

"We will go along with you, for we have heard that God is with you," we gladly reply, "Come with us and we will do you good."

In his portraiture of the late Dr. Williams, the author, Mr. Gilbert, has advanced an idea, which, did we not know to the contrary, would lead us to conclude that he was on the high road to Rome—it is, that the Scriptures are insufficient for our guide in reference to the ordinance of baptism. Now, had he said that the work of which he there becomes the apologist had obscured that which would otherwise appear plain, he would not have been far from the truth, for I hesitate not to aver, that if a comprehension of the subject depended on the understanding of the Doctor's book, ninety-nine persons out of a hundred must inevitably remain ignorant. And is it so, indeed, that the great Lawgiver has given us but two positive institutes to observe, and one of these revealed so obscurely, that it cannot be comprehended without the glosses and reasonings of fallible man? for ever perish the thought; it is nothing less than a libel on Him of whom it was predicted, he "shall deal prudently," and in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. We, on the contrary, gladly say to enquirers on this, and every other subject connected with revelation, "Search the Scriptures," for there all that is necessary to be known is as plain as a sunbeam, so that "he that runs may read, and a wayfaring man though a fool cannot err therein"—here is firm footing, "all is sea besides." But if doubts still remain, and recourse must be had to human authors, read both sides of a question with impartiality and prayer, and do not yourselves or the subject the injustice to examine one side only, as too many do; that thus "every man may be fully persuaded in his own mind."

ADJUTOR.

A REPLY TO FRERE'S ADDRESS ON EXHORTATION.

MY DEAR SIR,—I have carefully read your address to the churches of Christ on the subject of exhortation, in the April number of the *Magazine*; and being convinced that you take an extreme view of the subject, for the sake of the cause of Christ and the churches you address, I would offer the following observations:—

1. That the assertion is entirely without proof and highly objectionable, that the first churches, under apostolic direction, borrowed several of their observances from the synagogue worship: such as discipline, reading the scriptures, and exhortation. This is exactly in the style of those who say that Christ borrowed baptism from the doubtful and traditionary baptism of Jewish proselytes and

pagan washings. For my part, nothing appears to me more evident than that these churches borrowed every ordinance of their worship from the apostles, and the apostles from Christ our Lord and lawgiver; and the church ordinance that did not come in that way, and from that source, we have nothing to do with. With me it is no matter how far the Jews do or did extend the liberty of speaking in the synagogue; one thing I know, and that upon Divine authority, that under that economy, God ordained an order of men to officiate in holy things; and no mortal, not even the king anointed with the holy oil, could discharge their functions or step into their place and be blameless. How unfair and presuming the inference then, that as Jesus, who was neither recognized as a Priest or a Levite, taught in the public assembly of the synagogue, the brethren in common may do the same in the public assembly of the church. Jesus himself would and could not warrant such a system of instruction in the synagogue, or else he would contradict his own law, standing then in full force as given by his servant Moses. Nor was his personal ministry any such example, as he openly avowed every where his high authority and divine mission. He was not only high priest and prophet, but lawgiver himself; and as a teacher he was generally received by thousands that never understood his real character. Prophets and inspired men of whatever tribes, were authorised to preach and to teach as well as the sons of Aaron in the name of that God that gave them such a high commission. If the synagogue did extend this liberty by the traditions of the fathers, I have nothing to do with it, neither am I against exhortation in a scriptural and proper way; but I confess, as a borrowed Jewish tradition, the churches have little need of it, as they have by far too many of such human traditions already.

2. It has been in every age since the apostles, a prolific source of error, fanaticism, and confusion, to do away the line of distinction between the ordinary and extraordinary officers of the church. So in like manner, in this and many other things, churches and good men have greatly destroyed the beautiful order of a christian church, and introduced anarchy and confusion by not distinguishing between the ordinary and extraordinary brethren of the church, and this distinction finds no place in your address. That some of the brethren in the first church did, at least, usually occupy a share of the time devoted for public instruction, is evident; and such, if we had them, undoubtedly should have the same privilege to-day. But what were these *gifted* brethren? The Apostle answers in 1 Cor. xii. 7—10: "But the