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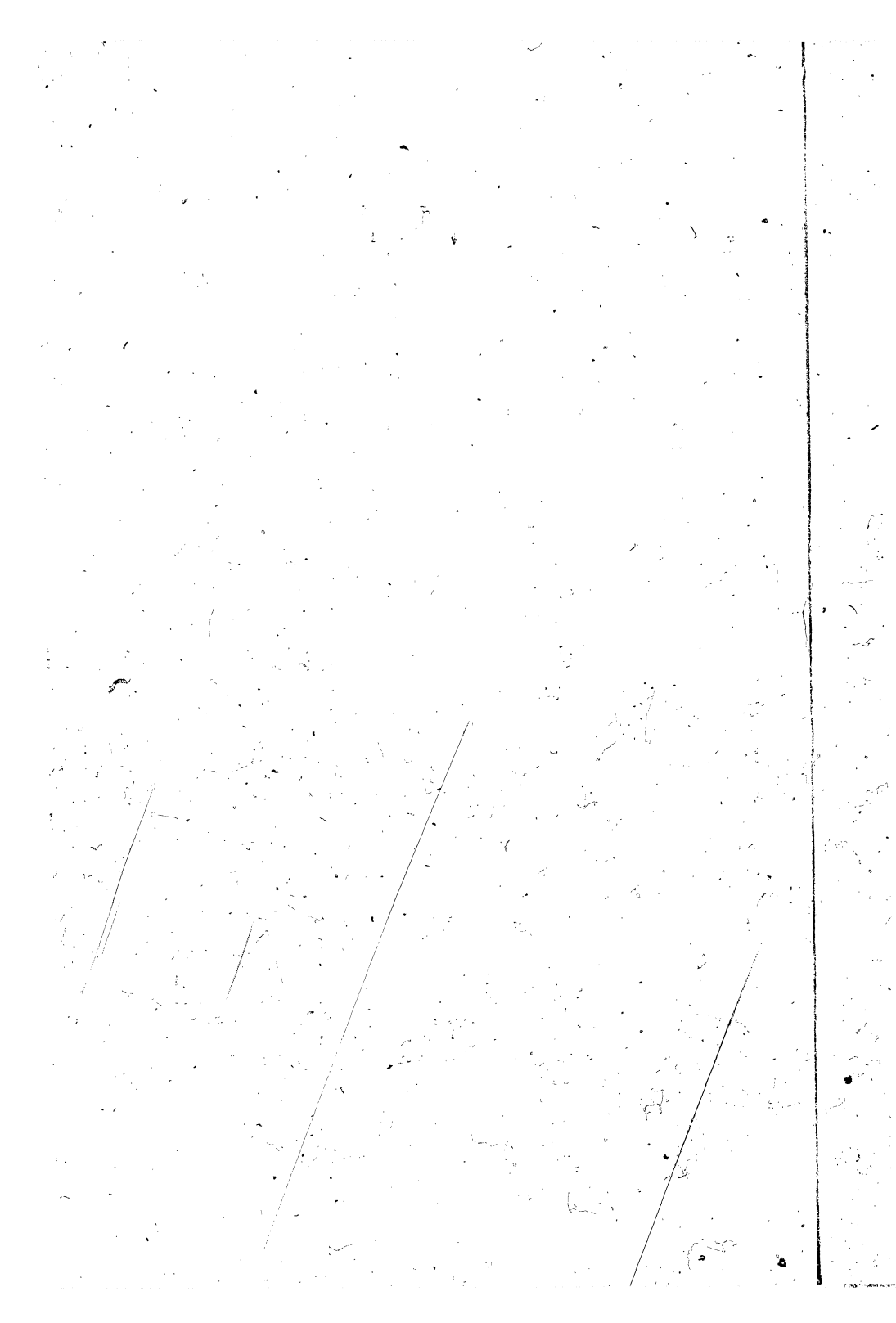
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ADDRESS

