

for here is the revealed channel of divine influence to man. It is well to illustrate revelation by the lights of science. It is well to prove our holy religion to be a great historical fact; but let it never be forgotten that the word of God alone is the sword of the Spirit, and the grand instrument of conversion and sanctification. We undervalue God's word, when we deem it unequal to the work of subduing the most obdurate heart. He who once said, "let there be light," and light was; who uttered his fiat, and from the womb of utter nothingness suns and systems sprung into existence, causing ancient space to glow with the beauties and wonders of Creation.—He can yet by the power of his word, make the blind to see, the deaf to hear, and the dead to live, and he has not promised to effect this work by any other means. We may crowd our statute books with enactments against infidelity; but we shall never by such means suppress it, nor save its votaries. God does not operate in converting souls through acts of parliament. He may bring good out of wise or unwise legislation; but his word is the instrument of conversion; faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. This word is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart; no hidden emotion escapes its searching eye, no secret sins escape its awful rebuke. That moral obliquity of heart which exists undetected and undisturbed by the teachings and maxims of philosophic systems of ethics, is laid bare by God's truth, and the rebellious one, however hardened, is made to quail as before the eye of Jehovah. No age or condition of man is overlooked. The young and the old, the intelligent and the ignorant, the sage in his study, the savage amid his clan, the afflicted and the prosperous, the happy and the wretched, the chaste and the vile, and all other conceivable conditions, are embraced within the scope of God's word. The flight of ages destroys not its adaptation to man. It is as much at home on one continent of the earth, or island of the sea, as on another. It is adapted to man as a fallen being, and wherever it finds him, in the wide spread forest, or the stately palace, asking a pitance from the passer by, or revelling amid the abundance of wealth, or the splendours of royalty, it addresses his inmost soul in a voice of such authority, it detects the workings of his heart with such fidelity, that he is constrained to pause, and, wondering, ask the Book of God the question, whence knowest thou me? Heaven has given us such an instrumentality, for the renovation of the world, and it is dishonouring God's word to doubt its perfect adaptation to the end for which it was bestowed on man. Let God's teachings in their simplicity be held up before the gaze of a fallen world; let human wisdom, and human doctrines and inventions be avoided, for such are not the Spirit's channels of com-

munication. Let the truth be brought to bear upon the darkness of the earth, for herein alone is freedom.

A WORD TO CHRISTIANS CONNECTED WITH THE ABOVE REMARKS.—Christians ought ever to be on their guard, lest they be surprised by their enemies. Their Master, who knew the subtlety of their foes, has commanded them to watch and pray, and such duties can never be disregarded, without inflicting an injury upon the soul, and hazarding the interests of truth. But while the man of God is urged to resist with vigor, every demand of sin, and every encroachment of error, he must never lose sight of the important fact, that his help is in God alone. Christianity since its first introduction has passed through many a conflict, and has suffered most from professed friends and guardians. Power as the instrument of superstition, has endeavored to crush all that is vital in the glad tidings, and to hold up before the eye of depraved man, a gorgeous image invested with the tinsel trappings of the court and the camp. The renovating influence of the gospel has been but partially felt, because the way of salvation, has been either totally concealed, or so shrouded by the drapery of metaphysical disquisition as to render it scarcely perceptible. And Christians have, we fear, looked too confidently to the potency of some system of orthodoxy, or to truth itself as the sure antidote of every form of corruption, without that distinct recognition of the sovereignty of God, and that pleading for the aid of the Spirit, which God has promised to give to them that ask him, and which is essential to all prosperity, worthy of the name. We are warranted to repose trust in the inherent power of truth; but we are not warranted in elevating it to the place of God. "Truth is mighty and will prevail," is a sentiment endorsed by all ranks and conditions of men, and quoted with equal complacency by Christian and Pagan, Turk and Jew. The popular idea connected with this phrase, however, we deem to be essentially erroneous. It is taken for granted that truth in its own innate energy, will ultimately conquer error, and free the world from every species of thralldom; but amongst fallen and degraded beings whose Sovereign is the God of this world, truth, in itself considered, will only be revered, when selfishness does not demand the aid of error to minister to its cravings. Left to itself, or to unaided human advocacy, truth, on the most important subject in the universe, will never prevail. There is a sense however, in which the sentiment is strictly accurate. Truth, as the instrument of a holy God, as the sword of the Spirit, must ultimately be triumphant. Its work, thus considered, will be accomplished with infallible certainty. It will open the gates of heaven to yet an innumerable multitude, and bring down to perdition those who reject its pro-

ferred blessings. "A savour of life unto life, or of death unto death," it must prevail in man, or over man.

DIVINE LOVE.

We often think and speak of the love of God; but how little able, after all, are we to comprehend that of which we think and speak, and in view of which we rejoice. Where on earth do we find a parallel to the love of Christ? We know the relative value of things brought to our notice, by comparison; but how shall we estimate the value or extent of that which has no counterpart? which admits of no comparison that would at all aid our conceptions? We may speak of the tenderest and holiest loves of earth, the deep burnings of a parent's heart, the pervading power of conjugal or friendly attachment, or the sublime fervour of that philanthropy which sacrifices self on the altar of public good; but when we sum up the whole, and seek to make the product the basis of a comparison by which we may understand the love of Christ, our limb of the comparison dwindles away into a paltry insignificance. We cannot trace Divine love beyond finite lines; and yet it is infinite. Where we are constrained to leave it, is only at its threshold—it cannot be followed by created intelligence. We may gaze upon the face of a cloudless sky, and the stars of night scattered broadcast in the firmament, will serve as a numerous host of guides to lead our vision far, far into the interminable blue; but have we seen or comprehended the measureless ocean which stretches eternally away beyond the furthest twinkling point which the eye of man has ever reached? So of the love of Christ: its glorious manifestations lead us high, indeed, above anything earthly. The vision of the soul is carried so far above everything human, that we almost fancy that we grasp the whole idea; yet a boundless and endless infinitude of love stretches away and away, beyond our holdest conception. The salvation of the chief of sinners, is a sure pledge to us that Christ's long-suffering is not exhausted by even high handed rebellion, that his love finds no obstacles in what we might deem unpardonable guilt. Had iniquity been sufficient to conquer his love and exhaust his forbearance, Gethsemane had never witnessed his agony of spirit or been sprinkled with his tears and bloody sweat; and Calvary had not beheld him bleeding on the cross, nor heard the announcement which crowned the hope of the guilty and the perishing:—*It is finished!* No, sin has not been too much for Divine love; and while it is a solemn fact, that God cannot look on sin, nor suffer sinners to dwell in his presence, his love is displayed in putting away sin by an all-sufficient sacrifice, and in preparing his people to appear without sin in his presence; Christ having borne their sins in his own body on the tree.