself in the fourth century, ever questioned the reality of the miracles related in the Gospels. Do but you grant us what these men (who were more likely to know the truth of the matter than you can be,) granted to their adversaries, and we will very readily let you make use of the magic, to which, as the last wretched shift, they were forced to attribute them. We can find you men in our days, who, from the mixture of two colourless liquors, will produce you a third as red as blood, or of any other colour you desire; and then, by a drop resembling water, will restore the transparency; they will make two fluids coalesce into a solid body; and from the mixture of liquors colder than ice will instantly raise you a horrid explosion and a tremendous flame;—and by a little art they will restore the functions of life to a man who has been an hour or two under water, or a day or two buried in the snow: but in vain will these men, or the greatest magician that Egypt ever saw, say to a boisterous sea, “Peace, be still;” in vain will they say to a carcase rotting in the grave, “Come forth;” the winds and the sea will not obey them, and the putrid carcase will not hear them. You need not suffer yourselves to be deprived of the weight of this argument, from its having been observed, that the fathers have acknowledged the supernatural part of Paganism; since the fathers were in no condition to detect a cheat, which was supported both by the disposition of the people, and the power of the civil magistrate; and they were, from that inability, forced to attribute to infernal agency what was too cunningly contrived to be detected, and contrived

for too impious a purpose to be credited as the work of God.

With respect to prophecy, you may, perhaps, have accustomed yourselves to consider it as originating in Asiatic enthusiasm, in Chaldean mystery, or in the subtle stratagem of interested priests, and have given yourselves no more trouble concerning the predictions of sacred than concerning the oracles of Pagan history. Or if you have ever cast a glance upon this subject, the dissension of learned men concerning the proper interpretation of the Revelation, and other difficult prophecies, may have made you rashly conclude that all prophecies were equally unintelligible, and more indebted for their accomplishment to a fortunate concurrence of events, and the pliant ingenuity of the expositor, than to the inspired foresight of the prophet. In all that the prophets of the Old Testament have delivered concerning the destruction of particular cities, and the desolation of particular kingdoms, you may see nothing but shrewd conjectures, which any one acquainted with the history of the rise and fall of empires might certainly have made; and as you would not hold him for a prophet who should now affirm, that London or Paris would afford to future ages a spectacle just as melancholy as that which we contemplate with a sigh in the ruins of Agrigentum or Palmyra, so you cannot persuade yourselves to believe that the denunciations of the prophets against the haughty cities of Tyre or Babylon, for instance, proceeded from the inspiration of the Deity. There is no doubt that, by some such general kind of reasoning, many are influenced to pay no attention to an argument, which, if properly considered, carries with it the strongest conviction.

Spinoza said, that he would have broken his atheistic system to pieces, and embrace, without repugnance, the ordinary faith of Christians, if he could have persuaded himself of the resurrection of Lazarus from the dead; and I question not that there are many disbelievers who would re-

linquish their deistic tenets, and receive the Gospel, if they could persuade themselves that God had ever so far interfered in the moral government of the world as to illumine the mind of any one man with the knowledge of future events. A miracle strikes the senses of the persons who see it ; a prophecy addresses itself to the understanding of those who behold its completion ; and it requires, in many cases, some learning, in all, some attention, to judge of the correspondence of events with the predictions concerning them. No one can be convinced that what Jeremiah and the other prophets foretold of the fate of Babylon, that it should be besieged by the Medes, that it should be taken when her mighty men were drunken, when her springs were dried up, and that it should become a pool of waters, and should remain desolate for ever ;—no one, I say, can be convinced that all these, and other parts of the prophetic denunciation, have been minutely fulfilled, without spending some time in reading the accounts which profane historians have delivered down to us, concerning its being taken by Cyrus, and which modern travellers have given us of its present situation.

Porphyry was so persuaded of the coincidence between the prophecies of Daniel and the events, that he was forced to affirm the prophecies were written after the things prophesied of had happened. Another Porphyry has, in our days, been so astonished at the correspondence between the prophecy concerning the destruction of Jerusalem, as related by St. Matthew, and the history of that event as recorded by Josephus, that, rather than embrace Christianity, he has ventured to assert (contrary to the faith of all ecclesiastical history, the opinion of the learned of all ages, and all the rules of good criticism,) that St. Matthew wrote his gospel after Jerusalem had been taken and destroyed by the Romans.

You may, from these instances, perceive the strength of the argument from prophecy : it has not been able indeed to

vanquish the prejudices of either the ancient or modern Porphyry; but it has been able to compel them both to be guilty of obvious falsehoods, which have nothing but impudent assertions to support them.

Some over-zealous interpreters of Scripture have found prophecies in simple narrations; extended real predictions beyond the times and circumstances to which they naturally were applied, and perplexed their readers with a thousand quaint allusions and allegorical conceits; this proceeding has made unthinking men pay less regard to prophecy in general. There are some predictions, however, such as concerning the present state of the Jewish people, and the corruption of Christianity, which are now fulfilling in the world, and which, if you will take the trouble to examine them, you will find of such an extraordinary nature, that you will not perhaps hesitate to refer them to God as their author; and if you once become persuaded of the truth of one miracle, or of the completion of any one prophecy, you will resolve all your difficulties (concerning the manner of God's interposition in the moral government of our species, and the nature of the doctrines contained in Revelation,) into your own inability fully to comprehend the whole scheme of Divine Providence.

We are told, however, that the strangeness of the narration, and the difficulty of the doctrines contained in the New Testament, are not the only circumstances which induce you to reject it; you have discovered, you think, so many contradictions in the accounts which the Evangelists have given of the life of Christ, that you are compelled to consider the whole as a fabulous story. Though we should grant you that the Evangelists had fallen into some trivial contradictions, in what they have related concerning the life of Christ, yet you ought not to draw any other inference from our concession, than that they had not plotted together, as cheats would have done, in order to give an unexceptionable consistency to their fraud. We are not, however, dis-

posed to make you any such concession; we will rather show you the futility of your general argument, by touching upon a few of the places which you think most liable to your censure.

You observe, that neither Luke nor Mark nor John have mentioned the cruelty of Herod in murdering the infants of Bethlehem, and that no account is to be found of this matter in Josephus, who wrote the life of Herod, and therefore the fact recorded by Matthew is not true. The concurrent testimony of many independent writers concerning a matter of fact, unquestionably adds to its probability; but if nothing is to be received as true, upon the testimony of a single author, we must give up some of the best writers, and disbelieve some of the most interesting facts of ancient history. According to Matthew, Mark, and Luke, there was only an interval of three months, you say, between the baptism and crucifixion of Jesus, from which time, taking away the forty days of the temptation, there will only remain about six weeks for the whole period of his public ministry, which lasted, however, according to St. John, at the least above three years. Your objection fairly stands thus: Matthew, Mark, and Luke, in writing the history of Jesus Christ, mention the several events of his life as following one another in continued succession, without taking notice of the times in which they happened; but is it a just conclusion from their silence, to infer that there really were no intervals of time between the transactions which they seem to have connected? Many instances might be produced from the most admired biographers of antiquity, in which the events are related, as immediately consequent to each other, which did not happen but at very distant periods: we have an obvious example of this manner of writing in St. Matthew, who connects the preaching of St. John the Baptist with the return of Joseph from Egypt, though we are certain that the latter event preceded the former by a great many years.

John has said nothing of the institution of the Lord's Supper ; the other evangelists have said nothing of the washing of the disciples' feet :—What then ? are you not ashamed to produce these facts as instances of contradiction ? If omissions are contradictions, look into the history of the age of Louis the Fourteenth, and you will meet with a great abundance of contradictions.

John, in mentioning the discourse which Jesus had with his mother and his beloved disciple, at the time of his crucifixion, says, that she, with Mary Magdalene, stood near the cross ; Matthew, on the other hand, says, that Mary Magdalene and the other women were there beholding afar off. This you think a manifest contradiction ; and scoffingly inquire, whether the women and the beloved disciple, which were near the cross, could be the same with those who stood far from the cross ? It is difficult not to transgress the bounds of moderation and good manners in answering such sophistry : what ! have you to learn, that though the Evangelists speak of the crucifixion as of one event, it was not accomplished in one instant, but lasted several hours ? and why the women, who were at a distance from the cross, might not, during its continuance, draw near the cross ; or, from being near the cross, might not move from the cross, is more than you can explain either to us or yourselves. And we take from you your only refuge, by denying expressly, that the different Evangelists, in their mention of the women, speak of the same point of time.

The Evangelists, you affirm, have fallen into gross contradictions, in their accounts of the appearances by which Jesus manifested himself to his disciples, after his resurrection from the dead ; for Matthew speaks of two, Mark of three, Luke of two, and John of four. That contradictory propositions cannot be true, is readily granted ; and if you will produce the place in which Matthew says, that Jesus Christ appeared twice and no oftener, it will be further granted, that he is contradicted by John in a very

material part of his narration ; but will you do that ? you must excuse me if I cannot grant that the Evangelists have contradicted each other in this point ; for to common understandings it is pretty evident, that if Christ appeared four times, according to St. John's account, he must have appeared twice according to that of Matthew and Luke, and thrice according to that of Mark.

The different Evangelists are not only accused of contradicting each other, but Luke is said to have contradicted himself ; for in his gospel he tells us, that Jesus ascended into heaven from Bethany ; and in the Acts of the Apostles, of which he is the reputed author, he informs us, that Jesus ascended from Mount Olivet.—Your objection proceeds either from your ignorance of geography, or your ill will to Christianity ; and upon either supposition, deserves our contempt : be pleased, however, to remember for the future, that Bethany was not only the name of a town, but of a district of Mount Olivet adjoining to the town.

From this specimen of the contradictions ascribed to the historians of the life of Christ, you may judge for yourselves what little reason there is to reject Christianity upon their account ; and how sadly you will be imposed upon (in a manner of more consequence to you than any other,) if you take every thing for a contradiction, which the uncandid adversaries of Christianity think proper to call one.

Before I put an end to this address, I cannot help taking notice of an argument by which some philosophers have of late endeavoured to overturn the whole system of Revelation ; and it is the more necessary to give an answer to their objection, as it is become a common subject of philosophical conversation, especially amongst those who have visited the Continent. The objection tends to invalidate, as is supposed, the authority of Moses, by shewing that the earth is much older than it can be proved to be from his account of the creation and the scripture chronology. We contend that

six thousand years have not yet elapsed since the creation ; and these philosophers contend that they have indubitable proof of the earth's being at the least fourteen thousand years old ; and they complain that Moses hangs as a dead weight upon them, and blunts all their zeal for inquiry.

The canon Recupero, who wrote the history of Mount Etna, has discovered a stratum of lava which flowed from that mountain, according to his opinion, in the time of the second Punic war, or about two thousand years ago. This stratum is not yet covered with soil sufficient for the production of either corn or vines ; it requires then, says the canon, two thousand years, at least, to convert a stratum of lava into a fertile field. In sinking a pit near Jaci, in the neighbourhood of Etna, they have discovered evident marks of seven distinct lavas one under the other ; the surfaces of which are parallel, and most of them covered with a thick bed of rich earth. Now the eruption which formed the lowest of these lavas (if we may be allowed to reason, says the canon, from analogy,) flowed from the mountain at least fourteen thousand years ago. It might be briefly answered to this objection by denying that there is any thing in the history of Moses repugnant to this opinion concerning the great antiquity of the earth ; for though the rise and progress of arts and sciences, and the small multiplication of the human species, render it almost to a demonstration probable that man has not existed longer upon the surface of this earth than according to the Mosaic account ; yet, that the earth was then created out of nothing when man was placed upon it, is not, according to the sentiments of some philosophers, to be proved from the original text of sacred Scripture. We might, I say, reply, with these philosophers, to this formidable objection of the canon, by granting it in its fullest extent. We are under no necessity, however, of adopting their opinion in order, to show the weakness of the canon's reasoning. For, in the first place, the canon has not satisfactorily established his main fact, that the lava in

question is the identical lava which Diodorus Siculus mentions to have flowed from Etna in the second Carthaginian war; and, in the second place, it may be observed, that the time necessary for converting the lavas into fertile fields must be very different, according to the different consistencies of the lavas, and their different situations with respect to elevation or depression, to their being exposed to winds, rains, and to other circumstances; just as the time in which the heaps of iron slag (which resembles lava,) are covered with verdure, is different at different furnaces, according to the nature of the slag, and situation of the furnace; and something of this kind is deducible from the account of the canon himself; since the crevices of this famous stratum are really full of rich, good soil, and have pretty large trees growing in them.

But if all this should be thought not sufficient to remove the objection, I will produce the canon an analogy in opposition to his analogy, and which is grounded on more certain facts. Etna and Vesuvius resemble each other in the causes which produce their eruptions, and in the nature of their lavas, and in the time necessary to mellow them into soil fit for vegetation; or, if there be any slight difference in this respect, it is probably not greater than what subsists between different lavas of the same mountain. This being admitted, which no philosopher will deny, the canon's analogy will prove just nothing at all, if we can produce an instance of seven different lavas (with interjacent strata of vegetable earth) which have flowed from Mount Vesuvius within the space, not of fourteen thousand, but of somewhat less than seventeen hundred years: for then, according to our analogy, a stratum of lava may be covered with vegetable soil in about two hundred and fifty years, instead of requiring two thousand for the purpose. The eruption of Vesuvius which destroyed Herculaneum and Pompeii is rendered still more famous by the death of Pliny, recorded by his nephew in his letter to Tacitus. This event happened in

the year seventy-nine: it is not yet then quite seventeen hundred years since *Herculaneum* was swallowed up. But we are informed, by unquestionable authority, that "the matter which covers the ancient town of *Herculaneum* is not the produce of one eruption only; for there are evident marks that the matter of six eruptions has taken its course over that which lies immediately above the town, and was the cause of its destruction. These strata are either of lava or burnt matter, with veins of good soil between them."

* * * * *

You perceive with what ease a little attention will remove a great difficulty; but had we been able to say nothing in explanation of this phenomenon, we should not have acted a very rational part in making our ignorance the foundation of our infidelity, or suffering a minute philosopher to rob us of our religion.

Your objections to *Revelation* may be numerous; you may find fault with the account which *Moses* has given of the creation and the fall; you may not be able to get water enough for an universal deluge, nor room enough in the ark of *Noah* for all the different kinds of aerial and terrestrial animals; you may be dissatisfied with the command for sacrificing of *Isaac*, for plundering the Egyptians, and for extirpating the *Canaanites*; you may find fault with the Jewish economy,—for its ceremonies, its sacrifices, and its multiplicity of priests; you may object to the imprecations in the *Psalms*, and think the immoralities of *David* a fit subject for dramatic ridicule; you may look upon the partial promulgation of Christianity as an insuperable objection to its truth; and waywardly reject the goodness of God toward yourselves, because you do not comprehend how you have deserved it more than others: you may know nothing of the entrance of sin and death into the world by one man's transgression; nor be able to comprehend the doctrine of the cross and redemption by *Jesus Christ*; in short, if your mind is so disposed, you may find food for your scepticism

in every page of the Bible, as well as in every appearance of nature ; and it is not in the power of any person but yourselves to clear up your doubts ; you must read, and you must think for yourselves ; and you must do so both with temper, with candour, and with care. Infidelity is a rank weed ; it is nurtured by our vices, and cannot be plucked up as easily as it may be planted. Your difficulties with respect to Revelation may have arisen from your own reflection on the religious indifference of those whom from your earliest infancy you have been accustomed to revere and imitate. Domestic irreligion may have made you willing hearers of libertine conversation, and the uniform prejudices of the world may have finished the business at a very early age, and left you to wander through life without a principle to direct your conduct, and to die without hope. We are far from wishing you to trust the word of the clergy for the truth of your religion : we beg of you to examine it to the bottom, to try it, to prove it, and not to hold it fast unless you find it good. Till you are disposed to undertake this task, it becomes you to consider with great seriousness and attention, whether it can be for your interest to esteem a few witty sarcasms, or metaphysical subtleties, or ignorant misrepresentations, or unwarranted assertions, as unanswerable arguments against Revelation ; and a very slight reflection will convince you, that it will certainly be for your reputation to employ the flippancy of your rhetoric, and the poignancy of your ridicule, upon any subject rather than upon the subject of religion.

I take my leave with recommending to your notice the advice which Mr. Locke gave to a young man who was desirous of becoming acquainted with the doctrines of the Christian religion : “ Study the holy Scriptures, especially the New Testament ; therein are contained the words of eternal life. It has God for its author ; Salvation for its end ; and Truth without any mixture of error for its matter.”

VICESIMUS KNOX, D.D.

VICESIMUS KNOX was born in 1754. He became fellow of St. John's College, Oxford, and master of Tunbridge Grammar School, and died in 1822. He was the author of numerous works, and among them of *Christian Philosophy*, which may be justly said to comprise a compendium of Christianity, and from which the following extracts are taken. His style is distinguished by great purity and elegance.

OF A GOOD HEART.

THE most desirable treasure which a human being can possess, whether he has regard to his own happiness or to those around him, is a good heart. In every situation and under all circumstances this will furnish a store of sweets which the wicked cannot obtain; and delicious though it is, would not relish, so vitiated is their taste: a good heart communicates liberally the pleasure it enjoys; blessed or blessing in every motion.

But what constitutes a good heart? The grace of God operating upon it. The mild, gentle, healing spirit of the Gospel, or, to use the language of Scripture, the unction of the Holy Ghost, mollifying its hardness, and preserving it from corruption. This it is which forms a good heart; and a good heart is a land of Canaan to itself,—a land flowing with milk and honey.

All the irascible passions are, in their excess, diabolical. They are the fruitful sources of misery. They would unparadise the garden of Eden, and turn the cheerful light of Heaven into gloomy darkness, like the shadow in the valley of death. There is in the world much natural evil; there are pains and diseases enough to wean the heart from the immoderate love of it; but none of them are productive of wretchedness so great and difficult of cure as the malignant passions of pride, envy, and revenge. These estrange man from man, and convert the

haunts of human creatures into dens of foxes and wolves. Cheats, calumniators, robbers, murderers, in all their variety and degrees of flagitiousness, are characters naturally flowing from hearts unsoftened, unenlightened, unhallowed by the Spirit of grace.

But behold the Christian. Gentleness and sweetness beam from his eyes and illumine his countenance with a mild lustre. Good humour predominates in all his demeanour. He has no concealed rage rankling in his bosom; he has no sinister and selfish views under a studied openness of countenance; he converses with a generous frankness; his bosom is transparent; you are perfectly safe with him. He will serve you if possible, as well as please you; but he will never injure you purposely, or give you the smallest pain. He feels complacency in all the good he sees around him, and delights in augmenting it. His treasure is within him. His interest is in heaven. His ambition is for objects above the world, so that nothing in it is of value enough, in his estimation, to tempt him to resign the tranquillity of innocence, to renounce the pleasures of a friendly and benevolent disposition. He has all the ingenuous simplicity of the infantine age, and you delight in him as in the harmless babe, who sports around you, and expresses his pains and pleasures according to the dictates of uncorrupted nature.

Such is man, when his natural asperities are smoothed, and his inborn bitterness sweetened by the benign operation of celestial influence. Compared with the mere natural man, he is an angel. Is it not desirable thus to raise human nature, and thus to improve society; thus to render the earthly existence almost an anticipation of what our imperfect imaginations picture of the heavenly? Heathen philosophy cannot effect it. Heathen philosophy is confined to a few, in comparison with the myriads that compose the great mass of human beings who weary themselves in pursuit of happiness on this terraqueous globe. The

experiment has been tried by the philosophers of all ages, and failed. But religion can effect it. Yet what religion? A religion founded on historical faith and heathen morality? No; it must be a vital religion—a divine influence on the heart,—which is plainly promised and announced in the glad tidings of the Gospel. This is the true *evangelion* or good news to the human race. It is authenticated by the written Gospel, and there is a witness within us which renders it unquestionable. Happy are they who have obeyed the voice which commands, saying, “My son, give me thy heart.” When the heart is devoted to Christ, the understanding will make no resistance to his doctrines, but humbly acknowledge the most inexplicable mysteries to be above, yet not contrary to, reason.

OF ENTHUSIASM.

ENTHUSIASM is commonly used and understood in a bad sense; but if its real meaning be attended to, it may certainly admit of a very fine one. It means a consciousness or persuasion that the Deity is actually present, by an immediate emanation or impulse, in the mind of the enthusiast; the reality of which, in certain cases, is the doctrine of the church and of the Gospel; a doctrine sufficiently consonant to reason, and not necessarily connected with self-delusion, folly, madness, or fanaticism.

But because many have made pretensions to the privilege of God's immediate presence in their hearts, whose lives and conduct gave reason to suspect that they were not thus favoured, the word enthusiasm, which in common language expressed their false pretensions, has fallen into disgrace, and now often implies no more than the idea of a bigot, or a devotee, weakly deluded by the fond visions of a disordered imagination.

But let not enthusiasm of the better kind, a modest confidence of being assisted, as the Gospel promises, by the agency of the Holy Spirit, be involved in undeserved disgrace. We are taught that the Divinity resides in the pure heart ; the belief of it is, indeed, enthusiasm, but it is enthusiasm of the noble, the virtuous, the necessary kind. The ardour which it inspires is laudable. Like that of all other good things, the corruption and abuse of it is productive of great evil ; but still it is not itself to be exploded.

There is indeed a cold philosophy, which seems to discourage all the warm sentiments of affection, and will hardly allow them in anything which concerns religion. It aims at reducing theology to a scholastic science, and would willingly descant of the love of God and the sublimest discoveries of the Gospel in the same frigidity of temper as it would explain the metaphysics of Aristotle. But there is a natural and laudable ardour in the mind of man, whenever it contemplates magnificent objects, and which is certainly to be expected, when that object is the Lord God Omnipotent, and the human soul, the particle of Deity, aspiring at reunion with the Supreme Being, and meditating on immortality.

Is there not an ardour of enthusiasm which admires and produces excellence in the arts of music, painting, and poetry ? And shall it be allowed in the humble province of imitative skill, and exploded in contemplating the great Archetype of all, the Source of life, beauty, order, grandeur, and sublimity ? Shall I hear a symphony, or behold a picture, a statue, or a fine prospect, with rapture, and at the same time consider God, who made both the object and the sense that perceives it, with the frigid indifference of abstracted philosophy ? Shall I meditate on heaven, hell, death, and judgment, with all the coolness with which a lawyer draws a formal instrument, an arithmetician computes a sum, or a logician forms a syllogism in mood and figure ?

Such coolness on such subjects arises not from superiority of wisdom, but from pride and vain philosophy, from acquired callosity, or natural insensibility of temper. God has bestowed on man a liveliness of fancy and a warmth of affection, as well as an accuracy and acuteness of reason and intellect: he has bestowed a heart vibrating with the tender chords of love and pity, as well as a brain furnished with fibres adopted to subtle disquisitions.

The Scriptures afford many examples of a laudable and natural enthusiasm. "My heart was hot," says David; and the warm poetry of the Psalms, the rapturous style of prophecy, are proofs that those who have been singularly favoured by God were of tempers which the modern philosophy would call enthusiastical. Their fire was kindled at the altar. St. John was a burning and a shining light. St. Paul was avowedly of an ardent temper and a glowing imagination; nor did our Saviour himself express his sentiments in the cold language of the Aristotelian school, but with emphasis and pathos.

They who rail at enthusiasm in general terms, and without making a due distinction between the scriptural and the false kind, consist either of those who laudably endeavour to discredit the pretensions of the hypocrite and the weak brother; or of those, who, from their speculative habits, their cold tempers, or irreligious lives, labour to discountenance all pretensions to an excellence and purity which they never felt, and to which they could not rise.

Whoever believes what the Scriptures indisputably affirm, that the body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, and that He actually resides in it when it is purified sufficiently for his reception, is so far an enthusiast; but let him glory in the appellation, for he is such an one as every Christian who thinks and feels in conformity to the Gospel he professes, must be of necessity. If he denies the agency of the Spirit of God on the soul of man, he denies the most

important doctrine of Revelation, and must be a stranger to its finest effects on the human bosom.

But since such is the case, let those who very laudably write against enthusiasm of the false kind, take care not to confound truth with falsehood, and not to proceed to such an extreme in refuting the pretensions of hypocrites, fools, or knaves, as to infringe on the genuine and sublime doctrine of grace, the glory of the everlasting Gospel.

THE SUM AND SUBSTANCE OF CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHY.

WHAT is Christian wisdom or philosophy ? Let the Apostle answer ; it is to “ put off the old man, which is corrupt, and to put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.” We must be born again, or it had been better for us that we had not been born at all. The wisdom from above is the true Christian philosophy ; that wisdom which we are told “ is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated ; full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy.”

Hardness of heart is incompatible with this wisdom, which is full of mercy. The bosom must be softened by divine influence. Redeem the time, therefore, that ye have hitherto lost in a cold, lifeless, formal, decorous religion. Love God, love your neighbour, with the ardour of a sincere mind, and the amiable simplicity of infantine innocence. Seek Jesus Christ with the earnestness of one who is a Christian by choice, and not merely because he was born in a Christian country or of Christian parents ; nor because the laws of the land have established that religion, and it is creditable to appear among its professors in places consecrated to public devotion. Be Christians on your pillows, in your daily employments, in the occupation of your merchandize or agriculture, as well as in your church, and on the day set apart for divine service. Let Christ by the Holy Ghost be

formed in your hearts, restoring in you the image of God in which you were created, but which was sadly sullied, or quite defaced, by the fall of the first Adam, and can be restored only by the mercy of the second.

If there were but a probability that these comfortable doctrines are true, a wise man would cherish them; but as they are abundantly confirmed by the written Word, by the Church, by the learned, by the experience and testimony of millions of pious men, who would not resolve to believe, and if any doubts should at any time arise, to say, "Lord, help thou my unbelief?"

Religion has been, and is, the delight of a great part of our fellow-creatures throughout Christendom. It may be ours if we will duly apply our minds to it. Consider with what ardour of attachment many seek pictures, books, the works of art, the objects of taste and fancy. They learn to love them by applying their minds to them. Half the application bestowed on things, which at best are but toys, if bestowed on religion, would make it your chief delight—the guardian of youth, the comfort of the aged and afflicted. You would no longer consider its duties and employments as heavy and dull: you would feel not only the offices of charity, but devotion, sweet to your soul. The gracious words of Gospel truth, of prayer and thanksgiving, would "come o'er thine ear," as the poet says,—

Like the sweet south
That breathes upon a bank of violets.

It is justly said that in devotional offices passion becomes reason, and transport temper. Heaven must disdain the cold prayer, the lukewarm praise of insensibility and indifference. The incense must blaze on the altar before the sweet odours can ascend to the skies. Cold devotion is indelicate: heartless thanksgiving is an insult. What! shall we warm and be anxious and sanguine in worldly pursuits, in politics and party, and dull and languid as followers of Christ, in showing our zeal in the cause of the great Captain

of our salvation, which is the cause of all mankind, a cause in which heaven and earth is interested? Be it the great endeavour of all who would obtain wisdom from above to conciliate, by fervent prayer, the grace of God, which will remove all hardness of heart, the cause of that coldness and insensibility, which is too often most unjustly honoured with the name of moderation.

TEMPERANCE NECESSARY TO THE PERCEPTION OF THE
EVIDENCES OF CHRISTIANITY.

THE Apostle says, "Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the spirit." The word here rendered excess corresponds with the Latin *prodigalitas*, which in the Roman law characterised the spendthrift and debauchee, incapable, from his vices, of managing his own affairs, and therefore placed by the prætor under the guardianship of trustees, without whose concurrence he could perform no legal act. He was considered as an infant and an idiot. The words of the Apostle may then be thus paraphrased: "Be not intemperate in wine, because intemperance will destroy your reason, and degrade you to a state of infantine imbecility, without infantine innocence; but be filled with the spirit;" that is, let your reason be exalted, purified, clarified to the highest state, by the co-operation of the Divine reason, which cannot be, if you destroy the natural faculties which God has given you, by drunkenness and gluttony. I think it evident, from this passage, as well as from the conclusions of reason, that all excess tends to exclude the radiance of grace; the mental eye is weakened by it, and cannot bear the celestial lustre.