TO THE

FEMALE MEMBERS

OF THE

CHURCH OF CHRIST

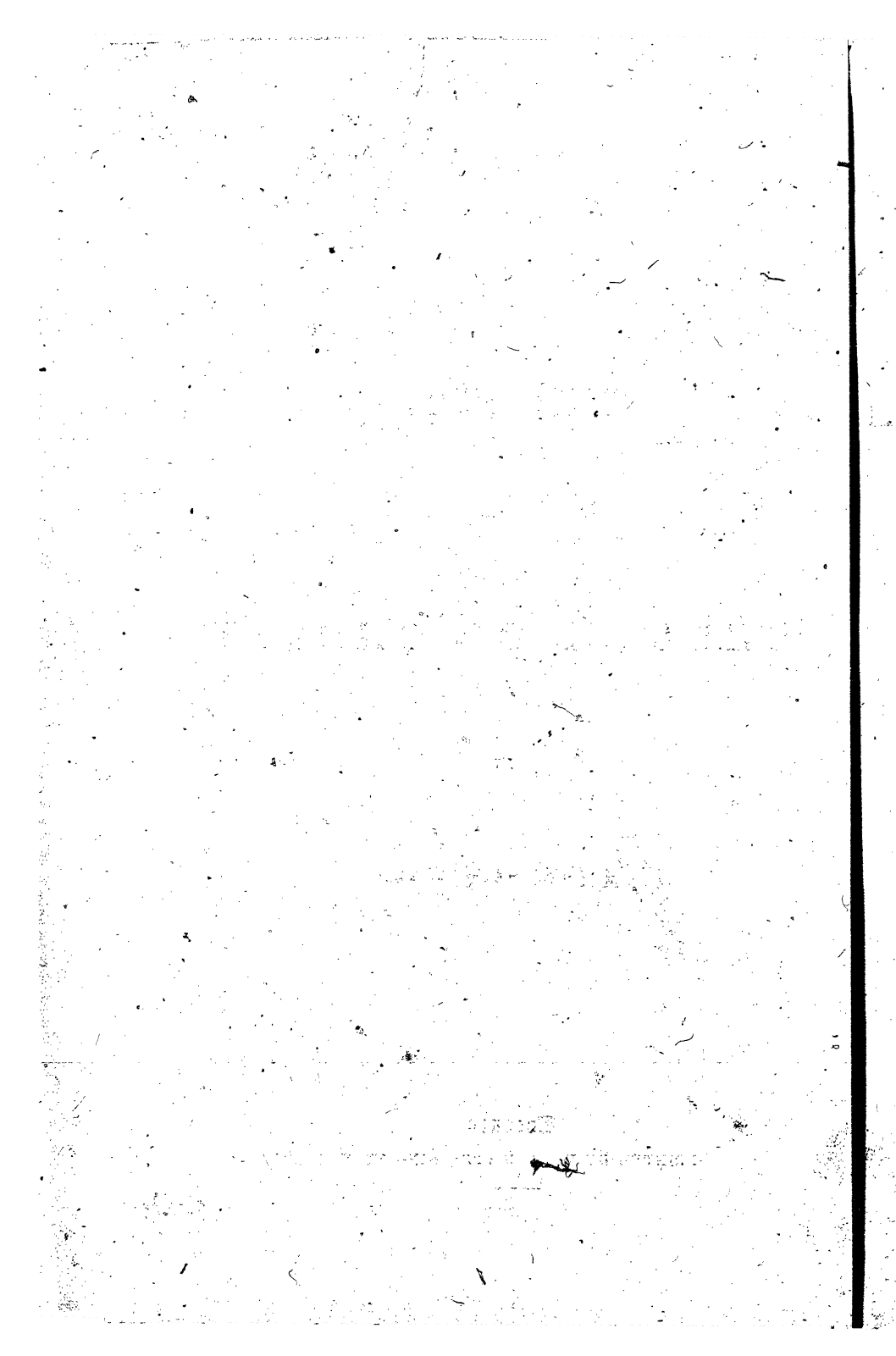
IN

TORONTO.

Toronto:

PRINTED BY W. J. COATES, KING STREET.

1837.



ADDRESS, &c.

"Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences, contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not the Lord Jesus Christ, but —— by good words and fair speeches deceive the heart of the simple."—Rom. 16.

It was my earnest desire, on my return to this place a few months ago, to have requested a meeting with you, for the purpose of addressing to you the word of exhortation and warning, as He should vouchsafe to help me, who hath promised to "bring all things to remembrance." As I have been disappointed in an opportunity of so doing, I avail myself of this method, as the next best I can devise, of acquitting my conscience of my duty to you, and of relieving my heart, in some measure, of its sorrowful anxieties on the subject; for although you have pastors and teachers much better qualified to address you on the subject, and who no doubt have frequently done so, yet do I not feel myself thereby exempted from contributing my mite of evidence on the occasion.

The subject I refer to, is the ministration of those following in the late Mr. Edward Irving's track. *You believe*, that "the children of God are led by the Spirit of God,"—and consequently that the *experience of any member* of "the household of faith," demands respectful and devout attention; my experience in the matter I will accordingly give you. I had occasionally attended Mr. Irving's preaching in England with much pleasure, as opportunity offered, from about 1822, and was personally acquainted with Mr. I. In about 1830, residing about 50 miles from London, and hearing of the profession made by himself and his church, of a remarkable measure of the gift of the Holy Ghost being vouchsafed to them, manifested even in miraculous endowments, I felt much inclined to believe it was truly so; for I had long and deeply lamented that so little of the Spirit of Christ seemed to dwell in those who by membership with the church of Christ, declared that their bodies were the temples of the Holy Ghost. One thing seemed *very certain*, either that it was, as they said, a *very great work of God*, or that they were uttering a very solemn lie, and that instead it was a *very great work of the adversary*. That what they said was *true*, (and it might be so,) or that "the enemy had again done great things," and had seduced many to "speak as in the name of the Lord," saying with the false

prophets of old: "thus saith the Lord, when the Lord had neither sent them, nor had spoken by them." *As I had not then heard of any false doctrines preached, nor false morals exhibited by them,* I considered it my duty, in accordance with the wishes of my friends, to embrace the leisure and other facilities, with which providence had at that time favoured me, for hearing, seeing, feeling for myself; and also that I might, to the best of my ability, bring a true, faithful and honest report for those around me, who could only hear and judge at second hand. I accordingly took convenient lodgings in London and attended Mr. Irving's Lectures, &c. especially at 6 every morning for about a week, when he closed his lectures on "the Unknown Tongues." His reasoning to prove that the unknown tongue spoken in the apostolic times as well as by themselves, was in many instances a language not spoken or understood by any people of the earth, and only to be comprehended by immediate revelation, was to my mind quite unsatisfactory and inconclusive: and his addresses on Baptism extremely confused and contradictory; his illustrations of typical scripture however then, as well as on former occasions, seemed to me correct and true as well as highly interesting. This was the report of my *understanding*; and the inward sense bore a similar testimony. *We believe* in the "communion of saints;" one part of which is, that when "we sit together in heavenly places," especially when convened in the sanctuary of the Most High, and the King of Glory in the midst of us by the Spirit of the Lord, "as a spirit of love and peace and of a sound mind," we *feel*, sometimes *very* sensibly, that we are members one of another in Christ our Head and source of spiritual influence and intelligence; we *feel* as well as know that the Lord is with us of a truth, and that He is breathing over us and around us an atmosphere very different from that which surrounds us at other times, and even when the divine life may run very low among us, we are still sensible of some spiritual pulse, indicating, however, that "the whole head is sick and the whole heart faint." — But attending Mr. I.'s I was *surprised* to feel an entire want of sympathy with the worshipping assembly, and the only moment in which I was enabled to realise communion even with "the Father of Spirits," was during a few minutes in which I besought Him to fulfil his promise of manifesting himself to his people as He does not unto the world, to myself individually and separately from the assembly; and on leaving the church it was some minutes again before I could *feel*, as I always wish and endeavour to do, that the living and life-giving Jehovah was with me, and

