

he proves its abolition, is careful to guard his Christian brethren against supposing that they were therefore at liberty to eat of things sacrificed to idols.

The doctrinal sentiments of the Novatians appear to have been very scriptural, and the discipline of their churches strict, perhaps, to an extreme.

Dr. Lardner, in his *Credibility of the Gospel History* (ch. 47), has been at considerable pains in comparing the various and contradictory representations that have been given of Novatian and his followers, and has exonerated them from a mass of obloquy, cast upon them by the Catholic party. Though Novatian and his principles were condemned by that party, he still continued to be supported by a numerous body in various places, separated from the Catholic church. They had among them persons of considerable note, and of eminent talents. Among them were Agelius, Aceius, Sisinnius, and Marcian, all of Constantinople. Socrates mentions one Mark, bishop of the Novatians in Scythia, who died in the year 439. In fact, the pieces written against them by a great variety of authors of the Catholic church, such as Ambrose, Pacian, and others, the notice taken of them by Dionysius, Basil, and Gregory Nazianzen, and the accounts given of them by Socrates and Sozomen, in their ecclesiastical histories, are proofs of their being numerous, and that churches of this denomination were to be found in most parts of the world in the fourth and fifth centuries. "The vast extent of this sect," says Dr. Lardner, "is manifest from the names of the authors who have mentioned them, or written against them, and from the several parts of the Roman empire in which they were found."

The Novatians suffered severely by persecution, both from the Catholics on the one hand, and by the Arians on the other, as each of the rival parties came to power. Socrates, the historian, who seems to have been intimately acquainted with the affairs of the Novatians, says that the toleration which this class of Christians at length obtained of Valens, the Arian emperor, in 379, they owed under providence to one Marcian, a presbyter of their church in Constantinople, a man of learning and piety, who tutored two daughters of the emperor. This historian particularly mentions the liberality and kindness which the Novatians exercised towards such of the orthodox party as were the subjects of persecution, while they themselves were tolerated; a trait in their history which even Milner is obliged to admit "reflects an amiable lustre on the character of these Dissenters;" and for showing which benevolence, they actually incurred the displeasure of the reigning party.—*Jones' Hist. of the Christian Church; Mosheim; Muencher's Dogmatic History.*

THE violation of truth in contracts, affirmations, and promises, has involved nations in destruction, undermined public prosperity, and blasted the *good name and comfort of families.*

PITCH upon that course of life which is most excellent, and custom will render it most delightful.—*Pythagoras.*

REST satisfied with doing well, and leave others to talk of you as they please.