

of utility alone. This being the point to which he constantly steers, this being the line from which he never deviates, he puts a value on every thing precisely as it is calculated to accomplish his purpose. Accordingly, to gain his end, he descends to the lowest and the vilest means; he gives up the manly, the spirited, and the honourable part of life; he makes a sacrifice of fame, and character, and dignity and turns himself into all the forms of meanness, and baseness, and prostration. The Prophet Isaiah, with infinite spirit, derides the idols of the Heathen world. "A man," saith he, "planteth a tree, and the rain doth nourish it; he heweth him down cedars, and taketh the cypress and the oak; and of the tree which he planted, he maketh to himself a god. The carpenter stretched out his rule, he marketh it out with a line; he fashioneth it with planes, and maketh it after the figure of a man; and then he worshippeth it as a god. Part thereof he burneth in the fire, with part thereof he maketh bread, and with the residue he maketh a god." Similar to this is the creation of these earthly gods. Reak the pages of their history, and behold them rising to divinity by compliance, by servility, by humiliating meanness, and the darkest debasements. How dishonourable often is that path which conducts to earthly grandeur; and how mean a creature frequently is he whom the world calls a great man! So low and grovelling is the spirit of the world.

It is a spirit of a different kind that animates the citizen of heaven. He is born from above; he derives his descent from the everlasting Father, and he retains a conscious sense of his divine original. Hence Christians, in Scripture, are called "noble;" are called the "excellent ones of the earth." It is unworthy of their celestial descent, it is unbecoming their new nature, to stoop to the meanness of vice. The citizen of heaven scorns the vile arts, and the low cunning, employed by the man of the earth. He condescends, indeed, to every gentle office of kindness and humanity. But there is a difference between condescending, and descending from the dignity of character. From that he never descends. He himself ever feels, and he makes others feel too, that he walks in a path which leads to greatness, and supports a character which is forming for heaven. Such is a difference between the spirit of the world, and the spirit which is of God. Suppleness, servility, abject submission, disgrace the one; dignity, elevation, independence, exalt the other. The one is a serpent, smooth, insinuating, creeping on the ground, and licking the dust: the other is an eagle, that towers aloft in the higher regions of the air, and moves rejoicing in his path through the heavens.

In the second place, The spirit of the world is a spirit of falsehood, dissimulation, and hypocrisy: the spirit of God is a spirit of truth, sincerity, and openness. The life which the man of the earth leads is a scene of impos-

ture and delusion. Show without substance; appearance without reality; professions of friendship which signify nothing; and promises which are never meant to be performed, fill up a life which is all outside. With him the face is not the index of the mind, nor the tongue the interpreter of the heart. There is a lie in his right hand. He is perpetually acting a part, and under a mask he goes about deceiving the world. He turns himself into a variety of shapes; he changes as circumstances change; he goes through all the forms of dissimulation, and puts off one disguise to put on another. He does not hesitate to counterfeit religion when it serves a turn, and to act the saint in order to gain his ends. Hence the spirit of the world hath often passed for the spirit which is of God, and Satan, under this disguise, hath been mistaken for an angel of light. Such is the spirit of the world.

The spirit which is of God is a spirit of truth, sincerity, and openness. The citizen of heaven esteems truth as sacred, and holds sincerity to be the first of the virtues. He has no secret doctrines to communicate. He needs no chosen confidants to whom he may impart his favourite notions; no private conventicles where he may disseminate his opinions. What he avows to God he avows to man. He expresseth with his tongue what he thinketh with his heart. He will not indeed improperly publish truths; he will not prostitute what is pure and holy; he will not as the Scripture says, throw pearls before swine; but neither will he on any occasion partake with swine in their husks. He is what he appears to be. Arrayed in the simple majesty of truth, he seeks no other covering. Supported by the consciousness of rectitude, he holds fast his integrity as he would guard his life. Such is the difference between these characters. The man of the earth turns aside to the crooked paths and insidious mazes of dissimulation; the citizen of heaven moves along in the onward track of integrity and honour. The spirit of the world seeks concealment and the darkness and the shade; the spirit which is of God loves the light, becomes the light, adorns the light.

Thirdly, The spirit of the world is a timid spirit; the spirit which is of God is a bold and manly spirit. Actuated by selfish principles, and pursuing his own interest, the man of the earth is afraid to offend. He accommodates himself to the manners that prevail, and courts the favour of the world by the most insinuating of all kinds of flattery, by following its example. He is a mere creature of the times; a mirror to reflect every vice of the vicious, and every vanity of the vain. His sole desire is to please. If he speak truths, they are pleasing truths. He dares not risk the disapprobation of a fool, and would rather offend against the laws of Heaven than give offence to his neighbour.