in me, and around me, according to his promise by the prophet: "They shall say my Father and I will say: Here I am!" and this sense of distance from my God increased till I thought it wrong to go again. Such were my *feelings*, and I may truly say impartial and unprejudiced feelings;—and *ought we entirely* to disregard testimony from this quarter? God forbid! and I apprehend that were we more exercised in spiritual things in "feeling after God if haply we might find Him," as the apostle expresses it, we should not be so liable to be deceived by false impressions and suggestions from the enemy;—"having thus our senses exercised to discern between good and evil." But while I state *these* circumstances as what must very properly influence *my own* mind, I am fully aware that only the soul and spirit acted upon can judge of this internal kind of evidence. If it *contradicts* the Truth, the written word, certainly it cannot be any part of the truth of God; but if it does not, it either may or may not be, and who can tell "but he that receiveth it:"—yet, the testimony of a Christian in this matter should weigh with others according to his acknowledged character for *true spirituality* of mind, a sound judgment, good common sense, and *veracity*.*

I will now mention,

Secondly, One or two things of a moral and religious character, of which all may judge, and which seemed to me to indicate that the whole ministration was pervaded by a spirit of error and falsehood—that they had received a spirit "giving efficacy to error." These instances may seem, perhaps, trivial; but a small key sometimes opens a large room, and a little fruit will satisfactorily indicate the tree from which it was gathered.

A few days previous to Mr. Irving's trial by the London Presbytery, a paper was produced in his church and presented for the signature of persons present, intended in vindication of Mr. Irving as a Minister of the Church of Scotland at his approaching trial. One of the items in this paper was, that nothing had been introduced in the services of the church while under Mr. Irving's charge contrary to the standards of the

*While giving this weight to the *religious feeling* of every *true christian*, I most readily admit, that "we cannot be too sensible of the danger of an implicit reliance on frames and feelings, or of regarding them as constituting an infallible test by which to judge of our state before God. Upon the broad and grand principle of the gospel, let us repose on God's purposes of grace, and mercy towards us through life, conceived before the foundation of the world, and extending from the beginning of time to the consummation of all things."

Church of Scotland. Some gentlemen rose to say that they did not consider themselves qualified to sign the paper, as they were not acquainted with the standards of the Church of Scotland; upon which Mr. Irving rose, I expected to say, that they were not so voluminous but that gentlemen might easily convince themselves on this matter in time,—but instead of this, after remarking that he had no personal concern whatever in such a document, as his standing in the church of God rested not on any human testimony,—he said that if gentlemen were desirous of putting their names to that paper they need not be prevented by the difficulty mentioned, as “*they may take my word and that of my elders here* (pointing to gentlemen on his right and left) *that it is so*”!!! and that seemed quite satisfactory to these disciples of Mr. Irving, as some of them immediately signed it!!! I was astonished, and could scarcely believe my senses, that a man of Mr. Irving’s intelligence and high moral character could lead his people into so egregious a fallacy and on so solemn an occasion; and that his people could be so blinded as to permit themselves to be thus led to act so deceptively. I asked one of these gentlemen, a lawyer, how he came to do so? He really did not perceive, *at the time*, the inconsistency. When Mr. I. appeared before the London Presbytery shortly after, I could not but be struck with the remarkable contrast exhibited between this scene and that in which our adorable Redeemer stood before his judges: between the character, conduct, feelings, and whole bearing of the accused, the court, and the accusers, on these two occasions. Especially between him who “in all things came to set us an example that we should tread in his steps;” who, when he was reviled reviled not again,—and Mr. Irving exclaiming, in the pomp of highly theatrical intonation, look and gesture, “I denounce you as a court of Anti-Christ!” And this high and haughty bearing was evidently no burst of impassioned feeling which the Christian spectator might hope would speedily give place to the compunctious relentings of godly sorrow; but it was just the acting out of a *principle*, and in strict accordance with the arrogant pretensions to a something so much like Popish infallibility, that it is difficult to draw any line of distinction, if indeed any real difference exists—a high assumption of such divine authority, presence, and power, as forbids and repels enquiry and investigation. Mr. I.’s first plea was, that nothing had been sanctioned in that place of worship, while under his pastoral care, contrary to the standards of the Church of Scotland: in this he was palpably disproved by one article in these standards, which expressly prohibited any part of the service being in any but

the *vulgar tongue*. Mr. Irving then shifted his ground, and refused to be tried by those, or any human creeds whatever; and appealed to scripture, insisting on substantiating the truth of all the doctrines and practices of his church on *scriptural authority alone*. This was exceedingly specious, and took mightily with the people, but such a proceeding was as false as it was specious; and really as *anti-scriptural* as its pretence was that of a peculiar regard for scripture: it was doing what the whole of these ministrations are doing, viz. acting contrary to the life and *spirit* of God's word, under a hollow pretence of honouring the *letter* of the law. Now the scripture tells us: "not to lie one to another;" not to defraud one another; to be men of honor, whose yea and nay may *bona fide* be depended on; yet, Mr. Irving having received his ministerial appointments from the church of Scotland under a sacred pledge to administer for her in ecclesiastical affairs according to what *she believed* the truth of God's word exhibited in her *written standards*, now refuses to be tried as a minister of that church by those standards. The Moderator, however, very properly refused to permit such a defence, alleging that as Mr. I. had accepted his ministerial office upon the conditions of the observance of these standards, by these standards they as a court of that church must examine and judge. If Mr. I. had after his ministerial ordination in this church found, or fancied he had found, such discrepancies between her standards and the alone and supreme law to which *every christian* must conform all his thoughts, words, and actions, both private and public, that he could not conscientiously abide by them; his path was quite clear; the church of Scotland assumed no infallibility; supposed errors might be brought before her courts for re-consideration, and if there considered *anti-scriptural* would be corrected, and if not, and the complainant remained still dissatisfied, he was quite free to leave the church and follow in some other way the dictates of his conscience; but to take up his defence as he required would be quite unsuitable and out of place, and would be opening the door to a theological controversy which might not terminate before that day when all error and falsehood should have passed away for ever. Upon this Mr. I., with his arm extended and his face averted, denounced them as a court of Anti-Christ, and soon left the church, nor would he return to attend the continuance of his trial, which lasted from 9 A. M. to half-past 9 P. M., when he was condemned. The Moderator summed up the judgment of the court by saying: they considered Mr. I. as a pious and holy man, endowed with talents and attainments of uncommon eminence; to many of them the object of high

