

sometimes,) and that circumstances have changed so far as to render the *ancient order* obsolete or unsuitable ; for there is now no shame in professing, no danger of all those evils and terrors which you very properly enumerate—how shall we prove *our way*, to be safer than the good *old way* ? They never told their experience in order to baptism ; but it is supposed that this new way is not liable to the same objections as the old way. But will you please consider that all the shame and terror which you have very properly detached from saying “ *I believe with all my heart that Jesus is the Son of God,*” is also detached from a narrative of our feelings, and our “ *journey from nature to grace.*” Now if the shame of terrors prevented hypocrisy then, they might, if they still existed prevent it still. But they do not exist, either in relation to the confession of faith or the narrative of experience and consequently can have no effect in one case more than in the other. If from the love of honor and absence of human terrors, men will solemnly declare a lie in professing their faith, they will solemnly tell a lie in narrating an experience which they never felt, and which, if they did feel, is to us not so sure an evidence of a change of heart as a declaration of the precious faith. For we are assured that all who believe what they confess, are born of God ; but we are not sure that all who have felt as that candidate feels, are born of God. I am, therefore, dear brother, fully convinced that the good old way affords us the strongest evidence that the nature of the case admits.

A change of circumstances cannot be plead against the ancient, nor in favor of the new way—for circumstances equally affect both. Nor would I carry the argument from a change of circumstances so far in relation to the topic which you mention against any instituted item of religious worship. A brother in Maryland wrote me a long letter in favor of *the holy kiss*, which was received after my departure from home last Fall. I had intended it for publication, but it has been jostled ont. He lays great stress upon the *five times* commanded, and inveighs against my reasoning on a change of circumstances or customs. Had I published his letter, I should have illustrated one point not stated in my remarks upon “ *the holy kiss,*” and which would have shown that a change of circumstances and customs was not the reasonings which sets aside a holy kiss in our country. Advocates for this usage deceive themselves by inserting a definite article and by rejecting the indefinite which always precedes the terms *holy kiss*. It is not *the holy kiss*, but *a holy kiss*. All instituted acts of religion are characterized by the definite article, as, *the Lord's table*, *the Lord's day*, &c. It is one thing to command *a holy kiss*, and another to command *the holy kiss*. The former style is decisive evidence that it was no stated institution, while the latter would most certainly have shown it to be established—against which no change of circumstances could be plead ; but as it is, a change of circumstances can be plead with good effect. This, in passing, as a caveat against a licentious prin-