

unequivocal manner. They say the law of God is absolute: "Obey them that are set over you." "Children obey your parents." "Wives submit yourselves unto your own husbands," &c. And will not permit that these precepts shall be qualified by such as *demand*, that such obedience shall be "*only in the Lord*." They teach that if such persons command you to break the law of God you *must* obey; you are exonerated and that all the guilt and sin passes over to those who gave the command; but that if you *disobey*, you are guilty of disobedience to God's authority. They teach, moreover, that if you pray to God he will so change the hearts of your rulers, that they will not persist in sinful requirements. Now we know that God does, indeed, often wonderfully change the hearts of rulers in answer to the prayer of faith; but we also know that often he does *not* see fit to do so; and the fire and the gibbet have secured the bright crown of martyrdom to those who have, for the honor of God's most holy and righteous law, dared to disobey and to say, "be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not worship the golden image" as thou hast commanded. In private I heard one of their followers put the question: "But Mr. C. as to the absolute obedience which is to be rendered by a child; if the parent should require a child to do what was wrong, (and alas! how many do) ought that child to comply?" and what was the answer of this teacher of religion and christian morals? Did he hasten to correct with fearful earnestness such an inference from his teachings, and one of so malignant a nature? O no! with great ease and non-chalance he answered, "and what have you to do with *ifs*;" and there this important question was left. That the doctrine of passive obedience is spreading among his people cannot be doubted by those who converse with them on the subject. Another of their peculiarities of a most baneful tendency is, the limitation affixed by them to exertions made to do good under the pretence of maintaining good order: so that instead of being ready to "every good word and work" in season and out of season to do good as we have opportunity to all men, they put their forbid upon every effort that lies beyond the immediate sphere of our regular and positive avocations; narrowing up and contracting the life of christian effort, till it is bound and fettered in swaddling bands, more injurious than ever swathed the limbs of the child of the wig-wam.

One instance may suffice as to the fatal and paralysing effects of this system. A lady of my acquaintance had for some time felt uneasy at the dishonor done to God; and the