

then, which swept into ruins the great Diana of the Ephesians, and the pillars of her Temple, where all the world worshipped; it was this which kindled a light which the power of numerous and mighty enemies could not put out—a light, still shining in the enemies' face, to increase in radiance, until it merges and belost in the glories of heaven; it was this which snatched from the grasp of Satan, which drew, as brands from the burning, thousands of souls that had otherwise been writhing in eternal torment, but who are now the exalted and blessed, singing and ministering before the throne of the Lamb. Such have been the influences and effects of the preaching of the Word, concerning which our Lord commanded His disciples "Go ye," &c.

We remark,

I. The Gospel originates in a source of supreme excellence. We are naturally apt to form our opinions as to the character of existing systems, by referring to the characters of their founders. Apply this mode of reasoning to the Gospel, and the character of its Founder, and it will be found to possess every claim on the human mind for reverence, admiration and love. To Christ the Gospel is indebted for its existence; and hence it is called the Gospel of Christ. Christ unfolded its powers and principles, established its essential laws, performed those miracles which confessed its truth, bestowed on it its inherent and intrinsic efficacy, and appointed those varied arrangements by which it was to be advanced through the world.

There are more admitted facts in the history of Christ that seem to assign Him a state of humiliation, and to constitute what Scripture terms a stumbling block, on account of which many are disposed to deny and disown Him. He associated with men in the most despised circles of society, and selected the companions of his earthly career from those who were regarded with fear and contempt. Thus prompted by the impulses of Almighty mercy and love, He trode constantly on the very confines of poverty and want. He was finally seized and tried, convicted as a malefactor, condemned to die, and did die upon the cross. If these facts stood alone, they would, we admit, be startling and forbidding; but they are to be explained in such a way as to in-

crease and redound to the splendor of His glory.

Then there are certain truths in regard to Him which give Him a character of high and matchless elevation. He *was without sin*. There was not a deed, word or thought on which there rested, or could rest, the shadow of a stain. He was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners. He did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth. The *human nature which he wore was invested with an especial appointment from God the Father*, because all the offices He performed as Mediator between God and man, arose from the important fact that He was the Messiah—the Christ—the set apart and solemnly anointed of God. Besides the possession of such a human nature, *he was essentially and eternally divine*, the second person in the co-equal and co-eternal Jehovah, the divine and human nature being mysteriously and miraculously united in Him. He was "Emanuel, God with us." "The word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory (the glory as of the only begotten of the Father) full of grace and truth." While he came "of the seed of David according to the flesh," he was "over all, God blessed for ever."

All these truths have been contradicted, cavilled at and denied, but their revelation is distinct, their authority final, and our duty and privilege is to receive and delight in them, as combining to represent the Great Author of the Gospel as one whom the seraphs of heaven may well adore and obey, who merits all blessing and praise, and who is yet infinitely higher than all.

Besides these elevated and dignifying truths in regard to the person and character of the founder of the Gospel, we might direct attention to the facts recorded in revelation in regard to His existence as Mediator subsequent to His death on the cross, and which, in fact, that death purchased and secured. For example, His resurrection from the dead, His ascension to His Father and our Father, to His God and our God, His glorified station as the triumphant Redeemer at the right hand of the Majesty on high. Time, however, will not allow us to enter even superficially on the development of that "great mystery of godliness—God manifest in the flesh, justified in the