

in this way the old christian casuists defended lying, or in their own words, "lies told in order to do good, are not only innocent, but meritorious." Fifty falsehoods might be uttered to save a single life! They agreed well with one of the characters of our great dramatic bard--

"Sweet sister, let me live:
What sin you do to save a brother's life,
Nature dispenses with the deed so far,
That it becomes a virtue."

We will, try, however, the question of truth, in the same way that Marmion and others have proposed that of war. We presume that all christians are convinced that lying is never commendable or innocent. We may observe with the Rev. John Wesley, "How strange does that saying of the ancient fathers sound in modern ears! 'I would not tell a lie, no, not to save the souls of the whole world.' Yet is this strictly agreeable to the word of God; to that of St. Paul in particular, if any say, 'Let us do evil that good may come, their damnation is just.'" It is as easy to conjure up cases in which life may be preserved on the condition of lying, as on that of violence towards the assailing party. We have some war cases furnished to our hand, which, with the alteration of a few words will admirably suit our purpose. We will, therefore, assume the propriety of lying when life is suspended on the sole condition of a departure from truth. Addressing an opponent who maintains that the principle of veracity ought to be inviolable, we will hold fast the form of sound words, by using the following language:--

This writer repudiates lying in toto, and urges it as a duty incumbent on men, to submit to every species of insult and wrong, rather than be guilty of dissimulation or lying.

Now it appears to us that lying to save life is sometimes unavoidable; and whatever is unavoidable presents no alternative. A right apprehension of this question involves the well-being and existence of families as well as nations. Suppose then, for instance, one of our quiet farmers seated by the cottage fire, in evening conversation with the partner of his bosom and children of his love: Suddenly, a number of assassins having failed in breaking into a house near at hand, rush in, their murderous blades are uplifted--they demand of the farmer that he shall accompany them to his neighbour's house, and there ask for admittance, stating that he is alone, in order to enable the assassins to take the advantage of his admission, to enter and plunder the property--an instant compliance is demanded with this request to tell a lie--a moment's hesitation on the part of the husband, and his screaming wife will be the bleeding victim. Quere--shall he calmly witness the scene; or shall the tongue that is nerved with sufficient strength by the God of Truth protect his beloved, though at the expense of truth and his neighbour's property? We should really like to know how ***** would respond to this inquiry.

Again: suppose you and your congregation were worshipping the Deity in one of your peaceful chapels--unexpectedly a large ferocious party of armed rebels crowd the aisles, and completely surround the building, and having captured all the males, in all the excess of brutality, begin to seize upon your wives and daughters as their prey. On one condition, however, they will desist. It is that the preacher, with the concurrence of the congregation, shall promise to go a neighbouring town and declare to the authorities, that a large company of rebels have been seen in a certain direction--in a opposite direction from the place in which they are. Quere--shall fathers, brothers, or friends content themselves with truth lectures in this trying extremity. Shall they, by a refusal to lie, ingloriously turn away from the he-re-rending screams of injured innocence? We should really like to know whether ***** would not justify defensive lying in a case so harrowing.

What applies in these cases, applies equally to the defence of nations. And so the maxims of war applaud lying when employed in the destruction of others. "Did not Mr. Addison," asks Mr. Wesley, "as well as all his brother statesmen, plead for a trade of deliberate lying? Did he not plead for the innocence, veracity, and the necessity, of employing spies? The worst race of liars under the sun. Yet who ever scrupled using them, but Lord Clarendon?" The cases we have now put, we admit are supposititious, but they involve an important principle. Such dreadful alternatives are not likely to happen any more than the war-cases generally employed, or even Marmion's flying pirates demanding the unconditional surrender of one hundred armed men. But here is one case in point. "When the immortal SPENCER was told that he might save his life by telling a falsehood--by conveying his hand-writing alone--he said--'When God has brought me into a dilemma, in which I must either assert a lie, or lose my life, he gives me a clear indication of my duty, which is, to prefer death to falsehood.' How different from this is the doctrine inculcated by the moral philosophers of the present day!--the doctrine that we may not only utter rank falsehood, but even butcher our fellow men, as a means of protecting not our lives only, but even our property!" But how will Marmion reply to our supposititious cases, on the subject of truth? We presume he will not say that it is right to lie, because life is at stake. Perhaps his "unqualified answer," will be, Christianity forbids us to lie. So we say of killing when life is endangered,--Christianity forbids us to kill. Nay more, Marmion we think must know that our position may be proved with greater facility than his; or in other words, that more is said in the gospel against hatred and killing than against lying and dissimulation.

