"HER FOUNDATIONS ARE UPON THE HOLY HILLS."

STAND YE IN THE WAYS, AND SEE, AND ASK FOR THE OLD PATHS, WHERE IS THE GOOD WAY, AND WALK THEREIN, AND YE SHALL FIND REST FOR YOUR SOULS.—JEREMIAH VI. 16.

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TORONTO, UPPER CANADA, SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 1840.

NUMBER 9.

Poetry.

TIME.

TIME! where didst thou those years inter Which have I seen decease My soul's at war, and truth bids her Find out their hidden sepulchre, To give her troubles peace.

Pregnant with flowers, doth not the spring Like a late bride appear? Whose feathered music only bring Caresses, and no requiem sing, On the departed year.

The earth, like some rich wanton heir, Whose parents coffin'd lie,
Forgets it once look'd pale and bare,
And doth for vanities prepare,
As the spring ne'er should die.

The present hour, flattered by all, Reflects not on the last; But I, like a sad factor, shall T' account my life each moment call, And only weep the past.

My mem'ry tracks each several way, Since reason did begin Over my actions her first sway: And teacheth me that each new day Did only vary sin.

Poor bankrupt conscience! where are those Rich hours, but farm'd to thee? How carelessly I some did lose, And other to my lust dispose, As no rent day should be.

I have infected with impure Disorders my past years; But I'll to penitence inure Those that succeed. There is no cure, Nor antidote, but tears.

William Habington.—1605.

DIVINE ORIGIN AND UNINTERRUPTED SUCCESSION OF AN EPISCOPAL MINISTRY.*

Who are the rulers of Christ's family? for though Christ knew it, and, therefore, needed not to ask; yet we have disputed it so much, and obeyed so little, that we have changed the plain hypothesis into an entangled question. The answer yet is easy as to some part of the inquiry: the apostles were our fathers in Christ, they begat sons and daughters unto God; and were a spiritual paternity, is evident; we need look no farther for spiritual government, because in the paternal rule all Power is founded; they begat the family by the power of the word and the life of the Spirit, and they fed this family, and ruled it, by the word of their proper ministry; they had the keys of this house, the steward's ensign, and they had the ruler's place; "for they sat on twelve thrones, and judged the twelve tribes of Israel."

But of this there is no question. And as little of another proposition; that this stewardship was to last for ever, for the power of ministering in this office and the office itself were to be perpetual: for the issues and powers of government are more necessary for the perpetuating the church, than for the first planting; and if it was necessary that the apostles should have a rod and a staff at first, it would be more necessary afterwards, when the family was more numerous, and their first zeal abated, and their native simplicity perverted into arts of hypocrisy and forms of godliness, when heresies "should arise, and the love of many should wax cold." The apostles had also a power of ordination: and that the very power itself does denote, for it makes perpetuity, that could not expire in the days of the apostles; for by it they themselves pro-Pagated a succession. And Christ, having promised Spirit to abide with his Church for ever, and made his apostles the channels, the ministers and conveyancers of it, that it might descend as the inheritance and eternal portion of the family; it cannot be imagined, that when the first ministers were gone, there should not others rise up in the same places, some like to the first, in the same office and ministry of the Spirit. But the thing is plain and evident in the matter of fact also: "Quod in ecclesia nunc geritur, hoc olim fecerunt apostoli," said St. Cyprian: "What the apostles did at first, that the Church does to this day," and shall do so for ever: for when St. Paul had given to the Bishop of Ephesus rules of government in this family, he commands that they should be "observed till the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ;" and, therefore, these authorities and charges are given to him and to his successors; it is the observation of St. Ambrose upon the warranty of that text, and is obvious and undeniable Well, then, the apostles were the first stewards; and this office dies not with them, but must for ever be succeeded in; and now begins the inquiry, Who are the successors of the Apostles? for they are, they must evidently be, the stewards to feed and to rule this family. There are some that say, that all who have any portion of work in the family, all the ministers of the Gospel, are these stewards, and so all will be rulers. The presbyters surely; for, say they, presbyter and bishop is the same thing, and have the same name in Scripture; and, therefore, the office cannot be distinguished. To this I shall very briefly say two things, which will quickly