esteem and particular friendship, to which feelings they did much violence in the discharge of their present responsible duty; they had no doubt that he *had* been the honored instrument of turning many from darkness to light—but that at present—why? they presumed not to say—he was under a *very* “strong delusion,” from which they hoped and prayed the Lord would yet deliver him, when the dark and gloomy cloud which for a time had eclipsed his brightness and prevented his usefulness, would be dispelled, and his sun of glory again break forth with more than its former splendor, imparting its salutary influences in a still larger sphere than it had ever before done. Such was the conduct of the court by whom Mr. I. was tried; being in perfect consistency with the well-known characters of the individuals composing it, and such was the conduct of him who stood before them for judgment; both forming a striking contrast with that by whom Christ was condemned. As to the doctrines of these religionists, perhaps the secret root of bitterness whence all this mischief has sprung may be found, by him who only can clearly trace all the lamented effects of sin and folly up to the spring and source which originated them, to be the old heresy respecting the nature of the Lord Jesus Christ, asserting that “the King of Glory,” who was ever “holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners,” did, notwithstanding, assume not man’s holy and *unfallen*, but his *fallen* nature; so that instead of viewing the incarnate and adorable Redeemer as pure and spotless in body, soul, and spirit; his whole manhood and Godhead in unjarring and profound harmony, loving all righteousness and hating all iniquity; suffering in no way in consequence of his own sin whether original or actual, but only suffering for the sins of others; we see in his person the most horrible tempest ever exhibited as arising from the violence of contest between natural propensities, stronger than *mere* human nature ever experienced, or was capable of experiencing; to every vice that ever germinated in the pollution of a human heart, and the principle of grace (or, as they would rather express it, the Holy Spirit) imparted in such measure as effectually to prevent the out-breakings of such propensities, or the yielding to any such sinful desires in any individual instance. Mr. Meux of London told me that when Mr. I., to whom he was personally known and sincerely attached, began to preach this foul stain on immaculate purity, he said to him, “Irving you must leave this, or the Lord will leave you.” This was no prophesy, *after* the sad sequel of Mr. Irving’s closing career. He mentioned it to me before Mr. I. had incurred the

solemn sentence by which the Church of Christ, in the name of him who has said: "Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." put him out from her communion. It will not be supposed that the writer of these few imperfect remarks is of opinion, that however unjust and trivial the judgment of a Court of Christ may be, that the Divine Head will honor such judgment with the broad seal of heaven. O no! but, that when the judgment of his church is duly given *according to his will*, he will then indeed make it to appear that the censure of his church is not a thing to be set at nought. The tendency of the teachings of this sect in some other important particulars seem to be, to sap the foundations of christian *faith*, and to lay the axe to the root of christian *morals*. As to the former, in reference to the work of the Holy Spirit in the human soul. The dispensation under which we live (comprising the interval between the rejection and restoration of the Jewish people) is *peculiarly* a *spiritual* dispensation. *The first*, or Jewish dispensation, was one of *chiefly external* instruction, in which the church in her infancy was taught through the external senses. *The second*, the present, or christian dispensation, *chiefly* that of *spiritual or internal* instruction. Now, therefore, during this dispensation (rapidly drawing to its close) in which the Divine Spirit, the only sensible manifestation of the living and life-giving Jehovah, is, in a very peculiar and special measure and manner, the teacher and guide of the flock in "the word, sacraments, and prayer," "until the Lord come;" any *false* assumption of his presence and power, and every effect to weaken the faith of his creatures in his *true*, great and gracious work in the hearts and minds, and consciences of men, is, in a very peculiar and special manner, anti-christian; for who or what is the Holy Ghost but the spirit of Christ himself? Nor will the admixture of other matter, however true, interesting and important, free a ministration, marked by such characteristics, from the appalling and fearful denomination of an anti-christian ministration; nor those who attend such a ministry after *sufficient* evidence of its real character, whether received *personally* or through the evidence of others, of fearfully tampering with their soul's vital health; nay, must we not say of presumption and disobedience. The tender plant may be putting forth the most luxuriant foliage and the brightest blossoms, while a worm at the root may be destroying the minute germ of life, till suddenly it withers, droops and dies, to revive no more; it is gone and *for ever!* So may the doctrine gainsayed appear but a

very little matter; it may perhaps be expressed in one or two little words, and yet it may be the very germ of our most holy faith, which once destroyed, what will avail all those other minor truths, however interesting, under the cover of whose redundant verdure the secret work of destruction has been working its insidious way?