The case of Marmion when proposed fairly, is simply this. Is taking away the life of a person who threatens ours, compatible with the precepts of christianity? Is it morally and scripturally right to kill in self-defence? Marmion adopts the affirmative, while we take the negative of the question. We beg the serious attention of Marmion to the following observations of Dr. J. Pyc Smith, an individual of high repute in the theological world. The remarks were made at a meeting of the London Peace Society, held in May, 1837--"Having gone through the painful process in his own mind--a process continued through years of anxiety, he was bound to acknowledge that he could find no rest to his soul, no satisfactory conclusion, which as a professed disciple of Christ he dare adopt, but in the rejection of the assumption that life may be taken in self-defence. As a disciple of Christ, he had asked that most important question,--Could he, for any earthly consideration, take away the life of a fellow-creature, in order to

preserve his own property or life? When he endeavored to put the question as in the sight of God, he felt that the spirit and genius of Christianity, the example of its blessed Author, his wondrous act of stupendous love, in dying for his enemies, would not permit it. They were thus conducted to a most important point--a point essential to the very reality of the Christian religion. He must habitually know whether he was prepared to die. If he were not living a Christian life, notwithstanding all his professions, the curse of God was on him for time and eternity; but if, indeed, he were a sincere disciple of the Saviour, and he were a martyr to his principles, he should realize what Christ had in his word declared, 'If ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye.' It was infinitely better to suffer wrongfully, than to escape wrong by the adoption of any measure inconsistent with the spirit of religion. That was a hard saying--who could bear it? No heart, which did not receive God's method of reconciliation, and live habitually under a sense of God's redeeming love, would, he was persuaded, honestly and thoroughly receive that principle."

Let it be remembered that we have asserted in former numbers of the Pearl, that "to fly from impending danger, or to prevent an assailant from perpetrating his cruel design, is unquestionably right." But is it equally right to kill him, as to prevent his killing you? Is it perfectly just in you to divest him of life, when it is the excess of injustice in him to attempt to destroy yours. Marmion, says yes. Where is the proof from the christian law? In what part of that law is it promulgated, that "whenever life is endangered, all rules of morality are, as it respects the individual, suspended, annihilated,--every moral obligation taken away by the single fact, that life is threatened." Where in all the New Testament is the permission granted to take vengeance, to retaliate, to return evil for evil, or to kill a foe when life is at stake? Where in the example of Christ do we find any such permission? When the mob came out against him, did he use the sword? And yet he knew that his cause was just, and he might easily have overthrown his persecutors. But he offered no physical resistance; thus, as it seems to us, settling the question for ever, that no cause, however just and important, and no life, however valuable, may on christian principles be defended by force and arms. Marmion cannot produce a syllable from the christian law authorising any man or number of men to resort to vindictive measures, or to commit homicide in self-defence.

