

maintain their own pretensions to superior wisdom and freedom from vulgar prejudice. Thus Gibbon, instead of a history, writes a panegyric of the apostate Julian ; and although, on his own shewing, we can perceive that Julian was the most superstitious of human beings, yet this renowned historian calls him not only a virtuous but a philosophic prince, and at the close of his account of his remarkable reign, adds, with an effrontery which none but a sceptic could use in such circumstances, "Philosophy," says he, "can boast (and perhaps it is no more than the boast of philosophy) that her gentle hand is able to eradicate from the human mind the latent and deadly principle of fanaticism." But it is not only the philosophers of the first centuries of Christianity, but modern philosophers, who have, in the course of Divine Providence, been allowed to shew the extent of their folly in opposing revealed truth. In latter times, in their zeal against Christ, they sapped the foundations of all morality, and by the adoption of their principles by multitudes who followed their delusions, human nature was exhibited in an aspect of ferocity that had never before been witnessed. Truly it may be said of false philosophers, as well as of the votaries of a false church, God hath sent them strong delusion that they may believe a lie. If men will reject the wisdom which shines in every word the Saviour uttered, they shall not do it with impunity. Opposition to truth hardens the mind and blinds the understanding, so that the little which a man hath is taken away by the workings of his own perversity. Thus we see that in the character of Christ there is a wisdom which far excels that of all men. The reasonings of heathen philosophers are altogether set aside by the light of the Gospel, and modern sceptics only increase their folly in their attempts to overturn the truth of God, and in their pre-