

EXTRACTS FROM "THE CHRISTIAN PREACHER."

FAITH AND SIGHT.

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It will be the object of the present discourse, to show the strict analogy that subsists between sense, as the principle of enjoyment in the kingdom of nature; and faith as the principle of enjoyment in the kingdom of Grace, and that the INSTITUTIONS of nature and religion are the appointed means, through which we are put into the enjoyment of every thing that pertains to both systems. * *

Man is divided into the inner and outer man; by the one he finds himself related to the invisible world, and by the other to the visible; by the one, he comes into contact with things immaterial and spiritual, by the other, to things material and gross. * *

Sense is the principal of enjoyment in the Kingdom of nature, by which we mean, that by our outward man—our senses, of seeing and hearing, &c.—we stand related to the visible and material universe, and that by their healthy and proper use, we enjoy all the blessings belonging to the natural economy. That if divested of any one of these, or if it is diseased, we are deprived of all enjoyment which that sense imparts, or conveys to the mind. And if deprived of all our senses, we are cut off from all connexion with the natural system; creation is a perfect blank! * *

If *sense* is the principle of enjoyment, in the kingdom of nature as we have shown, the *institutions*, or *ordinances of nature* are the appointed means, for our enjoyment. * * *

The sun, moon, and stars, air, earth, fire, and water, are all ordinances of God, and are the appointed means of bestowing upon man, all the blessings appertaining to natural life. No solar light enters our world, but from the sun, no lunar, but from the moon, no stellar, but from the stars. Without the atmosphere, we could have no clouds, without clouds, no rain, &c. Without earth, we would have no fruits, or flowers. Without fire, the earth and seas would be locked up in eternal ice, and for this great liquifier, we could have no substitute, and so of water, and of all the other institutions of God. We have seen therefore that without the ordinances of nature, we are destitute of any sensible enjoyments, as much so, as if we were deprived of all the organs of sense; whether we destroy the sense, or annihilate the universe, the effects are the same. To the dead, there is no sun, moon, or stars, as the sense by which they were related to the visible creation is extinct, and as far as light is concerned, the same is true to the blind. * *

Now, what *sense* is to nature, *faith* is to religion, and what the institutions of nature are to animal men, the institutions of religion are to spiritual men.

Were it not for the confused notions entertained upon the subject of faith, it would not be necessary to attempt a formal definition of the term. * * * * *