That great master of reasoning, Aristotle, maintains, that pleasures are corruptive of principles; and many of the ancients were of opinion, that vice disqualified for philosophical pursuits, where the object was merely terrestrial and human, by raising a thick cloud round the understand-

ing, which the rays of truth could not penetrate. It was for this reason that one of them maintained, that youth were unfit auditors of philosophy; that though youth is most in want of moral instruction, yet from the violence of its passions, and its usual immersion in sensuality, it was the least qualified to comprehend, he does not say to adopt or follow, but even to understand, the doctrines of moral philosophy.

One of our own philosophers, who in many respects equalled the ancients, justly observes, that "anger, impatience, admiration of persons, or a pusillanimous over-estimation of them, desire of victory more than of truth, too close an attention to the things of this world, as riches, power, dignities, immersion of the mind into the body, and the slaking of that noble and divine fire of the soul by intemperance and luxury; all these are very great enemies to all manner of knowledge, as well natural as divine." I therefore earnestly recommend it to every serious man who wishes to be convinced of Christianity, to consider it in the morning before either the cares of the world, or the fumes of that intemperance which conviviality sometimes occasions, blunt the feelings of the heart, and spread a film over the visual nerve of the mental eye.

ON YOUTH RECEIVING THE SACRAMENT.

THERE are many who think themselves too young to be at all concerned with things so sacred as the Sacrament. But if there be truth in Christianity, they are trifling with the most important matters; in a most dangerous manner they are acquiring a habit of considering the most sacred things with indifference. If they are too young to think of serious things, they certainly are not too young to die. Let them take a walk in the churchyard, and read the inscriptions on the tomb-stones; they will find perhaps as many young

as old, among the victims of death; and they must allow that youth is a more dangerous season with respect to temptations than any other; and consequently, that it more particularly requires the succours of Divine grace to keep it from falling into sin and misery. And what so powerful a means of grace as the Sacrament, after a due preparation!

No; you are not too young to receive the Divine blessing of grace. Only be sensible how much you want it; how wretched and how profligate you may become, into what shameful and dreadful conduct you may fall without it. Awake, therefore, from a sleep which you cannot indulge without losing the morning of life; the best season for every kind of work, spiritual as well as worldly. Begin well, in order to end well. Remember your Creator in the days of your youth, and He will not forget you in the days of your old age. Trust not in beauty; trust not in strength. Beauty alone has no charms in the eye of heaven; strength of body cannot prevail against the arm of offended Omnipotence. But beauty and strength combined with virtue and piety—how lovely in the sight of men! how pleasing to heaven! peculiarly pleasing, because, with every temptation to deviate, they voluntarily walk in the path of duty.

SPIRITUAL SLUMBER.

Is it possible (it might be asked) that men can sleep so soundly in this uncertain state, while the house they inhabit may be said to be in flames, or while they lie on the very brink of a steep cliff, from which, if they fall, they fall to rise no more? It is not only possible but common; though it is a sleep in which whosoever indulges may possibly sleep on till he awake no more. It may be a fatal sleep; the sleep of death; the stupor of a lethargy; the numbness of a spiritual palsy; the insensibility of mortification.

They who fall into this deep sleep, like those who indulge the sleep of nature, lie in darkness; the darkness of

voluntary ignorance. During their repose, indolence smooths their pillow, and silence their pavilion. Their eyes are closed by prejudice, and the curtains are drawn around them by pride and presumption. The opiates of vanity, or worldly ease and pleasure, superinduce a kind of trance. Sealed are the eye-lids, but their sleep is not a quiet sleep; it is not sweet and refreshing, like the sleep of virtue, the balmy repose of health, wearied at the close of day with the virtues of beneficence.

Theirs is a sleep interrupted by dreams. Shadowy fantastic forms, of a thousand shapes and hues, flit before their fancy. Ambition has her dreams, Avarice her spectres, and Pleasure her visions of ideal bliss, painted with a glow of colouring, which the pencil cannot emulate.

Crowns and sceptres, purple robes, crimson banners with titles of honour and armorial bearings, pass like a pageant, before the courtier, the statesman, the senator, the lawyer, and the warrior. Each fixes his eye upon them devoutly. He catches at them eagerly as the glittering train comes on: they elude his grasp; he catches again; the air-drawn bubbles vanish. Again he is disappointed. Still he perseveres; and, with aching heart and trembling knees and palsied hand, he reaches at last, perhaps, with great difficulty, a coronet, a star, a ribband, and places it on his shaking head or his throbbing bosom; then, stumbling on the dark mountains, down he falls, stripped of all his blushing honours and his gorgeous robes. Clad in a shroud, and with a few vain words engraved on his coffin-plate, his body is thrust, lest he should become noisome, into a mouldy vault, to rot and be forgotten here, where alone he sought distinction; and to appear, divested of all its gaudy ornaments, before Christ his judge; of whom he never once thought seriously, during the deep sleep and the long day-dreams of a vain, worldly, irreligious life.

Behold another dreamer, with a hoary head, lying down to rest, not on soft pillows, but on bags of gold. It is the

miser : he dreams that the pale spectre of haggard poverty is pursuing hard after him ; a cold sweat bedews his emaciated cheeks, and his teeth shake ; but he is cheered again by dreaming of bargains, usurious contracts, of joining house to house, and laying field to field ; of saving all the gains ; of taking advantage of the wants of one and the ignorance of another, to fill his enormous chest. And lo ! it is now full. Is he happy ? and does he use it ? Does he enjoy it for the purposes it was designed ? Does he think of God, the giver of all good things ? Does he distribute it to the poor ? No ; his joy consists in telling it over and over, weighing it with shaking hands, and viewing it with a dim spectacled eye, which can scarcely distinguish a counterfeit from a true coin. At some future period, when he shall have completed a certain sum, he dreams that he shall build, plant, do good, and be whatever a man ought to be. But the sleep of death comes on before the dream of life is over, and he is gone. Down sinks the dreaming dotard into the bosom of that earth to which his mind was prone ; his very name rots with his emaciated body ; and his spirit, now poor indeed, moans and bewails that he laid up no treasure in heaven ; and that in his earthly visions he never thought of his soul ; never felt a desire for the riches of grace.

And now behold his heir. Possessed of wealth which he never knew the toil of earning, he becomes a man of pleasure ; and he also dreameth a dream. The banquet is prepared ; the wine giveth its colour in the cup ; the gaming-table is before him ; noise and riot drive away thought and care ; the singing men and singing women enter ; money is lavished on horses, dogs, sharpers, buffoons ; and no debts regarded but those of false honour. His heart dances to the melody of the harp and the viol ; he pampers every bodily sense, till pleasure itself is converted into pain or insensibility. He dreams on, and soon sees phantoms of pleasure, the ghosts of departed joys dancing in mockery before his eyes. His powers of perception decay ; his youth

and health are departed ; and he droops like a hyacinth, broken down by a hasty shower before it has expanded its beauty. Down he sinks to the earth into an untimely grave ; and mourns, as he retires from the shadowy scene, that a greediness of pleasure surfeited his senses, and robbed him not only of longer life, but of real enjoyment during its continuance. What preparation did he make to relish the pleasures which flow at God's right hand ; the pleasures of reason, the sweets of benevolence, all-pure, all-spiritual, no less exquisite in the enjoyment than exalted and desirable in their nature ?

Alas ! none. He had neither time nor inclination. His soul slept, while his body waked with a fever. The fine sensibilities of the spiritual nature were enveloped in slumber, while his bodily senses were unnaturally jaded and prematurely worn out by constant vigilance and activity. He drank the cup of pleasure to the dregs, and the dregs were to his palate wormwood, and to his vitals poison.

Similar to such slumbers and such dreams are the slumbers and the dreams of many who are met walking in their sleep in the streets of the city ; who are seen all lively and active in the gaily illuminated theatres of pleasure, in the crowded emporiums of commerce, in the courts of princes, in the senate-house, in the forum, and at the tribunal. Deeply do they drink the draughts of worldly vanity, which, like doses of opium, lay them indeed asleep, but at the same time fill them with self-conceit and pride, and disturb them with dreams, wild as the scenes of fairy land. Theirs is not a sweet sleep ; it is the sleep of disease, and resembles what the physicans call the *coma vigil*, a waking slumber—a dangerous symptom. Then let not man indulge the first tendencies to the sleep of the soul, but rather shake off sloth, and hear the voice which calls him like the cheerful herald of the morning : “Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.”

Let all men take an impartial view of their own state, and examine whether they are not in the state of spiritual sleeping and dreaming already described. How passes our life? We eat, we drink, we sleep. To-morrow and to-morrow the same dull repetition: we eat, we drink, we sleep. So also do the poor animals around us, whom we look down upon as our inferiors. How are we employed in the intervals of this animal, or rather vegetative life? We buy, we sell, we dress, we trifle, we visit, we tell or hear the tale of the day—often a trifling, often a false, sometimes a malevolent one; but in all this, have little other design than to pass away the time without reflection; to forget ourselves; to hide the prospect before us—death, judgment, heaven, and hell!

How stands the real state of that religion we profess? We learned our catechism in our infancy; we read the Bible at school; we go to church like others; we hear and repeat our prayers; but have we, indeed, considered our religion as our principal concern? Christianity is either true or not true. If we believe it true, it must be our chief concern; if not true, then why mock we both God and man by our hypocrisy? But we profess to believe it true. Have we then the symptoms of sincere belief? Have we any secret exercises of the soul in converse and communion with God? Do we spend any time with our own hearts? Have we no sweet intercourse with heaven in solitude?—no fervour of piety, no inward religion, no spiritual sensibility, no pious ardour, no secret store of comfort unknown to the world, and which the world cannot reach, locked up as a precious jewel, in the casket of the heart? If we have not, we have reason to suspect that our belief is insincere; we are assuredly in that state which requires us to listen to the animating call,—“Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead;” for dead we are to God; dead to everything but that vanity which ever terminates in vexation.

Take away the spiritual life, and you level man with

the brutes. He becomes immediately what the philosophers of old called him, an animal with two legs, and without feathers. How are the mighty fallen ! The wings of the eagle are clipped. He no longer eyes the golden sun, but grovels like a reptile on the earth. You not only level him with the brutes ; you make him more miserable than they ; for he is sorely sensible of his evils, which they are not ; he is sensible of his forlorn condition ; sensible of the shortness and passible evils of life ; suffers imaginary, as well as real woe, and sees the gloomy prospect before him,—the grave opening to swallow him up, and the possibility of something terrible beyond it. If we are but animals, then are we of all animals the most miserable ! Our very perfections are our bane.

Since a religious lethargy is thus degrading to our nature, let us rescue ourselves from it to-day, while it is called to-day ; and let no man say with the sluggard, “A little more sleep, and a little more slumber, a little more folding of the hands to sleep.” Life ebbs apace. The day is far spent to many of us. The night is at hand, when the sad license may be allowed to us in that severe punishment, “Sleep on, now, and take your rest.” Your sun is set to rise no more. Death’s scythed, triumphal car drives on rapidly, and mows down all that stand in the way. It is computed by the ingenious in calculation, that on the surface of the globe more than fifty thousand men, women, and children, die every night. How soon may any one of us make an unit in the thousands that every hour go down into the pit, and are no more seen ?

It appears, I think, from what has been already said, that the lively and animating summons contained in the words, “Awake, thou that sleepest,” is necessary to a great part of mankind, whose feelings are become callous, and who (to repeat the emphatic words of Scripture) have a heart of stone, instead of a heart of flesh ; necessary to many who are, upon the whole, commendable for general

decency and propriety of conduct in the world, as the world is now circumstanced. Even good kind of people, as they are called, and appear to men, are often not sufficiently awakened to the calls of religious duty. They acquiesce in decencies, decorums, plausibilities, and the cold formal morality which may be practised on the most selfish motives, for worldly interests, for health, and for pleasure. They are not sufficiently sensible of the Gospel truths, its great promises, and its dreadful denunciations of vengeance. They are virtuous heathens; followers of the religion of nature; not that of Christ. The world approves them, and therefore they approve themselves; but can the world save them? Can they save themselves? No; assuredly, if Christianity be not a fable, they must come to Christ, and to Christ only, for salvation.

Persons who live in pleasure, that is, who make vain and sensual pleasure the sole business of their lives, are expressly said in Scripture to be dead while they live. They appear with smiles of perpetual gaiety; are often furnished with riches and honours; but yet, in the Scripture sense they are dead, if they are not alive to Christ. What avail worldly possessions and ornaments to a spirit dead in trespasses and sins? The soul, in its best state, takes no real delight in them, because it naturally aspires to higher things. So have I seen a nosegay of tulips, and pinks, and roses, put into the cold hand of a corpse, in a coffin, though the poor image of what once was man could neither see the gaudy tints nor smell the fragrance.

Shall we not, then, cry aloud as we are commanded, in the hope of awakening such unthinking persons to a sense of their own miserable condition, and the hopes afforded by the Gospel? Happy for ourselves and our fellow-creatures, if we could address a slumbering world with the trump of an archangel, uttering these enlivening words, "Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead; and Christ shall give thee light."

ON THE SABBATH.

I SEE a party travelling by choice on the Sunday, (the day of rest appointed for man and beast, by the benevolent Being who made them,) with a speed that almost outstrips the wind. Whither are they hastening? To regions of delight; some place of modish resort; where the sound of the viol invites; where the song, and the dance, and the festive board, promise pleasure without alloy. Join the train awhile, and mark the event. The variety of objects dissipates care for a short time; but weariness soon ensues, and satiety converts the promised pleasure to indifference, at least, if not to pain. And now they return to their home, the seat of plenty, with countenances that by no means express satisfaction at what is just past; that satisfaction which might have been expected, considering the preparation and expense, the haste and the eagerness, which appeared in the commencement and progress of the fashionable excursion. Piety, charity, domestic comfort, have all been sacrificed at the shrine of fashion; and the fickle, unfeeling deity has bestowed nothing in return but weariness, languor, and a total disrelish of the pleasures of simplicity, the sweets of innocence, the feast of benevolence, and the enlivening ardour of devotion.

To contrast the scene, I picture a regular, respectable, religious family, spending their time, after the performance of their social, public, or professional duties, around the domestic fireside, in peace and love. Every countenance is illumined with cheerfulness. No tedium, no exhausted spirits, no pale ghastly visages, from the vigils of the card-table; no envious feelings, no jealousy nor rage at the light of superior splendour. Pleased with a well-spent day, they fall on their knees before they retire to repose, and thank the Giver of all comfort for the mercies already received; and pray with humble confidence for protection in the night, and continuance of mercy during the remainder

of life. Cheerful and refreshed they rise in the morning, and go forth to the labours of life, chanting the carols of pious gratitude. Here is enjoyment of existence ; this is life indeed, with a perpetual relish ; not attended with the tumultuary ardours of a fever, but the gentle, pleasant warmth of sound health.

THOMAS SCOTT, M.A.

THIS excellent man and voluminous writer was born in 1747, and was for many years rector of Aston Sandford, where he died in 1821. His works form a valuable accession to the theology of our country. His *Essays on the Force of Truth* are deeply instructive to every class of Christians ; and his *Commentary on the Bible* entitles him to a high rank among the theologians of his day.

CHRISTIANITY EVERYTHING.

THE observation is not more common than just, that if religion be anything, it is everything. If Christianity be true, the consequences of our present conduct are infinitely important : and while the infidel may be more atrociously criminal and extensively mischievous ; the professed believer who lives like other men, is the most inconsistent character in the world. The language of Scripture does not accord to that of modern times : wicked Christians and irreligious believers are never mentioned in the sacred volume ; faith is never supposed separable from a holy life : all worldly men are represented as unbelievers, or as possessing a dead faith, and all believers are spoken of as servants of God, who live to his glory, and are distinguished from other men by the whole tenour of their conduct, and not merely by their principles. These things are as observable in the Old as in the New Testament ; for true religion has been essentially the same ever since the fall of Adam, though many circumstantial alterations have

taken place ; and indeed the perfections of God, the wants of a sinner, and the nature of holiness and happiness, are in themselves immutable. Let me then conclude with the observation which introduced the subject : " If religion be anything, it is everything." It must be our business in this world, if we would enjoy a warranted hope of felicity in the world to come : yea, it must be our element here, in order to a meetness for the inheritance of the saints in light. Every man's own conscience must decide how far this is his character and experience ; and every one must be left to apply the subject to his own case for conviction, admonition, and encouragement.

RELIGION THE ONLY SOURCE OF PERMANENT CONTENTMENT.

IT would engage us too long to pursue this subject into its various particulars. Reverential fear, admiring love, spiritual worship, well-regulated passions, holy affections, with every hope and earnest of heavenly felicity, might easily be shewn to promote genuine, permanent contentment. On the contrary, whatever men may pretend or imagine, " The wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast forth mire and dirt. There is no peace, saith my God, for the wicked." Poets and novelists have beautifully described contentment, and have often charmed their admirers into a momentary oblivion of their sorrows ; but this has made way for subsequent dissatisfaction with every situation and employment in real life. And all men of information know very well, that many of those very writers have rankled with envy and discontent, because the public has not rewarded their ingenuity with liberality proportioned to their self-estimation ! The citizen fancies that contentment dwells in rural obscurity ; the rustic concludes that it may be found in the splendour and pleasures of the metropolis. Courtiers pretend to think that

this pleasing companion is inseparable from retirement ; the poor erroneously imagine that it may be found in palaces. Britons amuse themselves with descriptions of Arcadian groves ; the Arcadians probably conclude, that none are so happy as the inhabitants of this favoured isle.—But pride, ambition, an uneasy conscience, resentment, disproportionate or disappointed expectation, the insipidity of enjoyment when novelty ceases, the common troubles of life, and the dread of death, render men dissatisfied and uneasy in every place and station, from the throne to the cottage. They who have it in their power are continually shifting from one place and pursuit to another ; and such as are excluded from this privilege, envy, grudge, and murmur. The world resembles a number of people in a fever, who relish nothing, are always restless, and try by incessant change of place or posture to escape from their uneasy sensations ; but all their efforts are vain. Does not this single consideration prove, that godliness is the health of the soul, and that without it there can be no abiding contentment ?

REASON AND REVELATION.

WHATEVER plausible and soothing notions students in their retirement may entertain, facts undeniably prove, that reason untutored by Revelation uniformly leads men into atheism, idolatry, impiety, superstition, or enormous wickedness. Renowned and elegant Greece and Rome sunk as deep into these absurd abominations as the barbarians whom they despised. The philosophical Athenians were ignorant worshippers of an unknown God amidst their highest improvements ; nor have the most celebrated modern believers been preserved from most gross absurdities, or lamentable ignorance. How perplexed and unsatisfactory are their discourses, when they attempt to show in what way a sinner may be justified before God ! or when they would instruct

mankind in the method of conquering bad habits, resisting strong temptations, overcoming the world, or meeting death with humble, serious, and reflecting composure.

If, then, unaided reason in its highest advancement can give so little satisfactory information on these important points, what must have been the state of the world at large if Revelation had not been vouchsafed ? So far, therefore, from deeming it unnecessary, we ought to value it unspeakably more than gold and precious stones, and to relish it as "sweeter than honey, and the honeycomb."

IMPORTANCE OF ATTENDING TO THE CONCERNS OF RELIGION.

NUMBERS are of opinion that people should adhere to the religion in which they were educated ; but does not this imply that they deem all religion a vain and trifling matter ? A nation may retain some inconvenient usages without much censure, but to support unjust and ruinous laws because their fathers did so, would imply a most unreasonable and detestable obstinacy. Thus some circumstances in religion may perhaps be retained because they are deemed venerable for their antiquity ; but its grand essentials are our life, and we are ruined if we prefer human tradition to divine revelation. Such an opinion vindicates the Jews in rejecting the Gospel, and exculpates those who cried out, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians." It espouses the cause of Pagans, Mahometans, and Papists ; while it condemns prophets, apostles, martyrs, and zealous reformers ; and in short it considers it criminal to oppose any established error or imposition. But the monstrous deformity of this tenet must be visible whenever it is brought forth to the light, and we need only exhort every one to consider the subject with application to himself, and to act accordingly. It will then be deemed most rational to examine with

diligent and impartial care the evidences of divine revelation; and if the mind be satisfied in this respect, daily to search the Scriptures with earnest prayer for divine instruction, according to the apostle's exhortation: "If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not." But let it also be remembered, that multitudes study religion as a science, and thus adopt a scriptural creed, yea, are useful in propagating the truth, who yet are not themselves truly religious; nay, many have prophesied and wrought miracles who have been at the same time workers of iniquity. Notions may float in the understanding, when they do not durably affect the heart, or influence the conduct: but unless the truth be an engrafted and sanctifying principle in the soul, it must be "held in unrighteousness," and such a religion is indeed a vain thing, though vital Christianity is unspeakably valuable and important.

Our Lord requires his disciples to seek "first the kingdom of God and his righteousness." We should set out early in youth with this most important business; but if we have wasted a very great part of our lives already, we should immediately attend to it with proportionable earnestness and industry. We should begin every year, month, week, and day, with this one thing needful: to which the prime of our affections, and the best of our hours, should be dedicated; and all other pursuits if possible rendered subservient. "Labour not for the meat that perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give you." If this be neglected, all is lost, whatever else may seem to succeed: if this be secured, all things will surely turn out to your advantage.

BISHOP HEBER.

REGINALD HEBER was born in 1783. At an early age he was entered of All-Souls College, Oxford, where his talents and piety were alike remarkable. In 1822 he was elected preacher to the Society of Benchers of Lincoln's Inn, and in the next year he was appointed bishop of Calcutta. The fatigues of this station brought on an apoplectic fit, which ended his most valuable life in 1826.

Beside some beautiful poetry, Bishop Heber was the author of *A Narrative of a Journey through the Upper Provinces of India*, and *Sermons Preached in India and in England*. The first of these works is reckoned one of the very best of its class; and the latter is written with great elegance: occasionally the language is lofty and poetical; but the general scope of his discourses is such, that they are intelligible to the meanest capacity, as well as suitable to the loftiest intellect.

THE LIFE OF MAN A PILGRIMAGE.

WHICH of us is there whose experience may not bear abundant witness to the changeable nature of our prospects in the world: the uncertainty of our best laid plans, the insecurity of our firmest possessions? Where shall the man be found, who, for long together, continueth in one stay? Which of us does not behold and feel himself and every thing around him, with various speed but with equal certainty, hasting on to dissolution and decay, while all which we enjoy has no more comparative permanence than our good or bad reception in an inn, or the still briefer accidents of a voyage? Life bears us on like the stream of a mighty river: our boat at first glides gently down the narrow channel through the playful murmurings of the little brook and the windings of its grassy border. The trees shed their blossoms over our young heads; the flowers on the brink seem to offer themselves to our young hands; we are happy in hope, and we grasp eagerly at the beauties round us; but the stream hurries us on, and still our hands are empty.

Our course in youth and manhood is along a wider and a deeper flood, and amid objects more striking and mag-

nificent. We are animated by the moving picture of enjoyment and industry which passes before us; we are excited by some short-lived success, or depressed and rendered miserable by some equally short-lived disappointment. But our energy and our dependance are both in vain. The stream bears us on, and our joys and our griefs alike are left behind us; we may be shipwrecked, but we cannot anchor; our voyage may be hastened, but it cannot be delayed; whether rough or smooth the river hastens towards its home, till the roaring of the ocean is in our ears, and the tossing of his waves is beneath our keel, and the lands lessen from our eyes, and the floods are lifted up around us, and the shore loses sight of us, and we take our last leave of earth and its inhabitants; and of our further voyage, there is no witness but the Infinite and Eternal.

GOD SEEN IN HIS WORKS.

It is easy to show, even to the plainest understanding, that every thing around us must be the work of some thinking and most wise Being; because every thing around us bears the marks of design, of plan, of contrivance, to answer some particular and useful purpose. If a man finds a watch in the field, even if he has never seen a watch before, he knows, at first sight, that this engine must have had a maker; since it is plain that it could not make itself; and since it would be equally unreasonable to pretend that mere chance could bring so many small pieces of gold and silver and glass, and steel together, and join them in a form so regular, and producing motions so well qualified to answer a particular and useful end. It would never enter into the head of the wildest savage to say that a house, a ship, a pump, a gun, were the work of chance; because he must have daily experienced how very little blind chance could perform; and what irregular,

and clumsy, and useless results proceed from merely allowing things to come together by accident. Throw bricks and mortar and slates and boards together in any quantity, or for any length of time you please, what sort of approach will they make, I will not say to such a building as this wherein we are now assembled, but to the meanest and most miserable cottage? Chance may make a heap of rubbish; but to build a house, something more, much more than chance, is necessary. And who will dare to say, that the many wonderful objects which are under our feet and over our heads,—the lilies of the field, whose garments surpass the proudest robes of mortal majesty; the sun, the moon, the stars, those glorious and shining lights which with so much order and regularity perform their stated rounds, and bless us with the returns of night, of seed time, and harvest—that these can owe their existence to a power which never, that we know of, has been able to produce a single regular or complicated body? Look on our bodies, so fearfully and wonderfully made as we are; look on an ear of corn, and judge for yourselves whether chance could have drawn forth from the mother's womb, all that strange anatomy of muscles and bones, of veins and blood and flesh, which we find about ourselves? or could have multiplied one single grain into many, and raised it from the earth in which it was buried, and clothed it in that machinery of stalk, and root, and ear, and appointed it to draw nourishment from the ground, and ordained that the rain should so fall and the sun so shine, as exactly to be sufficient to bring it to strength and ripeness? “O God, how manifold are thy works: in wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches.” Psalm civ. 34.

THE MANNER OF REVELATION.

WHEN any, after long blindness, have been restored to sight by surgical skill, it has always been thought advisable and necessary to prevent the light of the sun from striking too soon on the newly opened sense; and to keep the patient many days in a dark or shaded chamber, till, by slow degrees, and a cautious disclosure, his eyes have received sufficient strength to sustain without danger the full brightness of noon. Thus it is, that all the truths which the Almighty has thought fit to reveal to his creatures, have been shrouded at first in mystery or prophecy; and that He gradually inured our minds to wonder and miracle, before we were admitted to the knowledge of his more perfect will, and to the noon-day brightness of his glory.

At first, among the first men and the patriarchs, we discover the thin dawn and twilight of Revelation; the covenant taught by the mystery of the woman's seed and the serpent's head, and by the visible sign of the rainbow; or handed down, from age to age, by tradition, by dreams, or by the descent of angels. Then came the break of day, but obscure still, and cloudy; and Christ appeared afar off, but reflected from the face of Moses. And now every generation it grew lighter and more light, as one prophet after another announced the approaching Messiah; till, bearing the full brightness of the Godhead bodily, with healing on his wings, the Sun of righteousness arose.

Still, however, the whole of God's glory is not yet disclosed; and we see, says the Apostle, "through a glass darkly;" we find even as yet, though amply sufficient is revealed for our use, that our curiosity is not yet equally gratified;—that, in all the truths and mysteries of our religion, a part, but not the whole, is discovered. It is only here and there that the clear heaven is shown us, through the clouds and darkness which are beneath the feet

of God ; and the visions indulged us of his glorious nature are no more than sufficient to strengthen our faith, and to raise and exercise our hope.

LEGH RICHMOND, M.A.

LEGH RICHMOND was born in 1772, and received his early education at home. In 1788 he was entered at Trinity College, Cambridge, and he took his degree of M.A. in 1797, immediately after which he entered upon the duties of the curacies of the adjoining parishes of Brading and Yaverland, in the Isle of Wight. He was afterwards chaplain of the Lock Hospital, and finally settled as rector of Turvey, in Bedfordshire, where he performed his clerical duties in the most exemplary manner. He died in 1827.

Legh Richmond was not a voluminous author, but what he has written will be handed down to many generations. His *Annals of the Poor* have gained an almost unexampled celebrity ; and his *Dairyman's Daughter*, so simple in story, so graceful in style, and so rich in imagery, has been translated into almost all the European languages. To Legh Richmond belongs the merit of bringing before the public the writings of the Reformers of the English Church.

THE DEATH OF THE DAIRYMAN'S DAUGHTER.

I SAT down by the bed-side. The mother could not weep, but now and then sighed deeply, as she alternately looked at Elizabeth and me. The big tear rolled down the brother's cheek, and testified an affectionate regard. The good old man stood at the foot of the bed leaning upon the post, and unable to take his eyes off the child from whom he was so soon to part.

