

Dr. George Campbell's views of Commentators and Commentaries, extracted from his Lectures on Systematic Theology.

“THE dogmatist knows nothing of degrees, either in evidence or in faith. He has properly no opinions or doubts. Every thing with him is either certainly true, or certainly false. Of this turn of mind I shall only say, that so far from being an indication of vigor, it is a sure indication of debility in the intellectual powers.”—

“Of most of our commentaries we may almost say, they speak an infinite deal of nothing. Their reasons are as two grains of wheat hid in two bushels of chaff; you shall seek all day ere you find them, and when you have them they are not worth the search.”

“Almost every commentator hath his favorite system, which occupies his imagination, biasses his understanding; and more or less tinges all his comments.”—

“How unsafe, then, must it be to trust in men. When we thus implicitly follow a guide before inquiry, if we should even happen to be in the right, it is, with regard to us, a matter purely accidental.”

“Whilst, therefore, it is by far the too general cry, “Read, read commentators, systematists, paraphrasts, controvertists, demonstrations, confutations, apologies, answers, defences, replies, and ten thousand other such like;” I should think the most important advice to be, Devoutly study the scriptures themselves, if you would understand their doctrine in singleness of heart.”—

“Rica having been to visit the library of a French convent, writes thus to his friend in Persia, concerning what had passed: Father said I to the librarian, what are these huge volumes which fill the whole side of the library? These, said he, are the interpreters of the Scriptures. There is a prodigious number of them, replied I; the scriptures must have been very dark formerly, and very clear at present. Do there remain still any doubts? Are there now any points contested? Are there? answered he, with surprise; Are there? There are almost as many as there are lines. You astonish me, said I; what then have all these authors been doing? These authors, returned he, never searched the scriptures for what ought to be believed, *but for what they did believe themselves.* They did not consider them as a book wherein were contained the doctrines which they ought to receive, but as a work which might be made to authorize their own ideas.”

EXTRACT FROM A SENTIMENTAL JOURNAL.

IN approaching the city we met multitudes of men and women flying in every direction, some of them having literally forsaken all that they had; husbands had left their wives, parents their children, and children their parents. I asked every one who would stop to hear me, what was