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#### FOR THE CHRISTIAN EXAMINER.

SOME OF THE DIFFICULTIES THAT MAY BE EXPECTED IN THE STUDY OF THE WORD AND WAYS OF GOD.

It is known to every one who has had experience in the business and affairs of life, that valuable things can seldom be acquired but at the expense of great pains and labour. They who would acquire wealth must submit to the toil and drudgery of business, or hazard their health and life in foreign and insalubrious climate; they who would succeed in the career of ambition must ply all those anxious and laborious arts which are necessary to their end. Nor are the distinctions of science and literature to be obtained on easier conditions. Many long hours of study and solitude are necessary to gain even a tolerable name, and to prevent the approach of ignorance and dulness. It is a general rule, indeed, which extends to every human pursuit; that labour and attention are the conditions which alone eminence is to be attained.

We shall not at present enquire at much length, of the reasons and advantages of this condition of things. The proofs for the reality of its existence are every where around innumerable; and since it is so, it would be foolish to imagine, supposing religious knowledge to be valuable, that

it could be acquired on any other terms than those on which other valuable things are acquired. It is not easy indeed to imagine any other scheme of imparting knowledge to man, in his present circumstances, than that which has been adopted by our great Creator. Our religious knowledge and feeling might, it is true, have been directly communicated and stamped upon our minds by the finger of God, and it might have determined our actions with the infallibility of instinct; but, had this been the case, man would not *then* have been what he now is, a rational, voluntary, and moral being, but an animal similar in kind to the brute tribes which roam around him, and superior to them only by a more exquisite organization and a more elevated direction of his instinctive powers, and not by moral worth or rational attainments. If his character as a moral agent be preserved, it is not easy to conjecture any other possible scheme of improving his moral and intellectual nature than by gradual advances depending much on his own personal exertions.

But it is presumptuous and unphilosophical to form conjectures and theories of things unsupported by any facts existing in nature. Were this mode of reasoning to be allowed, objections might be made against the frame and constitution of the