

*The consequence was that multitudes declared his speech contemptible ; and would not listen to his teaching.*

There is something exceedingly appropriate, in this conduct, to the sacred office with which the Apostle was invested. He would not follow any unwarranted expedient with the view of gaining a temporary reputation and success. We have every reason to believe, that he could have pleased the Corinthians with "the wisdom of words," but what would posterity have thought, had he pandered to a perverted taste, merely to regale the ears of a few fastidious Greeks ? Or had he, to gain a favourable reception among the learned, mingled the errors of their philosophy with the revelations that came from God ? We have here then the dignified integrity of the heavenly messenger—of one who would stoop to no mean shifts to gain his object :—of one who was so deeply impressed with the divine origin of the truths he taught, that he feared the usual ornaments of speech might derogate from their majesty, and laboured that the faith of his converts should stand, not in the wisdom of man, but in the power of God.

It is worth while to observe that this remarkable peculiarity of Paul's preaching, belongs also to every part of those sacred writings which we receive as inspired. We do not find such a peculiar simplicity of style in any other book. Those who are most extensively acquainted with books, will most readily confess, that there is a strange and an inimitable peculiarity in the scriptural writings. This has sometimes been adduced as a corroborative argument of their divine original. The simple language, the lofty conception, the ineffable dignity in the lowliest incident, the pure spirituality of the upper world breathing in doctrines and pre-

cepts suited to our earthly existence—seem to whisper to us, that these are the oracles of the living God, bequeathed to man on earth, to inspire him with a wisdom otherwise unattainable. We need not wonder therefore that the purest and the loftiest minds have delighted in the study of these writings. Newton, after he had traversed the extent of human science, applied himself in age to the study of the Bible, as the last and worthiest employment of his gifted mind. Locke, after long and profound investigation of the human understanding, spent the latter years of his life in the study of this book, which shows how great an honour the God-head has conferred upon mind. We might easily enumerate distinguished names—the purest and the most exalted of our species—who, in their highest state of intellectual advancement, left behind the wisdom of man, to study the wisdom of God herein revealed. But we refrain. We have adverted to these merely to show, that there is a progress in the life of good men from a delight in things human, to a delight in things divine. The mind in its infancy might perhaps be more struck with the sun painted on a sign-post, than the sun shining in the heavens ; it might reckon the coloured lamps of a theatre more beautiful than the stars glittering in the sky ; it might prefer the rude imitation of nature upon canvass to the fairest of her real landscapes. But as it becomes enlightened and improved, it thinks more meanly of the rude productions of human skill, and wanders with more delightful entrancement amidst the created magnificence of the divine. It is the same in our spiritual and intellectual progress. We turn aside at length from the uncertain tracks of what passes for wisdom in the world. We come to delight in the simplicity of inspiration,