False Christs and false Prophets the Lord forwarned us should arise, and should "deceive many by signs and lying wonders, so that if it were possible they should deceive even the elect;" but what was the advice of the good shepherd? Was it, go after them; don't be satisfied with the evidence even of credible witnesses to the falsity of their doctrines, to their heretical and schismatic ways; nay, be not satisfied by the testimony of the most wise, pious, and experienced of the brethren; be satisfied with nothing until you have heard with your own ears, and seen with your own eyes, and inhaled yourselves somewhat of their spirit, and of the atmosphere which surrounds them? Far from it—our Lord says on the contrary, if they shall say of such: lo, he is in the desert! *go not forth*: behold, he is in the secret chambers! believe it not. Take heed lest *any man* deceive you: lo I have told you before: for as a snare shall it come upon all them that dwell upon the face of the whole earth. Watch ye, therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things.—*Luke 21. Mark 13. Matt. 24.*—For as to this infidel principle which determines to receive no evidence but that of *personal experience*, does the wisdom of God consider this a mark of the wise, candid, ingenuous disciple, who with genuine humility receives the light of divine instruction in whatever way his master may choose to impart it; and would shrink from the thought of "limiting the Holy One of Israel," or prescribing to the Most High how he will be directed? "Thomas! because thou hast seen thou hast believed; blessed are they who have not seen and yet have believed!" And on another occasion when other of the disciples manifested the same incredulity in *sufficient* testimony, "he upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not *them that had seen him.*" O Lord! increase our faith in all the truth; in all that thou hast taught us, especially in the divine, in the super-sensuous, in "the things of the spirit;" that our whole body being full of light, having no part dark, we shall more readily detect every meteor blaze, and every *ignus-fatuus* which "leads to bewilder, and dazzles to blind;" and whether we hear the promised "voice behind us saying, this is the way, walk ye in it"—or this is not the way,

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“avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it and pass away :” whether by the immediate movement of thy spirit on our souls, or by the sanctified deductions of our rational powers from thy word and providence : O grant us grace, so to hear that our souls may live, and that we may be preserved and delivered from all illusion and delusion on the one hand, so that we shall not “lie down in sorrow after having walked in the light of sparks of our own kindling ;” and on the other from a slavish fear of the same, leading to “hardness of heart, and blindness of mind.”

In both of these important particulars, I mean in assuming to themselves a measure of the Holy Spirit amounting to infallibility, and in gainsaying, denying, and deriding the work of the Blessed Spirit in the hearts and souls of believers, I hardly think that any unprejudiced christian who has heard them a few times will hesitate to say, that they are far gone from “the simplicity that is in Christ.” Mr. Irving in his last letter to his people makes a solemn “confession of (as he says) my sins, by which I think I shall but serve my God and the flock, and the quiet of my own soul, and the health of my body also.” This sin he states to be, assuming to himself or themselves an undue measure of the Holy Spirit, which says he, “was no less than exalting the angel of the church into the place of Christ.” Since writing these remarks I was favoured with this letter of Mr. Irving’s, which has much relieved my feelings in respect of this otherwise great and good man, who, after this important concession, would, in all probability, had he been spared, have returned to the paths of sobriety and sound doctrine. They do not consider, said Mr. Caird, that “when the minister stretches out his hand it is God who is stretching out his hand, and when the minister speaks it is God’s voice that is heard !” Dear friends where is the difference between such pretensions, and those of the Pope ? I can see none ; and tell me what is blasphemy if this is not. The dogmatical *mode* of their instructions also, so different from our Lord’s manner, who was ever anxious to follow up the more solemn and public exhibitions of divine truth by familiar colloquial explanations in the house and by the way, does not, I think, bespeak them the possessors of an unusual measure of his spirit. Their pastor was requested by one of his steady followers to explain a doctrine that, as delivered publicly, had appeared very confused. The applicant was put off in a very harsh and dictatorial manner, with the reply, that “that doctrine could only be taught *in the church.*” Surely this savours more of *superstitious darkness and mysticism*, than of benign

and heavenly irradiation in the *gospel mystery* of a God incarnate, bringing light, liberty, and immortality to light. And as to the gainsaying, the *true* work of the *true Holy Ghost*: those who know any thing of experimental religion, do know, that to give that childlike unsuspecting credence to the work of the ever-blessed Spirit in their souls, which is comprehended in "receiving the kingdom of God as a little child," is of very difficult attainment, and seldom arrived at in any very comfortable and satisfactory manner without some mighty exercise of mind. "Ye believe the witness of men but the witness of God is greater;" and yet *that* witness we are indeed slow of heart to believe. Now, Mr. Caird's teachings have a strong tendency to harden the heart against *this* small, still voice, and to induce those who have received the seal of the spirit again and again, in many ways, to renounce their faith in the work of God in their souls; to call "the truth of God a lie," while they give heed to this spurious kind of spirituality, as subtle and fallacious as it is dangerous. Had Mr. Caird confined his observations on this subject, to a warning against imputing every impression, however strong, to the Divine Spirit, his remarks had been wise and reasonable; but with the same solicitude and prayerful watchfulness that we should shun receiving as divine what may not be so, should we take heed to receive and hold fast the teachings of Him "who teacheth as *no man* teacheth." Is it difficult to discern at all times the voice of the shepherd from that of the stranger? It is; to our minds and hearts as yet imperfectly enlightened and sanctified: Jesus draws near to us in the midst of the stormy and dark night to bring us speedily to our desired haven, and because he approaches in a way to which we are unaccustomed, we "cry out for fear, and would fain flee, supposing we have seen a spirit;" but what then? shall we give up the lesson because it is a difficult one that often puzzles us? Shall we determine that, however we may be inwardly moved, *in accordance with the written word*, we will not yield to such a movement upon our minds? God forbid! If we do, can we ever expect to attain to the happy experience of the word in Prov. 22nd. "That thy trust may be in *the Lord*, I have made to *thee* this day, even to thee; that I might make thee *know* the *certainty* of the words of truth, that thou mightest answer the words of truth to them that send unto thee." Doing so, many have been convinced too late of the truth of that "small, still voice," against which they have determinately stopped their ear "as the deaf adder, who will not listen to the voice of the charmer, charming never so wisely," until, by

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their stiff-neckedness, they have "not only wearied men, but wearied my God also;" who has at length said, "let him alone," "my spirit shall not always strive with man!"

