

Many of the great men of all departments of Science, have in their lucid moments as regards religion, expressed the same views of the Bible and of Systematic Theology.

DR. BEATTIE'S OPINION OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION.

“THE Christian Religion, according to my creed, is a very simple thing, intelligent to the meanest capacity; and what, if we are at pains to join practice to knowledge, we may make ourselves acquainted with, without turning over many books. It is the distinguished excellence of this religion that it is entirely popular, and fitted, both in its doctrines and in its evidences, to all conditions and capacities of reasonable creatures—a character which does not belong to any other religious or philosophical system that ever appeared in the world. I wonder to see so many men eminent both for their piety and for their capacity, labouring to make a *mystery* of this divine institution. If God vouchsafe to reveal himself to mankind, can we suppose that he chooses to do it in such a manner that none but the learned and contemplative can understand him? The generality of mankind can never in any possible circumstances, have leisure or capacity for learning or profound contemplation. If therefore we make christianity a mystery, we exclude the greater part of mankind from the knowledge of it; which is directly contrary to the intention of its author, as is plain from his explicit and reiterated declarations. In a word, I am perfectly convinced that an intimate acquaintance with the **SCRIPTURE**, particularly the Gospels, is all that is necessary to our accomplishment in true Christian knowledge. I have looked into some systems of theology, but I never read one of them to an end, because I found I could never reap any instruction from them. To darken what is clear, by wrapping it up in a veil of system and science, was all the purpose that the best of them seems to me to answer.”

MILTON'S TREATISE ON CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE.

“IF, then, the scriptures be in themselves so perspicuous, and sufficient of themselves to make men wise unto salvation through faith, and that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works, through what infatuation is it that even Protestant divines persist in darkening the most momentous truths of Religion by intricate comments, on the plea that such an explanation is necessary; stringing together all the useless technicalities and empty distinctions of scholastic barbarism, for the purpose of elucidating those scriptures which they are continually extolling as models of plainness? as if scripture, which possesses in itself the clearest light, and is sufficient for its own explanation, especially in matters of faith and holiness, required to have the simplicity of its divine truths more fully developed, and placed in a more distinct view, by illustrations drawn from the abstract of human science, falsely so called.”