

practice these rights; and as a just recompence, you are yourselves the first who are obliged bitterly to feel the efforts at independency made by these young autocrats. It is not that we see through a darkened glass in passing so severe a sentence upon the youth of the present day. Only go from house to house, from school to school, and listen to that which passes there, and you will convince yourselves that our complaint is an universal one, uttered the most loudly by the parents and teachers themselves. The evil and poisonous mildew lies upon the languishing plantation of the rising generation amongst us. The inmost kernel is rotten—the root is gnawed. They are a bold and obstinate race, destitute of childlikeness, and for the most part initiated, even in their infancy, into all the mysteries of abomination and ungodliness; in the sight of whom it no longer occurs to any one that “of such is the kingdom of heaven.” A race who are strangers to every thing like filial obedience, modest subjection, and tender respect for parents and superiors; who mock at the kindness with which we would gladly lead and direct them, and rise in rebellious defiance against severity. Yes, they are in general a race who no longer regard any thing as sacred, or as enjoining respect, or commanding reverence. In the lower classes they are base, vulgar, and licentious; in the higher, morally unnerved, entirely pervaded by deceit, and full of intolerable and absurdly haughty presumption. God be merciful to that period for which this generation is ripening! Brethren, the foundations of the anti-Christian kingdom are laid; they are deposited in the hearts of our children! The man of sin need only shake the tree of the nations, and his disciples will fall, like ripe fruit, into his lap and his arms. The fig tree putteth forth leaves; the summer is at hand. The Lord have mercy upon us, and prevent the approaching destruction.

KRUMMACHER.

ON WRESTING THE SCRIPTURES.

There is almost nothing in the history of the world more remarkable than the preservation of the sacred books, and their transmission to our times. Nothing can shew so clearly the protecting hand and providence of God, as the fact that these records should have escaped the countless hazards to which they were exposed amid the darkness of antiquity, the assaults of barbarism, the convulsions of empires, and the contests of churches and opposite parties. And what is still more wonderful, these holy books have come down

to us, not only entire, but also pure; secured, as it were by an invisible but Almighty hand from every stain of error and corruption.

But while the providence of God has guarded so completely against this source of error—the corruption of the word itself; the perverse mind of man has devised a method of delusion hardly less dangerous—the misinterpretation of the sacred books. How many wrest the scriptures to suit their own schemes, and please their own fancy; they affix to them meanings which they themselves, not the Holy Spirit, devised; they profess to render a kind of homage to the mere words as syllables, while the truths and doctrines are despised and rejected.

Even in the earliest times of the Christian church, this distortion of the word of God had begun. St. Peter tells us of some false teachers who thus wrested or perverted the Epistles of St. Paul. The word employed is derived from the torture, by means of which, according to the barbarous practice of ancient times, confession were extorted from supposed criminals, and information procured from witnesses. By these engines of torment the unhappy victims were often forced to speak what they knew was not the truth but what they hoped would please their tormentors and procure release from their pain.

The word of God is perverted chiefly in three ways: By misinterpretation; by drawing erroneous inferences and conclusions; and by misapplication.

1. *Misinterpretation.*—There is hardly a doctrine which has not been explained away, or at least deprived of all its glory and power, by the misinterpretation of the terms in which scripture has revealed it. What doctrine is so plainly taught as the Deity of our Lord; yet how eagerly have some endeavored to shew that this has no place in the Bible; that when Christ is called God, it is not meant that he is really God; that when he is said to possess supreme power, wisdom, and sovereignty, no such thing is intended. Again, how plainly is the doctrine of the atonement taught in scripture; yet how strongly have some contended that Christ made no atonement for human guilt; that his death was merely a martyrdom; and that all the terms employed to express his death as sacrifice, ransom, offering, propitiation, are mere figures and metaphors. The assertion of our Lord, “Except a man be born again, he cannot enter the kingdom of heaven,” has also been placed in the rank of unmeaning metaphors, and explained to signify no more than some reformation of the conduct. The law spoken of in the Epistle to the