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“ PROVE ALL THINGS, HOLD FAST THAT WHICH IS GOOD.”

THE CONVERSION OF THE WORLD.

MAN has been often considered as a creature of circumstances. Diversified by climate, by language, by religion, by morals, by habit, he presents a most varied aspect to the contemplative mind. Betwixt “*the frozen Icelander and the sun-burn'd Moor,*” the wandering Indian and the polished citizen, the untutored savage and the sage philosopher, the superstitious pagan and the intelligent christian, what a difference! To the sceptic reasoner the human race presents an insoluble enigma. The questions, *What am I? Whence came I? and Whither do I go?* are questions which philosophy in its boasted powers, deism in its bold excursions, infidelity in its daring enterprizes, attempts in vain. The Bible alone answers them with satisfaction and certainty. To the disbeliever of it, the world has neither beginning, middle, nor end. The sceptic feels himself a speck of matter, floating down the stream of time into a region of impenetrable darkness, alike ignorant of his origin and his destiny. Whether there is in him a spark of immortality, or whether he is all annihilated in the grave, are, to him, things unknown and unknowable. The reptile, encased in its kindred shell, the oyster clinging to its native rock, could as easily calculate the rapidity of the particles of light, or measure, by its powers, the orbit of a comet, as the most gigantic genius, by its own vigor, unaided by the Bible, could prove that there is a God, that there was a creation, that there is an immortal spirit in man, or that there will be an end of this mundane state of things. We know what deism, philosophy, and natural religion arrogate to themselves; but their pretensions are as vain, as their efforts to give assured hope, are impotent and unavailing. Deism steals from the Bible the being of a God, the immortality of the soul, the future state of rewards; and shutting the volume of light, impudently arrogates to itself that it has *originated* those ideas from its own ingenerate sagacity. But we are insensibly falling into a disquisition foreign to our present purpose.

The world, as respects religion, is divided into four grand divisions—the Pagan, the Mahometan, the Jewish, and the Christian. In the first of these there are some fragments of divine revelation mutilated and corrupted. The knowledge of God once communicated to Noah, was transmitted to his descendants; and although many of them were never