clear our way through this bush of thorns. 1. That the word "presbyter" is but an honourable appellation used amongst the Jews, as "alderman" imongst us; but it signifies no order at all, nor was ever used in Scripture to signify any distinct company or order of clergy; and this appears not only by an induction in all the enumerations of the offices ministerial in the New Testament,† where to be a presbyter is never reckoned either as a distinct office, or a distinct order; but by its being indifferently communicated to all the

superior clergy, and all the princes of the people. 2. The second thing I intended to say, is this: that although all the superior clergy had not only one, but divers common appellatives, all being called πρεσθυτεροι and διακονοι, even the apostolate itself being called a deaconship; yet it is evident, that before the common appellatives were fixed into names of propriety, they were as evidently distinguished in their offices and powers, as they are at this day in their names and titles.

To this purpose St. Paul gave to Titus, the Bishop of Crete, a special commission, command, and power, to make ordinations; and in him, and in the person of Timothy, he did erect a court of judicature even over some of the clergy, who yet were called presbyters: Against a presbyter receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses": § there is the measure and

* From the works of Bishop Jeremy Taylor.
† Rom. xii. 6. Eph. iv. 11. 1 Cor. xii. 28.
‡ Acts i. 25.

§ 1 Tim. v. 19.

Samaritans whom he had baptized, but the apostles viour. were sent for; for that was part of the power reserved to the episcopal or apostolical order.

Now from these premises, the conclusion is plain and easy. 1. Christ left a government in his church, and the apostles in this stewardship, and that they did alfounded it in the persons of the apostles. 2. The ways rule the family, was taught and acknowledged "alapostles received this power for the perpetual use and ways, and every where, and by all men" that were of benefit, for the comfort and edification of the church for the church of God; and if these evidences be not suffiever. 3. The apostles had this government; but all cient to convince modest and sober persons in this questhat were taken into the ministry, and all that were tion, we shall find our faith to fail in many other articles, called presbyters, had it not. If, therefore, this govern- of which we yet are very confident: for the observation ment, in which there is so much disparity in the very of the Lord's day, the consecration of the holy euchanature, and exercise, and first original of it, must abide rist by priests, the baptizing infants, the communication for ever; then so must that disparity. If the aposto- of women, and the very canon of the Scripture itself, late, in the first stabiliment, was this eminency of power, rely but upon the same probation; and, therefore, the then it must be so; that is, it must be the same in the denying of articles thus proved, is a way, I do not say, to succession, that it was in the foundation. For, after bring in all sects and heresies,-that is but little;-but the church is founded upon its governors, we are to ex- a plain path and inlet to a heism and irreligion; for by pect no change of government. If Christ was the authis means it will not only be impossible to agree conthor of it, then, as Christ left it, so it must abide for cerning the meaning of Scripture, but the Scripture itever; for ever there must be the governing and the self, and all the records of religion, will become useless, governed; the superior and the subordinate; the or- and of no efficacy or persusion. dainer and the ordained; the confirmer and the con-

lical; and although this be succeeded to for ever, yet no man, for his now or at any time being called a presbyter or elder, can pretend to it; for, besides his being a presbyter, he must be an apostle too; else, though he be called "in partem sollicitudinis", and may do the office of assistance and under-stewardship, yet the government and rule of the family belongs not to him.

But then, "who are these stewards and rulers over the household now?" To this the answer is also certain and easy. Christ hath made the same governors to-day as heretofore; "apostles still." For though the twelve apostles are dead, yet the apostolical order is not; it is a "generative order," and begets more apostles. Now who these "minores apostoli" are, the successors of the apostles in that office apostolical and supreme regimen of souls, we are sufficiently taught in holy Scriptures; which when I have clearly shown to

called an apostle: "Other apostles saw I none, save were accounted.§ But the Church also made apostles: and these were called by St. Paul, "apostles of the churches"; and particularly Epaphroditus was the 'apostle of the Philippians"; "properly so," saith Primasius; and "what is this else but the bishop," saith Theodoret: for "those who are now called bishops were then called apostles," saith the same father. The sense and full meaning of which argument is a perfect commentary upon that famous prophecy of the church: "Instead of thy fathers, thou shalt have children, whom thou mayest make princes in all lands"; That is, not only the twelve apostles, our fathers in Christ, who first begat us, were to rule Christ's family, but when they were gone, their children and successors should arise in their stead: their direct successors to all generations shall be rulers and governors of the whole catholic church. St. Austin saith, "The children of the church become fathers of the faithful; that is, the church begets bishops, and places them in the seat of the fathers,