Elizabeth's eyes were closed, and as yet she perceived me not. But over the face, though pale, sunk, and hollow, the peace of God which passeth all understanding had cast a triumphant calm.

The soldier, after a short pause, silently reached out his Bible towards me, pointing with his finger at 1 Cor. xv. 55, 56, 58. I then broke silence by reading the passage,—

“ O death, where is thy sting ? O grave, where is thy victory ? The sting of death is sin ; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.” At the sound of these words her eyes opened, and something like a ray of divine light beamed on her countenance as she said, “ Victory, victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

She relapsed again ; taking no farther notice of any one present.

God be praised for the triumph of faith, said I.

Amen, replied the soldier.

The dairyman's uplifted eye showed that the amen was in his heart, though his tongue failed to utter it.

She recovers for a short interval.

At length, I said to Elizabeth, Do you experience any doubts or temptations on the subject of your eternal safety ?

No, sir ; the Lord deals very gently with me, and gives me peace.

What are your views of the dark valley of death now that you are passing through it ?

It is not dark.

Why so ?

My Lord is there ; and He is the light of my salvation.

She did not again revive while I remained, nor ever speak any more words which could be understood. She slumbered for about ten hours, and at last sweetly fell asleep in the arms of that Lord who had dealt so gently with her.

I left the house an hour after she had ceased to speak. I pressed her hand as I was taking leave, and said “ Christ is the resurrection and the life.” She gently returned the pressure, but could neither open her eyes nor utter a reply.

I never had witnessed a scene so impressive as this before. It completely filled my imagination as I returned home.

Farewell, thought I, dear friend, till the morning of an eternal day shall renew our personal intercourse. Thou wast a brand plucked from the burning, that thou mightest become a star, shining in the firmament of glory. I have seen thy light and thy good works, and will therefore glorify our Father which is in heaven. I have seen in thy example what it is to be a sinner freely saved by grace. I have learned from thee, as in a living mirror, who it is that begins, continues, and ends the work of faith and labour of love. Jesus is all in all: He will and shall be glorified. He won the crown, and alone deserves to wear it. May no one attempt to rob Him of his glory. "He saves," and saves "to the uttermost." Farewell, dear sister in the Lord. Thy flesh and thy heart may fail, but God is the strength of thy heart, and thy portion for ever.

A SCENE IMPROVED.

I ROSE early in the morning to view the mountains of Arran. They were enveloped in clouds and rendered invisible. Thus, it occurred to me, have my fair prospects in the landscape of life been often obscured, and the mists of sadness and uncertainty have shed a gloom over my spirit. I have said, "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? And why art thou so disquieted within me? Hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise Him who is the health of my countenance, and my God."

I looked again across the arm of the ocean which intervened, and I saw the clouds becoming gradually thinner; the mountains showed their grotesque and interesting forms as if seen through a veil, which at length dispersed, and the magnificent group of hills was seen in all its beauty. So, I thought, has mercy often shed her rays over the scene of life; dissolved the clouds of apprehension and sorrow, and cheered the whole prospect with the enlivening light of hope and love. Every mountain raises its head to the glory

of God, and all their fantastic but sublime combinations declare his wisdom, power, and goodness. This lovely scenery shall preach to my soul, and from its ever-varying features I will draw forth instruction and subjects for praise and adoration.

MEDITATION ON THE WONDERS OF THE KALEIDOSCOPE.

I TOOK up my kaleidoscope ; and as I viewed with delight the extraordinary succession of beautiful images which it presented to my sight, I was struck : 1. With the singular phenomenon of perfect order being invariably and constantly produced out of perfect disorder ; so that, as by magical influence, confusion and irregularity seemed to become the prolific parents of symmetry and beauty. 2. It occurred to me that the universality of its adoption would imperceptibly lead to the cultivation of the principles of taste, elegance, and beauty through the whole of the present and following generations, and that from the philosopher and artist down to the poorest child in the community. 3. I admired the effects produced by new and varied combinations of colours, as well as forms. The analysis of this kind of arrangement is here attended with unprecedented facility and advantage. The artist, the philosopher, the admirer of the works of nature and of art, may here find a source of amusement almost peculiar to the use of this instrument. 4. I saw a vast accession to the sources of invention in its application to the elegant arts and manufactures, and the consequent growth of a more polished and highly cultivated state of habits, manners, and refinement in both. 5. I mused with delight on the powers and effects of geometrical arrangement and combination, so easily exhibited to the eye, and so characteristic of the optical principle on which the instrument is constructed. 6. I was struck with the idea of infinite variety ; more strikingly demonstrated to the eye than by any former experiment. Here the sublime mingles

with the beautiful. 7. I perceived a kind of visible music. The combination of form and colour produced harmony; their succession melody. Thus what an organ or pianoforte is to the ear, the kaleidoscope is to the eye. I was delighted with this analogy between the senses as exercised in this interesting experiment. 8. I thought that God was very good to afford and permit so innocent and gratifying a source of recreation to all ranks of my fellow-countrymen—a recreation arising partly from the exhibition of so much loveliness to that sense of sight which he had formed, and partly from the exercise of the mental faculties of reason and taste in meditating upon the beautiful vision. I laid my kaleidoscope down, and thought of the adorable attributes of Him from whom all blessings earthly and heavenly flow. I took up my kaleidoscope again, and was lost in the contemplation of its uses and beauties, to think: 1. Here I seem to see on the one hand the ruin and disorder of human nature, and on the other the marvellous influence of grace in producing, out of these materials, order, beauty, and restoration. 2. My instrument I compared to a telescope-glass which faith and hope had put into my hand. I saw through one end of the tube the world, and our life in it a scene of confusion and tribulation—strange revolutions and mysterious complexities. Through the other I beheld promised delights, heavenly realities, beauty for ashes, and the wilderness blooming like a rose. I took the hint, and saw reasons for resignation, contentment, and patient waiting for the glory that shall be revealed. 3. I observed, as I gently turned my instrument round, how quickly the pleasures of sense vanished. The phantom which delighted me but a moment before was gone—for ever gone—irrecoverably lost! Let me not then, said I, set my heart on that which so quickly taketh wing and fleeth away. Such is the world and its delights. 4. But again as I looked, new beauties constantly succeeded those which had passed away. Now I thought, How does the Lord multiply

his mercies in constant variety and succession! In the succession of beautiful configurations in my glass, is an emblem of the endless goodness of my God, whose "tender mercies are over all his works." 5. In this chaos of confusion, thus made to produce beauty and order, I seem to see a representation of the primitive work of the great Creator, who, when the earth was without form, and void, sent forth his Spirit, and therewith created an universe in all its original perfection. 6. When I look at my little fragments of glass and stones, and observe how, from such apparently despicable materials, such beauty and symmetry arise, I learn not to despise the day of small things, and to count nothing unworthy of my notice. I learn how God has chosen the foolish things of this world to confound the wise; and base things of this world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things which are; that no flesh should glory in his presence. I concluded by reflecting how the works of creation, the principles of natural philosophy, the discoveries of science, and the ingenuities of art, illustrate and demonstrate the attributes of the God of redemption. My kaleidoscope shows me, in the harmony of its colours, the union of his excellencies—in the symmetry of its forms, his wisdom—in the invariable efficacy of its principle, his faithfulness—in the endless diversities of its figures, his infinity—in the simplicity of its essential character, his unity—in its faculty of producing novelty, his power—in its ability to delight, his goodness—and in its affording me this opportunity of seeing Him in it, his love. I laid down my kaleidoscope, that I might praise and pray to the Author of all my mercies.

NATURE IN HARMONY WITH SPIRITUAL-MINDEDNESS.

It was not unfrequently my custom, when my mind was filled with any interesting subject for meditation, to seek some spot where the beauties of natural prospect might help me to form pleasing and useful associations.

South-eastward I saw the open sea, bounded only by the horizon. The sun shone, and gilded the waves with a glittering light, which sparkled in the most brilliant manner. On the north the sea appeared like a noble river, varying from three to seven miles in breadth, between the banks of the opposite coast and those of the island which I inhabited. Immediately underneath me was a fine woody district of country, diversified by many pleasing objects. Distant towns were visible on the opposite shore. Numbers of ships occupied the sheltered station which this northern channel afforded them. The eye roamed with delight over an expanse of near and remote beauties, which alternately caught the observation, and which harmonised together, and produced a sense of peculiar interest.

How much of the natural beauties still remain in the world, although its spiritual character has been so awfully defaced by sin ! But when Divine grace renews the heart of the fallen sinner, paradise is regained, and much of its beauty restored to the soul. As this prospect is compounded of hill and dale, land and sea, woods and plains, all sweetly blended together, and relieving each other in the landscape,—so do the gracious dispositions wrought in the soul produce a beauty and harmony of the scene, to which it was before a stranger. What do they not lose who are strangers to serious meditation on the wonders and beauties of created nature ! How gloriously the God of creation shines in his works ! Not a tree, nor leaf, nor flower, nor a bird, nor insect, but proclaims in glowing language, “ God made me.”

ROBERT HALL.

ROBERT HALL, a dissenting minister, and one of the most eloquent writers of his time, was born in 1764. He was educated at a seminary for Baptist ministers; and was early distinguished for the acuteness and originality of his mind and the fervid flow of his eloquence. After enjoying great popularity, he died minister of a congregation at Bristol in 1831.

"Few men," it has been remarked, "combined so many excellencies as a writer as Robert Hall. His understanding was enlarged and cultivated in the highest degree. He possessed a command of language which enabled him to employ the whole vocabulary at pleasure; and his words are so fitly chosen, that they are 'like apples of gold in pictures of silver.' His classical and scientific knowledge, which was great, in the most elegant yet unassuming way, was consecrated to the service of the Cross. His reasoning powers were those of a mental giant, and carry conviction with them. He could be simple or sublime, pathetic or terrible, didactic or argumentative, at pleasure."

INFIDELITY PROLIFIC IN CRIME.

IN those conjunctions which tempt avarice, or inflame ambition, when a crime flatters with the prospect of impunity, and the certainty of immense advantage, what is to restrain an atheist from its commission? To say that remorse will deter him is absurd; for remorse, as distinguished from pity, is the sole offspring of religious belief, the extinction of which is the great purpose of the infidel philosophy. The dread of punishment, or infamy, from his fellow-creatures, will be an equally ineffectual barrier, because crimes are only committed under such circumstances as suggest the hope of concealment; not to say that crimes themselves will soon lose their infamy and their horror, under the influence of that system which destroys the sanctity of virtue, by converting it into a low calculation of worldly interest. Here the sense of an ever-present Ruler, and of an avenging Judge, is of the most awful and indispensable necessity; as it is that alone which impresses on all crimes the character of *folly*, shows that duty and interest in every instance

coincide, and that the most prosperous career of vice, the most brilliant successes of criminality, are but an accumulation of "wrath against the day of wrath."

As the frequent perpetration of great crimes is an inevitable consequence of the diffusion of sceptical principles, so, to understand this consequence in its full extent, we must look beyond their immediate effects, and consider the disruption of social ties, the destruction of confidence, the terror, suspicion, and hatred, which must prevail in that state of society in which barbarous deeds are familiar. The tranquillity which pervades a well-ordered community, and the mutual good offices which bind its members together, is founded on implied confidence in the indisposition to annoy; in the justice, humanity, and moderation of those among whom we dwell. So that the worst consequence of crimes is, that they impair the stock of public charity and general tenderness. The dread and hatred of our species would infallibly be grafted on a conviction that we were exposed every moment to the surges of an unbridled ferocity, and that nothing but the power of the magistrate stood between us and the daggers of assassins. In such a state, laws deriving no support from public manners, are unequal to the task of curbing the fury of the passions, which, from being concentrated into selfishness, fear, and revenge, acquire new force. Terror and suspicion beget cruelty, and inflict injuries by way of prevention.

Pity is distinguished in the stronger impulse of self-preservation. The tender and generous affections are crushed; and nothing is seen but the retaliation of wrongs; the fierce and unmitigated struggle for superiority. This is but a faint sketch of the incalculable calamities and horrors we must expect, should we be so unfortunate as ever to witness the triumph of modern infidelity.

INFIDELITY UNPRODUCTIVE OF VIRTUE.

THIS system is a soil as barren of great and sublime virtue as it is prolific in crimes. By great and sublime virtues are meant, those which are called into action on great and trying occasions, which demand the sacrifice of the dearest interests and prospects of human life, and sometimes of life itself: the virtues, in a word, which by their rarity and splendour draw admiration, and have rendered illustrious the character of patriots, martyrs, and confessors. It requires but little reflection to perceive, that whatever veils a future world, and contracts the limit of existence within the present life, must tend, in a proportionable degree, to diminish the grandeur and narrow the sphere of human action.

As well might you expect exalted sentiments of justice from a professed gamester, as look for noble principles in the man whose hopes and fears are all suspended on the present moment, and who stakes the whole happiness of his being on the events of this vain and fleeting life. If he is ever impelled to the performance of any great achievements in a good cause, it must be solely by the hope of fame; a motive which, besides that it makes virtue the servant of opinion, usually grows weaker at the approach of death, and which, however it may surmount the love of existence, in the heat of battle, or in the moment of observation, can seldom be expected to operate with much force on the retired duties of a private station.

In affirming that infidelity is unfavourable to the higher class of virtues, we are supported as well by facts as by reasoning. We should be sorry to load our adversaries with unmerited reproach; but to what history, to what record, will they appeal, for any traits of moral greatness, any sacrifice of interest or life, any instances of daring heroic virtues exhibited by their disciples? Where shall we look for the trophies of infidel magnanimity, or atheistical virtue? Not that we mean to accuse them of inactivity: they have

recently filled the world with the fame of their exploits ; exploits of a different kind indeed, but of imperishable memory and disastrous lustre.

Though it is confessed, great and splendid actions are not the ordinary employment of life, but must, from their nature, be reserved for high and eminent occasions, yet, that system is essentially defective which leaves no room for their cultivation. They are important both from their immediate advantage and their remoter influence. They often save, and always illustrate, the age and nation in which they appear. They raise the standard of morals ; arrest the progress of degeneracy ; and diffuse a lustre over the paths of life. They are noble monuments of the greatness of the human soul ; and present to the world the august image of virtue in her sublimest form ; from whence streams of light and glory issue to remote times and ages ; while their commemoration by the pen of historians and poets excites a noble emulation, and awakens in distant bosoms the sparks of kindred excellence.

Combine the frequent and familiar perpetration of atrocious deeds with the dearth of great and generous actions, and you have the exact picture of that condition of society, which completes the degradation of the species ; the frightful contrast of dwarfish virtues and gigantic vices, where every thing that is good is mean and stunted in its growth, and everything evil is rank and luxuriant ; a sickening uniformity prevails, and the soul asserts its native grandeur only in volcanic eruptions of anarchy and crime.

HUMILITY.

THE devout man loves to lie low at the footstool of his Creator, because it is there he obtains the most lively perceptions of the Divine excellence, and the most tranquil confidence in the Divine favour. In so august a presence

he sees all distinctions lost, and all beings reduced to the same level. He looks at his superiors without envy, and at his inferiors without contempt; and when from this elevation he descends to mix in society, the conviction of superiority, which must in many instances be felt, is a calm inference of the understanding, and no longer a busy importunate passion of the heart.

THE EFFECTS OF PRIDE.

THE tendency of pride to produce strife and hatred is sufficiently apparent from the pains men have been at to construct a system of politeness, which is nothing more than a sort of mimic humility, in which the sentiments of an offensive self-estimation are so far disguised and suppressed, as to make them compatible with the spirit of society; such a mode of behaviour as would naturally result from an attention to the apostolic conjunction: "Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than themselves." But if the semblance be of so much importance, how much more useful the reality! If the mere garb of humility be of such indispensable necessity, that without it society could not subsist, how much better still would the harmony of the world be preserved, were the condescension, deference, and respect, so studiously displayed, a true picture of the heart?

WILLIAM WILBERFORCE, Esq.

WHILE the horrors of the Slave Trade are remembered, the persevering zeal of Mr. Wilberforce, in procuring its legal abolition, will cause his name to be handed down to posterity among the best benefactors of the human kind. But he was not the friend of humanity alone, but of religion—the pure and vital religion of Christianity, which he has admirably exhibited in his *Practical View*; a work written with great elegance and spirit.

Mr. Wilberforce was born in 1759, was for many years a member of Parliament, and died in 1833.

THE NOMINAL CHRISTIAN.

To pass over the throng from whose minds religion is altogether excluded by the business or the vanities of life; how is it with the more decent and moral? To what criterion shall we appeal? Are their hearts really filled with these things, and warmed by the love which they are adapted to inspire? Then surely their minds are apt to stray to them almost unseasonably; or at least to hasten back to them with eagerness, when escaped from the estrangement imposed by the necessary cares and business of life. He was a masterly describer of human nature who thus portrayed the characters of an undissembled affection:

Unstaid and fickle in all other things
Save in the constant image of the object
That is beloved.—MILTON.

“And how,” it may be perhaps replied, “do you know but that the minds of these people are thus occupied? Can you look into the bosoms of men?” Let us appeal to a test founded on Scripture: “Out of the abundance of the heart,” it has been pronounced, “the mouth speaketh.” Take these persons, then, in some well selected hour, and lead the conversation to the subject of religion. The utmost which can be effected is, to bring them to talk

of things in the gross. They appear lost in generalities ; there is nothing precise and determinate, nothing which implies a mind used to the contemplation of its object. In vain you strive to bring them to speak on that topic which one might expect to be ever uppermost in the hearts of redeemed sinners. They elude all your endeavours ; and if you make mention of it yourself, it is received with no very cordial welcome, at least, if not with unequivocal disgust ; it is at the best a forced and formal discussion. The excellence of our Saviour's moral precepts, the kindness and simplicity, the self-denial and unblemished purity of his life, his patience and meekness in the hour of death, cannot indeed be spoken of but with admiration when spoken of at all, as they have often extorted unwilling praise from the most daring and malignant infidels. But are not these mentioned as qualities in the abstract, rather than as the perfections and lineaments of our patron, and benefactor, and friend, "who loved us and gave himself for us ;" of Him "who died for *our* offences and rose again for *our* justification ;" "who is even now at the right hand of God making intercession for *us* ?" Who would think that the kindness, and humanity, and self-denial, and patience in suffering which we so drily commend, had been exerted towards *ourselves* in acts of more than finite benevolence of which we were to derive the benefit ; in condescensions and labours submitted to for *our* sakes, in pain and ignominy endured for our deliverance.

But these grand truths are not suffered to vanish altogether from our remembrance. Thanks to the compilers of our Liturgy, they are forced upon our notice in their just bearings and connections as often as we attend the service of the Church. Yet is it too much to affirm, that, though there entertained with decorum, as what belong to the day, and place, and occupation, they are yet too generally heard of with little interest ; like the legendary tales of some venerable historian, or like other transactions of great anti-

quity, if not of doubtful credit, which, though important to our ancestors, relate to times and circumstances so different from our own, that we cannot be expected to take any great concern in them? We hear them, therefore, with apparent indifference; we repeat them almost as it were by rote, assuming by turns the language of the deepest humiliation and of the warmest thankfulness with a calm unaltered composure; and when the service of the day is ended, they are dismissed altogether from our thoughts, till on the return of another Sunday a fresh attendance on public worship gives occasion for the renewed expressions of our public humility and gratitude. The Unitarian and Socinian, who deny or explain away the peculiar doctrines of the Gospel, may be allowed to feel these grand truths and to talk of them with little emotion; but in those who profess a sincere belief in them, this coldness is insupportable. The greatest possible service of man to man must appear contemptible when compared with "the unspeakable mercies of Christ;" mercies so dearly bought, so freely bestowed; a deliverance from eternal misery; the gift of a "crown of glory that fadeth not away." Yet what judgment should we form of such conduct as is here censured, in the case of any one who had received some signal services from a fellow-creature? True love is an ardent and an active principle; a cold, a dormant, a phlegmatic gratitude are contradictions in terms. When these generous affections really exist in us in vigour, are we not ever fond of dwelling on the value and enumerating the merits of our benefactor? How are we moved when any thing is asserted to his disparagement! How do we delight to tell of his kindness! with what pious care do we preserve any memorial of him which we may happen to possess! How gladly do we seize any opportunity of rendering to him, or to those who are dear to him, any little good offices, which, though in themselves of small intrinsic worth, may testify the sincerity of our thankfulness!

The very mention of his name will cheer the heart and light up the countenance ! And if he be now no more, and if he had made it his dying request, that in a way of his own appointment we would occasionally meet to keep the memory of his person and of his services in lively exercise, how should we resent the idea of failing in the performance of so sacred an obligation !

THE CHRISTIAN CHARACTER.

OUR blessed Lord himself, in the prayer which closed the last discourse He held with his disciples, enforced on them the ennobling consideration that all his people were to be made partakers of a divine nature : “ Neither pray I for these alone, but for all them that shall believe on me through their word : that they all may be one ; as thou, Father, art in me and I in thee, that they also may be one in us ; I in them, and thou in me.” Thus is the heavenly character to be formed ; thus are we to be “ made meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light ” on earth ; and it will be the daily business of the true Christian to be rooting out every remaining trace of his natural corruptions, and perfecting the lineaments of the Divine image. For this end let him often peruse the Sacred Volume, and more especially the Epistles of St. Paul, and the first Epistle of St. Peter and St. John, with a view to fix in his mind and maintain in his lively recollection a just sense of the nature and extent of spiritual religion, scrutinizing at the same time the state of his own tempers and affections, that he may ascertain the real state of what is styled so forcibly in Scripture, “ the inner man of the heart.”

BISHOP JEBB.

DR. JOHN JEBB received his education at Trinity College, Dublin, and afterwards was presented to the living of Abington, near Limerick. He was the author of *Practical Theology, comprising Discourses on the Liturgy and Principles of the Church of England and Ireland—Sermons, chiefly on Practical Subjects*—and several other works of high character. He at length became bishop of Limerick, and died in 1833.

THE CHRISTIAN HAPPY IN TRIBULATION.

WHAT trouble, indeed, can overwhelm—what fear can discompose, that man who loveth Christ and keepeth his words? What earthly power can make such a man unhappy? Will you take away his riches? His treasure is in heaven. Will you banish him from home? His country is above. Will you bind him in chains? His conscience, his spirit, his affections, are all free. Will you destroy his body? His body shall be raised incorruptible at the last day, and his soul will immediately return unto God who gave it. Heaven itself is but an emblem of his happiness. As heaven is enlightened by the rising sun, his soul is illuminated by that Sun of Righteousness which ariseth, without setting, in his heart. As heaven is intrinsically bright and beautiful, though clouds obscure and midnight darkness surround it, he is peaceful, happy, and serene, in the midst of trials and afflictions. As heaven is exalted above the storms and tempests of this lower atmosphere, he is elevated above the distractions and perturbations of this troublesome world. He is a Christian. His conversation is in heaven; his life is hid with Christ in God.

We admit then, that such a Christian has his sorrows; but his sorrow is sweeter than this world's joy. Every trial, every affliction, draws him nearer to his God. In the secrecy of his chamber, in the silence of midnight, he has

a resource which the world knows not of. He pours forth his fears, his apprehensions, his griefs, into the bosom of his Maker. Suffering thus becomes a well-spring of delight, for it is felt to be a source of spiritual improvement. Thus it is that all things work together, not only for good, but for enjoyment, to them that love their God. Thus it is, that if they sow in tears they also reap in joy.

THE PREACHING OF A MINISTER OF CHRIST.

HIS address should be simple, affectionate, and grave ; his matter solid, his method clear, his expressions chaste and select ; neither soaring to a false sublime, nor sinking to a mean familiarity. He should speak so plainly, that the most ignorant may understand ; so seriously, that the most careless may feel ; so rationally, that the most fastidious may have no room to cavil ; and yet so spiritually, that the most pious may be provided with the bread of life. It is not enough that his flock be taught to know what is true, and exhorted to practise what is right. The heart must be addressed, and the affections must be awakened, or no effectual progress will be made : for all knowledge will be sterile, and all performances unprofitable, unless affection interpose to give vitality to one, and sterling value to the other. To preach thus, it may be imagined, requires a rare assemblage of qualifications ; and indeed it would be so were anything but Christianity the subject. But the word of God both furnishes a perfect model, and, when impressed by the Spirit of God, gives its devoted student a power, which no natural talent, no secular study, no familiarity with the masters of human eloquence, ever did or ever could confer. He that with a well-prepared heart, and rightly harmonised affections, drinks in the divine wisdom of our Lord's discourses, will almost infallibly attain a ready, unlaboured fluency of religious sentiment, which can hardly fail to awaken, to convince, to animate, to influence his hearers. And

if he wish to enliven his discourse with irreproachable beauties both of thought and diction, he can enlist in the service of evangelical truth, the sublimity of Isaiah, the pathetic tenderness of Jeremiah, the deep-toned energy of Job, and the varied excellences of the sweet Psalmist of Israel. Nor be it deemed enthusiasm to say, that fervent prayer will make a more impressive preacher than all the rules of rhetoric ; and that he who speaks what he doth know, and testifies what he doth feel, as in the presence of his gracious God, will win more souls to heaven than if he wielded at will the eloquence of men and angels.

EDWARD BURTON, D.D.

EDWARD BURTON was born in 1794. He was educated at Westminster School ; after which he entered Christ Church, Oxford, as a commoner. He took his degree of B.A. in 1815, and that of M.A. in 1818. He was chosen Examining Chaplain to the bishop of Oxford in 1827 ; and two years after, having taken the degrees of D.D., he was appointed Regius Professor of Divinity, a canonry of Christ Church, and the rectory of Ewelme, in Oxfordshire, being annexed to the theological chair. He died in 1836.

To the Biblical student the labours of Dr. Burton will supply much useful information, as they bring before him the opinions of some of the earliest Christian writers on the fundamental doctrines of Christianity ; and his sermons are distinguished, not more by their learning and sound argument, than by their unaffected piety and genuine Christian feeling.

ON HERESIES.

It may be asked by some persons, whether it is not strange that heresies should have sprung up at all in the lifetime of the Apostles ? It might be said that the care and protection of the Almighty was of such vital importance to the infant church, that He would never have suffered the enemy to sow tares so early in the field. Or, if we consider the Apostles as proclaiming a commission from God, and confirming their pretensions by stupendous miracles, would seem im-

possible for any human presumption to proceed so far as to alter a doctrine which came immediately from heaven. It is not my intention to enter into the abstract question, why God allowed divisions to appear so early in the Church. If it be proved that they did then exist, the believer in Revelation will be satisfied that God saw wise reasons for permitting it to be so ; and to the unbeliever or the sceptic, it would be useless to offer such reasons, because it would still be open for them to say, that it would have been better if the evil had not existed. The believer, as I said, will be satisfied with knowing the fact ; or, if he seek the reason, he will find it in the words of St. Paul : “ There must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you.” Which words are to be understood, not as ascribing a motive to the Almighty in allowing divisions, but as pointing out a good effect which came from them when they appeared : as if St. Paul had said, I lament your divisions, though I am not surprised at them ; it is natural to our condition that they should arise, and God will not always interfere to stop them ; neither is the evil, though in itself great, unattended with good ; for where some err from the right way, others will take warning from their danger, and their own faith, being strengthened and made more conspicuous, will serve perhaps to lessen the number of those who might otherwise have fallen.

THE REV. A. HARE.

THIS excellent clergyman, who died in 1836, was the author of *Sermons to a Country Congregation*, which were published after his death. They are compositions of very great merit, and most admirably adapted to fulfil their great purpose of "making wise unto salvation."

REPENTANCE.