I have been alarmed at seeing some of our friends so incautious in believing every internal suggestion, and some again, of whom I had hoped better things, denying the Holy Ghost in one very important branch of his work in man, and "limiting the Holy One of Israel," as he has not limited himself, and this in direct contradiction to the express and solemn testimony of some of the Lord's faithful witnesses. Is there any thing in scripture, either positive or inferential against the important doctrine that the Holy Ghost may now say to any one, as he did to Philip, "go" to this or that place? And as there is not, but, on the contrary, as we are told that "the children of God are led by the spirit of God;" and many of his servants have declared, that by an impulse which they are assured was divine, they have been thus guided in a matter, the issue whereof has also been unquestionably good and highly beneficial; ought we not to cultivate this kind of spirituality and docility of mind, and carefully guard against that "leaning to our own understanding," against the movements of God's spirit, which must issue in darkness and coldness of heart and soul in the things of God. "Trust to the Lord with all thine heart and lean not to thy own understanding." You will, dear friends, excuse my dwelling more on this subject than the particular object of this address might seem to call for; but as it is a subject on which it has pleased the wisdom of God to exercise my mind particularly, I am satisfied to embrace every fair opportunity of bearing my testimony to what I believe *important truth* on this subject.

And now, as to the practical bearing and tendencies of this church; I have said that by their teachings they appear to me to lay the axe to the root of the fair tree of *christian morals*, and "by their fruits ye shall know them." I don't know that they make use of the words, "*passive obedience*," that badge of the dark ages, both of civil and ecclesiastical despotism! that daring contradiction of the word of God as well as of all natural religion, feeling, common sense, and intellectual light and liberty! "Call no man master upon earth," says Christ, nor "father." O no! for if master, or father, or husband require an act contrary to "the mind and will of Christ," there is but one answer for them: "whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you *more* than unto God—judge ye." But I will submit to those who have heard them, whether they do not teach it in the most palpable and

unequivocal manner. They say the law of God is absolute: "Obey them that are set over you." "Children obey your parents." "Wives submit yourselves unto your own husbands," &c. And will not permit that these precepts shall be qualified by such as *demand*, that such obedience shall be "*only in the Lord.*" They teach that if such persons command you to break the law of God you *must* obey; you are exonerated and that all the guilt and sin passes over to those who gave the command; but that if you *disobey*, you are guilty of disobedience to God's authority. They teach, moreover, that if you pray to God he will so change the hearts of your rulers, that they will not persist in sinful requirements. Now we know that God does, indeed, often wonderfully change the hearts of rulers in answer to the prayer of faith; but we also know that often he does *not* see fit to do so; and the fire and the gibbet have secured the bright crown of martyrdom to those who have, for the honor of God's most holy and righteous law, dared to disobey and to say, "be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not worship the golden image" as thou hast commanded. In private I heard one of their followers put the question: "But Mr. G. as to the absolute obedience which is to be rendered by a child; if the parent should require a child to do what was wrong, (and alas! how many do) ought that child to comply?" and what was the answer of this teacher of religion and christian morals? Did he hasten to correct with fearful earnestness such an inference from his teachings, and one of so malignant a nature? O no! with great ease and non-chalance he answered, "and what have you to do with *ifs*;" and there this important question was left. That the doctrine of passive obedience is spreading among his people cannot be doubted by those who converse with them on the subject. Another of their peculiarities of a most baneful tendency is, the limitation affixed by them to exertions made to do good under the pretence of maintaining good *order*: so that instead of being ready to "every good word and work" in season and out of season to do good as we have opportunity to all men, they put their forbid upon every effort that lies beyond the immediate sphere of our regular and positive avocations; narrowing up and contracting the life of christian effort, till it is bound and fettered in swaddling bands, more injurious than ever swathed the limbs of the child of the wig-wam.

One instance may suffice as to the fatal and paralysing effects of this system. A lady of my acquaintance had for some time felt uneasy at the dishonor done to God; and the

lack of religious benefit to her large little family, by the non-observance of family worship in her house. "Pour out thy wrath upon the heathen, and upon all the families who call not upon thy name;" and was very seriously thinking of taking up this duty herself, as her husband would not object to her engaging in it. She went to hear Mr. Caird at this time, and he succeeded in lulling her conscience to sleep on this point, for she was there taught that it was her husband's business, which it was sinful for her to meddle with, as for her to step into his line of duty would be to interrupt their beautiful system of order! But let me ask you, dear friends, which order would be most beautiful in the eye of him who has given us many brilliant examples, that to break in upon a bad and vicious order and rule is the best order. Which house in the sight of God exhibits the best and truest order; that in which while the husband is loitering in the public streets in the morning, and at the billiard table in the evening, and the second head of the family is vainly endeavouring, *without the mighty support of an ESTABLISHED RELIGION* in her family, to keep the idle and vagrant minds of the young to any regular or orderly habits, where no family altar concentrates the piety and devotion of the household, or sends up to heaven the morning anthem, or the evening hymn; and where no voice expressive of that *open* acknowledgment and adoration of "him in whom we live, and move, and have our being" is ever heard; but a dark and drear silence on all subjects heavenly and divine, pervades all the chambers in which as a family they meet from time to time, and all its religion is shut up and confined to the secret chambers. Surely this lamp enkindled by heaven was never intended to be put under a bushel, or under a bed, but "to give light to *all* that are in the house." Surely such an order is the order of death and not of life! Such is the order that holds on in its silent march, interrupted only by the sob of the suffering, or the groan of the despairing, that long band of enchained Africans; do you admire the order of their march, hand manacled to hand, foot to foot. O what lovely order! who would dare to break it up? or rather who that ever breathed that liberty which the God of nature breathed into every human soul, and especially that liberty wherewith "Christ delights to set his people free," would not, were it in his power, break their slavish bands, and set the prisoners free? Would you think the order of the family already sketched, more beautiful in the sight of the God and father of all the families that call upon

