

man is able through the assistance of the Spirit of grace to perform his own share of the Gospel covenant. For it is only by the use of means, recollect, that any person can become truly pious, or shew his desire for future happiness.

'Well: I am not so sure about that.'

'Why not?' Deny the inference if you can. And I believe you cannot do so upon any grounds of reason or philosophy. For I take it to be a self-evident maxim in religion that every ordinance of God is of some use in the course of his Providence. They constitute a sort of language by which He speaks to the heart and affections of his creatures, and enables them to 'purify themselves even as He is pure.'

'I understand.'

'The very existence therefore of the means of grace, proves that forgiveness of sins is only conditional: that those who make the rational and necessary use of these means, will receive pardon of their sins, and every other benefit of Christ's passion; and that those, who refuse to listen to the voice which speaks to them from heaven, will be visited with tribulation, and wrath and anguish. Moreover, if they continue impenitent in their hearts, and persevere in their course of sin, Scripture tells us that they have nothing to expect in a future world but everlasting torments in the fire prepared for the devil and his angels.'

'Now, Parson, that is what I cannot understand. How can a merciful God inflict infinite punishment for a finite transgression?'

'Because every attribute of God is eternal. His justice is eternal: his goodness is eternal. Therefore the judgment which his justice pronounces must be eternal too.'

'I do't know that.'

'I tell you, it is truth. And no man who seriously reflects upon the subject aright can with reason ascribe any undue severity to the course of Providence in this particular. For the means and conditions of salvation, as well as the rewards and punishments of a future state of being, are openly laid down in the Bible; and no one can complain of being taken by surprise.'

'Rewards, I grant ye: but no punishments.'

'I beg your pardon Mr. D. Hear me out. The Scriptures state most distinctly that there shall be not only punishment for wicked doers in the world to come: but that that punishment will be eternal—everlasting—without end. Hear St. Paul, whom I trust you will allow to be better authority than a newspaper: 'The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven, with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ:—who shall be furnished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power.' 11. Thess. 1. 9. &c.'

'Well: I do't remember that passage.'

'Ah! my friend. This comes of your going to newspapers for your religion instead of the Bible. Here, take the book and look at it.' He coust it over for a minute or two. 'Now my good Sir, turn up if you please, to the twenty fifth chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel, and you will find what you have just read to be further confirmed. In our Lord's prophetic description of the last Judgment he is represented as saying to the wicked or those on his

left hand:—'Depart from me ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.' v. 41.'

'Yes: I know all that. But it is not a true description: it is a parable.'

'What is your reason for thinking so.'

'Because it is not agreeable to the Divine mercy.'

'That is to say, you distort the plain meaning of Scripture to suit a fanciful tenet of a most pernicious system.'

'Besides: I cannot understand it.'

'In other words Mr. D. you pretend to scan the works of an Infinite Being, with the imperfect powers of a weak and finite mind. I will tell you what it is. There are mysteries in the works and ways of God which no man can understand. For instance you sow seed in the spring of the year: you see it grow in summer; and you cut down the crop from it in autumn. With this process you are perfectly familiar: but you cannot either understand or explain, how common earth and moisture are converted into large stalks, and small grains of seed. This is a problem which is impossible of solution. If then you cannot understand what is before your eyes of the works of Providence, you cannot surely expect to comprehend what you have neither seen nor felt, Mr. D. It is impossible that man should understand these things fully. That enlargement of the intellect, which will enable us to see things, even as we also are seen, is reserved as a reward to the faithful after the resurrection.'

'I must think upon these things: but I'll honestly own to you, Parson, that I did not think so much could be said against Universalism.'

'Alas! my friend, by admitting so much to me you give me the best possible evidence that you do not read your Bible so often or so attentively as you ought to do. Believe me it, and it only, contains the words of eternal life. The system of Universalism which you dream about, is unsound and unphilosophical in its structure and pernicious in its tendency. I have no hesitation in saying that by taking away the fear of future punishment it opens the flood-gates of vice and immorality—of sin and every sort of wickedness. In conclusion, allow me to advise you to study the Scriptures with humility and godly fear, and to pray God to give you a clean heart, and renew a right spirit within you.'

Life a Journey.—Man is a traveller, his life is a journey, heaven is his end, his road lieth through a wilderness, and he is in the dark. Thus circumstanced, how earnestly and devoutly ought he to pray, 'O send out thy light and thy truth; let them lead me, let them 'bring me to thy holy hill, and to thy tabernacles!' Ps. xliii, 3. For surely, 'the commandment is a lamp, and the law is 'a light; and reproofs of instruction are the way of life.' Prov. vi. 23. The word of God discovereth to us our errors; it sheweth us where we lost our way, and how we may recover it again. If we take this 'lamp' in our hand, it will not only point out our course in general, but also direct us in every step, and guide our 'feet' aright in the 'path' of holiness and peace. Thus, through the deserts and lonely wilds of Arabia, was Israel once conducted to the land of promise, by the illuminating pillar, or rather by Him, whose presence dwelt in the midst of it.—*Horne.*

PHILANTHROPY.

'Hast thou power?—the weak defend;
Light? give light—thy knowledge lend;
Rich? remember Him who gave;
Free? be brother to the slave.'

ARGUMENTS FOR CHURCH ESTABLISHMENTS.*

By Bishop Wilson of Calcutta.

Secondly. *As to the reasons for National Establishments.*

1. The corruption of nature is such, that no sufficient care would be taken by unconnected individuals, without a plan, without adequate funds, and without the protection of the State, for the propagation and support of Christianity.

2. The out-places and the more crowded population of large cities would especially be neglected, even in the most wealthy nations, as uniform experience has proved.

3. Needful support being precarious, a learned and pious and respectable Clergy would not be trained.

4. Schools and Universities would fade, a learned preparation for the Church being less insisted on.

5. Vice, profaneness, desecration of the Sabbath, &c. which abound now, would be much increased the moment Christianity ceased to be part and parcel of the law of the land.

6. The grand doctrines and facts of the Advent, Incarnation, Epiphany, Death Sacrifice, Resurrection of Christ—of the gifts of the Holy Ghost,—and of the Mystery of the holy Trinity, would be less firmly incorporated with the first feeling of the common people, if there were no creeds, and no national days of solemn observance, to keep them full before the consciences of men.

7. The doctrines of ministers and teachers of youth would be perpetually changing and declining, till Deism, or what is termed Unitarianism, a species of Deism, would probably, through the corruption of man, prevail.

8. There would be no standard of public doctrine and no subscriptions to articles of faith, to which the false opinions of individual ministers might be recalled by due spiritual authority.

9. When general decays of real piety spread, (which would probably soon be the case,) there would be no principle of resuscitation within the nation—nothing left to fall back upon, and for the faithful few to appeal to.

10. Public humiliations and thanksgivings, which are called for by Almighty God from every Christian people, would be less duly celebrated.

11. The appeal to an oath, which is now "the end of all strife," and on which distributive justice and all the safety of property depend, would be rendered insecure.

12. The loyalty, tranquility, and peaceableness of a people, founded on the fear of God, and nourished by the constant national prayers offered for the King and his government, would be less binding on the conscience.

13. There would be no national profession of Christianity, no national acknowledgment of God, no visible national body of Christ, no recognised authorities in the Church to receive the oaths of princes, nobles, and parliaments on their inaugurations.

14. The principle of self-preservation which induces all States to avoid what would displease a superior neighbouring power, which has sufficient strength to destroy it, would be violated as it respects that infinitely powerful and glorious Sovereign by "whom kings reign and princes decree justice." This in a

*Concluded from our last number.