ON the sea-shore, many of you must know, there are often rocks. Now suppose a man walking among these rocks, and finding the stones painful to his feet, thinks he shall walk more easily and pleasantly on the smooth sand below. He quits the rocks and goes down to the sands. The tide is out; the sea is calm; the waters are a long way off: there can be no danger; so he walks on. Presently the winds begin to rise; still there can be no danger; it is only rounding that jutting cliff—there is plenty of time—and then he will be safe. Meanwhile the sea comes on gradually, gradually—wave after wave, like so many horsemen riding in battle array—riding one after the other. Every moment they advance a step or two; and before the man has got to the jutting cliff, he sees them dashing against his feet. What is he to do? On one side of him is a steep and rugged ledge of rocks; on the other side the sea, which the wind is lashing into a storm, is rushing with all its might and fury. Would a man in such a plight think of losing another moment? Would he stop to consider whether he should not hurt his hands by laying hold of the sharp stones? Would he not strain every nerve to reach a place of safety before the waves could overtake him? If his slothfulness whispered to him, "It is of no use; the ledge is very steep; you may fall back when you have got half way. Stay where you are; perhaps the wind may drop, or the waves may stop short, and so you will be safe here;"—if his slothfulness prompted such thoughts as these

would he listen to them ? Would he not reply, " Hard as the task may be, it must be tried, or I am a dead man. God will not work a miracle in my behalf ; He will not change the course of the tides, and put a new and strange bridle on the sea, to save me from the effects of my own laziness ; I have still a few moments left ; let me make the most of them and I may be safe ; if they slip away, I must be drowned." Now the sinner is just in the situation of the man I have been speaking of. On one side of him is the steep ledge of repentance ; on the other side the fiery waves of the bottomless pit are every moment rolling on towards him. Could his eyes be opened as the eyes of Elisha's servant's were, he would see those fiery waves already beginning to surround him. Is this a situation for a man to stop in ? Will any man in such a plight talk about the difficulty of repentance ? Let Passion cry out, " It is hard to deny one's self ;" Faith must make answer, " It is harder to dwell amid everlasting burnings." There is one great difference, however, between the man walking on the seashore, and the sinner walking on the edge of the fiery lake. The former will try to climb the rocks because they offer him a *chance* of escaping ; but if we try to climb the ledge of repentance, our escape is certain, provided we begin in time. Jesus Christ himself is standing at the top of the ledge, crying to us, " Why will ye perish ?" He stretches out his hands to us to help us up ; we have only to lay hold on them and we are safe. But then we must begin in time. They who are old in sin—they whose souls have become stiff through years of wickedness, and have grown double, so to say, by looking downward, how can they make the efforts that are needed for such a task ? Of all hopeless miracles, the miracle of a death-bed repentance seems to me one of the most hopeless. Therefore repent in time ; that is, repent now : for now is the accepted time ; now is the day of salvation.

CHARLES SIMEON, M.A.

THIS clergyman was born at Reading, and received his early education at Eton : he afterwards became a fellow of King's College, Cambridge, where the remainder of his life was principally passed, and where he died in 1836.

Mr. Simeon edited Claude's *Essay on the Composition of a Sermon*, and Jenks's *Prayers and Offices of Devotion*, and wrote *Horæ Homileticæ, or Discourses upon the whole Scripture* ; but was best known as a preacher, and his numerous published sermons have been extensively read, and are highly esteemed by his admirers.

THE PROGRESS OF RELIGION IN THE HEART.

RELIGION, in its first rise in the heart, is a personal matter between God and a man's own soul. A man, desirous of obtaining mercy from God, and peace in his own conscience, reads the Scriptures in order to find out the way of salvation, and marks with special care those passages which assure him of acceptance with God through the merits and mediation of our Lord Jesus Christ. For a considerable time, it is his own eternal welfare which engrosses all his attention, and almost exclusively occupies his mind : and even the salvation of the whole world is of chief interest to him, as warranting a hope that he himself may be a partaker of the blessings so freely offered, and so extensively diffused.

But when he has obtained peace with God, then he searches the Scriptures to find how he may adorn his holy profession, and render to the Lord according to the stupendous benefits that have been conferred upon him. He sees that love, in all its branches, is his bounden duty, and his highest privilege ; and he accordingly determines, with God's help, to live in the most enlarged exercise of that heavenly grace. Benevolence in all its offices, both towards the bodies and the souls of men, is now cultivated by him with holy ardour ; and every society that is engaged

in imparting good to man is gladly encouraged by him. Not only are schools for the education of the poor, and hospitals for the relief of the sick, become objects of his regard, but he extends his compassion to the perishing heathen, and gladly unites with Bible societies and mission societies in their efforts to spread divine knowledge throughout the world, by the dispersion of the Holy Scriptures in all the vernacular languages of the earth, and by the labours of pious ministers.

As religion advances in his soul, he takes deeper views of divine truth, and enters into considerations which, in the earlier stages of his career, found scarcely any place in his mind. He now enters into the character of Jehovah as displayed in the Sacred Volume, and his dispensations, both of providence and grace, as there revealed. He traces up the great work of redemption to the eternal counsels of Jehovah, and regards all its benefits, whether as conferred on himself or others, as the fruits of God's love, manifested in Christ Jesus, and ratified with the blood of the everlasting covenant. He sees that "covenant ordered in all things and sure;" and looks unto God to fulfil towards him all the engagements which from eternity He entered into with his only dear Son, and founds his hopes of ultimate felicity, not only on the mercy, but on the truth and fidelity of God.

THE SPIRITUAL MAN KNOWETH ALL THINGS.

WE do not mean to assert that those who seek the Lord are at once brought to the knowledge of all arts and sciences, or to an acquaintance with all the languages of the earth; but though in points of natural talent or acquired learning the godly man may be inferior to others, yet in spiritual discernment he is superior to the wisest philosopher on earth. The mode of divine teaching may be in some measure comprehended by means of a suitable

and familiar illustration. There are different ways in which an object that is obscure may be rendered visible. One way is by bringing it nearer to us; another is by removing intervening obstacles; another by reflecting stronger lights upon it; and another by strengthening the organs of vision to behold it. Now without entering into a minute consideration of all these particulars, we may observe in general that God's methods of instructing us by his Spirit are somewhat *analogous* to these, in that He brings home with power the truths which we hear, and inclines our hearts to embrace them. The telescope which brings distant objects to our view, and the microscope which enables us to discern things too small to be seen by the naked eye, make no difference whatever either in the objects themselves, or in the organs whereby we perceive them; the things themselves, and our faculties also, all remain the same, whether the instruments be used by us or not. So there is no difference in the truths which are heard by different persons, or in the capacity of those by whom they are perceived; the difference is in the manner in which the truths are presented to the mind. And if we by instruments of human contrivance are able thus to bring to the sight of men things which are invisible to the naked eye, we may well suppose that God is able to bring home to the souls of men truths which the unassisted mind is unable to apprehend. But we may have a still clearer view of this, by considering how it is that the imperfections of our sight are remedied in common life. When we have an indistinct vision of objects before us, it is for the most part owing to this: through an excess or defect of convexity in our eye, the object before us either falls short of the retina, or goes beyond it; and the use of glasses is, by a suitable medium, to bring the object in the retina that so it may be distinctly impressed thereon in all its just symmetry and proportions. Now, the Spirit of God, by giving to us an "honest and good heart," imprints

upon the tablets of our souls the truths of which, without his aid, we could have no just perception; and thus we understand what others are not able even to discern; and thus is fulfilled what St. Paul saith, "the spiritual man judgeth all things."

THE CHRISTIAN'S CHOICE.

THE choice which every true Christian makes, affords matter of astonishment to the ungodly world. He prefers a life of godliness with all the odium attached to it, before all the pleasures and honours which he could possibly enjoy in the ways of sin. They who look no further than to the concerns of time and sense, are amazed that so many sacrifices should be made without any visible recompense. Doubtless the choice of Moses must have been deemed absurd in the palace of Pharaoh, when he is represented as choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season.

SELFISHNESS.

ONE of the strongest characteristics of our fallen nature is selfishness. All our desire is to gratify self; and even those actions which seem to have respect to God, or to our fellow-creatures, will be found upon examination to have self for their principle, and self for their end. This disposition being so deeply rooted in our nature, we cannot expect but that it should operate to a considerable degree even after the evil of it is discerned, and after its allowed dominion has ceased.

HARTWELL HORNE, M.A.

HARTWELL HORNE is the author of several valuable works, the most important of which is his *Introduction to the Critical Knowledge and Study of the Holy Scriptures*. This is a work of great research, and its utility as a text-book to the theological student, and as a book of general reference on Biblical subjects, cannot be rated too high.

CRITERIA OF INSPIRATION.

SINCE the Jewish and Christian Scriptures profess to be given by inspiration of God, and have been recognised as such in every age, (which in itself is no mean presumptive argument that they are divinely inspired writings,) and since also there have been many impostors in the world, who have pretended to be divinely inspired, it is necessary that the authors of the dispensations contained in the Bible should produce satisfactory evidences of their divine mission. What, then, are the evidences of inspiration with which every rational creature ought to be perfectly satisfied? This important question admits of a clear and decisive answer; for, as the existence of any power is demonstrated by its operations, so the possession of supernatural knowledge is established by the performance of supernatural works, or miracles; or, as an acquaintance with any language is manifested by speaking it with propriety and ease, so the gift of inspiration is unquestionably displayed by the foretelling of future events with precision. Miracles and prophecy, therefore, are the two grand criteria on which most stress is laid in the Scriptures. Prophecies are the language of inspiration, and miracles are the operation of that divine agency by which the prophet is influenced. The testimony of our senses is not a more satisfactory evidence of the existence of external objects, than miracles and prophecy are of the existence of inspiration; and though both these modes of evidence are calculated as well for us, who

live in remoter times, as for those who lived in the earliest ; yet the evidence from miracles seems more particularly addressed to *them*, as that from prophecy is to *us*. To them miracles would appear the best proof of the truth of a revelation, as they are addressed to the senses of the rude and the refined, and establish the truth of a religious system at once, without subtle disquisitions, for which comparatively few persons possess leisure, talents, or inclination. Miracles convince the mind at once, while prophecy does not give immediate conviction, but the *means* of conviction to such as in due time shall compare predictions with events. The ancients who beheld the miracles, had reason to believe that the prophecies would be accomplished ; just as the moderns who see them fulfilled, have, besides other arguments, a strong presumption that miracles were performed. The arguments from miracles depending on written testimony, will at all times be equally forcible, while that from prophecy (which has been termed a standing miracle,) is *increasing* in strength through every age ; and the more prophecies are fulfilled, the more testimonies there are, and confirmations of the truth and certainty of divine revelation ; and in this respect we have eminently the advantage over those who lived in the days of Moses and the Prophets, of Christ and his Apostles. They had this growing evidence in part, but to us this amazing web is still more unfolded, and more of its wonderful texture is displayed. They indeed heard the discourses of Moses and the Prophets, of Christ and his Apostles, and they beheld their miracles : but we have this advantage over them, that several things which were then only foretold are now fulfilled ; and what were to them only matters of *faith*, are become matters of *fact* and *certainty* to us. The evidence furnished by miracles and prophecy is so abundantly sufficient to prove that the Bible is the word of God, that we might safely rest its divine authority on these proofs. There are, however, other in-

ternal evidences, which though not so obviously striking as miracles and prophecy, come home to the conscience and judgment of every person, whether learned or illiterate, and which leave infidels in every situation without excuse. These internal evidences are—the sublime doctrine and excellent moral precepts revealed in the Scriptures—the wonderful harmony and intimate connexion subsisting between all the parts of Scripture—the miraculous preservation of the Scriptures—and their tendency to promote the present and eternal happiness of mankind, as evinced by the blessed effects which are invariably produced by a cordial reception of the Bible.

DIVINE CHARACTER OF THE FOUNDER OF THE
CHRISTIAN RELIGION.

THE third and last dispensation of religion is that which was introduced by that divine and glorious Person whom the prophets had foretold. This is properly the Christian dispensation, which was designed and fitted for an universal extent, and in which, considered in its original purity, religion is brought to its highest perfection and noblest improvement. An admirable wisdom, goodness, and purity, shone forth in the whole conduct and character of the great Author of it. He came in the fulness of time ; the time which had been pointed out in the prophetical writings. In Him the several predictions relating to the extraordinary person that was to come were fulfilled ; and the several characters by which He was described were wonderfully united, and in no other person. He appeared, as was foretold concerning Him, mean in his outward condition and circumstances, and yet maintained in his whole conduct a dignity becoming his divine character. Many of his miracles were of such a kind, and performed in such a manner, as seemed to argue a dominion over nature and its established laws ; and they were acts of great goodness as well as power. He went about doing

good to the bodies and to the souls of men ; and the admirable instructions He gave, were delivered with a divine authority, and yet great familiarity and condescension. And his own practice was every way suited to the excellency of his precepts. He exhibited the most finished pattern of universal holiness, of love to God, of zeal for the Divine glory, of the most wonderful charity and benevolence towards mankind, of the most unparalleled self-denial, of the heavenly mind and life, of meekness and patience, humility and condescension. Never was there so perfect a character, so God-like, venerable, and amiable, so remote from that of an enthusiast or an impostor. He is the only founder of a religion in the history of mankind which is totally unconnected with all human policy and government, and therefore totally unconducive to any worldly purpose whatever. All others, as Mohammed, Numa, and even Moses himself, blended their religious and civil institutions together, and thus acquired dominion over their respective people ; but Christ neither aimed at nor would accept of any such power. He rejected every object which all other men pursue, and made choice of all those from which others flee and are afraid of. No other founder of a religion ever made his own sufferings and death a NECESSARY part of his original plan, and essential to his mission. Jesus Christ, however, most expressly foretold his own sufferings—the cruel and ignominious death He was to undergo ; his resurrection from the dead on the third day ; his ascension into heaven ; the dreadful judgments and calamities that should be inflicted on the Jewish nation ; and, what seemed the most improbable thing in the world, the wonderful progress of his own Gospel from the smallest beginnings, notwithstanding the persecutions and difficulties to which He foretold it should be exposed. All this was most exactly fulfilled. He rose again on the third day, and shewed Himself alive to his disciples after his passion by many infallible proofs, when their hopes were so sunk, that they could hardly believe that He was risen, till

they could no longer doubt of it without renouncing the testimony of all their senses. He gave them commission to go and preach the Gospel to all nations, and promised that, to enable them to do it with success, they should be endued with the most extraordinary powers and gifts of the Holy Ghost. This accordingly they did, and, though destitute of all worldly advantages, without power, riches, interest, policy, learning or eloquence, they went through the world preaching a crucified Jesus, as the Saviour and Lord of men, and teaching the things which He had commanded them ; and by the wonderful powers with which they were invested, and the evidences they produced of their divine mission, they prevailed and spread the religion of Jesus, as their great Master had foretold, in the midst of sufferings and persecutions, and in opposition to the reigning inveterate prejudices both of Jews and Gentiles.

THE PERFECTIONS OF GOD AND THE CONSEQUENT DUTY OF MAN.

THE account of God and of his perfections contained in the Scriptures commends itself to our reason as worthy of the highest and most excellent of all beings, and the most suitable affections and dispositions towards Him. He is represented as a pure Spirit, the Creator and Governor of the world, possessed of infinite wisdom, holiness, truth, justice, goodness, and perfection ; the witness and judge of our actions ; eternal, immortal, invisible, unchangeable, and omnipotent. At the same time his majesty is softened (if we may be allowed the expression,) by his benevolence, which is liberal and unwearied, in diffusing good throughout the universe—" his tender mercies are over all his works,"—embracing at once the interests of our souls and bodies ; and while He bestows in abundance the blessings and consolations of the present life, He has provided for us perfect and exalted felicity in the life to come. Of all the views of God which had

ever been given, none was so calculated to endear Him to us, and to inspire our hearts with confidence, as this short but interesting description, of which the scheme of redemption affords a sublime illustration—"God is love." (1 John iv. 16.) But the Gospel not only makes known to us the nature of God, it also imparts to us a full discovery of our duty to Him, clothed in ideas the most venerable, amiable, and engaging. We are required to fear God, but it is not with a servile horror, such as superstition inspires, but with a filial reverence. We are directed and encouraged to address ourselves to Him as our heavenly Father through Jesus Christ the Son of his love, and in his name to offer up our prayers and our praises, our confessions and thanksgivings, with the profoundest humility becoming creatures deeply sensible of their own unworthiness, and yet with an ingenuous affiance, hope, and joy. We are to yield the most unreserved submission to God as our sovereign Lord, our most wise and righteous Governor, and most gracious Benefactor; to resign ourselves to his disposal, and acquiesce in his providential dispensations, as being persuaded that He orders all things really for the best; to walk continually as in his sight, and with regard to his approbation, setting Him before us as our great all-seeing Eye-witness and Judge—our chiefest good, and highest end. Above all, we are required to love the Lord our God with all our heart, and mind, and strength, and to show that we love Him by keeping his commandments, by aspiring after conformity to Him in his inimitable perfections, and by endeavouring, as far as we are able, to glorify Him in the world.

The external worship of God, according to the idea given of it in the New Testament, is pure and spiritual, and is characterised by a noble simplicity. As God is "a spirit" He is to be worshipped not in a formal manner, but in "spirit and truth." (John iv. 24.) The numerous rites of the Mosaic dispensation, which, though wisely suited to that time and state, were marks of the imperfection of that

economy, are now abolished. The ordinances of Christianity prescribed in the Gospel are few in number, easy to be observed, and noble in their use and significance; and those ceremonies which are necessary, in order that all things may be done decently and in order, are left to be filled up in every country at the discretion of pious men lawfully appointed. A glorious plan of religious worship this! grounded upon the perfections of the divine nature, and admirably corresponding with the case and necessities of sinful man.

THOMAS CHALMERS, D.D.

DR. CHALMERS is Professor of Theology in the University of Edinburgh. He is the author of many works, the most important of which is, perhaps, his *Evidence and Authority of the Christian Religion*. This evinces the mighty power of argument with which he is endowed, and is generally regarded as a masterly performance. The characteristics of the writings of Dr. Chalmers are originality of thought, strong reasoning, and vigour of diction. His style is occasionally burdened with sentences of enormous length, but along with this striking imperfection there are numerous excellencies.

THE EFFECTS AN EARLY RELIGIOUS EDUCATION OUGHT TO HAVE UPON THE MIND.

ANTERIOR to a well-grounded belief in the objects of religion, there is a preparatory season of religious scholarship, commencing with childhood and reaching onward through successive stages in the growth of intellect—a very early and useful season of aspirations and inquiries, prompted by a sense of duty even to the yet unknown God. Here it is that the ethics of our science and the objects of our science stand most noticeably out from each other—for, at the very time that the objects are unknown, there is an impellent force upon the spirit, of a clear ethical dictate, enjoining us to acquire a knowledge of them.

And this early education can be vindicated not only on the score of principle, but also on the score of effect. Whether it properly illuminates or not, it at least prepares for those brighter means of illumination which are competent to a higher state of the understanding. If it do not rationally convince, it at least provides a responsibility, though not a security for that attention which goes before such a conviction. It does not consummate the process; but, in as far as the moral precedes the intellectual, it makes good the preliminary steps of the process—insomuch that, in every Christian land, the youth and the manhood are accountable for their belief, because accountable for their use or their neglect of that inquiry, by which the belief ought to have been determined. There is no individual so utterly a stranger to the name and the conception of a Divinity as to be without the scope of this obligation. They have all from their infancy heard of God. Many have been trained to think of Him, amidst a thousand associations of reverence. Some, under a roof of piety, have often lisped the prayers of early childhood to this unseen Being; and, in the oft-repeated sound of morning and evening orisons, they have become familiar to his name. Even they who have grown up at random through the years of a neglected boyhood, are greatly within the limits of that responsibility for which we plead. They have at least the impression of a God. When utterance of Him is made in their hearing, they are not startled as if by the utterance of a thing unnoticed and unknown. They are fully possessed, if not with the certainty, at least with the idea, of a great eternal Sovereign whose kingdom is the universe, and on whose will all its processes are suspended. Whosoever may have escaped from the full and practical belief of such a Being, he most assuredly hath not escaped from the conception of Him. The very imprecations of profaneness, may have taught it to him. The very Sabbaths he spends in riot and blasphemy, at least remind him of a God. The worship-bell of the church he never enters, con-

veys to him, if not the truth, at least the imagination of the truth. In all these ways, and in many more beside, there is the sense of a God upon his spirit—and if such a power of evidence hath not been forced upon his understanding as to compel the assurance that God is—at least such intimations have been given, that he cannot possibly make his escape from the thought that a God may be. In spite of himself this thought will overtake him, and if it do not arrest him by a sense of obligation, it will leave guilt upon his soul. It might not make him a believer, but it ought to make him an inquirer—and in this indifference of his there is the very essence of sin—though it be against a God who is unknown.

THE SUPREMACY OF CONSCIENCE.

CONSCIENCE in man is as much a thing of observation as the regulator in a watch is a thing of observation. It depends for its truth, therefore, on an independent and abiding evidence of its own, under all the diversities of speculation on the nature of virtue. By the supremacy of conscience we affirm a truth which respects not the nature of virtue, but the nature of man. It is that in every human heart there is a faculty, not, it may be, having the actual power, but having the just and rightful pretensions to sit as judge and master over the whole of human conduct. Other propensities may have too much sway, but the moral propensity, if I may so term it, never can; for to have the presiding sway in all our concerns, is just that which properly and legitimately belongs to it. A man under anger may be too strongly prompted to deeds of retaliation; or under sensuality be too strongly prompted to indulgence; or under avarice be too closely addicted to the pursuit of wealth; or even under friendship be too strongly inclined to partiality; but he can never under conscience be too strongly inclined to be as he ought and to do as he ought. We may say of a

watch that its main-spring is too powerful; but we would never say that a regulator is too powerful. We may complain of each of its other parts that it has too much influence over the rest, but not that the part whose office it is to regulate and fix the rate of going, has too much influence. And just as a watch cannot move too regularly, man cannot walk too conscientiously. The one cannot too much obey its regulator; the other cannot too much obey his conscience. In other words, conscience is the rightful sovereign in man; and if any other, in the character of a ruling passion, be the actual sovereign, it is an usurper.

VIRTUE AND VICE CONTRASTED.

VIRTUE is not only seen to be right—it is felt to be delicious. There is happiness in the very wish to make others happy. There is a heart's ease, or a heart's enjoyment, even in the first purposes of kindness, as well as in its subsequent performances. There is a certain rejoicing sense of clearness in the consistency—the exactitude of justice and truth. There is a triumphant elevation of spirit in magnanimity and honour. In perfect harmony with this, there is a placid feeling of serenity and blissful contentment in gentleness and humility. There is a noble satisfaction in those victories which, at the bidding of a principle, or by the power of self-command, may have been achieved over the propensities of animal nature. There is an elate independence of soul in the consciousness of having nothing to hide, and nothing to be ashamed of. In a word, by the constitution of our nature each virtue has its appropriate charm; and virtue, on the whole, is a fund of varied as well as of perpetual enjoyment to him who hath imbibed its spirit, and is under the guidance of its principles. He feels all to be health and harmony within; and without he seems as if to breathe in an atmosphere of beautiful transparency;

proving how much the nature of man and the nature of virtue are in unison with each other. It is hunger which urges to the use of food ; but it strikingly demonstrates the care and benevolence of God, so to have framed the organ of taste, as that there shall be a superadded enjoyment in the use of it. It is conscience which urges to the practice of virtue ; but it serves to enhance the proof of a moral purpose, and therefore of a moral character in God, so to have framed our mental economy, that, in addition to the felt obligation of its rightness, virtue should of itself be so regaling to the taste of the inner man.

In counterpart to these sweets and satisfactions of virtue, is the essential and inherent bitterness of all that is morally evil. We repeat, that with this particular argument we do not mix up the agonies of remorse. It is the wretchedness of vice in itself, not the wretchedness which we suffer because of its recollected and felt wrongness that we now speak of. It is not the painfulness of the compunction felt because of our anger, upon which we at this moment insist, but the painfulness of the emotion itself ; and the same remark applies to all the malignant desires of the human heart. True, it is inseparable from the very nature of a desire, that there must be some enjoyment or other at the time of its gratification, but, in the case of these evil affections, it is not unmixed enjoyment. The most ordinary observer of his own feelings, however incapable of analysis, must be sensible, even at the moment of wreaking in full indulgence of his resentment on the man who has provoked or injured him, that all is not perfect and entire enjoyment within ; but that in this, and indeed in every other malignant feeling, there is a sore burden of disquietude ; an unhappiness tumultuating in the heart, and visibly pictured on the countenance. The ferocious tyrant who has only to issue forth his mandate, and strike dead at pleasure the victim of his wrath, with any circumstance too of barbaric caprice and cruelty, which his fancy in the very

waywardness of passion unrestrained and power unbounded might suggest to him, he may be said to have experienced through life a thousand gratifications in the solaced rage and revenge which, though ever breaking forth on some new subjects, he can appease again every day of his life by some new execution. But we mistake it if we think otherwise than that, in spite of these distinct and very numerous, nay, daily gratifications, if he so choose, it is not a life of fierce internal agony notwithstanding. It seems indispensable to the nature of every desire, and to form part indeed of its very idea, that there should be a distinctly felt pleasure, or, at least, a removal at the time of a distinctly felt pain, in the act of its fulfilment.—yet, whatever recreation or relief may have thus been rendered, without doing away the misery, often in the whole amount of it, the intense misery inflicted upon man by the evil propensities of his nature. Who can doubt, for example, the unhappiness of the habitual drunkard?—and that, although the ravenous appetite, by which he is driven along a stormy career, meets every day, almost every hour of the day, with the gratification that is suited to it. The same may be equally affirmed of the voluptuary, or of the depredator, or of the extortioner, or of the liar. Each may succeed in the attainment of his specific object; and we cannot possibly disjoin from the conception of success, the conception of some sort of pleasure; yet in perfect consistency, we affirm, with a sad and heavy burthen of unpleasantness or unhappiness on the whole. He is little conversant with our nature who does not know of many a passion belonging to it, that it may be the instrument of many pleasurable, nay, delicious or exquisite sensations, and yet be a wretched passion still; the domineering tyrant of a bondsman, who at once knows himself to be degraded, and feels himself to be unhappy. A sense of guilt is one main ingredient of this misery.

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INDUCTION OF A SUPREME CAUSE FROM A SURVEY OF THE SCIENCES.

IN the utterance of science, no cadence is heard with which the human mind can feel satisfied. Yet we cannot but go on listening for and expecting a satisfactory close. The notion of a cadence appears to be essential to our relish of the music. The idea of some closing strain seems to lurk among our own thoughts, waiting to be articulated in the notes which flow from the knowledge of external nature. The idea of something ultimate in our philosophical researches, something in which the mind can acquiesce, and which will leave us no further questions to ask, of *whence*, and *why*, and *by what power*, seems as if it belonged to us;—as if we could not have it withheld from us by any imperfection or incompleteness in the actual performances of science. What is the meaning of this conviction? What is the reality thus anticipated? Whither does the development of this idea conduct us?

We have already seen* that a difficulty of the same kind, which arises in the contemplation of causes and effects considered as forming an historical series, drives us to the assumption of a First Cause, as an axiom to which our idea of causation in time necessarily leads. And as we

* The reference is to the *Philosophy of the Inductive Sciences*, of which work this is the conclusion.

were thus guided to a First Cause in order of succession, the same kind of necessity directs us to a Supreme Cause in order of causation.

On this most weighty subject it is difficult to speak fitly; and the present is not the proper occasion, even for most of that which may be said. But there are one or two remarks which flow from the general train of the contemplations we have been engaged in, and with which we must conclude.

We have seen how different are the kinds of cause to which we are led by scientific researches. *Mechanical forces* are insufficient without *chemical affinities*; chemical agencies fail us, and we are compelled to have recourse to *vital powers*; vital powers cannot be merely physical, and we must believe in something hyperphysical, something of the nature of a *soul*. Not only do biological inquiries lead us to assume animal soul, but they drive us much further; they bring before us *perception*, and *will* evoked by perception. Still more, these inquiries disclose to us *ideas* as the necessary forms of perception, in the actions of which we ourselves are conscious. We are aware, we cannot help being aware, of our ideas and our volitions as belonging to *us*, and thus we pass from *things* to *persons*; we have the idea of *personality* awakened. And the idea of design and *purpose*, of which we are conscious in our own minds, we find reflected back to us, with a distinctness which we cannot overlook, in all the arrangements which constitute the frame of organized beings.

