

believes embodies the doctrine. The first is Acts xi. 21, "*The hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number believed and turned to the Lord.*" The belief and turning of sinners unto the Lord is here evidently connected with or dependant upon "the hand of the Lord" being with the disciples who proclaimed the glad message of mercy; and the enquiry is, what is meant by "*the hand of the Lord*" being with them? The writer infers that it means the communication of a divine influence to the sinner's heart direct from God to induce him to believe; but the plain testimony of scripture explains it as meaning simply the miracles, wonders, and signs which the Lord wrought by his servants in attestation of the truth. The apostles, Peter and John, on a very interesting occasion, prayed with their brethren for "the hand of the Lord" to be outstretched to make the message of grace effectual, and their prayer leaves our mind in no uncertainty as to the meaning of the language.—Acts iv. 30—"*By stretching forth thine hand to heal; and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy child Jesus.*" Paul also when preaching the gospel to Sergius Paulus, being resisted by Elymas the sorcerer, said, "*behold the hand of the Lord is upon thee, and thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun for a season.*" The same explanation is given essentially in Mark xvi. 20, "*And they (the apostles) went forth preaching every where, the Lord working with them and confirming the word with signs following.*" See also Acts xiv. 3, and Heb. ii. 4.

Instead therefore of referring the conversion of sinners at Antioch to the impartation of "a divine influence" to the sinner's heart by God (according to the meaning of the expression by the author of the Essay) we are taught that the reason why "a great number believed and turned unto the Lord" on that occasion was, that extraordinary evidence was given of the truth by the miracles, wonders, and signs which God wrought by his servants before the multitude. At Corinth also the power and demonstration of the Spirit accompanied the preaching of Christ by Paul. 1st Cor. ii. 4.

But another passage is quoted in proof of the theory of the writer, Acts xvi. 14. It refers to the conversion of Lydia, "*whose heart the Lord opened that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul.*" She received the Lord's message gladly and obeyed his command by being baptized. The opening of the heart, the eyes of the mind, or of the understanding, with respect to divine things, must be from God, who is "the giver of every good and perfect gift." That the heart of Lydia was opened by the Lord is plainly declared, but the