After these plain and evident testimonies of Scripcure, it will not be amiss to say, that this great affair, relying not only upon the words of institution, but on matter of fact, passed forth into a demonstration and greatest notoriety by the doctrine and practice of the whole Catholic Church: for so Irenæus, who was one of the most ancient fathers of the church, and might easily make good his affirmative: "We can," says he, 'reckon the men, who by the apostles were appointed bishops in churches, to be their successors unto us; leaving to them the same power and authority which they had."-Thus St. Polycarp was by the apostles Lord." made bishop of Smyrna; St. Clement, bishop of Rome, by St. Peter; "and divers others by the apostles," saith Tertullian; saying also, that the Asian bishops were consecrated by St. John. And to be short, that bishops are the successors of the apostles in the stewardship and rule of the Church, is expressly taught by St. Cvprian, and St. Jerome, St. Ambrose and St. Austin, by Enthymius, and Pacianus, by St. Gregory, and St. John Damascenus, by Clarius à Muscula, and St. Sixtus, by Anacletus and St. Isidore; by the Roman council under St. Sylvester, and the council of Carthage; and the succession of bishops from the apostles' hands in all the churches apostolical, was as certainly known as in our chronicles we find the succession of our English kings, iniquity!" and one can no more be denied than the other. The conclusion from these premises I give you in the words of St. Cyprian; "Let the ministers know that apostles, that is bishops, were chosen by our blessed Lord himself:" and this was so evident, and so believed, that St. Austin affirms it with a "Nemo ignorat"; "No man s so ignorant but he knows this, that our blessed Saviour

1 Tit. xi. and 2 Tit. xv. † Chap. ii. ver. 2. ‡ Gal. i. 19.

§ Cor. viii. 23. Philip. ii. 25.

the warranty of "the bishop's audience court"; and appointed bishops over churches." Indeed the Gnostics | behold, with hands outspread, the Christian Apostle: opposite, when the accused were found guilty, he gives in charge spake evil of this order; for they are noted by three that we behold him, who is called "the Sorcere, withstanding the beautiful and affecting simplicity, may no human sophistical to proceed to censures; "You must rebuke them sharply, apostles, St. Paul, St. Peter, and St. Jude, to be "de- Apostle to his face," anxious that the lord of Asia should not be and you must silence them, stop their mouths,"* that is spisers of government, and to speak evil of dignities"; turned by these intrusive visitors from the ancient worship and astray, till darkness itself be chosen for light. St. Paul's word; that they may no more scatter their and what government it was they did so despise, we may venom in the ears and hearts of the people. These understand by the words of St. Jude; they were "in hishops were commanded "to set in order things that the contradiction or gainsaying of Corah," who with his Jew, or perhaps high priest of the goddess to whom this island was were wanting" in the churches, the same with that company rose up against Aaron the high-priest; and power of St. Paul; -"Other things will I set in order excepting those, who were the vilest of men, no man, of the lord of the country-filled with the Holy Ghost-and now when I come", said he to the Corinthian churches; in within the first three hundred years after Christ, opwhich there were many who were called presbyters, who posed episcopacy. But when Constantine received the Let us think of that look and these words, when, in a moment, nevertheless, for all that name, had not that power. To church into his arms, he found it universally governed the impostor stood before the Apostle helpless and dark, in the the same purpose it is plain in Scripture, that some by bishops; and, therefore, no wise or good man, prowould have been apostles that were not; such were fessing to be a Christian, that is, to believe the holy those whom the Spirit of God notes in the Revelation;† Catholic church, can be content to quit the apostolical and some did love "pre-eminence" that had it not, for government (that by which the whole family of God was so did Diotrephes; and some were judges of questions, fed, and taught, and ruled), and beget to himself new and all were not, for therefore they appealed to the fathers and new apostles, who, by wanting succession apostles at Jerusalem; and St. Philip, though he was from the apostles of our Lord, have no ecclesiastical and an evangelist, yet he could not give confirmation to the derivative communion with these fountains of our Sa-