We cannot but reflect how widely diverse are the kinds of principles thus set before us;—by what vast strides we mount from the lower to the higher, as we proceed through that series of causes which the range of the sciences thus brings under our notice. Yet we know how narrow is the range of these sciences when compared with the whole extent of human knowledge. We cannot doubt that on many other subjects, besides those included in physical specula-

tion, man has made out solid and satisfactory trains of connexion ;—has discovered clear and indisputable evidence of causation. It is manifest, therefore, that, if we are to attempt to ascend to the Supreme Cause—if we are to try to frame an idea of the Cause of all these subordinate causes ;—we must conceive it as more different from any of them, than the most diverse are from each other ;—more elevated above the highest, than the highest is above the lowest.

But further ;—though the Supreme Cause must thus be inconceivably different from all subordinate causes, and immeasurably elevated above them all, it must still include in itself all that is essential to each of them, by virtue of that very circumstance that it is the cause of their causality. Time and space,—infinite time and infinite space,—must be among its attributes ; for we cannot but conceive infinite time and space as attributes of the Infinite Cause of the universe. Force and matter must depend upon it for their efficacy ; for we cannot conceive the activity of force, or the resistance of matter, to be independent powers. But these are its lower attributes. The vital powers, the animal soul, which are the causes of the actions of living things, are only the effects of the Supreme Cause of life. And this Cause, even in the lowest forms of organized bodies, and still more in those which stand higher in the scale, involves a reference to ends and purposes, in short, to manifest final causes. Since this is so, and since, even when we contemplate ourselves in a view studiously narrowed, we still find that we have ideas, and will and personality, it would render our philosophy utterly incoherent and inconsistent with itself, to suppose that personality, and ideas, and will, and purpose, do not belong to the Supreme Cause from which we derive all that we have and all that we are.

But we may go a step further :—though, in our present field of speculation, we confine ourselves to knowledge founded on the facts which the external world presents to us, we cannot forget, in speaking of such a theme as that to

which we have thus been led, that these are but a small, and the least significant portion of the facts which bear upon it. We cannot fail to recollect that there are facts belonging to the world within us, which more readily and strongly direct our thoughts to the Supreme Cause of all things. We can plainly discern that we have ideas elevated above the region of mechanical causation, of animal existence, even of mere choice and will, which still have a clear and definite significance, a permanent and indestructible validity. We perceive as a fact, that we have a conscience, judging of right and wrong; that we have ideas of moral good and evil; that we are compelled to conceive the organization of the moral world, as well as of the vital frame, to be directed to an end and governed by a purpose. And since the Supreme Cause is the cause of these facts, the origin of these ideas, we cannot refuse to recognize Him as not only the Maker, but the Governor of the world; as not only a Creative, but a Providential Power; as not only a Universal Father, but an Ultimate Judge.

We have already passed beyond the boundary of those speculations which we proposed to ourselves as the basis of our conclusions. Yet we may be allowed to add one other reflection. If we find in ourselves ideas of good and evil, manifestly bestowed upon us to be the guides of our conduct, which guides we yet find it impossible consistently to obey;—if we find ourselves directed, even by our natural light, to aim at a perfection of our moral nature from which we are constantly deviating through weakness and perverseness;—if, when we thus lapse and err, we can find, in the region of human philosophy, no power which can efface our aberrations, or reconcile our actual with our ideal being, or give us any steady hope and trust with regard to our actions, after we have thus discovered their incongruity with their genuine standard;—if we discern that this is our condition, how can we fail to see that it is in the highest degree consistent with all the indications supplied by such a philo-

sophy as that of which we have been attempting to lay the foundations, that the Supreme Cause, through whom man exists as a moral being of vast capacities and infinite hopes, should have himself provided a teaching for our ignorance, a propitiation for our sin, a support for our weakness, a purification and sanctification of our nature ?

And thus in concluding our long survey of the grounds and structure of science, and of the lessons which the study of it teaches us, we find ourselves brought to a point of view in which we can cordially sympathize, and more than sympathize, with all the loftiest expressions of admiration and reverence and hope and trust, which have been uttered by those who in former times have spoken of the elevated thoughts to which the contemplation of the nature and progress of human knowledge gives rise. We can not only hold with Galen, and Harvey, and all the great physiologists, that the organs of animals give evidence of a purpose ;—not only assert with Cuvier that this conviction of a purpose can alone enable us to understand every part of every living thing ;—not only say with Newton that “every true step made in philosophy brings us nearer to the First Cause, and is on that account highly to be valued ;”—and that “the business of natural philosophy is to deduce causes from effects, till we come to the very First Cause, which certainly is not mechanical :”—but we can go much further, and declare, still with Newton, that “this beautiful system could have its origin no other way than by the purpose and command of an intelligent and powerful Being, who governs all things, not as the soul of the world, but as the Lord of the universe ; who is not only God, but Lord and Governor.”

When we have advanced so far, there yet remains one step. We may recollect the prayer of one, the master in this school of the philosophy of science : “This also we humbly and earnestly beg ;—that human things may not prejudice such as are divine ;—neither that from the un-

locking of the gates of sense, and the kindling of a greater natural light, anything may arise of incredulity or intellectual night towards divine mysteries ; but rather that by our minds thoroughly purged and cleansed from fancy and vanity, and yet subject and perfectly given up to the Divine Oracles, there may be given unto faith the things that are faith's." When we are thus prepared for a higher teaching, we may be ready to listen to a greater than Bacon, when he says to those who have sought their God in the material universe, "Whom ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you." And when we recollect how utterly inadequate all human language has been shown to be, to express the nature of that Supreme Cause of the natural, and rational, and moral, and spiritual world, to which our philosophy points with trembling finger and shaded eyes, we may receive, with the less wonder but with the more reverence, the declaration which has been vouchsafed to us: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

NOBLEST VIEW OF THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD.

SURELY God appears in far greater majesty when we view him as the ruler and lawgiver of the moral world, than when we contemplate the earth as his footstool and the sky as his canopy. He sits enthroned, not only among clouds and lightnings, stars and planets ; but also in the wider and deeper world of thought and will, of passion and action, his government is felt, his strength and wisdom are seen. There, he has not only a throne but a sanctuary. He has erected a tribunal in the human heart, so that though man *may do evil*, he cannot knowingly *approve* it. On this tribunal, on this sanctuary, we may well look with admiration and reverence ; and as we read the sublime lesson of a great and wise God in the wide page of the external world, we decipher, in the moral constitution of man, a testimony no

less significant, and even more touching and solemn, of his holiness and righteousness, his love of good and hatred of iniquity.

This is indeed the lesson which has constantly offered itself to the minds of those, even among the heathen, who have, in seriousness and sincerity, looked at the constitution of man, and of nature, and endeavoured to raise and purify themselves by the contemplation. They have in all cases, though often without being able to render reasons which should convince more vulgar and turbid minds, advanced, not only to the persuasion of a Maker of the universe, but also of a just and righteous Master and Ruler, on whose approval the good man may rest in trust and hope. This was the conclusion, as you well know, to which the wisest and best of those were led, who reasoned and enquired before the light was sent to lighten the Gentiles. This belief, a wavering and feeble conviction no doubt, yet still the constant prompting of their better nature, dawned upon some minds, even among those Greeks who by their wisdom knew not God for any effectual purpose of salvation. The same persuasion too took root among the reasoners of that city [Rome], to whom the Epistle now under consideration is addressed, and mingled with the injunctions of the sternest code of morality*, a soothing recognition of a divine power to which we owe all that we have of good. And what shall we say of the meditations of those who worshipped the true God? Can it have escaped the notice of any reader of the Bible, that the Jewish Psalmist, always delighted to trace the greatness and goodness of the Creator in the things which are seen, never concludes such a train of reflections without recurring to the superior beauty and majesty of God's moral attributes? Thus in that beautiful hymn, the hundred and fourth psalm, the divine poet exclaims, O Lord, how manifold are thy works:—the earth is full of thy riches;—so is the great and wide sea; thou stretchest

* The Stoical philosophy.

out the heavens like a curtain ;—thou makest the clouds thy chariot, and walkest upon the wings of the wind ;—thou hast planted the hills with thy forests ;—thou givest food to the lions and space to the leviathan ;—life and death are in thy hand. The glory of the Lord shall endure for ever ;—I will sing unto the Lord as long as I live ;—my meditation of Him shall be sweet. But is this all ? Are these songs and meditations only concerning the aspects and movements of lifeless matter ; the life and death of brute beasts ? Far from it : these contemplations lead up to a more solemn thought ; “ Let sinners be consumed out of the earth, and let the wicked be no more. Bless the Lord, O my soul ! ” The loftiest notions of God the Creator lead us on to God the Judge. We cannot rest satisfied with acknowledging the Divine Power, except we also believe it to be the awful enemy of sin and wickedness. All living things wait upon Him that He may give them their meat in due season ; if He hide his face they are troubled ; if He take away their breath they return to dust : and we cannot but recognise, in the Lord of life and death, the guardian of that separation of sin and holiness to which our reason points. When in our moments of inward brightness we consider Him who clothes himself with light as with a garment, we are solemnly impressed with the Psalmist’s persuasion that “ justice and judgment are the habitation of his throne, mercy and truth go before his face.” (Ps. LXXXIX. 17).

PRESENT AND FUTURE CONCEPTIONS OF THE HOLINESS OF GOD.

WE now see our Maker and Judge, as through a glass, darkly. We see but the remote beams of his radiance, the outskirts of his glory ; but we believe that these scattered rays and broken reflexions proceed from a central orb of unutterable brightness. We believe that God is the author

of all good ; and we judge of God by what we see of good. We seek to approach Him by imagining all we can of best and holiest. We conceive our Father in heaven to be the perfection of all that *tends* to perfection in his creation ; and on the wings of the best faculties which He has given us,—our purest thoughts, our highest aspirations, our most solemn judgments,—we endeavour to raise ourselves into the region which lies at the foot of his eternal throne.

With what faculties we shall contemplate Him if we are admitted to that blessed region, it is not for us to say. What more intimate knowledge, what clearer vision, what closer apprehension of the attributes of God, may be vouchsafed hereafter to those that love Him, we know not. In their glorified condition they will see Him as He is, and no longer judge but by the reflexion of Him in his works, the world and the souls of men. They may then perhaps understand the essence of goodness, and purity and holiness ; and look with adoring eyes into the sources, hidden far in the depths of the Divine nature, from which these perfections have flowed forth into his creation. When day shall cease to utter forth to day and night to night ;—when the angel shall swear that there shall be time no longer :—when the heavens shall be rolled up as a scroll ;—when the world in which we live shall cease to bear testimony to God's power and wisdom and kindness ;—then the world within us may also cease to be the witness of God's holiness and righteousness, justice and truth. Then, it may be, we shall no longer have to seek the kingdom of God in the soul of man, but may be able to gaze on its glories as they surround us on every side. But while we are in our present condition, we may not omit to look into our hearts and into our consciences for a distinct and significant evidence of God's nature and purposes. This we are bound to do, not only that we may adore and glorify Him, but also that we may thus be able to receive and to interpret those declarations and directions, those gracious promises and

pure commands, which He has given us by a more especial and merciful dispensation. It is our duty—may it be our privilege !—it is our appointed course—may it be our path of blessedness !—to find, within and without, in the book of revelation and of reason, in the original structure of our souls, as well as in the blessed provisions for their redemption and sanctification, evidence of Him, who not only “openeth his hand and filleth all things living with plenteousness,” but also “is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works.” (Ps. cXLv. 16, 17.)

CONSCIENCE.

IN order that man may perceive the truths which belong to his moral nature, he must look for them. In order to judge of the true nature of human actions, he must seek a rule to which they must conform ;—not a secondary rule, by which they are subservient to some other end ; but a primary rule, by which they are right and wrong. In order to read the law written on the heart, he must turn his eyes within, and use such care and patience as befits one trying to decipher the record of a concealed treasure. He must habituate himself to refer to the internal guide, not only for safety, but also in order to know that there is such a guide. He must, like the apostle, exercise himself to have a conscience void of offence ; not only as the great rule of Christian practice, but also in order that, if he has need to deal speculatively with such subjects, he may, as a Christian moralist, know that he *has* a conscience.

This consideration well deserves our most serious attention. Too many there are, in whom perverse and vicious habits of thought and feeling have overlaid and apparently extinguished the apprehension of duty as the primary ground of conduct, of right and wrong as the most important aspects of human actions. Such persons bring upon

themselves more than one punishment ;—they deprave and pollute their own hearts, thus unfitting themselves for that regulation of the thought and will which God requires of his servants :—and moreover, they impair and obscure their speculative powers of apprehending and judging of moral and spiritual truths. “If any man will do the will of God, he shall know of the doctrine.” But if a man never try to do or to know the will of God ;—if his soul be utterly immersed in selfishness or sensuality, frivolity or pride ;—or even if he habitually contemplate the actions of men and the course of the world in a mode in which moral considerations are excluded ;—how can he discern the operation of that deeper principle which is only visible to the eye of a moral being ? How is it wonderful that man’s foolish heart is darkened, if he never turns his eye towards that quarter from which the light comes ? If he never attempt to discover what is the course of action which duty prescribes, how can he know whether men, or whether he himself, have a sense of duty ?

There may be, for example, men who have in their own imagination, reduced the course of the world to a chain of inevitable consequences, of which they care only to number the links. In their view, the fortunes of nations run their fated round, and the precautions of the wise and the efforts of the good are unmeaning episodes, which cannot avert or alter the catastrophe. They consider the struggles of men to shape their own course, as vain movements which an inexorable and overwhelming power beholds with a smile of tranquil irony. When men look at the world in such a spirit, they are so entirely occupied in contemplating what they conceive *must* be, that they well nigh forget to ask what *ought* to be : and even the foulest deeds, passing under their notice, call forth no indignation or blame. They can gaze on the crowds and the ages who rush to do evil, till they deem the current irresistible, and lose all other estimate of man’s proper course. They have no sympathies with

those who resist the stream of baneful tendencies, and battle to the last for that which is right. They can admire the prudence which conciliates the too powerful evil-doer, but they understand nothing of the spirit which calls upon men to put on their armour because they struggle against the rulers of the darkness of this world. How false and hollow is all this system we shall not here stay to point out; but we cannot omit to observe, when men have allowed such tendencies as these to assume habitual possession of their minds, how ill fitted they are to judge of moral questions. How can they, so disciplined, see in the history of man's actions a record in which the most important words are *right* and *wrong*? How can they, intent on such views, fail to overlook the manifestations of man's moral nature?

Or again, consider the man who not only gives up his mind to selfish impulses, but trains and disciplines his thoughts to make selfishness the *rule*, as well as the motive of his actions;—who studies only how he may be an accomplished minister to his own pleasure and gain, and places the pride of his soul in the skill with which he balances the claims and opportunities of gratification or of worldly advancement. How shall such a man fail to blunt and obscure his perception of that fundamental moral preeminence of purity over impurity, of generous over selfish emotions, of duty over transgression, which is something far different from the self-applause of the successful voluptuary or worldling? How shall such a man, exercising himself altogether to aim at external objects by prudential rules, understand the far different principle of human conduct which the Apostle lays down, “to exercise himself always to have a conscience void of offence toward God and toward man.”

Once more; we may look at the disappointed votary of mere enjoyment, whether mental or sensual, when he is somewhat further advanced in the career of life, and we well know in what condition we shall often find him. He has reached a state of satiety and weariness which breathes

itself forth in a loathing of all human hopes and employments. Man's pursuits, he declares, lead but to objects which contain not what he sought, to streams which slake not his thirst. All things are alike empty and vain: and when all has been tried, the business of life is over, the world is a wilderness, the crowded city a solitude, and man and all his doings are a jest;—a jest fitted to excite only a scornful and bitter smile. And thus men foster a mood of mind, utterly at variance with all moral view of human action. For all this deadly sickness of the heart, this blight and withering of the soul, is caused by this;—that men have sought in the world a scene of enjoyment, and not a field of duty. He who considers that everything which he himself and others do is marked with the all-important stamp of moral good and evil, can never see in human actions, and human concerns, a fit subject for scorn and contempt. He who knows that the enemy, sin, is constantly at the gate, ever ready to burst in upon his soul and destroy it, can never complain that he has nothing to wake and employ him. Let the fastidious slumberer listen to the rousing voice of duty. Let him up and be doing, for he has occupation enough. Let him look to the improvement of his own moral nature. Let him enquire, not if there be something which may bring a moment of pleasure to his jaded sense, or of relief to his weary languor, but something which he *ought* to do. Let him shake off the nightmare which binds his faculties in a troubled and painful dream; and find himself in a real living and moving world, where man has the path of duty to tread, and a holy and merciful God to overlook and support him. Let him do this; and, in addition to other blessed consequences, he will become aware that he has also an internal guide and judge; and will learn the meaning of that text—"Beloved, if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart and knoweth all things; but if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence towards God."

That state of mind would indeed be blessed, in which the self-acquittal of the heart, a conscience void of offence toward God and toward man, should diffuse a clearness over the contemplative faculties also. And even our approaches to such a state partake of this blessedness. The practical student of Christian morality, constantly employed in choosing the good and rejecting the evil;—in directing himself by the voice of his conscience within, which becomes clearer and clearer as he listens to it;—can no longer doubt that he has a conscience within his breast, or that there is a moral good and evil in human actions. He endeavours to do the will of God, and receives the fulfilment of the promise that thus also he shall know.

This is the true study of morality; and though we have here been employed in considering how men may attain, or how they may fail of a comprehension of the great principles of a genuine and pure moral law; yet let us not forget, that this declaration and promise concerns us in a far closer and higher sense, than merely as pointing the way to true speculative views and well-devised systems of doctrine. "If any man will do the will of God, he shall know;" and he shall know things which concern him far more than the construction of a code of ethics. He shall know, not merely what it behoves him to know as a teacher of others, but the things which pertain to the guidance of his own life, to the furtherance of his own salvation. He shall know, with that knowledge which resides not in the intellect but in the heart; which not merely gives him a superiority among men, but brings him nearer to God. This is the prize and happiness of him who seeks the knowledge, by doing the will, of God. He does not dis sever the practical from the contemplative pursuit of holiness; and his reward is, that he at the same time gains clearness to his contemplations, and fervour to his better will. The atmosphere of his inner being is illuminated by a sunshine which gives at the same time light and warmth. If we could reach this condition,

how little should we need codes and systems, reasonings and doctrines ! That we do need such things is true ; for we are weak and imperfect creatures, swayed by a thousand impulses to good and evil : and it is needful for us to train all our faculties ;—our mind as well as our heart ;—our understanding as well as our will ;—our speculative along with our practical powers, that they may aid and support each other in the purification of our nature, and in making us more zealous and faithful servants. But let us never forget that all these things ;—books and sermons, principles and demonstrations, plans and systems, however true ;—have this for their object. And it will be well for us, and we shall to good purpose have looked inwards upon our conscience, and shall have given it its true practical as well as speculative office, when we can say with the Apostle (2 Cor. i. 12), “ Our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience ; that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world.”

That when all this is done, we are still debtors to God for our own souls ;—that it is not the approval of our conscience, but the mercy of our Redeemer which is to be our final stay and support ;—is a truth of deep and awful moment. In the mean time let us bear in mind the sequel of the Apostle’s exhortation to the men of Athens. Notwithstanding all that the loftiest spirits and brightest intellects of men could devise, the times of which we have spoken,—the times of philosophy and human wisdom,—the times of the study of the conscience alone,—the times of the knowledge of the moral law, without the knowledge of the dispensation of redemption,—were “ times of ignorance ;” —of dark and perilous ignorance. And “ the time of this ignorance,” says the Apostle, “ God winked at ; but now commandeth all men every where to repent.”

This therefore is now our great and important practical business ;—to cherish the sense of our own demerits,

and a reliance upon a righteousness better than our own. And may He teach us so to contemplate and so to use the faculties which he has given, that they may be subservient to this end. May we so study and foster the sensibility of our conscience, the purity of our internal tribunal, the elevation of our moral nature, that we may be brought to him by a sense of our own unworthiness; and find, even in that part of our nature which appears most to exalt us, additional reasons for falling, as humbled and contrite sinners, at the footstool of his grace!

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GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE ENGLISH LITURGY.

LET us suppose the case of an intelligent person, possessed of a general acquaintance with the subject, who should enter, for the first time, a church of the Establishment, during divine service. Or rather, let us make the case our own. Let us endeavour to recall those first emotions, which early habit has, in fact, anticipated, but which we may reproduce in ourselves by an effort of the imagination; and having thus regained that susceptibility of feeling, without which the surest observation is uncertain, dim, and partial, let us follow out the train of thought suggested by the circumstances. The building itself, both externally and internally, has already struck us as peculiar. We can hardly mistake the character of the place: so marked is the distinction which it exhibits to all other edifices, even to those dedicated, under a different sanction, to the purposes of

religion. Comparing it with every other Church that we have seen, of whatever age, or country, we recognize a general uniformity of plan, dating from the most ancient times, and communicating an air of solemnity, alike indescribable, and inimitable.

If we analyze our feelings, we shall be at no loss as to the cause of this impression. We still discern the operation of a common will, raised above the controul, not only of individual men, but of a particular age. We perceive a sameness, which no diversity of circumstances, no variety of modification, has been able to disturb. It has evidently not resulted from the prevalence of fashion, because it has come down in independent lines. These we naturally seek to trace to a common origin ; and although at length we lose sight of them, in the most remote antiquity, we have ascertained their convergence, and the point to which they seem to conduct us, is the centre of Christianity itself. Yet the agency of man must have been everywhere employed. Say that a *tacit* convention has existed from the beginning on this point. How did it arise ? how has it been preserved ? How has it maintained itself against the caprices of individuals, the opposing interests of parties and nations, or the varying humour of the times ? Will not the idea of a vast incorporation be suggested to the reflecting mind, pervaded by an invisible spirit, upheld by a superior power, revealed to the senses, and in this way represented to the understanding, as by many other symbols of permanence and communion, appreciable only by the initiate, so by the very form and general appearance of its sacred buildings, that stand as beacons and signals to the world without ?

This idea, or the dim sentiment in which it is commonly enveloped, will be powerfully confirmed by the service itself. There is the same sort of solemnity, arising from the same source. The same character of stedfastness, union, and association, reigns throughout. We discern still clearer and more numerous indications of a wide spread and permanent

order, variously modified, but still exhibiting a determinate identity, cognizable under every disguise, and pointing, as in the former case, but with more explicit evidence, to a common and a sacred source. Throughout the celebration we are struck with the absence of everything casual, arbitrary, and dependent. Of the individual worshippers, some appear serious and fervent, some cold and formal, some, perhaps, wholly indifferent and abstracted : but there is in the scene, as we see it acted before us, a holy presence, both visible, and otherwise sensible, which human piety could not have produced, and which human infirmity cannot destroy. No accident can vitiate the act of worship, though performed in common, and in the midst of many imperfections. Pure and holy in itself, it waits to be realized, and as it were asserted, by every individual for himself, and yet it is no solitary offering, no self-originating effusion. It tells of the faith, not merely of other men, and other days, but is a fixed exponent of that faith which is now and always, here and everywhere, one, not as an abstract notion, but as a living principle. In the extemporaneous prayers of a sectarian ministry, we may have discerned much piety, much acquired or natural ability : we may have believed them animated in some cases, more or less, by the Spirit of God. But here there is neither more nor less, neither failure nor special abundance. The clergyman, as a man, may exceed or fall short of a given standard of ministerial devotion. We are not the sport of such a contingency. In his official character, he represents an immutable ordinance, over which chance has no power. He stands to us, indeed, in many other relations, in which his personal piety, his learning, and his intelligence, have an ample field : but he has a certain range of duty, in which his acts are not his own, and possess a value, which he can neither enhance nor diminish.

This distinction is kept in view throughout, and imparts a propriety to many peculiarities in the Church Service,

which might else appear trivial, and perhaps objectionable. The peculiar vestment of the officiating clergyman thus acquires a meaning of some importance, and removed as far as possible from superstition. It is a silent rebuke to that homage so commonly paid to particular men, in respect of their special gifts, by which the person is more honoured than the office, the ambassador more regarded than his message. Properly considered, *this* is an idolatry, more insinuating in its nature, more mischievous in its tendency, and incomparably more ripe, and germinant in these times, than that which arises from the undue veneration of *a thing*. It was comparatively easy to pronounce the brazen serpent of Moses, *Nehushtan*, (2 Kings xviii. 4.) and to break it to pieces. But when the people of Lycaonia would have paid divine honours to Paul and Barnabas, "they rent their clothes" (Acts xiv. 14.) in grief and horror. Here was a case of gross ignorance; but a similar feeling soon displayed itself in more specious forms. Thus the Corinthians are taxed with saying, "I am of Paul, and I am of Apollos, and I of Cephas, and I of Christ," (1 Cor. i. 12.) How did these schisms arise, except from a confusion of the personal with the official character of those who ruled over them in the Lord? Hence the earnest question, "Were ye baptized in the name of Paul?" This scandal, one of the earliest that arose in the Church, still continues one of the most frequent: and this misplaced homage is the more to be apprehended from the amiable feelings with which it is often linked, and out of which it appears to arise. Any correction to this dangerous tendency cannot but be desirable: and in the decent uniformity of ecclesiastical vestments, worn from age to age by the same functionaries, on the same sacred occasions, we are admonished as by an intelligible sign, that the ministers of Christ neither officiate "in their own name," nor in their own strength. It may be remarked further, that the use of the surplice is generally accompanied by a sobriety of manner, in the performance of divine ser-

vice, which to some may appear a defect of animation, though it is quite compatible with a deep and solemn earnestness, the more affecting, because it is subdued. This again is another working of the same principle. It marks the absence of personal pretension, the presence of an official importance. Contrast with this the characteristic manner of those by whom the surplice is rejected, or despised. It is thought to indicate greater heartiness. That it is sincere and genuine, need not, and ought not, to be denied. But it is a *personal*, not an *official* fitness, which it symbolizes : and is an effort on the part of the minister to claim for himself, what the Church restrains to his function. What if a gross caricature has resulted in the Romish Church, from the misapplication of this principle, or rather from an extravagance in the practice, apart from, and in opposition to, the principle ? Let us not argue from the abuse, against the use, lest we place a terrible weapon in the hands of our adversary. It is thus that the Bible was withholden from the laity, liberty from the subject, and education from the poor.

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I have characterized the English Liturgy as Scriptural, spiritual, practical ; let me ask finally, Is it not *comprehensive* ? What part of " the counsel of God," as revealed for the salvation of man, is not there to be found ? Confession, prayer, intercession, thanksgiving, praise, the profitable word of Scripture, the divinely instituted sacraments of baptism, and Eucharistic communion,—all that the most pious and best informed Christian can look for, whether in his daily, or his occasional devotion, will be found in that treasure of religious services, the Common Prayer Book, arranged in the most beautiful order of succession, and expressed in such a solemn, devotional, lucid, and harmonious style of composition, as can hardly be paralleled in any other writing not immediately divine. The causes of this excellence it would neither be unprofitable to trace, nor dif-

ficult to discover. They lie, indeed, above the range of those influences to which the merit of a merely human production is imputable, however holy its design, or admirable its execution. Neither the learning, the piety, nor the judgment of a Ridley, or a Cranmer, or any other individual of that illustrious band, nor all of them in council, could *alone* have sufficed to make the English Liturgy such as it is, and such as we have received it from their hands. We are indebted to these great and holy men for a judicious selection, for careful adaptation, for many admirable additions, conceived in so Catholic a spirit, as to render them indistinguishable from the elder portions of the work. Our obligations to the compilers of our Liturgy are, indeed, equally great, whether we take into consideration what they rejected, or what they retained; their wisdom, and their moral courage being equally evident, in their casting aside so much of the old material, and in their *not* casting aside more. To this praise they are entitled in their character of Reformers; nay, it may be conceded to them that they have left the impress of their mind on the whole collection, no less in that which they appropriated, than in that which they themselves produced: that they were not a whit behind the most eminent saints that had gone before them in that spirit of prayer to which these compositions owe their peculiar excellence; and, in the highest sense in which the words can be employed, they touched nothing which they did not adorn. Still, in its essential part, the English Ritual claims a different, and an elder origin: several portions, and those the most solemn and important, date from the apostolic age: many more to that which immediately succeeded it, or, at all events, to a period long anterior to the corruptions of the papacy. A large proportion had been in use in the Church for many hundreds of years, antecedently to the usurpations of the Roman See: and for the rest, the traditions of other Apostolic Churches, furnished at least a precedent and an authority.

