

sion that non-essentials were no where expressed in the Bible, which made the last evening's discourse so irreconcilable. Especially in the New Testament, containing the doctrines of Christianity, I have read diligently; and I believe you have questioned me upon almost every passage, and illustrated with remarks as necessity required. I therefore was the more surprised.

OMEGA.—You are correct, my son, in saying that such words or their meaning are not within the book of life. Indeed, we have positive injunction to the contrary. The Saviour, in his farewell instructions to his Apostles, after giving the commission to announce the gospel to all nations, adds, "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I command you." Paul, also, in preaching to the Corinthians, appears to have been unacquainted with non-essentials. A few facts, and a few splendid deductions from them, constituted the gospel he promulged. Christ died—was buried—rose again—was seen by numerous and credible witnesses—seems to have been the 'essential' points in the 'creed' of his gospel; and inasmuch as we have no record of his "non-essentials", admitting he had any, shall we not be as faultless as Paul in leaving them wholly to theorists? But this "short metre" would not answer the system of the gentleman you heard last evening, nor any of his doctrinal brotherhood; for, take away the power they claim to make non-essentials, and they feel themselves unchristianized: *for the existence of their religious systems depends as much upon non-essentials as upon essentials.*

ALPHA.—Like one of old, I am disposed to ask "How can these things be?"

OMEGA.—My affirmation may be easily illustrated. Suppose a company of twelve Doctors of Divinity, all belonging to different parties. They assemble for the purpose of ascertaining if there be any possibility of uniting and co-operating. Before each begins for himself to explain the length and breadth of his creed, they all agree that in the New Testament there are at least one hundred precepts. Subsequently they are all engaged, one after another, in relating and minutely retailing their religious belief. Doctor All-worthy first addressing the meeting, says, 'With peculiar pleasure I have learned that we all agree in being regulated by one hundred precepts of Christ; and with freedom I also express my belief, that as they are all divine, they are all obligatory.' Doctor Orthodoxy then rises, saying,—'Brethren, I am happy we are all united in this cordial truth, that there are one hundred precepts in our religion, and I am also happy to affirm my sincere opinion, with all my orthodox brethren, that when these precepts are fairly divided, there are fifty essentials and fifty non-essentials.' Then rises Doctor Doubtful, and says with equal gravity, 'My dear brother Doctors, I believe there are fifty essentials in the religion of our Re-