If ever Vincentias Lirinensis's rule could be used in any question, it is in this: "Quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus"; that bishops are the successors of

I am entered into a sea of matter, but I will break it off abruptly, and sum up this inquiry with the words of Thus far the way is straight and the path is plain. the council of Chalcedon, which is one of the four gene-The apostles were the stewards and ordinary rulers of rals, by our laws made the measures of judging here-Christ's family, by virtue of the order and office aposto- sies: "It is sacrilege to bring back a bishop to the degree and order of a presbyter." It is indeed a rifling the order, and entangling the gifts, and confounding the method of the Holy Ghost; it is a dishonouring them whom God would honour, and a robbing them of those spiritual eminences with which the Spirit of God does anoint the consecrated heads of bishops. And I shall say one thing more, which indeed is a great truth, that the diminution of episcopacy was first introduced by popery; and the popes of Rome, by communicating to abbots, and other mere priests, special graces to exercise cred order to be cheap and apt to be invaded. But then add this: if Simon Magus was in so damnable a condition for offering to buy the gifts and powers of the apostolical order, what snall we think of them that snatch them away, and pretend to wear them, whether the apostles and their successors will or no? This is "to interest, home to our own business and bosoms? you, I shall pass on to some more practical considera- belie the Holy Ghost"; that is the least of it; it is rain the records of the Holy Scriptures, preached by the universal voice of all the Christian world, delivered by notorious and uninterrupted practice, and derived to further and unquestionable issue by perpetual succession.

ST. PAUL AT CYPRUS.

"So they departed unto Seleucia, and from thence they sailed to Cuprus." Cyprus, I need not say, is an island of the Mediteranean sea, not far from the maritime cities of ancient fame, Tyre and Sidon, and in the direct way of the vessels navigating those seas to Greece, to Rome, and to the farthest remote known lands. We will now again follow the narrative.

"And when they (the Apostles) had gone through the isle unto Paphos," (the chief city, to this day called Baso), "they found a certain sorcerer, a false prophet, which was with the deputy Sergins Paulus, a prudent man, who called for Barnabas and Saul, and desired to HEAR THE WORD OF GOD. But Elymas, the orcerer, (for so is his name by interpretation), withstood them, seeking to turn away the deputy from the faith."-Verses 6, 7, 8.

Verses 9 to 12 are more particularly worthy of our observation. Then Saul (who is also called Paul) filled with the Holy Ghost, set his eyes on him and said, "O, full of all subtilty and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all rightcousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord? And now behold the hand of the Lord is upon thee, and thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun for a season. And immediately there fell on him a mist, and a darkness; and he went about seeking some to lead him by the hand. Then the deputy, when he saw what was done, believed, being astonished at the doctrine of the

It was thus, by Divine command, as we are expressly informed, St. Paul and his fellow-labourer, Barnabas, landed in this island. The governor, the Proconsul of the great city of Rome, informed of the important message they had brought, importing to be no less than a message from the Maker of heaven and earth, sent for these extraordinary visitors, and desired to hear-what?-" The Word of God?' The Word of God! HE desired to hear the Word of God! who had heard nothing of God, but of the derided and unseen God of the Jews, or the fabled deities of his own country, among whom the Goddess of Impurities, to whom this island was consecrated, had her place! He, the great Roman Proconsul, "desired to hear the WORD OF GOD!"-of the CHRIS-TIAN'S Gon!-of the God "whose eyes are too pure to behold

A desire to hear the Word of God by him who, from his infancy, had never heard any thing of any God but the unseen God of the derided Jew, and the sculptured gods of Egypt, Greece, and Rome, might well be thought extraordinary, his conversion to the CHRISTIAN FAITH more extraordinary still; but such a sudden conversion is not, and cannot be, a necessary example to us, born in a Christian country, and bred up by Christian parents, as was Timothy, who had "known," we are told, (2 Tim. iii, 15), "the Scriptures from a child,"

scene more immediately described.

the known depravities of the place.