On the whole, our Liturgy is not to be regarded as the work of any single man, or set of men, either in their individual or collective capacities. It is the gift and contribution of the universal Church, and has become to us an accumulated patrimony, carefully husbanded, and handed down from age to age. Scriptural in doctrine, spiritual in sentiment, practical in its tendency, comprehensive in form; in all these respects, in form, in spirit, in operation, and in doctrine, essentially *Catholic*: and, therefore, without the least mixture of fanaticism; perfectly free from all the vanities of self-exalting schism, and mystical illumination: untainted by the pride of learning, and the yet more intolerable conceit of ignorance; it appears saved by miracle, say rather by the special care and providence of God, not, indeed, from all imperfection, (it is still a human work,) but from all the grosser errors and abominations of deceived and deceiving man.

Such is that "form of sound words," which the English Christian may hear in the divine service of his Church. Nor may I omit to add, what is perhaps not the least praise to which it is entitled, it is *fixed* and uniform; secured against the endless change of unsettled creeds, the captious objections of contending parties, the impatience and the fastidiousness of unsanctified and undevotional feelings.

JOHN BROWN, M.A.

OF Queens' College, Cambridge, has recently published *Five Discourses preached before the University of Cambridge*; the following extract is from one of these discourses, entitled *The Rejection of the Gospel explained*.

MAN'S IGNORANCE OF SIN, AND ITS REMEDY.

“THE whole need not a physician, but they that are sick.” The individual who listens thus unaffected to the Gospel declarations of pardon and peace, and continues to live on in the same recklessness of mercy, may ascribe his apathy and neglect to the insufficiency of Scripture evidence, and the unattainable obedience of Scripture requirements, and to their inconsistency with human passion and infirmity; but the proper account of the matter is this:—he has yet to be brought to sympathize in the Gospel plan, he has yet to learn to look upon himself in that precise condition in which the Gospel may appear to him as it is intended to appear to all—the only possible means of escape from the greatest possible danger. .

It is strange to remark how little the man, who has actually been brought into this state of adaptation, has in common with the man, who is ignorant of it. These persons may be joined together in all the familiarities of ordinary life and natural relationship; they may read the same books and partake of the same religious ordinances,—it is the same Gospel which is presented to both; but, like the pillar of the cloud between the Israelites and the Egyptians. —to the one, it bears the aspect of light, and it is the guiding star to the promised land,—to the other, and he sees it also, it is altogether darkness.

Now, in all this we have an exemplification of the true import of that, at first sight, very difficult passage of Scripture, as it is written, “seeing they shall see, and not perceive; and hearing they shall hear, and not understand;”

and we may note in the same connexion, the strongly-marked importance of that little sentence so frequently adopted by our Lord, and which would seem almost merely expletive to us, "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear."

Considering the Gospel, then, as a proclamation of pardon, we can feel no sympathy in its promises, unless we feel that we stand in need of forgiveness; neither can we receive with joy a ministry of reconciliation, when we are totally unconscious of an enmity within us towards the author of it:—hence, too, the different effects which the Gospel produces upon the different persons to whom it is addressed, are precisely in accordance with the different estimates they form of the necessities of their condition in the sight of God.

It is well, it is grateful to contemplate the latter days of one gradually sinking to his rest, with every concomitant around—busy in attestation that he has lived a life of honour, of usefulness, and of praise: it is improving to ourselves to witness the repose of a conscience void of offence, unruffled by the reflected images of turbulent passions. It is consolatory to behold the calm serenity which possesses the soul in the peaceful anticipation of a long waited-for futurity. But that which gives the reality of an eternal impress to the scene, and touches with the alchemy of Heaven whatever there may be of earth within, is to hear this very man, with all his unquestioned worthiness,—(by whatever scale worth is estimated among men,)—to hear him dwelling most upon his unworthiness before God: speaking with heartfelt astonishment of the forbearance of his Heavenly Father,—and rejoicing,—not in the unsullied integrity of his life,—not in the approbation of his friends and the world, but rejoicing in this—that Christ Jesus came "to save the lost."

Now, to any one to whom this condition of feeling may seem unnatural and inexplicable, we can only propose,

in solution of their difficulty, the principle asserted by our Lord, when He declared, "The whole need not a physician, but they that are sick." But if this solution seem to them neither applicable nor available,—is it a safe conclusion for us to settle down in, that because we cannot perceive any necessity for such in-wrought personal conviction of sin and unworthiness, that no such necessity can, therefore, exist—that we are safe—we are whole, and need not a physician? And it is true men, from various causes, may rest in such a conclusion, rather however *felt* than expressed: and may, in the utmost honesty, from some peculiar temperament of constitution and habitude of education, feel unable to persuade themselves of guilt within them, deserving punishment. But it is not from within,—in the absolute neutrality of the man to all that is spiritually right,—or the positive activity of all that is spiritually wrong,—it is not from these alone he is to derive the conviction of his lost state. Whatever we may think of ourselves, there is a memento ever suspended before our eyes between earth and heaven, which graduates at once our danger and our guilt, though we may be insensible to both. We may, indeed, be at peace, with feelings insensible to the load of our iniquity, only when we can annihilate the whole fact and purpose of the mission of the Son of God to earth;—but we never can have true peace, till feeling persuaded of our great sin as measured in God's estimation of it, by the greatness of the ransom, we appeal to the Saviour in brokenness of heart, not as "the whole, but the sick;" and whatever we may think of ourselves, the sacrifice of his beloved Son tells us what God thinks of us,—and if I believe that Christ suffered, I must believe that man must suffer without Christ, and if I am without Christ, I must be without hope, and therefore, before I can exclude from my mind a rational and well-founded apprehension of the future for myself,—I must exclude Christ himself from the

Godhead, and the redemption which He purchased from the glory of God.

We may be without apprehension, and really see no danger,—but does this prove that none exists? Many a man has slept in peace with the deadly snake beneath his pillow—his tranquillity only depended on his unconsciousness—the danger was imminent and real—may we not, then, thus lull ourselves into a false security? And, methinks, when I hear of God giving his Son to die for the healing of the people, some fearful disease must be abroad in the world,—when the Author of my being tells me, too, at the very moment He offers me the remedy, that no one has escaped the taint,—it is time for me to consider what is the true state of my spiritual constitution. The delirium of a fever can gift me with preternatural strength, and people my imagination with many a strange and untoward vision. The victim of consumption draws many an omen of returning health from the increased lustre of the eye and the fresh colour of the cheek,—yet these are the very types of disease;—may not something of the same process take place with respect to the maladies of our spiritual constitution?—may we not conclude, that it is likely to take place when we are told of the deceitfulness of our own hearts, and the insidiousness of sin?

Comparing ourselves with others, we may have kept our place in all the proprieties of life, and neither in act nor intention given any legitimate ground for reproach to be cast upon us—in the eye of man we may be blameless and praiseworthy—but what shall we think of that ordeal, when our secret sins are placed in the light of God's countenance; and how shall we be prepared to meet it, but by examining our spiritual condition, not by the fitful glare of man's opinion, but by the enduring light of God's most holy word?

Looking at ourselves by the broad daylight of heavenly truth, be assured that many a blemish, which is scarcely

perceived in the clouded atmosphere of our own conventional notions, will present to us, then, in the language of Scripture, "a wound, a bruise, a putrefying sore,"—and will lead us to say of ourselves, in the same language, "Unclean, unclean,"—and then shall we understand, but not till then, the "whole need not a physician, but they that are sick."

This will be found at last to be the safe, because the true estimate of our condition,—and convinced that it is so, we shall be prepared to give a becoming audience to the remission of sins proclaimed in the name of Jesus—to receive with thankfulness the agency of the Holy Spirit:—we shall find that the Gospel is indeed glad tidings to us, for that it provides for our every want, and is exactly adapted to all our necessities: then will there be a complete sympathy between our minds and its provisions,—and our faith will stand "not in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God;"—and though we may be unable like him of old, who was healed of his infirmity, to answer the gainsaying questionings of the many, we shall each be able to say with him in truth, "This one thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see,"—and the whole of the enigma of the difference between our present and our past condition will be found fully explained and intelligibly accounted for, by the declaration of our Lord, that "the whole need not a physician, but they that are sick."

CHARLES LAWSON, M.A.

OF St. John's College, Cambridge, is morning preacher at the Foundling Hospital, and has published, beside other works, two volumes of *Sermons* delivered in the chapel of that institution.

THE RETURN OF THE PRODIGAL SON.

THE young man described in the parable persisted, for some time, in not abandoning the scenes of his folly and his ruin : he even submitted to almost the greatest degradation that could be inflicted upon the mind of a Jew ; and this, without procuring for himself the means of subsistence. At length, under this severe discipline, "he came to himself." The recollection of the comfort and plenty of his father's house smote upon the heart of the forlorn and destitute wanderer. The comparison of his own condition with that of the hired servants of his father, convinced him of the folly of his impatience of control. The thought that he, once the son of his father's love, was now degraded beneath the servants of his household, appears to have decided him to attempt his escape from misery and from sin. If he be unworthy to be called a son, yet, as a hired servant, he will at least have bread enough and to spare ; and in submitting once more to wholesome restraint, and sacred obedience in his former home, he can bear even to rank only as a servant, if so he may escape from his present degradation. The toil of servitude would at least be cheered by something of that favour of his father which once he slighted ; the bread of servitude would lose much of its bitterness when supplied by a father's hand, though once he despised its plenty, when he might claim it as a son. It required, certainly, some degree of moral courage for the prodigal to make the resolution in the parable, and to carry that resolution into effect. And this, his effectual repentance, shows clearly that in his

perceived in the clouded atmosphere of our own conventional notions, will present to us, then, in the language of Scripture, "a wound, a bruise, a putrefying sore,"—and will lead us to say of ourselves, in the same language, "Unclean, unclean,"—and then shall we understand, but not till then, the "whole need not a physician, but they that are sick."

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estimate of the comforts of home he had not failed to include the duties of home. He makes no compromise, as it were, for the restoration of his former station; he asks no exemption from the labour of that condition of servitude, of which he esteems himself scarcely worthy: he acknowledges that he has no claims to be regarded as a son; and that if admitted to be a hired servant, it is but to the compassion of his father that he must confess himself indebted. Here was the humility that acknowledged his folly and unworthiness; here was the contrition that bewailed the sin of disobedience; here was the submission that was ready to yield obedience, and to bow under authority; the deep, earnest, and overwhelming feeling of one who found himself wretched where he was, and longed to be but within the extremest verge of that domestic happiness, which he might once have enjoyed in the inmost sacredness of his father's dwelling.

My brethren, is not the return of a sinner to God something of this very sort? Is it not the result of that overwhelming feeling of wretchedness, which shows itself in the desire to forsake the paths of sin, and the society of the ungodly, as affording no substantial happiness to the soul? Is it not the confession of unworthiness, that does not ask for the very least of God's mercies, except as the gift of a gracious Father, the purchased blessing of the Saviour's atonement? Is it not the humility that dares not lift up so much as the eyes to heaven, and that, standing afar off, smites upon the breast, and utters the cry, "God be merciful to me a sinner?" And all this is the pledge and earnest of a steady and heartfelt resolution to conform to the holiness of that Father's house, the happiness of which is the object of desire. The famine, the want, the degradation, may be the means of bringing the sinner to himself; and then the affections must be fixed upon proper objects; the longing of the renewed heart will be after the enjoyments and the claims of godliness. The sinner that confesses himself unworthy to be accounted as a son, will not refuse

that submission and obedience by which he can show himself willing to be reckoned as a servant ; and he will not shrink from the labour of that household, where there is bread enough and to spare, for them that cheerfully perform the work that their heavenly Father gives them to do.

But, finally ; the reception of the prodigal must equally engage our attention, and awaken our interest. Who can estimate the anxiety with which the return of his child was anticipated, by one whose affection is so beautifully displayed, in his acceptance of the penitent prodigal ? Who can tell how often his heart had yearned over the erring child of his love, or how often his aching eyes had been turned towards that land whence his lost one might be expected to return ? And had even the remotest rumour of the want, the misery, the degradation of his son, reached the father's ear, how would he anxiously wait for that period when his heart should yield to discipline, and be prepared for obedience ! Well may we account for the description of the parable, that while the prodigal was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion on him, and ran, and fell on his neck and kissed him. Well may we acknowledge the tenderness that brought forth the best robe, and the ring, and the shoes, and killed the fatted calf, to welcome him who was thus recovered alive from the dead, and who was lost and was found.

My brethren, what is all this but a faint emblem of that love of our heavenly Father which cares for the salvation of the sinner ? All that tends to the recovery of the repentant, is his gracious work : all that brings the sinner to himself, is the operation of his Holy Spirit. The famine may be sore ; but the infliction is from the mercy of God. The feeling of want may be urgent ; but God has given it its severity. The degradation of sin may be extreme ; but God's goodness turns even the effects of human folly into the means of exhibiting the danger of that folly. Our merciful Father does more for us than

we may imagine : He not only receives us when we return, but He gives us the wish to return. He not only offers us the provision of his own house, but He gives us that distaste from the husks of this world's goods, without which we might linger on in the land of famine, nor put forth our hands to that bread of life, of which he that eateth shall live for ever. And when the affections are indeed allured, and the heart turned towards the loving kindness of God, like the father who permitted not his repentant son to offer himself as a servant, but restored him at once to his former place in his affections, and his former station in his house ; even so are we made sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty. And what does this privilege involve ? What but the obedience of sons ? —the submission of children to paternal authority ?—the dependence of child-like humility upon the wisdom, the goodness, the love of a forgiving father ? Every mark of affectionate reception ; every token of honour and esteem ; every means of supporting the dignity, and of continuing in the society to which he had been restored, was given to the prodigal, only that he might remain under the paternal roof, nor attempt again to seek an uncertain happiness beyond the precincts of domestic tranquillity and holiness.

And so it is with ourselves : the promise of pardon and reconciliation, the means of grace, the aid of the Spirit to remain in that grace wherein we stand, the claim of affection and gratitude to Christ our Saviour ; the earnest anxiety to escape the danger of sin, and to walk in the ways of godliness ;—all these are given to us, and are wrought in us, to keep us still in that Father's house to which we have in repentance returned, and to guide us to the more complete enjoyment of his dwelling-place above, where we shall find that they who are now acknowledged as his sons, shall be even like Him, for they shall see Him as He is.

Merciful Father, give us thy grace, that we may acknowledge thee in this endearing character ! Teach us to seek the plenty of thy house, and to flee from the famine of ungodliness and sin ! Teach us each to come to thee with the confession,—“ I have sinned in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son ;” and of thy mercy receive us graciously, and love us freely !

CHRISTOPHER BENSON, M.A.

PREBENDARY of Worcester and Master of the Temple, has published two volumes of Hulsean Lectures on the *Evidences of Christianity*, and on *Scripture Difficulties*, and more recently another series of Discourses on *Tradition and Episcopacy*.

SCRIPTURE DIFFICULTIES.

[AFTER discussing the various reasons why the difficulties of Scripture have not yet been all cleared up, the Lecturer proceeds :]—

Having thus ascertained that a partial, though very considerable degree of success may be expected in the explanation of “ things hard to be understood,” we are next to inquire whether this partial success be sufficient for all the ordinary purposes of religion ; and this point I would most strenuously maintain in the affirmative. Admitting, as I do, that it would be most hopeless to expect to remove every speck which dims the brightness of the Gospel firmament, I would yet, at the same time, contend, that it is, happily, not indispensable to our belief in the Scriptures that they should be altogether purified of obscurity, and that universal success in the elucidation of the difficulties of the Bible is not absolutely necessary either to our edification or faith. It is not necessary to our edification, because every essential principle is sufficiently plain, and because we shall never be condemned for our errors or ignorance

upon those less important points which have not been so clearly revealed, as to be made level to the weakness of our intellectual capacities. It is not necessary to our faith, because, as some portions and passages in Holy Writ, which to our predecessors were in a great measure inexplicable, have been satisfactorily explained in the present age, so it is equally fair and reasonable to suppose that the same will occur in every future generation, and that the darkness under which we still continue to labour will, in the same manner, though perhaps slowly, fade away before the increasing knowledge and inquiries of our successors. There is no cause, therefore, for assuming that every thing which is indefensible or unintelligible to *us*, is really indefensible and unintelligible in itself, or will necessarily remain indefensible and unintelligible for ever. Some few points there may be, in which all the labours of the learned, in every period of the world, may after all prove vain and ineffectual; either on account of the loss of some information which was requisite to their explanation, or because, on account of our limited range of observation and intellect, we are incapable of forming a just estimate of heavenly things. But no one who has made revelation the object of his serious and frequent study, and found, as he must often have found, its difficulties diminishing at every fresh perusal of its pages, will not be convinced that he is justified in looking for a continued recurrence of similar illustrations. If much of what he *can* see of the divine counsels be justifiable to man; if so far as he possesses a full comprehension of the divine dispensations, those dispensations are not repugnant to righteousness; if when he is puzzled and confounded by the strangeness of what he is required to believe or do, he can yet see cause to suspect that, from the want of historical or other information, the entire state of the case is not clearly before him, or that the subject is one which relates to beings and things far above out of his sight—in all these cases he will feel, if he be rightly disposed, that he

has neither a right to look for a perfect knowledge, nor to make the difficulties he encounters a ground for rejecting the Bible as the word of God. For why should the Bible differ from every other creation of omnipotence, and be condemned for obscurities which are allowed in every other department of the universe? It is indeed, "given by inspiration of God," and was expressly "written for our learning" and instruction in righteousness; but I have already shewn that neither of these circumstances demand an absence of those difficulties which exist in other writings, and attach to the natural works of the Almighty. Look, then, to what is the case with those natural works of the Almighty, and examine whether it be not, and ought not to be, the same with his Word. Lift up your eyes to the heaven that is above us. It is not less the heaven, nor is it less the work of its Almighty Maker, in a gloomy, than in a glorious day: and if the clouds which float upon its surface in the grey twilight of morning, be occasionally removed during the journey of the Lord of light, so as to leave him at length in the evening to shine forth with the splendours of an unsullied setting, it is as much as we can demand, and far more than we deserve. Sinful and ignorant as we are, we should be grateful both for the presence and the absence of the sun's beautiful beams; because both their presence and their absence have their uses, though we perceive them not. So it is also with the Heaven of revelation and the Sun of righteousness. If the darkness which overspreads that spiritual firmament be found gradually to fade away with the increasing light of the intellectual and moral world; if by the successive and successful efforts of ingenuity and research, the great Ruler of the Gospel day become gradually unfolded to our view, and made to enlighten our minds with a brighter glimpse of knowledge, and enliven our hearts with a warmer beam of sanctity, far be it from us unthankfully to weep because of his present dimness, or unwisely to shut our eyes upon his partial

gleams. Those gleams, though partial, should rouse our senses to a readier perception of their brightness, because arising out of surrounding obscurity; and that dimness no doubt is for our good. At any rate, it is according to the word of God. For though that word does indeed contain a promise that, at some time or other, we shall "know even as we are known," yet it also expressly teaches us that this is not the time. It tells us that now we are fated to "know only in part," and that the fulfilment of the promise is reserved for a future day and a future world, when prophecies shall have failed, and languages have ceased, and knowledge have vanished away. Content then let us be with the pleasing certainty that the light we possess, though feeble, is yet an increasing light, which "groweth more and more unto the perfect day." And as for that full and unclouded perception of heavenly things to which the Apostle refers—for that let us wait in a humble and rational reliance upon promise and prophecy; looking patiently for that closing hour of the Gospel day when the whole body of gloominess and thick darkness shall be dissipated in the second coming of the Lord. Let us wait for the splendours of that wondrous period, and the holiness of that heavenly Jerusalem, where there shall be no night at all unto the mind, no need of the candle of reason to glimmer faintly over the works of nature, nor yet of the stronger beams of revelation to illumine the dark places of Providence; because then the tabernacle of God shall be visibly present with men, and his glory shall dwell with them by his Son, and the Lord himself shall lighten them, and the Lamb be their light for ever.

THE DAY OF JUDGMENT.

WE contemplate the obstinacy of the Jew, and we pity him. We read of the permitted sensualities and unhallowed paradise of Mahomet, and turn away, lest we should be

corrupted, from the impure pages of the Koran. We are told of the bloody and senseless rites of India and the East, and we bless the holiness of the religion into which we have been baptized. We hear of the horrors and vile degradation of savage life, and, wondering how human nature could ever sink so low, rejoice in the moral and intellectual eminence upon which we stand. But there cometh a day—and how soon we know not—when we may chance to change this note of triumph into the voice of weeping and much lamentation, and be compelled to envy, through eternity, that darkness of the understanding which, in time, we so hated and despised. These misguided wanderers, indeed, do not the will of God, because, indeed, they do not know it; but we, when we are sinners, know it and do it not; and therefore it is, that, perhaps, many of them shall hereafter be less miserable than us. For what saith the Lord, and upon whom were the heaviest of his judgments pronounced? He said that “unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required,” and the deepest of his woes descended upon the faithlessness of Capernaum and the impenitence of Chorazin and Bethsaida; because they had seen so many of his mighty works, and heard so many of his gracious words, yet repented not at his preaching, neither were persuaded by his power. Therefore, says He, “it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and of Gomorrah in the day of Judgment, than for you;” and therefore say we, that, lighter shall be the suffering of Arabia’s wanderer, or India’s slave, than for them who under any clime, having heard and known of the truth and excellence of Christianity, have neither been careful to believe nor to do what it commands.

But if this is indeed to be the rule and measure of our judgment, who then, we may ask with trembling impatience, may stand when God appeareth, or who may abide the day of his coming? If God will be thus extreme to mark what is done amiss, no man will be able to lift up his head in

hope, and is it not then a mockery to tell us, as we are told in the text, that we shall receive our reward "according to the things done in the body whether they be *good or bad*," knowing as we all must do, from the testimony of conscience, that we have done but little that is good, and that we have done very much that is evil? In the mouth of a mere human teacher I allow that such language would indeed be productive of but little comfort; for to the impotence of natural religion it must ever be a fearful thought, to think of being recompensed according to that merit which remains after the balance has been struck between our virtues and our crimes. Natural religion has therefore been compelled to break down the severity of the inquiry into sin, and by giving free scope to the operations of human infirmity, to abate the terrors of the judgment-day. But we that are in Christ have no need thus to infringe upon justice, in order to make way for the interposition of mercy. We, too, have a hope of forgiveness and forbearance; but it is grounded, as it ought to be, not on some fanciful imagination of the attributes of the judge, but upon the perfect fulfilment of the law, in all its strictness, and in all its extent, by Him who "was made sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." We read for our warning, and we lay it to heart for our improvement, that "it is appointed unto man once to die, and after that the Judgment." But we stop not in our perusal of the Scriptures here. We pass on to the succeeding verse, and there read also and believe to our comfort, that, "*as* it is appointed unto man once to die, and after that the judgment, *so* Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many," and though we be sinners, yet to us "and to all them that look for Him, shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation." Here, and here alone, do we place the strength of our confidence and the repose of our souls, acknowledging, in all its extent, the goodness and wisdom of the Spirit that

thus guided the Apostle in placing peace and righteousness so near together, and tempering the rigour of the justest judgment, with the mildness of a reasonable redemption and a plenteous mercy.

There remaineth, therefore, no more condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus ; and so to them that have tasted of this heavenly gift, it is a joyful sound to hear that they shall "receive the things done in the body, whether they be good or bad," because they are verily confident in God, that the guilt of their evil things will be forgotten and forgiven, and the good they have meditated or performed alone be remembered to their honour and their glory. With the same strictness, with the same impartiality, with the same fulness, with which the sins of the unredeemed will be scrutinized, with the same will the piety, and long-suffering, and patience, and meekness, and brotherly kindness and charity, of the redeemed be rewarded ; and in this there is no delusiveness of hope, no mockery of a promise, but the solid security of substantial bliss, to every one that will live godly in Christ. Each passing inclination to good, though abortive in act, from accident or infirmity ; each pious thought, each holy word, each benevolent work, each mental prayer, each patient endurance of wrong, each wrathful feeling subdued, each temptation resisted, worldly affections mortified, sensual propensities not indulged, kindness felt or done, contented labour, honest poverty, and industrious greatness, shall all be recompensed according to each man's due. To every one this is a cheering view, but to the poor and to the mourner, and to the tempted, its consolation is beyond all praise. That affliction which for the present seemeth so grievous, that poverty which now so narrows the benevolent exertions of the lowly in life, and those luxuries which make righteousness such a hard and constant act of self-denial to the wealthy, are soothed and gilded by the hope of the abundant greatness of their reward, and

the Gospel becomes indeed glad tidings of salvation and of joy.

Hear ye then these terrors and these mercies of the Lord—these terrors to the wicked, and these mercies to the redeemed. Hear of the heaviness of God's judgments upon the disobedient, of indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, the worm and the fire; and to-day, whilst it is called to-day, cast away the chains of sin and break the galling bonds of iniquity, that being justified in an accepted time, ye may be accepted in a joyful eternity. Hear of the multitude of God's mercies to the redeemed, and be not weary in your well-doing, knowing that, if ye faint not, ye shall in due season reap a glory not only beyond your merits, but beyond your understanding and your thoughts. Remember the infinite, yet mingled attributes of the Deity, and knowing that "God hath appointed a day, in the which we must *all* appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in the body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad," so strive to approve yourselves to the God of your salvation, that, being justified by his blood, and sanctified by his Spirit, you may reign with Him for ever; and having your evil deeds blotted out, be rewarded for your good.

WILLIAM KIRBY, M.A.

RECTOR of Barham, in Suffolk, is an eminent living writer on natural history, especially as regards the insect world. He is the author of one of the Bridgewater Treatises, *On the Power, Wisdom, and Goodness of God, as manifested in the creation of Animals, and in their History, Habits, and Instincts*, whence the following extracts are taken.

PROPER OBJECTS OF THE STUDY OF NATURAL HISTORY.

THE highest view that we can take of man is that which looks upon him as belonging to a spiritual as well as a material world. "The end of the creation of the earth," says the father and founder of Natural History, [Linnæus,] "is the glory of God, from the works of nature, by man only." And, as the same pious author observes, "How contemptible is man, if he does not aim at this end of his creation, if he does not strive to raise himself above the low pursuits that usually occupy his mind!" The heavens indeed declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth the work of his hands. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. The beasts of the field honour Him, and all the creatures that He hath made glorify Him. But man must study the book open before him; and the more he studies it, the more audible to him will be the general voice to his spiritual ear, and he will clearly perceive that every created thing glorifies God in its place, by fulfilling his will, and the great purpose of his providence; but that he himself alone can give a tongue to every creature, and pronounce for all a general doxology.

But further, in contemplating them, he will not only behold the glory of the Godhead reflected, but, from their several instincts and characters, he may derive much spiritual instruction. Whoever surveys the three kingdoms of nature with any attention, will discover in every department, objects that, without any affinity, appear to represent each other. Thus we have minerals that, under certain circum-

stances, as it were, vegetate, and shoot into various forms, representing trees and plants : there are plants that represent insects, and vice versa, insects that simulate plants ; and the zoophytes have received their name from this resemblance. And as we ascend the scale, everywhere a series of references of one thing to another may be traced, so as to render it very probable that every created thing has its representative somewhere in nature. Nor is this resemblance confined to forms ; it extends also to character. If we begin at the bottom of the scale, and ascend up to man, we shall find two descriptions in almost every class, and even tribe of animals : one, ferocious in their aspect, often rapid in their motions, predaceous in their habits, preying upon their fellows, and living by rapine and bloodshed ; while the other is quiet and harmless, making no attacks, shedding no blood, and subsisting mostly on a vegetable diet.

Since God created nothing in vain, we may rest assured that this system of representation was established with a particular view. The most common mode of instruction is placing certain signs or symbols before the eye of the learner, which represent sounds or ideas ; and so the great Instructor of man placed this world before him as an open though mystical book, in which the different objects were the letters and words of a language, from the study of which he might gain wisdom of various kinds, and be instructed in such truths relating to that spiritual world, to which his soul belonged, as God saw fit thus to reveal to him. In the first place, by observing that one object in nature represented another, he would be taught that all things are significant, as well as intended to act a certain part in the general drama ; and further, as he proceeded to trace the analogies of character, in its two great branches just alluded to, upwards, he would be led to the knowledge of the doctrine thus symbolically revealed—that in the invisible world there are two classes of spirits—one benevolent and beneficent, and the other malevolent and mischievous ; characters which, after

his fall, he would find even exemplified in individuals of his own species.

