

thority. It is impossible that the members of such a society can have real security in their religious tenets whilst the society itself disclaims infallible certainty of their revelation, or that it can reverence the society as divine, seeing it distinguished by no divine prerogative. Whilst the founders of human institutions employ all their wisdom, ingenuity, and power to perfect and perpetuate them; surely the wisdom and power of Jesus Christ were not unemployed for the sure transmission of his doctrines, and the perpetuation of his divine establishment.

From the same—  
PRIVATE REASON VERSUS AUTHORITY

Of all the faculties which a bountiful Creator has granted to man, there is none which has been alternately extolled and depreciated more than Reason, while modern Infidels and most of modern Religio-nists attribute to it the most exorbitant empire over all sciences, both human and divine; others dismayed at the consequences of such a doctrine, run into the opposite extreme, and pretend that reason is at all times a faithless guide, a glimmering, treacherous light, which can only lead us into the abyss, and that if we wish to find a secure refuge from uncertainty, error and despair, we must cast ourselves blindly, and with full confidence into the arms of Authority. Placed between these two conflicting sentiments, what party shall we join? Must we side with the Infidel and insist that reason, reason alone has a right to judge of every thing—sole arbitress of truth—that whatever is above reason is against it—and that a revealed religion, no matter how divine in its institution, its doctrines and effects upon society, must be rejected as absurd, because the mysteries it teaches are, and ought to be, incomprehensible to Reason? Or shall we on the other hand with a fiery zeal with science, strip reason of its just prerogative; deny that it can afford us any certitude whatever, and finally conclude to abjure it as the enemy of religion, truth and social virtue? The proverb says: No! that there is a golden medium where virtue and truth reside, and the Apostle tells us that it is in being "wise unto sobriety," "Sapere ad sobrietatem." We shall therefore give to reason and authority what respectively belongs to them, without lessening or exaggerating the lawful rights, and just privileges of either. In the first place then, when an opinion has not been revealed from on high, no matter by how many it may be professed and defended, if it does not appear to you evident, you have an indisputable right to subject it to the ordeal of a new examination—to adopt, reject, or doubt of it, according to the conviction of truth, or falsehood, or obscurity which the nature of its proofs shall have left upon your mind; on such occasions take up the flambeau of reason—approach and investigate, if you can, the unexplored secrets of its bosom—here dissent from all opinions, is no vice; weakness and timidity, no virtue—the aberrations of former philosophers only a salutary restraint—a mark to point out the precipice and to caution us to beware not to take the demonstrations of reason and conviction for the

visionary ravings of an overheated imagination.—In this conclusion we are justified by a reflection that only a few ages back, an infinity of the phenomena of nature appeared incomprehensible to reason which have been since explained, not to the delight alone, but to the utility of mankind. Among other important discoveries achieved by the darings of reason, we may instance the invention of balloons, and the degree of perfection to which modern aeronauts have brought them, notwithstanding that Borelli demonstrated its impossibility in a dissertation *ex professo* in the year 1608, we can add to this the accessions made to natural science by the inventive genius of a Franklin, and a Fulton. Nor will gratitude for America and freedom suffer us to forget Columbus, and his inflexible rashness in stretching across an untravelled ocean, to seek in defiance of authority, a new and undiscovered world. Nature has not been since altered—the human mind has not lost any thing of its vigor and neither the jealousy of ancient Greece, nor the affected fears of more recent debasers of reason can forbid the hope, that the Zenos and Aristotles, the Newton's and the Des Cartes may not yet be equalled, if not surpassed, such are, at least, the rights of private reason; such the advantages it has conferred on mankind. But shall we now become intoxicated with its power? Shall we assign it no limits in its pride? Shall we forget that even the ocean in its immensity has bounds which it respects, and from which its swelling waves retire upon themselves, and that reason, after having ranged with freedom the wide field of nature should not be content with this, nor dare to step beyond it; to search and scrutinize the *unsearchable* things of God?—No: she has been given to man as his guide in the natural order of things, she conducts him to religion for which she has first prepared his mind—nor does she abandon him here—she points out the truths which are not repugnant to her, nor to the idea that we should form of the Divinity—she gives testimony to the miraculous voice of God by which they have been proclaimed, and the innumerable other motives of credibility on which they are supported—she shows us that our obedience to such a Faith is Reason—and having done this, her mission is accomplished. Nor be it objected that all we have said in vindication of private reason, has authority against it; Paschal, Bacon, Malebranche, Leibnitz, and a host of others did not think so—all that we have advanced, has been nothing but the faithful expression of the testimony of these great men. Infidels and heretics themselves, by not discerning or admitting divine things, go just as much against reason as they do against authority—she herself warns them of her inadequacy for the examination of supernatural things, and conspires with the Apostle to bid them beware, for that "the searcher of majesty will be overwhelmed with glory." In a word, that we are indebted to her for what we know, and to authority for what we believe; whether the object of that belief be human or divine truth: "Quod scimus debemus Rationi, quod credimus Auctoritati." St. Augustine.

H.

## ORIGINAL.

## RELIGIOUS SWINDLING.

CONCLUDED.

We have shewn in England the origin and progress of that vile, hypocritical, swindling speculation: *the Bible Society*; a thing imagined purely on the trade, or mercantile principle; and reared and resting on the broadest basis of protestantism. It soon proved a mine of wealth to its contrivers and their retainers; who had thus wilfully enlisted on its side all the ignorant prejudices and anti-catholic zeal of protestant sectarianism; together with the vanity of all the self-deeming, and the would-be deemed, *godly* and *charitable* of our race.

The profitable nature of this mammonic delusion was soon spied abroad, as at home; and universally hailed, as a new and overflowing source of gain, by our reformed and reforming gospellers of every cast; whose only object, alter all, is but to secure to themselves, their wives and families, a genteel and easy temporal living: for they are evidently of those who, as St. Peter says, *leaving the right way, have gone astray: following the way of Balaam, the son of Bosor, who loved the wages of iniquity.* 2. Pet. 2. These all over our colonies, east and west; and in the United States of America, where so many kindred spirits abound; have industriously spread, and carried on with unusually joint accord; among their blind and bigotted dupes, this money-making Bible traffic, to such an extent, and with such success, as, according to their own statements, to have realised cash sufficient to have more than cancelled their national debt. And yet all these prodigious collections vanish quite, as soon as made; without producing one single visible beneficial effect, or durable advantage to the community. Nay, the prowling hydra that swallows all, is as hungry and clamorous for more as ever. The Bible-traffic alone cannot minister to the monster's cravings. And though, to recommend its sale, the printed Bible is proclaimed *all and sole sufficing*—and all other word or writing profane and inadmissible: yet (besides other furnishing shifts to cram the ravening monster's maw, such as Sabbath-schools, Revivals, Camp-meetings, rag-bag and mite societies; and daily begging brother and sisterhoods, all for what is called *the Lord's treasury*;) the tract peddling speculation is superadded to the Bible one; and vagrant evangelism to boot, with the most glaring possible inconsistency.

*Quo non mortalia pectora-cogis suri sacra fumes?*

So that the whole Protestant system has ended at last in a printer's bubble; a tract and bible-peddling apostleship; and a paper reformation!!!

No learning in this new religious system; no instruction whatever is required, but just as much as may enable one to read. All knowledge of the past, present and future, derivable from our fellow-creatures, and the testimony of man, is utterly discarded, as *fallible* and *fallacious*. The Bible alone.