But is the New Testament silent on the negative side of the question now under consideration? Do not the commands of our Saviour suppose aggression, and prescribe the conduct to be observed when it occurs? Do they not necessarily imply some insult, some injury, yea personal violence? When he says "Resist not evil," or the evil person, does not the prohibition rest upon the actual sufferance of evil? When he adds, "Whoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also," does he not forbid, in the clearest terms, retaliation? And in the succeeding directions does he not enjoin us, as St. Paul expresses it, "not to avenge ourselves, but rather to give place unto wrath;" and by particular instances, shew us that we are "not to overcome evil with good?" Again, when he says, "Fear not them which kill the body but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell," does he not intimate that obedience to the commands of God is to be preferred to the preservation of our lives? Again when our Lord rebuked Peter for endeavouring to turn him from his own purpose of surrendering himself to suffering and death, he took occasion to shew that his disciples ought also to manifest a noble readiness to lay down their lives, when obedience to his laws required the sacrifice. They were taught, patiently to submit to every kind of sufferings, and even to die a cruel death, like Christ himself, when called to it. Here are his memorable words. "If any man will come after me let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me. For whosoever will save his life [his bodily life, by a desertion of my cause] shall lose it [his life in a higher sense, namely, his soul] and whosoever will lose his life, [his bodily life] for my sake, shall find it, [that is, an immortal life.] And as an argument to enforce in them a noble readiness to die for his sake and the gospel's, he asks, "For what is a man profited if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" From hence it seems inevitably to follow, that resistance on the part of christians is absolutely forbidden; and that self-defence, as consisting in injuring the aggressor, is prohibited. They are not justified in breaking the commands of Christ, because their lives are endangered.

Or, take the case thus--God commands us to love our enemies, but we cannot kill our enemy in self-defence without hating him--we cannot kill him in the predominance, nor in the exercise of christian love. God tells us not to resist evil--but we cannot kill a man in self-defence without resisting evil in the spirit of retaliation. God tells us not to avenge ourselves, but we cannot kill a person in self-defence without taking the power of vengeance into our own hands. God likewise commands us not to kill, or as the meaning of the prohibition is, thou shalt not commit homicide. Who then will say that christian principles are acted upon in destroying the aggressor; and if they are not, shall we prefer christianity to ourselves--shall we be willing to lose our life for Christ's sake and the gospel's?" But we are sorry that Marmion should have proposed his pirate question, when the case has been so ably argued in the pages of the Pearl. We allude to the argumentative piece, "On the Right of Self-Defence by Jonathan Dymond," in number forty-four of our last volume. Marmion will not tell us that the noble specimen of argumentation referred to, is the argumentum ad verecundiam, for if so we should be obliged to him to give us an example of the argumentum ad judicium. And another person who has deemed it brotherly and christian to misrepresent our views (which Marmion has not done) on the peace question, (and in a quarter too which, in a former case, denied us the common justice one man owes to another,) and whose war-cases we have borrowed in the present address has likewise passed by the fall, the christian answer to all his triumphant queries, in the essay of Jonathan Dymond, the ablest essayist of modern times. May we beg the attention of Marmion to the piece alluded to, for in it he will find an "unqualified answer" on christian principles to the inquiries which he has proposed to us.

But what have the apologists for homicide in self-defence, to say to the scripture quotations we have introduced. There is but one reply, "Self-preservation is the first law of nature." True, but is the code of nature, the only code, which binds its requisitions on the human race. Are we left to the guidance of the light of nature alone? Will not every candid mind confess that the light of nature is often dim and uncertain; and that just so far as we have the purer and brighter radiance of revelation, we are under obligations to follow it. Will the laws of nature teach us to love our enemies, do good to them that hate us, and pray for them that despitefully use us? And so of many other christian precepts. If we are to be governed by the law of nature, then the disciples who were persecuted by Saul of Tarsus with such malignity, might have associated together for the purpose of ridding themselves and the world of such a murderous zealot, and they might, on the generally admitted principles of mankind, have been vindicated. But religion taught them a milder lesson, and they either fled from their enemies, or submitted to their fate without resistance or murmuring. Never did they attempt to insure their safety by injuring, much less by killing, their enemies. And now, 'the noble army of martyrs' praise our God. But we ask Marmion and all our readers if one commandment of God (Thou shalt not commit homicide) may be set aside, may be made to bend to the notion that Self-preservation is the first law of nature, so may all other commandments. "There are twenty other things which violent men may make the sole condition of not taking our lives. Do a wicked thing become lawful because life is at a stake? If they do, morality surely is at an end." May a man bow down to an idol in order to save his life? If he may, what becomes of the second commandment? Or may a man take God's name in vain, or steal, or commit adultery, in order to save his life? If he may, what becomes of the third, seventh, and eighth commandments? But what good reason can be adduced why the commandment "Thou shalt not kill" may be dispensed with, because self-preservation is the first law of nature, which will not apply to all other laws of God. And so all the precepts of revelation must be considered nugatory when life is threatened!