But after the unhappy fall of man, this mode of instruction by natural and other objects used symbolically, though it pervades the whole law of Moses, and the writings of the prophets, as well as several parts of the New Testament, gradually gave place to the clearer light of a Revelation, not by symbols, but by the words and language of men, which "he that runs may" often "read;" yet still it is a very useful and interesting study, and belongs to man as the principal inhabitant of a world stored with symbols, to ascertain what God intended to signify by the objects that He has created and placed before him, as well as to know their natures and uses. When we recollect what the Apostle tells us, that "the invisible things" of God "from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made," (Rom. i. 20,) and that spiritual truths are reflected as by a mirror, and shown, as it were, enigmatically, (1 Cor. xiii. 12,) we shall be convinced that, in this view, the study of nature, if properly conducted, may be made of the first importance.

PROVIDENCE.

Is there not an omnipresent Deity, whose action is incessant, and co-extensive with his presence? He it is that, as the prophet speaks, causes it to rain upon one city, and not to rain upon another city; that employs his instruments both of benediction and punishment, according to his will. Every power of nature, every physical agent, is at his disposal. His is the earthquake and the volcano; "the lightning of the thunder;" the fire-damp of the mine; the overwhelming violence of the water-flood; "the windy storm and tempest;" his is the wide-wasting sword, that destroys myriads, and "the pestilence that walketh in darkness," and carries off millions; and He gives his commission to all his scourges

against individuals as well as against nations, which they unconsciously execute and cannot exceed, for He saith to them, Hitherto shall ye come, and no further, and here shall the work of destruction cease.

We have a remarkable instance of this special guidance and employment of natural objects in the case of the prophet Jonah, when he disobeyed the word of the Lord. In the first place, God "sent out" a great wind into the sea; in the next He "prepared" a great fish to swallow him alive when he should be cast overboard, and at the Lord's "command" the same animal cast him upon the dry land. Next God "prepared" a gourd for a shadow against the heat; after that He "prepared" a worm which destroyed the gourd; and in the last place, He "prepared a silent east wind," or a heat, like the sirocco, without sound. In all these cases the object employed was a physical object, under the immediate direction of the Deity. The wind, the fish, the gourd, the worm, the heat, were not new creations, but well-known objects, acted upon to take a particular direction so as to produce particular events.

By what is here said, I by no means assert the doctrine of inevitable fate; but I would merely assert that constant superintendence of the Deity over the world that He has created, and "who upholdeth all things by the word of his power," which we call Providence, by which, in general as well as individually, his will has full accomplishment; and every substance or being, whether animate or inanimate, takes the station which He has assigned to it. This is no miraculous interference out of the general course of nature, but the adaptation of that course to answer the wise purposes of Providence, which selects individuals, and distinguishes them from other individuals by events, as to this world, seemingly prosperous or adverse, but which have their ultimate reference to the spiritual world, and to their final destiny. As God willeth not that any should perish, so He withholdeth not from any the means, that, if duly

used and improved, will be sufficient for his salvation ; and in all his dealings with mankind He hath this great and merciful object in view.

PETER MARK ROGET, M.D.

DR. ROGET, who is Secretary to the Royal Society, is a well-known writer on scientific subjects. He has also produced one of the Bridgewater Treatises, entitled *Animal and Vegetable Physiology considered with reference to Natural Theology*.

UNITY OF DESIGN IN THE CREATION.

THE inquiries on Animal and Vegetable Physiology in which we have been engaged*, lead to the general conclusion that unity of design and identity of operation pervade the whole of nature, and they clearly point to one Great and only Cause of all things, arrayed in the attributes of infinite power, wisdom, and benevolence, whose mighty works extend throughout the boundless regions of space, and whose comprehensive plans embrace eternity.

In examining the manifold structures and diversified phenomena of living beings, we cannot but perceive that they are extensively, and perhaps universally, connected by certain laws of analogy ; a principle, the recognition of which has given us enlarged views of a multitude of important facts, which would otherwise have remained isolated and unintelligible. Hence naturalists, in arranging the objects of their study, according to their similarities and analogies, into classes, orders, and genera, have but followed the footsteps of nature herself, who in all her operations combines the apparently opposite principles of general resemblance and of specific variety ; so that the races which she has united in the same group, though possessed of fea-

* This extract is taken from the above-named Bridgewater Treatise.

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tures individually different, may easily be recognised by their family likeness, as the offspring of a common parent.

We have seen that in each of the two great divisions of kingdoms of organic nature, the same general objects are aimed at, and the same general plans are devised for their accomplishment: and also that in the execution of those plans similar means and agencies are employed. In each division there prevails a remarkable uniformity in the composition and properties of their elementary textures, in the nature of their vital powers, in the arrangement of their organs, and in the laws of their production and developement. The same principle of analogy may be traced, amidst endless modifications of detail, in all the subordinate groups into which each kingdom admits of being subdivided, both in respect to the organization and functions of the objects comprehended in each assemblage; whether we examine the wonders of their mechanical fabric, or study the series of processes by which nutrition, sensation, voluntary motion, and reproduction, are effected. In constructing each of the divisions so established, Nature appears to have kept in view a certain definite type, or ideal standard, to which, amidst innumerable modifications, rendered necessary by the varying circumstances and different destinations of each species, she always shows a decided tendency to conform. It would almost seem as if, in laying the foundations of each organized fabric, she had commenced by taking an exact copy of this primitive model; and, in building the superstructure, had allowed herself to depart from the original plan only for the purpose of accommodation to certain specific and ulterior objects, conformably with the destination of that particular race of created beings. Such, indeed, is the hypothetical principle, which, under the title of unity of composition, has been adopted, and zealously pursued in all its consequences, by many naturalists of the highest eminence on the Continent.

The analogies on which the hypothesis is founded are numerous and striking ; but great care should be taken not to carry it farther than the just interpretation of the facts themselves may warrant. It should be borne in mind, that these facts are few, compared with the entire history of animal development ; and that the resemblances which have been so ingeniously traced, are partial only, and fall very short of that universality, which alone constitutes the solid basis of a strictly philosophical theory. Whatever may be the apparent similarity between one animal and another, during different periods of their respective developements, there still exist specific differences, establishing between them an impassable barrier of separation, and effectually preventing any conversion of one species into another, however nearly the two may be mutually allied. The essential characters of each species, amidst occasional varieties, remain ever constant and immutable. Although gradations, to a greater or less extent, may be traced among the races both of plants and animals, yet in no case is the series strictly continuous ; each step, however short, being in reality an abrupt transition from one type of conformation to another. In many instances the interval is considerable ; as, for example, in the passage from the invertebrate to the vertebrated classes ; and, indeed, in every instance where great changes in the nature and arrangement of the functions take place. It is in vain to allege that the original continuity of the series is indicated by a few species presenting, in some respects, intermediate characters, such as the *Ornithorhynchus* between birds and mammalia, and the *Cetacea*, between fishes and warm-blooded quadrupeds ; for these are but detached links of a broken chain, tending, indeed, to prove the unity of the designs of Nature, but showing also the specific character of each of her creative efforts. The pursuit of remote and often fanciful analogies has, by many of the Continental physiologists, been carried to an unwarrantable and extravagant length ; for the scope which is

given to the imagination in these seductive speculations, by leading us far away from the path of philosophical induction, tends rather to obstruct than to advance the progress of real knowledge. By confining our inquiries to more legitimate objects, we shall avoid the delusion into which one of the disciples of this transcendental school [Serres,] appears to have fallen, when he announces, with exultation, that the simple laws he has discovered have now explained the universe; nor shall we be disposed to lend a patient ear to the more presumptuous reveries of another system-builder, who, by assuming that there exists in organized matter an inherent tendency to perfectibility, fancies that he can supersede the operations of Divine agency*.

Very different was the humble spirit of the great Newton, who, struck with the immensity of nature, compared our knowledge of her operations, into which he had himself penetrated so deeply, to that of a child gathering pebbles on the sea-shore. Compared, indeed, with the magnitude of the universe, how narrow is the field of our perceptions, and how distant from any approximation to a knowledge of the essence of matter, of the source of its powers, or even of the ultimate configurations of its parts! How remote from all human cognisance are the intimate properties of those imponderable agents, light, heat, and electricity, which pervade space, and exercise so potent a control over all the bodies in

* Allusion is here made to the celebrated theory of Lamarck, as exposed in his *Philosophie Zoologique*. He conceives that there was originally no distinction of species, but that each race has, in the course of ages, been derived from some other, less perfect than itself, by a spontaneous effort at improvement; and he supposes that infusorial animalcules, spontaneously formed out of organic molecules, gave birth, by successive transformations, to all other animals now existing on the globe. He believes that tribes, originally aquatic, acquired by their own effort, prompted by their desire to walk, both feet and legs, fitting them for progression on the ground; and that these members, by the long-continued operation of the wish to fly, were transformed into wings, adapted to gratify that desire. If this be philosophy, it is such as might have emanated from the college of Laputa.

nature ! Doubtless there exist, around us, on every side, influences of a still more subtle kind, which "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard," neither can it enter into the heart or imagination of man to conceive. How scanty is our knowledge of the mind ; how incomprehensible is its connection with the body ; how mysterious are its secret springs, and inmost workings ! What ineffable wonders would burst upon us, were we admitted to the perception of the spiritual world, now encompassed by clouds impervious to mortal vision !

The great Author of our being, who, while He has been pleased to confer on us the gift of reason, has prescribed certain limits to its powers, permits us to acquire, by its exercise, a knowledge of some of the wondrous works of his creation, to interpret the characters of wisdom and of goodness with which they are impressed, and to join our voice to the general chorus which proclaims his "might, majesty, and dominion." From the same gracious hand we also derive that unquenchable thirst for knowledge, which this fleeting life must ever leave unsatisfied ; those endowments of the moral sense, with which the present constitution of the world so ill accords ; and that innate desire of perfection which our present frail condition is so inadequate to fulfil. But it is not given to man to penetrate into the counsels, or fathom the designs of Omnipotence ; for in directing his views into futurity, the feeble light of his reason is scattered and lost in the vast abyss. Although we plainly discern intention in every part of the creation, the grand object of the whole is placed far above the scope of our comprehension. It is impossible, however, to conceive that this enormous expenditure of power, this vast accumulation of contrivances and of machinery, and this profusion of existence resulting from them, can thus, from age to age, be prodigally lavished, without some ulterior end. Is Man, the favoured creature of nature's bounty, the "paragon of animals," whose spirit holds communion with celestial

powers, formed but to perish with the wreck of his bodily frame ? Are generations after generations of his race doomed to follow in endless succession, rolling darkly down the stream of time, and leaving no track in its pathless ocean ? Are the operations of Almighty power to end with the present scene ? May we not discern, in the spiritual constitution of man, traces of higher powers, to which those he now possesses are but preparatory ; some embryo faculties which raise us above this earthly habitation ? Have we not in the imagination a power but little in harmony with the fetters of our bodily organs ; and bringing within our view purer conditions of being, exempt from the illusions of our senses and the infirmities of our nature, our elevation to which will eventually prove that all these unsated desires of knowledge, and all these ardent aspirations after moral good, were not implanted in us in vain ?

Happily there has been vouchsafed to us, from a higher source, a pure and heavenly light to guide our faltering steps, and animate our fainting spirit, in this dark and dreary search ; revealing those truths which it imports us most of all to know ; giving to morality higher sanctions ; elevating our hopes and our affections to nobler objects than belong to earth, and inspiring more exalted themes of thanksgiving and of praise.

HENRY MELVILL, B.D.

OF St. Peter's College, Cambridge, is now the minister of Camden Chapel, Camberwell. The Sermons from which the following extracts have been taken were preached at Cambridge in the year 1837.

THE UNNATURALNESS OF DISOBEDIENCE TO THE GOSPEL.

WE declare of the Gospel, that it addresses itself directly to those feelings, which, for the most part, are instantly wakened by kindness and beneficence. Take away the divinity from this Gospel, reduce it into a record of what one man hath done for others, and it relates a generous interposition, whose objects, if they evinced no gratitude, would be denounced as disgracing humanity. If it be true that we naturally entertain sentiments of the warmest affection towards those who have done, or suffered, some great thing on our behalf, it would seem quite to be expected that such sentiments would be called into most vigorous exercise by the Mediator's work. If in a day when pestilence was abroad on the earth, and men dreaded its entrance into their households, we could carry them to a bed on which lay one racked by the terrible malady ; and tell them that this individual had voluntarily taken the fearful infection, and was going down in agony to the grave, because, complying, of his own choice, with a mysterious decree which assured him, that, if he would thus suffer, the disease should have no power over their families—is it credible that they would look on the dying man with indifference ; or that, as they hearkened to his last requests, they would feel other than a resolve to undertake, as the most sacred of duties, the fulfilling the injunctions of one who, by so costly a sacrifice, warded off the evil with which

they were threatened ? And yet, what would this be, compared with our leading them to the scene of Crucifixion, and shewing them the Redeemer dying in their stead ? You cannot say, that, if the sufferer on his death-bed would be a spectacle to excite emotions of gratitude, and resolutions of obedience, the spectacle of Christ on the Cross might be expected to be surveyed with carelessness and coldness. Yet such is undeniably the fact. The result which would naturally be produced, is not produced. Men would naturally feel gratitude, but they do not feel gratitude. They would naturally be softened into love and submission, and they manifest only insensibility and hard-heartedness.

And what are we to say to this ? Here are beings who are capable of certain feelings, and who shew nothing of those feelings when there is most to excite them ; beings who can display love to every friend but their best, and gratitude to every benefactor but their greatest. Oh, we say—and it is the unnaturalness of the exhibition which forces us to say—that enchantment has been at work, stealing away the senses, and deadening the feelings. In all other cases the heart has free play ; but in this it is trammelled, as by some magical cords, and cannot beat generously. Satan, the great deceiver, who seduced the first of human kind, has been busy with one sort or another of illusion, and has so bound men with his spells that they are morally entranced. We know not, as we said in the former case, what may have been the stupifying charm, or the coercive incantation. We have not gone down with them to the haunts of the Sorcerer, that we might know by what rites they have thus been unhumanized. But they would never be indifferent where there is most to excite, and insensible where there is all that can tell upon their feelings, if they had not surrendered the soul to some power of darkness, some beguiling and o'ermastering passion, some agency which, like that pretended to by the woman of Endor, professes to give life to the dead. And therefore

remembering, that, as grafted into the Christian Church, they are men "before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among them," we cannot see them manifesting no love to the Saviour, and yielding him no allegiance, without feeling that this their vehement ingratitude is wholly unnatural, and without therefore pressing home upon them the question, "Who hath bewitched you that ye should not obey the truth?"

We may certainly add, that, as addressing itself to men's hopes, the Gospel is so calculated for making and retaining disciples, that nothing but the workings of sorcery will explain its rejection. It must be remembered that Christ, as Mediator, not only gained our pardon, but procured for us everlasting happiness. And if we must judge the immenseness of the escaped punishment, we must judge also that of the proffered glory, by the fact that our substitute was none other than a person of the Trinity. If Christ Jesus is set before men, crucified among them, they are manifestly taught, that, as the price paid is not to be computed, neither is the happiness of which it was the purchase. And they are beings keenly alive to their own interests, readily excited by any prospect of good, and who exhibit the greatest alacrity and vigour in pursuing such plans as promise them advantage. It is moreover their natural constitution, to forego a present for a future and far greater good, and to submit cheerfully to privations, in hopes of receiving what shall be more than equivalent. We call this their natural constitution; and we therefore, further, call it unnatural, and demonstrative of strange and sinister influence, that they should choose the trifling in preference to the unmeasured, and give up the everlasting for the sake of the transient. Yet this men do when they disobey the Gospel. The Gospel addresses itself directly to their desire after happiness. It makes its appeal to that principle in their nature, which prompts them to provide for the future at the expence of the present. In every

other case they hearken to such address, and respond to such appeal. But in this case, which differs from every other only in the incalculable superiority of the proffered good, they turn a deaf ear, and wear all the appearance of a natural incapacity of being stirred by such an engine as the Gospel brings to bear.

What account shall we give of this? A principle of their nature is in full vigour, except in the instance in which there is most to excite it, and then it seems utterly extinguished. They can pursue a future good, unless it be infinite, and be moved by any prospect of happiness, except of everlasting. There must have been sorcery here; and we have no difficulty in determining how the magician has worked. The devil has practised that jugglery which causes the objects of faith to shrink into insignificance, and those of sense to dilate into magnitude. There has been the weaving of that spell which circumscribes the view, so that, though a man can look forward, he never looks beyond the grave. There has been the drinking of that cup of voluptuousness, of which whosoever partakes is maddened into longing for yet deeper draughts. It is sorcery, it is witchcraft. Men would not hesitate, if an earthly good were to be secured on the conditions of the Gospel; and they refuse, when the good is heavenly, only because they have suffered themselves to be beguiled and cheated and entranced. There is a charm upon them, and their own passions have sealed it, binding them to love the world, and the things that are in the world. There is an enchanted circle, which their indulged lusts have traced, and within which they walk, so that they cannot expatiate over the vast spreadings of their existence. There is a syren voice, and their own wishes syllable its whispers, telling them there is no cause for haste, but that hereafter it will be soon enough to attend to Eternity. And thus there is no defect in the Gospel. It is adapted, with the nicest precision, to creatures so constituted as ourselves. But we live

in the midst of gorgeous deceits, and brilliant meteors. The wizard's skill, and the necromancer's art, are busied with hiding from us what we most need to know ; and our eyes are dazzled by the splendid apparitions with which the god of this world peoples his domain ; and our ears are fascinated by the melodies in which pleasure breathes her incantations ; and thus it comes to pass, that we are verily " bewitched " into disobeying the truth.

Would to God that we might all strive to break away from the seductions and flatteries of earth, and give ourselves in good earnest to the seeking happiness in Heaven. And what is it that we ask of men, when we entreat them to escape from the magician, and live for Eternity ? Is it that they should be less intellectual, less philosophical ? On the contrary, religion is the nurse of intellect, and philosophy is most noble when doing homage to Revelation. It is not intellectual to live only for this world, it is not philosophical to remain ignorant of God. Is it that they should surrender their pleasures, and walk a round of unvaried mortification ? We ask them to surrender nothing which a rational being can approve, or an immortal vindicate. We leave them every pleasure which can be enjoyed without a blush, and remembered without remorse. We ask only that they would flee those vices whose end is death, cultivate those virtues which are as much the happiness as the ornament of man, and propose to themselves an object commensurate with their capacities. This, let them be assured, is practical Christianity—to shun what, even as men, they should avoid, and pursue what, even as men, they should desire.

Shall we not then beseech the Almighty, that we may have strength to break the spell, and dissolve the illusion ? The Philistines are upon us, as upon Samson, and we are yet, it may be, in the lap of the enchantress. But all strength is not gone. The Spirit of the living God may yet be entreated ; and the razor of divine judgment hath not swept

off the seven locks wherein our might lies. And therefore, however bewitched, each amongst us may yet struggle with the sorcerer who has bound him ; and we can assure him that there is such efficacy in hearty prayer to the Lord, that, if he cry for deliverance, the green withs shall be "as tow when it toucheth the fire," and the new cords be broken, like a thread, from his arms.

THE WORD OF GOD OUR SUPPORT IN AFFLICTION.

WE may assert that there cannot be imagined, much less found, the darkness, in passing through which there is no promise of Scripture by which you may be cheered. We care not what it is which hath woven the darkness ; we are sure that God has made provision for his people's exulting, rather than lamenting, as the gloom gathers round them, and settles over them. Whatever be the nature of the afflictions with which any man has been visited, can he deny, if indeed he be one who has received Christ into the soul, that he has found "a word in season" in Scripture ; will he not, at the least, confess, that, if he have passed through the period of calamity without experiencing such consolations as filled him with gratitude, it has been through his own fault and faithlessness, seeing that even "the vale of Baca" can be used by the righteous "as a well ?"

Let us take the case of most frequent occurrence, but of which frequency diminishes nothing of the bitterness. We mean the case of the loss of friends, the case in which death makes way into a family, and carries off one of the most beloved of its members. It is night, deep night, in a household, whensoever this occurs. When the loss is of another kind, it may admit of repair. Property may be injured, some cherished plan may be frustrated—but industry may be again successful, and hope may fix its eye on other objects. But when those whom we love best die, there

is no comfort of this sort with which we can be comforted. For a time, at least, the loss seems irreparable; so that, though the wounded sensibilities may afterwards be healed, and even turn to the living as they turned to the dead, yet, whilst the calamity is fresh, we repulse, as injurious, the thought that the void in our affections can ever be filled, and are persuaded that the blank in the domestic group can be occupied by nothing but the hallowed memory of the buried. It is therefore night in the household,—darkness, a darkness that may be felt. And philosophy comes in, with its well meant, but idle, endeavours to console those who sit in this darkness. It can speak of the unavoidableness of death, of the duty of bearing with manly fortitude what cannot be escaped, of the injuriousness of excessive grief; and it may even hazard a conjecture of reunion in some world beyond the grave. And pleasure approaches with its allurements and fascinations, offering to cheat the mind into forgetfulness, and wile the heart from its sadness. But neither philosophy nor pleasure can avail any thing in the chamber of death—the taper of the one is too faint for so oppressive a gloom, and the torch of the other burns sickly in so unwonted an atmosphere. Is then the darkness such that those whom it envelopes are incapable of being comforted? Oh, not so. There may be those amongst yourselves who can testify, that, even in a night so dreary and desolate, there is a source whence consolation may be drawn. The promises of Scripture are never more strikingly fulfilled than when death has made an inroad, and taken away, at a stroke, some object of deep love. Indeed, it is God's own word to the believer, "I will be with him in trouble,"—as though that presence which can never be withdrawn then became more real and intense.

What are we to say of cases which continually present themselves to the parochial minister? He enters a house, whose darkened windows proclaim that one of its inmates is stretched out a corpse. He finds that it is the fairest and

dearest whom death has made his prey, and that the blow has fallen where sure to be most deeply felt. And he is prepared for the burst of bitter sorrow. He knows that the heart, when most purified by grace, is made of feeling stuff; for grace, which removes the heart of stone, and substitutes that of flesh, will refine, rather than extinguish, human sensibilities. But what words does he hear from lips, whence nothing but lamentation might have been expected to issue? "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." The mother will rise up from the side of her pale still child; and though on the cheek of that child (alas, never again to be warm with affection) there are tears which shew how a parent's grief has overflowed, she will break into the exclamation of the Psalmist, "I will sing of mercy and judgment; unto thee, O Lord, will I sing." And when, a few days after, the slow windings of the funeral procession are seen, and the minister advances to meet the train, and pours forth the rich and inspiring words, "I am the Resurrection and the Life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live,"—is it only the low murmur of suppressed anguish by which he is answered? can he not feel that there are those in the group whose hearts bound at the magnificent announcement? and, as he looks at the mourners, does he not gather, from the uplifted eye, and the moving lip, that there is one at least who is triumphing in the fulfilment of the prediction, "O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction?"

And what are we to say to these things? what but that, in the deepest moral darkness, there can be music, music which sounds softer and sweeter than by day; and that, when the instruments of human melody are broken, there is a hand which can sweep the heart-strings, and wake the notes of praise? Yes, philosophy can communicate no comfort to the afflicted: it may enter where all is night; but it leaves what it found, even weeping and wailing. And pleasure

may take the lyre, whose strains have often seduced and enchanted ; but the worn and wearied spirit has no ear in the gloom, for what sounded magically, when a thousand lights were blazing. But religion, faith in the promises of that God, who is the husband of the widow, and the Father of the fatherless, this can cause the sorrowing to be glad in the midst of their sorrow ; for it is a description which every believer will confess borne out by experience, that God our Maker "giveth songs in the night."

GLEANINGS FROM THE EARLY FATHERS.

ST. ATHANASIUS.

THIS eminent prelate was born at Alexandria, in A.D. 296. At the age of thirty, being highly distinguished for his piety and learning, he was chosen bishop of his native city, and held that office, though severely persecuted and several times driven into exile, for near fifty years, dying in A.D. 373. Most of his works are lost, but enough remains to justify the high opinion which many of his contemporaries express of his virtues and his talents.

THE BOOK OF PSALMS.

THOUGH the unity of the same spirit is to be seen throughout the whole body of the Holy Scriptures, it must yet be acknowledged, that there is in the Book of Psalms an individual grace, and a character which belongs to it in particular. No one can study it, without finding in it all the divers passions with which he may be agitated, all the varying inclinations, and also the means of calming the one and appeasing the other. The other books of the Old Testament show us, in some, the good that is to be imitated and the evil that is to be avoided, in others, the prophecies concerning the coming of our Saviour, in others, the lives and actions of kings and holy personages. But the Psalms, whilst they at the same time do not omit these things, teach us moreover to become acquainted with ourselves, and to find a remedy for the spiritual maladies with which we may be afflicted. Other books tell us that we must be penitent, submit to afflictions, and render thanks to God :—This teaches us how to humble ourselves,—how to conduct ourselves under calamity, and how to express our gratitude. Elsewhere, it is the example of others that is proposed for our imitation : here we identify ourselves with the sacred

Author, and study our own history. This single volume is sufficient for all the necessities of the human heart:—there is not a situation in life in which we may not draw from it the most precious advantages. Whether we are tried by temptation or by adversity, exposed to danger or saved from peril, in sorrow or in joy, the Psalms still furnish wherewith to console and fortify us. They supply us abundantly with the language of prayer, praise, blessing, and thanksgiving—and all the virtues, graces, and duties of which Jesus Christ gave us the example, when He came on earth, are taught us in this book, with which He vouchsafed to enlighten us before his coming.

MAN RECALLED TO THE KNOWLEDGE OF HIS CREATOR.

WIDELY estranged from the unity of the Divine essence, how was man to be brought again to the knowledge of it? To effect this end, two means had been appointed by the Lord himself. The first was the religious instinct impressed on all rational souls at the time of their creation, and which is intended to unite them constantly to Him from whom they derive their existence; but this light is soon extinguished in the thick clouds which human passions spread over it. The other means is that of which St. Paul speaks in his Epistle to the Romans,—“That which may be known of God is manifest in them, for God hath showed it unto them. For the invisible things of Him, from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse.” Divine Providence had taken care to manifest itself to all eyes by the beauty of visible things, the magnificence and harmony of which sufficiently demonstrate one only God, the principle and regulator of all things that exist. If there had been a plurality of gods, how could that majestic and uninterrupted harmony have existed which we observe in the government of

the universe, notwithstanding the perpetual shock of the opposing elements of which it is composed, and which seem incessantly to threaten its destruction? Nevertheless, the testimony of his eyes and reason was insufficient in itself to bring man to the conclusion, at once so natural and so simple, that it was necessary for him to establish. It remained, then, for him to be taught this lesson in another school. It was only God himself who could reveal his existence to him, by drawing aside the veil under which it was hidden. What, then, was the hand that He employed as the instrument to effect it?—the same of which he has said, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”

ST. GREGORY OF NAZIANZUM,

So called from his birthplace, a small town of Cappadocia, and from his learning and eloquence, styled “the Divine,” became archbishop of Constantinople, in A.D. 378: but being of a mild and peaceable spirit, and wearied out with the contentions of rival sects, which he laboured in vain to terminate, he resigned his office, after holding it about seven years, and retiring to his native town, died there in the year 390, at the age of sixty-two.

CONNEXION BETWEEN THE SOUL AND BODY.