Whether we consider him who is called the "Sorcerer," as a consecrated, the Apostle of Jesus, thus opposed—in the presence assuming a sterner look, "fixed his eyes" on the bold blasphemer. mid-day sun, "seeking for some to lead him by the hand."

I turn from this harrowing picture to speak of the circumstances to which I have before alluded, concerning the place where this extraordinary instance of God's power and presence, in the beginning of St. Paul's career, was first manifested. The strangers, the hearers of the extraordinary message from heaven, were led, as we have remarked, by an over-ruling Providence and Divine command, to this island.

Might we not naturally pause to inquire why this particular pot was chosen for the first miraculous display of God's power? Need I say this island was, from its commerce, frequented by seafarers, and people of all nations and tongues of the earth? Hence the rapid intelligence of this signal event could be instantly, as it ere, and most widely, communicated to the most remote regions of the known world! Speaking before those who are educated, I would request them to look at the common charts of the country. They will find that on the north of this island, at the nearest distance, stretches the coast of the main land, with its once illustrious cities, and among them Tarsus,* the birth-place of St. Paul, in Cilicia. The line of coast extends on to the sea now venturing to encounter such dangers for the Gospel's sake. time distinguished by the bloody altars of the Scythian Goddess Dianat; to the east are the ancient ports of Tyre and Sidon, ssessed then by the Phonician navigators; to the south lies the low land of Egypt, the seat of the darkest and most degrading superstitions; to the west-all in the tract of the Phonician traders-are the nations renowned for arts and arms, Greece and Rome, the illustrious city of the converted Proconsul; and far to the north-west, in the outer seas, this then barbarian land. So that, almost simultaneously, together with more distinguished countries, Britain, visited by the Phænician ships, may have received the tidings of a Roman lerd in authority being converted tidings of this singular event being borne by every wind to the farthest extent of the Roman empire, and to the farthest extent of the known world.1

Shall we not say, then, the hand of God was visible in first directing the Apostles to this island, as the threshold of their holy enterprise? Doubtless we may be equally wise unto salvation first, whether, when these things are pointed out, you are not persuaded that such coincidences prove the more, the more they are considered, the design of an over-ruling Providence in opening some essential offices of episcopacy, have made this sa- a way, by second causes, for the wonderful propagation of the and inspiration of the Apostles, more particularly of the great Apostle, set apart for this holy work?

And, secondly, I ask whether these plain facts, in illustration of the "Word of God," do not bring that Word with more

Christian hearers, in what manner does this recorded lesson in pine and sacrilege, besides the heresy and schism, and the Bible strike your hearts? Are we to conceive that these any Divine commission of an extraordinary kind, for the great the spiritual lie. For the government Episcopal, as it things are told "in God's Word," merely as a marvellous St. James, the bishop of Jerusalem, is by St. Paul was exemplified in the synagogue, and practised by the transaction, which little concerns our own conduct or lives? The same measures in the temple, so it was transcribed by same cities, in the same island, remain, after nearly eighteen James, the Lord's brother." For there were some the eternal Son of God, who translated it into a Gospel hundred years have passed over the earth; but though, as the latter became incompatible with their clear and acknowledged whom the Scriptures call "the apostles of our Lord", ordinance; it was sentified by the Holy Spirit, who same Apostle says, "the fashion of this world passeth away"— duty to the former. They did not presumptuously oppose themthat is, such as Christ made by his word immediately, named some of the persons, and gave to them all power though the altars of the goddess of impurity are seen no more in selves to human authority. On the contrary, they regarded it or by his Spirit extraordinarily; and even into this number and graces from above: it was subjected in the apostles ber and title, Matthias, and St. Paul, and Barnabas, first, and by them transmitted to a distinct order of eccountries, where the Roman Proconsul desired to hear the without endangering their calculation. clesiastics; it was received into all churches, consigned "Word of God," so many years ago; though the Turk, with his scymitar, is there, where the humble Christian once prayed; though, instead of that prayer, "Our Father, which art in Heaven," the mosque of the Mussulman resounds, night and morning, "There is but one God, and Mahomet is his Prophet!" -in these things is not the voice of prophecy fulfilled? And to us, of this Christian land, is the lesson recorded in vain? Those regions are now dark, which were illumined by the first light of the Gospel; and this distant land is now in the full light of the open "Word of God," which was then dark.

