

THE  
CHRISTIAN BANNER.

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"If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God,"  
"This is love, that we walk after his commandments."

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THE BOOK AND SPIRIT OF GOD.

We are apt, in interpreting the holy scriptures, to suppose a hundred things said of "sinners," of "natural men," of "children of wrath," of "the dead," of "those without strength," were spoken of persons who were circumstanced as the inhabitants of the British Isles, or the citizens of the United States; never taking thought that there are essential differences between those without, and those under, the revelation of God. This single fact, clearly apprehended, is like applying the pruning hook to the vine: it lops off a great many quotations and applications of scripture which are thought to bear upon the sons and daughters, the brothers and sisters of christians, as if they were born in tribes, and nations where the name of Jesus has not been heard.

I have long felt an unconquerable repugnance to that system of religion which destroys the use of the holy scriptures to unconverted or unregenerate men. The doctrine of physical and irresistible energies of God's Spirit upon unbelieving men, as absolutely and indispensably prerequisite to their deriving any religious benefit from all that is written on the sacred pages: from all that is spoken by christian tongues, from all prayer and supplication addressed to the Father of all; from all and every moral and religious means, is, in my view, at war with Moses and the prophets; with the Lord Jesus and the apostles; with the whole Bible; with all rational analogies; with all the faculties yet belonging to the human race; with all and every thing, natural, moral, and religious, except the sheer, inoperative dogma of some indoctrinated fatalist. I do therefore, with all my heart, soul, mind, and strength, oppose every proposition, position, and sentiment, which either grows out of, is connected with, or looks towards, the establishment of such a cold, lifeless, and inoperative system. believing it to be entirely unauthorized by the Holy Spirit, and that it is the most genuine wresting of the scriptures to the destruction of thousands, who are now, as they have been for centuries, standing all the day idle; some running into all manner of excess: and others looking with aching hearts for some irresistible wind, afflatus, or spirit, to carry them, not literally, but figuratively,