SCARCELY can I conceive, even to myself, this union between my body and my soul—how is it that I bear upon me the stamp of the divinity, and that at the same time I grovel in the dust? Is my body in health, it wars against me—is it sick, I languish with it in sympathy. It is at once a companion that I love, and an enemy that I dread—It is a prison that frightens me, a partner with whom I dwell. If I weaken it by excess, I become incapable of anything noble; if I indulge it, or treat it with too much consideration, it revolts, and my slave escapes me. It fastens me to the earth by ties I cannot break; and prevents

me from taking my upward flight to God, for which end alone I was created. It is an enemy that I love, a treacherous friend whom it is my duty to distrust. To fear and yet to love ! At once what union, and what discord ! For what end, with what secret motive, is it that man has been thus organized ? Is it not that God has seen it fit by this means to humble our pride, which might otherwise have carried us to the height of disdain even our Creator, in the thought that, being derived from the same fount of being, we might be permitted to regard ourselves as on terms of equality with Him ? It is then to recall us incessantly to the sense of our entire dependence on Him, that God has reduced our bodies to this state of frailty, which exposes it to perpetual combats : balancing our nobleness by our baseness ; holding us in suspense between death and immortality, according to the affection which inclines us to the body or the soul ; so that, if the excellences of our souls should inspire us with pride, the imperfections inseparable from our bodies may bring us back to humility.

DUTY OF A PASTOR.

WHAT is the object of a pastor ? It is to give to souls which crawl in the dust like a worm, the flight and rapidity of the eagle ; to detach them from the earth, and consecrate them to God ; to restore and confirm in them the image and character of the Divinity ; to introduce them into, and form them after, Jesus Christ, by the virtue of the Holy Spirit ; it is, in short, to transform man into God, and to procure him the eternal felicity for which he has been created. Such is the end of the pastoral functions, and of the Holy Ministry. It is the same end that God himself has had in view from all eternity, in every thing that he has accomplished, ineffable and grand, in favour of man.

ST. BASIL THE GREAT,

THE friend of Gregory of Nazianzum, was born at Cæsarea, in Cappadocia, in the year 329. Having passed many of his early years, together with his family, in religious retirement, he became, in 370, bishop of his native place, where he distinguished himself alike by his defence of the faith against the errors of Arianism, and by his strenuous exertions in behalf of the poor, he being the founder of a noble institution, termed the Basiliad, the first of its kind in ancient times, which served the purposes of a public hospital for the diseased, the crippled, and the blind, and where also employment was provided for the destitute, and liberal hospitality exercised to strangers. St. Basil died in the year 379, leaving a number of writings which show that his learning and eloquence were only surpassed by his piety and charity.

AFFLICTIONS.

THE physician attacks the disease, and not the patient ; his object is to cure him whom he causes to suffer. It is thus that God, whose mercy is infinite, chastises us only to bring us into the way of salvation, or to confirm our course in it. You are not angry with your physician, when he applies the cautery or the knife to your gangrened limb ; on the contrary, you can scarcely find language adequate to the expression of your gratitude ; you keep repeating that he has saved your life, by preventing the disease from spreading, and you pay him liberally for his attentions. Yet you murmur against the Lord, who tries us only for our good ; and you are unwilling to acknowledge that the afflictions with which He visits us, are the only means capable of restoring health to our souls, or of securing the continuance of it, when it is restored to us.

ALMS-GIVING.

THE alms that we bestow on the poor is at once a gift and a loan ; it is a gift, inasmuch as we ought to require nothing for it ; and it is a loan, because the Lord himself deigns to become the debtor of him who advances it. And can there,

then, be found any one who would refuse the Maker of the Universe as a guarantee? If a rich individual offers his security, you accept it without hesitation; but when God himself engages to be answerable for the poor, you dare to consider and calculate, before you open your hand.

TEMPORISING WITH THE WORD.

“**THY** silver is become dross, thy wine mixed with water,” says the prophet Isaiah. How culpable, then, are those preachers, who turn the wine of the doctrine of the inspired writings into water, if we may so express ourselves, by mixing with it the suggestions of their own imaginations, to the great injury of souls. To gain the good graces of those who listen to them, they flatter their propensities, and lead them away, by the complaisance with which they discuss their vices. They weaken the holy energy of the Scriptures, which express themselves so forcibly against every kind of evil: and, as if they had sworn the destruction of their auditors, they dwell upon nothing but the mercy of God, of which they draw an exaggerated picture, and on similar topics which render more and more careless those whom they ought, with holy jealousy, to bring back, by every argument, to the fear of the Lord.

PROGRESS OF RELIGION IN THE SOUL.

How much we ought to admire the profound wisdom of our Divine Legislator, who, willing to guide us in the paths of virtue, shows us that the first step towards learning to do well, is to “cease to do evil.” Had He begun by exhorting us to perfection, we should scarcely have had the courage even to make the attempt; but in proposing to us what is of comparatively easy execution, He tries our strength by degrees. It is with piety as with the mysterious ladder that was exhibited to the patriarch Jacob, the foot of which

rested on the earth, but the summit reached the skies ; it is only by degrees that we can ascend, but it is by degrees that we can finally arrive at the highest elevation of which our nature is capable. The first step we take in mounting a ladder is that which disengages our foot from the earth ; so, in the scale of religion, the first step towards the attainment of good is the estranging ourselves from the practice of evil.

SPIRITUAL ADVICE.

IF you know how to search the Scriptures for the help they offer you, you will have no need of my aid, or of that of any other person, to guide you in your conduct. You will have the illumination of the Holy Spirit to enlighten you ; that is to say, you will draw your light from the source of Light itself.

“ Work out your salvation with fear and trembling ;” but I conjure you not to suffer any thing like distrust to take possession of your soul ; nothing can be more hurtful to its interests. Are you not in the service of the best of Masters ? is He not always willing to come to your assistance ? Look up to Him with faith, and you will find that not only He will never abandon you, but that every time you pray to Him, with sincerity and confidence, you will feel his presence in the interior of your soul ; He will deign himself to say to you, “ Here am I.”

ST. GREGORY OF NYSSA

WAS the brother of St. Basil, and was born in the year 351. Animated by the example of Basil, he forsook the study of the law, and at length became bishop of Nyssa, in Cappadocia, whence he was expelled by the Arians; but he was reinstated on the death of the Emperor Valens, and exerted himself greatly at the Council of Constantinople, in 381, in defence of the great truths of Christianity. St. Gregory died at Nyssa, in the year 400.

THE PEACE-MAKER.

“BLESSED are the peace-makers, for they shall be called the children of God.” To see God is a privilege above all others. To be the child of God is something still more happy! What is man? What is God? Yet the immense abyss which separates man from the divinity is crossed, in this appellation of Child of God! For the moment this glorious qualification is bestowed upon us, we are raised to the dignity of God himself,—we acquire a right to the paternal heritage. Such is the recompense that attends us at the end of the combat. But what is this combat? If you are a peace-maker you will be introduced, by a glorious adoption, into the family of God. What is more sweet than peace? Whatever goods we possess, is it not peace that gives the relish to them all? without that there is no good. But what is a peace-maker? What is peace? The peace-maker is he who gives peace to another. Can we give that which we do not ourselves possess? Peace is love towards our neighbour, founded on charity. By this simple definition we do away with every thing that is in opposition to peace; with hatred, violence, envy, resentment, dissimulation, war, and all the miseries included in her train. Like precious balsams, the perfumes of which exhale themselves into distance, peace dispenses its sweet influences all around. Peace is to the soul what health is to the body; with the one there can be no disease, with the other, none of the violent or disgraceful passions which fill the mind with uneasiness, and the senses with disorder.

PRAYER.

ALIKE ungrateful for the benefits we have received, and indifferent towards those we are still in expectation of, we neglect prayer, the only medium through which we can prove our gratitude to God. Who is it that has spread out the earth beneath our feet, opened paths to human industry across the waters, and hung the brilliant vault of the heavens above our heads? Who is it that directs my paths with the torch which enlightens me during the day? Who is it that makes the fountains spring up in the depths of the valleys? Who has dug out for our rivers the beds in which they are enclosed; has made the animal creation subservient to our necessities; has organized this vile dust; has given it at once life and intelligence; has engraved upon this handful of earth, of which I am composed, the resemblance of the divinity? and who, after this glorious image has been obscured and defaced by sin, who is it that has re-established it, in its pristine beauty?

We pray, but without reflecting on the sublime puissance of Him to whom we address our prayers! We degrade the majesty of the Divinity by the sordidness of our desires, and the abject nature of our affections. We present ourselves before God, like some poor wretch, who, possessing nothing in the world but a few paltry utensils of clay, should seek out his monarch, at the moment of his dispensing dignities and honours all around, and should then ask him to convert those utensils into something more suited to his desires. We expose to the eyes of Him from whom no secrets are hidden, the disorderly inclinations to which we are subjected, not to obtain their cure, but to persuade him to connive at them; whilst we ask of him only such things as are likely to add to, and inflame them; and we murmur against him, when we fancy our prayers are not heard, as if it were a fault in Him, not to be vindictive, proud, and avaricious, like ourselves.

“ But is it then forbidden,” some will say, “ to ask of God temporal goods, since he is equally the dispenser of them as of things eternal ?” Yes, it is from his hand that they emanate ; but it is not that they are valuable in themselves, that He gives them to those who ask them,—it is to inspire them with confidence to solicit things of real worth. God grants things of lesser import to our weakness, as a mother at first nourishes her babe with the milk of her breasts ; in order to prepare it for more solid aliments, afterwards, in the proportions that its age and strength may require. With Him they are only the first manifestations of that benevolence which promises us every substantial good, that we may be justified in asking of Him. Is it not, then, a species of self-deception, to offer up our prayers to the Eternal, solely to ask of Him sublunary and perishable things ? of Him, the master of the heavens ! to ask only the wealth of the earth ! of Him, the most high, to ask only things transitory and worthless ! of Him, the God who opens his immortal kingdom to us, to ask such ignoble acquisitions as we must, ere long, inevitably part with, and the very enjoyment of which, fugitive as it is, exposes us to so many dangers.

ST. EPHRAIM, THE SYRIAN,

ONE of the most eminent names in the Eastern Church, passed the greater part of his life as a hermit, in the deserts of Mesopotamia, but was at length induced to repair to the city of Edessa, where he became deacon of the church, and where he sacrificed his own life through his incessant efforts to alleviate the distresses of the inhabitants during a period of pestilence and famine. He died in the year 379, leaving a number of works which were so highly esteemed in the Syrian Church that for ages they were read immediately after the Holy Scriptures, but unfortunately most of them have since been lost.

CONDUCT OF LIFE.

THE Christian ought to prescribe it to himself as a rule in the events of life, when any thing fortunate happens to him, to expect that affliction may not be far off. Is he, on the contrary, visited with some sorrowful event, let him hope for it to be closely followed by some subject of joy. Let us take example from those that voyage on the ocean; do they, because they are assailed by some furious storm, or impetuous winds, relinquish the hope of saving themselves?—No; they resist the tempest, they wait the return of calm, and when it comes they still keep a careful watch, that they may not be surprised by fresh dangers. Thus ought we to act, and to be prepared for all events. He who expects misfortune confronts it, when it presents itself, without being alarmed at its aspect, as by something strange and unlooked for. When it comes, let us throw ourselves into the arms of God, that we may not be overwhelmed by it. If He sends us prosperity, let us still be prepared for the tempests, and not forget, in the excess of our enjoyments, that the day of affliction may be near at hand.

DEATH OF THE FAITHFUL.

WHAT admirable wisdom in the dispensations of the Almighty! He has sown the present life with tribulations, to make us more exquisitely sensible of the ineffable joys of

the life to come ! In creating us immortal, he has nevertheless taxed our immortality with death,—but with only temporary death ; a death which detains us only one moment under its dominion, that we may be enfranchised from it, immediately after, for ever. No ; there is no death for those who die in Christ, there is only sleep. For them death is the promised haven which affords them shelter from every storm. Can they, then, dread the arrival of that which for ever sets them free from sin, and all its cruel snares.

O my Saviour ! how can I bless thee with sufficient ardour, for having given us thy death as the pledge of our own immortal life ! thy resurrection as the earnest of that which thou hast promised to ourselves ! Let the sepulchre call us,—we will wait in peace, for the moment when thy powerful voice shall command our dust to rise and join itself to immortal life, to celebrate thy praises throughout eternity.

ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM,

OR, the Golden-mouthed, so styled from his eloquence, was born at Antioch, about the year 350. Here he became eminent as a preacher, and at length he was, though greatly against his inclination, appointed archbishop of Constantinople. In his new station his charity to the poor was conspicuous, and his popularity with his flock was unbounded ; but his decided measures against the Arians, and his warm invectives against the pride and luxury of the court, raised him a host of enemies, by whom, in 404, he was banished to the deserts of Mount Taurus. He was afterwards ordered to be removed to Pityus, in the barbarous region of Colchis, on the coast of the Euxine Sea ; worn out, however, with fatigue and ill usage, he died upon the journey, at Comana, in Pontus, in the year 407. Chrysostom is considered as closing the series of Fathers of the Greek Church.

TEMPTATIONS.

WE must all expect temptations and combats, from the moment we enter upon our spiritual life. Scarcely had Jesus Christ come into the world than the impious Herod

sought his life, and let loose all his fury against him. It is to God alone, who permits the temptation, to appoint when it is to terminate; and it is for man who is proved and purified by it, to suffer it with patience, and even with joy. Let us not then shrink from those trials, remembering always that in them Jesus Christ fights with us, and for us. But why should there be these temptations? you ask. I answer, because they serve as the test of our virtue. Without doubt God could prevent them; but he does not will to do so, because he desires that we should have the opportunity of meriting somewhat from his goodness. He permits them, therefore, to exercise our faith and courage; he commands them as combats, in order that we may gain the victory. Nor have we any right, if we yield to it, to blame the temptation itself, but solely our own negligence, in not foreseeing, or our weakness in not more vigorously resisting it.

EPISTLES OF ST. PAUL.

It is one of my sweetest satisfactions to assist, without ever failing to do so, at the reading which takes place three or four times in the week, at each of the solemnities of our martyrs, of the Epistles of St. Paul. Every time that his voice, stirring as the trumpet that called the tribes of Israel to the temple, sounds in mine ears, it excites an ardour in my heart which transports and inflames it. His accents recall to me Him whom I love: he appears to me to be brought again to life, and to be present in person to give us himself his sublime instructions. In reading the Epistles of St. Paul, we ask ourselves whence it is that this Apostle has drawn a theology so lofty and so original; whence has he derived it? At what school has he learned it? Could it be in the humble workshop, where he laboured at his skins, to make his tents? Was he in the habit of raising his views so high, when, before his conversion, his thoughts and language differed in no respect from the thoughts and language of persons in a situation equally abject with his own? We

may say, with certainty, that it is not the man who speaks, but the Holy Spirit, God alone, with his all-powerful grace: that Paul is only the instrument, and that it is the gift of God which operates in him, in all its magnificence. * * *

During nearly four hundred years that St. Paul has been dead, how many commentators, how many doctors, how many interpreters, have exercised themselves in the explanation of these admirable epistles! and so far from having exhausted them, they have only opened new fields for those who come after them to explore.

EARLY CHRISTIANITY.

WHAT contributed the most powerfully to the propagation of the Christian Church, was not so much the miracles that the first Christians performed, as the holy lives they led. They were angels upon earth. If we lived as they did, we should not be asked, as we continually are, for miracles in proof of our doctrines; we should bring the whole world into the faith of Jesus Christ, by the force of our example alone.

ST. HILARY OF POITIERS,

A **NOBLEMAN** of Gaul, and a convert to Christianity, was chosen bishop of Poitiers, in the year 350, but was speedily banished by the Emperor Constans, for his strenuous opposition to the Arians, and remained in exile nearly ten years. At length he was permitted to return, and he presided over his see in quiet until his death, in the year 308. The works of St. Hilary are characterised by a bold and flowing eloquence, and he was considered as the firmest champion of orthodoxy in the West, and a worthy compeer of St. Athanasius.

"BLESSED ARE THEY THAT MOURN."

"**BLESSED** are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted." Who is it that Jesus Christ thus promises to indemnify for their sorrows by endless consolation?—Not those who weep over the loss of their natural ties, or the

calumnies to which they may have been subjected, or the unjust treatment they may have received; but those who weep in reflecting on the sins they have committed. Those are they for whom he has reserved the felicities of heaven, which, most assuredly, they shall not fail to find.

THE CHURCH OF CHRIST INDEPENDENT OF CIVIL AID.

WELL may we deplore the evil days on which we are fallen. When man will have it that God has need of the protection of man, and that the Church of Christ cannot stand without the help of the civil government. We invoke it, we call aloud for it; but answer me, O ye who declare yourselves the advocates of such a system, to what human suffrages had the apostles recourse when they began to preach the Gospel? Of what earthly powers did they borrow assistance, when they proclaimed the name of Jesus Christ, and in that name turned nearly all the people of the earth from the worship of idols to that of the Living God? Did they seek their titles of recommendation in the courts and palaces of princes? They who sang their hymns of thanks and praises from the depths of their dungeons, under the fetters with which they were manacled, and their bodies still dropping blood from the wounds which the rods of their scourgers had inflicted on them. Was it by imperial ordinances that Paul, even when exhibited to the world as a spectacle, assembled together a church for Jesus Christ, from among those who gazed upon him? Paul, then, it should seem, sheltered himself under the names of Nero, of Vespasian, of Decius! He made patrons to himself of these men, whose avowed hatred of the Christian name was to contribute to its triumphs! No: the founders of our faith knew no arts but those of labouring with their hands for their own livelihood;—they were acquainted with no dwellings but the humble roofs beneath which they assembled their timid flocks—yet it was from under these roofs that they sallied

forth to make the conquest of the world, traversing, and gaining over to the faith, cities, countries, whole nations, without taking any thought of senatorial edicts or regal commands. The more they were interdicted from preaching the name of Jesus Christ, the more their eagerness to publish it was kindled ; but now, alas ! the countenance of the great ones of the earth is imagined necessary for the maintenance of divine truth, and the cause of Jesus Christ is made to appear weak, because it suits the intrigue of party purposes to find protectors for it.

GIFTS OF THE MAGI.

IN the quality of the gifts offered to the infant Jesus by the Magi, they set forth all his attributes—as a king they laid gold at his feet ; as God they offered him incense ; as man they gave him myrrh. Thus the homage they rendered him became a proclamation of all the mysteries of the religion he was to establish. As man, he was to die ; as God he was to live again ; as a king he was to judge all men.

ST. AMBROSE.

THIS eminent man was born at Treves, the capital of the Roman possessions in Gaul and Germany, in A.D. 340. He studied the law, and at length became governor of a province in Italy, when going to the church of Milan to appease a disturbance which prevailed respecting the appointment of a bishop, he was himself tumultuously chosen, and was, much against his inclination, compelled to accept the office. He, however, discharged its duties with great zeal and firmness, and wrote many valuable works upon sacred subjects. He died in the year 397.

WORSHIP OF GOD.

“THE Lord is in his holy temple : let all the earth keep silent before Him.” Why was it that we first raised temples to the God of heaven ? Was it to listen to his praises in them, to offer up our prayers to Him ? this duty

could everywhere have been fulfilled. Your own house is a sanctuary wherein you can pray: your own heart the altar on which you can sacrifice. Was it simply to recall to us the idea and remembrance of a Supreme Being? All nature, all his works, celebrate his glory. The universe is his temple, and man the priest. If man had not been ungrateful and rebellious, the sight of so many wonders would have been sufficient to keep his duty towards his God always before his eyes. Aurora each morning commencing her brilliant career; the ever-flowing streams coursing down the mountains, and meandering through the plains; the azure firmament, the enamelled meadows; the treasures of the harvest: everything, from the superb cedar to the smallest, lowliest shrub of the valleys; from the eagle that bursts through the clouds, to the insect that travels upon the earth,—all would have proved a source to man of continual praise and adoration. But he, becoming insensible to these ever-renewing miracles, plunged into the sleep of indifference in the midst of so many wonders, the very stars, even, ceasing to convince him of the glory of their Author. Art was added to Nature; for the name of God being effaced from the breast of his noblest work, was obliged to be engraven on the entablature of temples built with hands,—every day, every moment, hymns and canticles are publicly chanted to recall man, in spite of himself, to the worship of the Almighty; to reanimate his sense of benefits, and put his ingratitude to the blush. To proclaim the glory of God, to acknowledge it, to attest it in his earthly temples: this ought to be the desire of every one, the intention of all men, the end of religion.

RELIGION STRENGTHENED BY TRIALS.

TIMES of persecution have always been most fruitful in faith and good works. All affections were then turned towards God. The prayers of the faithful were then inter-

rupted by no terrestrial things. Their continual meditations made them look with a tranquil mind upon the perils of the world, and sustained them in an habitual contempt of death. Since we have lost this holy exercise, those whom labour could not subdue, have suffered themselves to be enervated by rest. Idleness and peace are then fatal to the Christian. It is during the calm of the Church that the most dangerous tempests are raised. The time of persecution leaves us no leisure to attend to the luxuries of the body, or to follow the dictates of the passions, which are only engendered in the bosom of abundance and prosperity ; but when we have only ourselves to contend against, we soon give up the struggle, sink, and yield.

ST. JEROME.

JEROME, the author of that translation of the Holy Scriptures termed the Vulgate, was born in Dalmatia, in the year 331, but was educated at Rome, where he applied himself at first to the cultivation of profane literature. Fearing the temptations of a great city, he first travelled into Gaul, and next retired to the Syrian desert, where for years he led the life of a hermit. Returning for a short time to society, he was ordained priest at Antioch ; but soon after repaired to Bethlehem, where the remainder of his life was chiefly passed, and where his translation was executed. He was unhappily much engaged in controversy, and the natural impetuosity of his temper displays itself in his style, which is bold, flowing, and energetic. Jerome died at Bethlehem, in the year 420.

MIRACLES OF CHRIST.

THE most astonishing of any of the miracles of our Lord, has ever appeared to me his chasing of the money-lenders, and others who defiled its sacred precincts, from the Temple. Not even the voice by which, on the banks of Jordan, God the Father declared Him to be his beloved Son, conveys to me a more striking evidence of his divinity. A man whose exterior had nothing in it imposing, close upon the day on which he was to be dragged to suffer an ignominious death

on the cross, to enter the Temple alone, and triumph thus over the avarice and hatred of the Scribes and Pharisees ; to dictate to a passion so strong as the love of gain ; and, without any other weapon than the scourge in his hand, to disperse and put to flight a whole multitude, overturn the counters of the vendors, and accomplish, by himself, what it might have been imagined a whole army would have had difficulty in achieving, is a prodigy that can only be explained by a reference to the Divine Omnipotence. What truly celestial fire must have darted from his eyes ! What divine majesty shone resplendent in his countenance !

REGENERATION.

Who can comprehend the manner in which the all-powerful hand of God forms the body, and creates the soul of an infant, in the womb of its mother ? Who can conceive the prodigious variety, and at the same time the perfect union, of so many parts ? Who can think without being struck with admiration, that of the same matter of which the body is formed, one part should be softened into flesh, another hardened into bones, another propelled through the veins, and another be bound up with the nerves ? If, then, the structure and formation of our bodies be such an incomprehensible mystery to us, how much more ignorant must we be of what passes in our hearts and the secret manner in which God renews and sanctifies our souls by a second birth ! Thus the order of nature teaches us to revere that of grace, and not to search into "the deep things of God," which, as St. Paul says, "knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God."

THE JEWS WEeping OVER JERUSALEM.

HEAVILY has the divine vengeance fallen upon the Jewish people, since the perfidious husbandmen, to whom the Father of the family had confided the care of his vineyard,

killed the servants he sent to them, and even the Son himself. Banished from their city, they have not the liberty of entering it for more than one single day. They only come to it that day, to deplore its loss ; and even then they are forced to purchase with money the permission to weep over the ruin of their inheritance. As before they bought the blood of Jesus Christ, they are now obliged to buy their own tears ; for, even to their very tears, every thing is sold to them. On the anniversary of the day on which Jerusalem was taken and destroyed by the Romans, we may see the remnant of this miserable people coming into the city, with all the insignia of grief—women bending under the weight of age—old men laden with rags, as with years, mingling in the crowd, bearing in their bodies, and even in their faces, the visible signs of the divine displeasure. This mournful multitude lament the ruin of their temple, whilst the cross of the Saviour shines forth to all eyes, from the summit of the Church of Mount Calvary ; the Anastasia, the Church of the Resurrection of the Saviour, shines with gold, as well on the outside as within ; and from every part of the city is seen the standard of Jesus Christ displayed upon the Mount of Olives. These imposing spectacles make us feel the profound misery of this ungrateful people ; but it does not excite the compassion of which their obstinacy renders them undeserving : their lamentations would be inexhaustible, and the women, whose locks are dishevelled, and their arms livid from the violence with which they strike their breasts, would not cease to afflict themselves, if the avaricious sentinel did not count the moments of their grief, and levy a fresh tax upon every fresh flood of tears.

ST. AUGUSTINE,

THE last, and perhaps the most illustrious of the Fathers of the Latin Church, was born at Tagasta, in Numidia, in the year 354. Early in life he was addicted to pleasure, and imbibed the errors of Manicheism, but he was at length brought into the way of truth by the exertions of St. Ambrose. He afterwards became bishop of Hippo, on the coast of Africa, where, until his death, in 430, he laboured unceasingly, as well for the temporal as the spiritual benefit of his people, and produced numerous works which have in each succeeding age commanded the admiration of posterity.

AFFLICTIONS.

UNDER the equitable Master whom we serve, we do not suffer a single affliction, that has not for its foundation, either his justice, which corrects us for even the most secret of our sins, or his mercy which thus prevents the faults into which we might otherwise fall. There is not one, therefore, which is not either a just chastisement, or a salutary ordeal.

If, then, we consider ourselves as a family of Christians, we shall see what solid grounds of consolation remain to us, in whatever troubles we may be visited with ; nor have we any right to complain of the present life, since it is only the apprenticeship to one more durable. We make use of the good things it may present to us, but yet as strangers who are not going to tarry ; and we profit by the evils we may be obliged to undergo, by regarding them either as purifications or corrections.

Such are the resources of the suffering Christian ; but when the infidel suffers, it is without benefit, and without consolation.

EXAMPLE OF JESUS CHRIST.

JESUS CHRIST willed that He should be acknowledged as being God indeed, and man indeed. He therefore proved himself God by his miracles, and man in his sufferings.

There is not a single action in his mortal life which does not exemplify one or the other of his two natures.

Men seek after the riches of the world with insatiable ardour ; Jesus Christ willed to be born in poverty. Our pride makes us indignant at the smallest outrages ; He experienced every description of insult. We revolt against the most trifling injury ; He suffered injustice, even permitting it to lead him to death. To us pain is insupportable ; He allowed himself to be lacerated with scourges, pierced with thorns and nails. We fear nothing so much as death ; He submitted to it voluntarily. The death of the cross was regarded as the most opprobrious of any, and it was upon a cross that He was willing to die ; in short, in foregoing for Himself all the goods, the love of which draws us into the commission of evil, and in exposing Himself to all the evils of which the dread turns us away from the search after Divine Truth, He has subjugated both the one and the other, alike, beneath our feet ; for every sin we commit has its origin either in the love of some one of the goods which Jesus Christ has despised, or the fear of some one of the evils which He has endured. Thus there is not a single incident in the life of this God-Man which does not serve us as a lesson for the regulation of our own ; and in it we find a complete treatise of perfect morality.

REPENTANCE.

GOD has allowed of repentance, as a door open to those who might otherwise be tempted to despair ; but to keep the bold and presumptuous within the paths of duty, he has ordained that the moment of death should be uncertain. What are the examples we find recorded of sinners who have been converted in their dying hour : the thief at the right hand of Jesus Christ, you reply. I grant it : this is one instance in order that no man shall despair ;—but go on—alas ! it is the only one, that no man shall presume.

It is not you who, on your death-bed, quit sin ; it is sin that quits you : it is not you who detach yourself from the world, it is the world that detaches itself from you. It is not you who break your bonds, it is your bonds which break of themselves, through the fragility common to our nature. It is easy to see that he who condemns the irregularities of his life, only at the moment when he is obliged, in spite of himself, to resign it, does not condemn them from conviction, but necessity.

GOD IS LOVE.

IF we ask, What is God ? St. John replies, “ God is love.” Let us bless his holy name ; let us rejoice in God, if we ourselves rejoice in charity. He who possesses charity has no great distance to go in order to find God ; let him only look into his conscience, and there he will behold Him. If charity does not dwell therein, neither will God, for where charity is, there doth God reside. Possess charity, and you will see Him, in your own heart, seated as on his throne.

THE END.

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