

the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe—v. 25. There was no good reason for this obstinate caution and incredulity. Did it imply a doubt of the veracity of the witnesses? Or did it imply a resolution that he would believe no fact unless he saw it with his own eyes? I am inclined to the opinion that neither of these was very distinctly intended. But under the influence of doubt and disappointment, he had viewed too strongly the inexplicable mysteries connected with the fate of his crucified Master, and could not now confide in any thing unless his eyes saw it; and, therefore, though half persuaded of the Lord's resurrection by the testimony of others, his *heart* would have treated it as a thing unproved, unless some clearer manifestation had been given him.

It was to a disciple laboring under this imperfection of character that our Saviour condescended to make the discovery that should remove it, v. 26—29;

and the use which I propose now to make of this subject, is to point out some of the evils resulting from that unreasonable scepticism which Thomas avowed, and the reasons of that blessedness which the Saviour here pronounces upon them 'that have not seen and yet have believed'.

I. I shall point out some of the evils resulting from that unreasonable scepticism which Thomas avowed:—

1. The man who acts upon the principle of believing nothing but what he sees—a principle that may be implied in the avowal of the doubting disciple—cuts himself off from some of the most valuable and interesting knowledge. He must remain ignorant of the origin of the world; for it is by faith, (not by sight,) we understand that the world was framed by the word of God. Without this principle the history of all past ages would be to him an utter blank, or

would seem peopled not with verities but with fictions. Even the contemporaneous transactions of distant lands would share the same fate, and the present and actual history of Arabia, and the East, for instance, would be regarded as we do the tales of the Arabian nights. The light of science too would be extinguished as well as the light of history; for to the great mass of mankind its discoveries are what their eyes have not seen, nor can see. Is there one in a hundred thousand, even of those who have embraced the system of modern astronomy, who have seen the five moons of Jupiter, or who are able to distinguish that planet from the other radiant points that adorn the sky? Even among scientific men, how terrible would be the curtailment of their knowledge, if they admitted nothing, but the actual results of their own investigations (!)—But without proceeding into the higher regions of knowledge for illustration of evils that would arise from such an unreasonable scepticism, I would say, that books would be rendered useless by it, for books are chiefly the records of past things; that human testimony would be annihilated, on which we are dependent for half our safety and enjoyment; that he who doubted the testimony of competent and veracious witnesses—declaring they had seen their risen Master—might on the same grounds have doubted whether the man he called father, or the woman he called mother, were really deserving of the name.—The avower of such a scepticism cuts himself off from some of the most valuable and interesting knowledge.

2. Again, to act on such a sceptical principle, that we will believe nothing except on the evidence of our own senses, would introduce innumerable evils into the ordinary transactions of life.—