

very few. Sincerity strengthens its possessor in every ennobling principle, and shields from many evils, and temptations; and fits for usefulness in every department of social life.

This is truly a wonderful age—greatly advanced in knowledge—enjoying more of the light of science—more civil and religious freedom than any other: yet exhibiting a great decrease in sincerity and many of its accompanying virtues. The more closely we look into society and watch with care the principles which govern it, the more decided will be our convictions that insincerity abounds and is destroying many bright hopes and carrying strife and misery into the abodes even of the pure and upright.

In view of the great defection in this point which exists in society in general, and even among those who are called after that name which is above every name, it certainly becomes the solemn duty of every "soldier of the cross", to raise his voice and fearlessly, boldly, and plainly testify against those who dishonour their profession by indulging in insincerity either in words or actions. There is a great reform to be accomplished in which every lover of the Saviour should engage with all the energy of his soul, determined never to desist until sincerity adorns every heart—beam from every countenance—flows forth in the evening song—and arises with the morning hymn of praise from pure and upright hearts to him who rules on high, and delights in sincerity and truth.

J. B. jr.

All our readers will thank this young, sincere, and very worthy brother for the preceding remarks. They are needed, much needed.

D. O.

PERSONAL DEFENCE.

MR. D. OLIPHANT, —SIR:—It would appear from certain things in the August Number of the *Banner*, (which I first saw a few days ago) that I am no better than I should be, and much worse than any man ought to be; in proof of which, a couple of articles are presented to the public, upon which (from the date of matters) much time and labor must have been expended. As it is no more than charitable to credit every man according to his polemic productions, I will at once close this preface, and notice in the first place "H's" communication, which is superior in point of assurance to anything I have met with of modern date. He peremptorily contradicts things of which he is ignorant. In my letter was the following, "One disciple endeavored to convince me that baptism is conversion." 'H' says this is untrue,—that he knows the man, &c. In reply, I would remark, that, I read the whole letter (before mailing it) to the disciple alluded to, and he neither denied nor objected to anything it contained. A second charge named by "H" is, "Another disciple contended that no man should pray before conversion." This he disposes of rather curiously. "H" denies the language, but subsequently acknowledges the truth of the assertion. Again, he imagines