THE EDITOR.

[A press of business very reluctantly compels us to stop in the middle of our conclusion to Marmion's article. We have dwelt longer than we intended on the extreme cases introduced by the advocates of defensive war, because passing circumstances have taught us that with many persons one well told case of the consequence of not resisting evil unto death, sets aside a hundred precepts of Christ and his Apostles. If our time permit we shall furnish our readers next week with the *finis* on our part.--Ed.]

THE COURAGE OF THE EARLY CHURCH.--It was not only the menace and the torture, the rack and the scourge, the stake and the sword, that raised itself against the Churches of God. The ridicule of the satirist, the "world's dread laugh," the storm of the philosophical leaders of the public opinion, the reasoning of the learned; contempt, and wonder, and pity; all that could move the affections, or break the resolution; the fear of infamy, which shrinks from slander; the love of approbation, which excites to virtuous and useful actions, and leads men to honourable eminence;--all of those, and more than those powerful motives of action, appealed in vain to the hearts of the primitive Christians. The more their spiritual enemies within, and the turbulent heathen without, opposed the Churches of Christ, the more they "multiplied and grew;" till the majority of the empire professed the faith of Christ, and the Emperor of Rome became the convert and protector.--Rev. G. Townsend's New Testament.

THE PEARL.

HALIFAX, FRIDAY EVENING, APRIL 26, 1839.

LATEST NEWS FROM EUROPE.--The Brit. Emeline, arrived on Tuesday morning in 4 1/2 days from New York; the Great Western steamer arrived on the morning of the 15th inst. in 23 days from Bristol. The Great Western experienced very boisterous weather. She brought 110 passengers, among whom are Judge Paribarton, the Hon. J. Cunard, M. Tobin, and P. Furlong, Esqrs. The following is a summary of the news brought by her.

The Liverpool steamer had not arrived at the departure of the Great Western, consequently the intelligence which she would bring relative to the Congressional proceedings in relation to Maine, had not been received, but the President's Message, arrived by the England, Capt. Wajle, and the protocol of Mr. Fox and Mr. Forsyth, together with all the preliminary proceedings, had reached Great Britain but had produced no particular sensation at all.

There is no news of any general interest. Queen Victoria is in good health. Parliament in session, the Duke of Wellington not dead, nor sick, and Louis Philippe, as before, in a peck of troubles, for fear of having an opposition majority elected to the Chambers.

A report was in circulation on the evening of the 22d, in London, that a Message was to be brought down to Parliament for a supply of 20,000 additional troops to the army.

Vice Admiral Sir Thomas Harvey, K.C.B. is appointed to succeed the late Sir Charles Paget on the West India and American stations.

Ministers experienced a defeat in the House of Lords on the 22d ult. on a motion for enquiring into the state of crime, and the administration of justice in Ireland, which motion Lord Melbourne strongly opposed.

Standard Office, March 22d, 5 o'clock.--We understand that a meeting of the Cabinet Ministers took place this morning at the Marquis of Lansdowne's, in Berkeley Square, upon the subject of

* A powerful writer has observed: "When the vague notions of justice and expediency are set aside by an examination of facts, the defenders of War have recourse to their last argument--it is that which upheld the Slave Trade, and which has been employed to justify every injustice since the world began--the argument of necessity."