him, than the order of the family, where, while the head thereof is shamefully squandering his time and property in sin and folly, his family is assembled together by the wife and mother to hear the word of God, to sing his praise, and to supplicate the throne of mercy? But so profound, so abject is the passive obedience preached, that the wife of a drunkard may not presume in the most private and gentle manner, to expostulate with her husband on the sin that is ruining him, and involving herself and family in helpless, hopeless poverty, and all those moral evils that follow thick in its train. Woman! know your place and privilege, and maintain them, by acting them out to the uttermost of the opportunities that He may open to you, "who openeth and *no man* shutteth." Suffer them not to be subtly withdrawn from you by an unsound application of scripture texts. I should have written in a very different strain had not the late baneful effort to cramp, fetter, and confine your exertions to do good, as the Lord may call and enable you, constrained me to write entirely on one side of the question. Look to the beginning, and there, seeing the office for which you were originally destined, endeavour to come up to it as far as present circumstances admit; it was to be an *help-meet* for man, that thus for him and *with* him, you might have the dominion over all lower things on earth. Now, an *help-meet* for man is not a slave, nor a mute; no, it is one who, with all the energy which a quick perception, lively feelings, generous and noble principles, elevated morals, and tender sympathies create, will promptly unbosom her soul's deepest feelings to him, and with all the eloquence which eye and gesture can give, would dare to *speak* and *say*, while her hand rested on the deadly bowl, "O do not! do not! touch the fatal draught, and sink your soul to hell, and mine to broken-heartedness." To be an *help-meet* for him, she must be one who will not only well fill up her own sphere of domestic duties, and this, as *unto him*, next to Christ; but one who can, in some considerable measure, fill up his place when he is either *unable* or *unwilling*. And now do you ask, what is the line of duty? The apostolic precept, *obey in the Lord*. Submission, or even apparent acquiescence, must ever be decidedly withheld from every thing that is positively sinful; and in judging as to what is so, *i. e.* in applying the general laws of the ten commandments to the various minutiae of daily life your own conscience can be, and must be, your supreme guide. Endeavour to *enlighten* your conscience by all possible means, for it may

sometimes be in error : be *candid* under expostulations : above all keep it *tender* by never acting contrary to its *decisions*, and you will not materially err under its sanctions ; and, on the other hand, take a pleasure in surrendering your own fancies, humours, plans, personal and other gratifications, as a garland of love to encircle the brow, soon, if not already, marked with the traces of Time's heavy finger, and the many wearing anxieties springing out of that sorrowful but well deserved sentence : " In the sweat of thy brow shalt thou eat bread until thou return to thy dust." And whatever is done, be sure that it is done cordially and cheerfully, if you cannot, *in due season*, persuade your partner to acquiesce *quite comfortably* and with his *free* good will, in what you may think your *very best* measures, then be you quite comfortably satisfied to fall in actively and energetically with his, as you may think, but *second best* ways and means. But to think for one moment, that in doing what we know to be wrong, because we are commanded, (when we have the power of resistance,) we can throw all the guilt and blame over on the bosom of our tyrants (for there is nothing that merits more the appellation of tyrannical, than a peremptory command to violate conscience,) to think this, is to brand as folly, the holy heroism of the noble band of martyrs who shed their blood rather than obey the sinful mandates of fathers and mothers, husbands and friends, kings and conquerors !

We are told also, and *in the name of the Lord too!* that *all the Protestant Churches are Anti-Christ, and together form the Mystical Babylon* so fearfully denounced in the Revelations; and, of course, have not the spirit of the Lord among them. Now this is a pretty bold assertion : a strong thing to say ; and, if proved, their daily cry : " Come out of her my people, lest, partaking of her sins, ye partake of her plagues also," which will be sudden and unexpected, as dreadful and calamitous— is faithful and kind, however painful to hear : but if, on the contrary, it is proved to be a slander : what does it not deserve at the hands of every true Christian, but to be repelled and discountenanced by all possible means that our love to Christ, and his church can devise ; taking good heed that in this holy warfare we use no unhallowed weapons : no calumny, no railing for railing : we need not go to the Prince of Darkness to borrow weapons : " The Captain of the Lord's Host, who mustereth the host of battle," has an ample supply in his divine armory, of heavenly temper, for each and all. We all allow that the Protestant Church needs the refining fire, and doubt not, that Irvingism will prove as a part of that fire, by which this gracious purpose will be promoted, and when the

dross and tin is sufficiently removed, then the pure gold, softened and separated, and apparently dissolved in the furnace, will come out and soon take a finer polish, and adhere more firmly together than before. O Lord, arise plead thine own cause, pity our weaknesses, pardon our errors, remove our sins and heal our divisions! Plead our cause against "the accuser of the Brethren," and all who take part with him: Undertake for us against "the scatterers"*—"the horns that have scattered Judah, Israel and Jerusalem:" and raise up for us those "who shall fray them away!" But they tell us, that the Spirit of the Lord is not among us: then by whose spirit is it, that hundreds are annually brought from darkness to light, from being the bond-slaves of Satan into the glorious light and liberty of the gospel of Christ: truly, I will agree to their position: That we are not influenced by the *same* spirit that moves among them in so remarkable a manner. I will also admit with them, that the Spirit under whose power they speak with tongues, &c. is super-natural, and a very mighty one,—but, "Paul I know, and Apollos I know, and the Holy Ghost I know, and the Communion of Saints I know,—but who are ye?" and what have ye?