And do we not confess with trembling, that wherever a nation ejects the code of holiness of life, there are the altars of the Pagan Queen !- wherever there is an immoral or licentious people, in that nation are erected the temples of depravity and sin? On the contrary, wherever on the throne of dominion there is a governor who has learnt, at the foot of the cross, to "do stice-to love mercy-and to walk humbly with his God"there is the virtuous Roman Proconsul. But neither he nor his people have here to seek the "Word of God." Blessed be the Giver of that Word! he and they were born in a country where that Word has been opened to all, at the expense of tortures and the death of those who opened it. Here the Word of God is read by the young and the old, the rich and the poor; here there are regularly educated public, but not "infallible" ministers of that

But if these things may be said of this Christian country, are there no "enemies" of "all righteousness" amongst us?-no false prophet?-no "Sorcerers full of all subtilty and mischief"?-no adversaries, who, though refuted and baffled, cease not to "pervert the right ways of the Lord? Alas! too many! For he who seeks by subtilty to "pervert" the first principles of religion and norality-he who handles the "Word of God" deceitfully-he is the "Sorcerer." He who, profaning the high gifts of genius, veaves the tale of corruption, for the sake of injuring the purity of generations to come, as well as the present, helps the Sorcerer," the vilest, the worst of sorcerers. To the voice of such allurements, to such songs of the siren pleasure, oh! let ngenuous youth turn a deaf ear, as to "the voice of the charmer harm she never so wisely." The harmless amusements and enjoyments of life neither reason nor religion forbids. To the pure in heart, the song has more harmony, the landscape and sky more beauty; and with the testimony of a "good conscience towards God and towards man," and with pious, and kind, and affectionate feelings, the smile of youth is more ingenuous and more engaging. But how many have been seduced by some insidious "Sorcerer" from the paths of purity and duty! Yes! insidious, and political, and fanatical "Sorcerers" are abroad, eager to "pervert" the plain understanding, and all loyal and

* A free city, on account of its knowledge and learning; made free on this account by Augustus; therefore, St. Paul says, "He was born free."

the scene of his perfect and most affecting tragedy, Iphigenia in

‡ I do not recollect this circumstance having been pointed out "the Scriptures from a child."

Having made these general observations, let us now turn to the scene more immediately described.

Before the lofty seat of the deputed governor, let us think we but the most meagre and miserable paraphrase.

moral principles. But above all, from the Word of God, in its commentator, the most pernicious of all "Sorcerers," lead you

Therefore watch, and besides stated times of public worshin never let a silent prayer to God be absent from your heart.

The season of joy and smiles will soon pass away-pass away, to return no more; baptized in a Christian country, and brought up to "lead a godly and Christian life," may you never forsake the Church in which you were baptized; and when the knell tolls over your grave, may what you learned in that Church, "to make you wise unto salvation." never die, like the sounds of the knell, which dies over the grave to be heard no more-but " abide, like the Faith, Hope, and Charity," which you have learnt on earth, in the kingdom of light and glory, for ever and ever .- Rev. W. L. Bowles.

THE PROTESTANT REFORMERS.

The few, whose zeal for pure religion led them to seek a remedy for the miscrable corruptions of Christianity under the Papal usurpation, could not but perceive the almost innumerable obstacles presented to their view. Obloquy, or persecution, threatened them on every side. Those who adhered to the Papal system from motives of worldly interest were many and powerful. Of those who were willing to resist its encroachments, not a few were hostile to Christianity itself. From persons of this description no cordial co-operation could be expected in any plan for the revival of pure Christianity, however ready they might be to join in the overthrow of its ambitious rulers. These obstacles must have been too evident, to escape the observation of the first Reformers; and hence arises a strong presumptive proof of their sincerity, in

Doubts, nowever, nave been frequently insinuated respecting the prejudice had, on both sides, much room to operate, it is hardly to be expected that the portraits of the principal actors in the scene should be transmitted to us without some extravagant colouring. By Romish advocates we cannot wonder to find them depicted in the most disadvantageous manner; while from Protestants we may sometimes apprehend a concealment of their indiscretions or misconduct. But it is most remarkable, that Infidel writers seem to take peculiar pleasure in reviling their characters and depreciating the value of their exertions. This may, perhaps, be accounted for, if we consider the nature of the contest between to the faith of Christ, by a miracle wrought in his sight, and a Christians and Unbelievers. When men are desirous of overudgment inflicted on the opposer of his faith, by a word; the throwing Christianity, the more they are enabled to represent it as abounding with absurdities and superstitions, the greater is the probability of their bringing it into discredit. But, without such an advantage, it is scarcely in the power of Intidels to hold it up as an object of contempt. This seems to be the most probable ause that can be assigned, of the rancorous treatment which the Protestant Reformation has experienced from Deistical writers, without reflecting on this, and without knowing it; but, I ask you From this circumstance, therefore, we may form some estimate of its real importance to the support of Christianity itself; since our adversaries, who are ever intent upon the destruction of Christianity, are generally more quick-sighted in discerning what is really favourable or inimical to the success of their plans, than Gospel in its infancy, independent of the zeal, fortitude, learning, those who are "at ease in Zion," or indifferent as to what

But it is by no means necessary for the vindication of the Protestant cause to prove, that the Reformers, though eminently distinguished by their virtues as well as their talents, were exempt from human failings. They pretended neither to absolute perfection, nor to preternatural powers; neither did they assert work which they had taken in hand. They honestly and conscientiously urged their obligation to obey God rather than man, when their compliance with the arbitrary injunctions of the unaffectedly deplored the necessity of disobedience, and earnestly deprecated any measures which might tend to destroy the Unity of the Church. Such, at least, was the conduct of the principal Reformers, in the outset of their important work : however some of them might, in after times, depart from those principles of moderation, and of respect for authority, Civil and Eccesiastical. Nevertheless, it cannot be denied, that too much of human passion and infirmity was sometimes blended with these upright and laudable motives: of which the occasional violence of some chief leaders of the Reformation affords but too clear a proof .-This we may readily allow, nor fear any advantage which may be taken of the concession; since it ably proves, that the best of men, acting in the best causes, are still human; and that in the most signal triumphs of God's faithful servants, there is ever so much weakness and imperfection discernible on their parts, as to shew "that not unto them, but unto His name," must be given the praise and the glory of their success.

But candor requires, that we should separate the views and principles of the Reformers themselves, from those of many who co-operated with them through motives of interest and ambition. Many Potentates in Europe undoubtedly engaged in an opposition to the Papal power, from considerations of State policy, rather than of Religion. Nor can we wonder at this, when we reflect upon the inordinate ambition, with which the Roman Pontiffs had grasped at secular power, and the gigantic strides which they had made towards universal dominion. It rather ought to excite our admiration of that omniscient wisdom, which can make even the vorst passions of our nature subserve his purpose, by bringing good out of evil. For, hence a host of fees were collected against the Romish Usurpation, who regarded the Popes with jealousy and hatred, as their competitors for earthly supremacy. But, however these might contribute towards the success of the Reformation, it were highly unjust to confound with such abettors of its cause, the excellent and illustrious characters, by whose labours it was more immediately effected.

It is evident, then, that we cannot form a just idea of this great change in the aspect of religion, without regarding it as the work of an over-ruling Providence. Never, perhaps, (except in the great triumph of Christianity over Paganism) was the Divine nterposition more conspicuous, than in the success of the Protestant Reformation. When we consider also, that this great event appears to have been by no means the result of any preconcerted plan: but to have arisen, as it were, easually, out of the circumstances which presented themselves, one event leading to another, and one successful investigation preparing the way for farther discoveries of truth; we are forcibly struck with the evidence thus afforded, of its being upholden by more than human

Although their adversaries have spared no pains to asperse the reputation of Wickliffe, Huss, Luther, and of others who stood in their steps, we shall, perhaps, search in vain, either in ancient or modern history, for examples of men more justly entitled to the praise of splendid talents, sound learning, and genuine picty. As to any failings in temper or discretion which appear to have sullied these excellent qualities, when we consider the perverseness with which these Reformers had to contend, and the bitter