To use the expression of "wrestling with God in prayer" is also, according to these gentlemen, most erroneous, and worthy of high reprobation. Dear friends, how do you feel when you are told, that you are not to wrestle with God in prayer? Do you feel as if a fiery dart of the wicked one had struck your very vitals? Cherish the feeling for it is according to truth, and wrestle with God more fervently, humbly and perseveringly, to fulfil the promise in our day and in our place, as it may seem good unto him, to "cause the prophets and the unclean spirit to pass out of the land."—*Zech.* 13. But oh! let us be *humble before God*, for we have, by our want of true spirituality of mind, by so *neglecting* to "feel after God continually if haply we might find him;" by not continually waiting for his counsel; by "leaning to our own understanding;" by neglecting the study of his word, given unto us as the test by which we are to "try the spirits whether they be of God," and especially as Christian churches, "biting and devouring one another;" so have we nearly been "destroyed one of another:" for, had we duly respected the work and worship of our Sister Church in Great Britain, who had just cut off the late Edward Irving for *heresy*, we should not have

* I heard Mr. Cuthbert thus denominate themselves, in one of his addresses. See *Zech.* i. 18, &c.

admitted any of his teaching followers even into our houses, (see 2d Epistle of John, verse 10th,) much less into our pulpits, until, if, after the most solemn examination, we were obliged to condemn the act of our Sister Church in Great Britain as being contrary to the mind and will of our Great Head and Lawgiver. Let us for this, and these, and all our other manifold provocations, private, domestic and public, "humble ourselves under the mighty hand of God and he will exalt us in due time." Fear not, dear friends, *all ye who are true of heart*, and willing to live or die in joy or sorrow for and by Christ and his Church, for that is all one as Christ and his Cause; "for your work" and your witness "shall be rewarded." Let our eyes be up unto him who hath said, and oh! may he speak it again, and again, and again, and apply it by his own spirit to the heart and mind of his faithful servants as the matter shall require. "I will work and WHO shall let it." "I will speak and will not keep silence." And O then shall all discern—yes, both saint and sinner, "the voice of the Lord, which is full majesty," from all vain and counterfeit pretensions. Not wrestle with God in prayer! If we do not, if we know not what it is to do so and effectually; what claim have we to be the seed of Jacob, whose distinguishing character it was, as also his most honorable encomium: "As a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed." What was our Blessed Teacher's meaning when he spoke a parable expressly to this end, "that men ought always to pray and not to faint?" The expression itself, implies a degree of earnestness and importunity that if for some time apparently fruitless, might lead the suppliant to grow weary and to give over his suit; and the parable itself is to shew that reiterated entreaties for the same thing, agreeable to his will, shall prevail. And if we look to our great exemplar, who in all things imitable came to set us an example, that we should tread in his steps. "He poured out his prayer with strong crying and tears, and was heard in that he feared." This is what we mean by the phraseology, "wrestling in prayer;" and this is our authority, and we doubt not it shall yet and again be found, "mighty through God to the pulling down of the strongholds, casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God."

It is another false accusation which I have myself heard them utter in public addresses, that the churches teach, "we may worship God any how it don't matter." On the contrary, the Protestant Church teaches that "great fear in meeting of the saints is due unto the Lord," and the guides of the flock

are ever looking up to their master and into his word, that they may be so taught by him, that under their ministration the people may "worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness."

These are a few of the observations which I have made upon the fallacious, but specious, doctrines of this sect, and I leave them with you, Beloved Sisters, in faith and love. I am much indebted to the Church of Christ in Toronto, for true comfort and spiritual refreshment, and the means by which I have been chiefly benefitted have been, the Communion Table; the Class Meeting; and the Female Prayer Meeting. And I am desirous of bearing my testimony to these means, as in his sight from whom all spiritual good is derived, and to whom we shall be accountable for the neglect, or misimprovement of every means of grace which in the course of his wise, though mysterious Providence, he opens to us while we pass through this foreign land: nor shall we, I think, be blameless if our only excuse for the neglect of any of them is, that it was offered to us by that part of Christ's mystical body with which we are not particularly united. Christian, "all things are yours;" whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas; *all* the wells of salvation opened up by any of the churches, are opened for you, and for all. "Whosoever will, let him come, and drink of the water of life freely." Every table of the Lord is spread for you and for all. True, for the sake of discipline, &c., it is orderly and suitable that we attach ourselves to some particular section of the Church, whose call we should not neglect for the sake of other means in other places (any rare occasions excepted), but when our duty to our more particular people does not forbid, we should find a visit to other christian societies, highly promotive of our own refreshment, and mutual christian love and charity. "Blessed are they that sow beside all waters."

And now, beloved Sisters: "Suffer the word of exhortation." We pray daily: "Lead us not into temptation:" then if we are sincere in such desire and prayer, we shall shudder to go into temptation: and after *sufficient evidence*, that dangerous and unsound doctrines, subversive of the life of true religion and vital piety in the soul, and paralysing to the energies of Christian effort and exertion, are preached, "go not after them," nor follow them. We, my friends, are, and perhaps, with some justice, censured for the weakness of vain curiosity. If this is our fault, by nature, under the encouraging promise: "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound," let us who have put on Christ endeavour to manifest in some measure this truth, by being exemplary in checking every injurious indulgence of this propensity, especially when

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it would lead us to subject our hearts, and minds, and feelings to the fatal influence of "false doctrine, heresy, and schism," preached too in the name of Him who is "the True Light;" and especially, "Remember the Sabbath-day to keep it holy," that it may ever be occupied in the "Communion of Saints;" "in the Tabernacles of the Most High;" in the Courts of His Holiness!" "O cease, my son, to hear the instruction which causeth to err from the words of knowledge." Beware of the plea which your heart may bring for this gratification of idle curiosity. I must "prove all things;" yes, dear friends—but there are many ways of testing a poison, thank God, besides drinking it. We are not called to run after every Johannan Southcote, or Mormon, or Swedenburg, &c. &c. &c., and to waste our precious time, especially Sabbath time, by attendance upon their wild rhapsodies. What would you think of a child who, after having been warned by its parents and friends not to touch the poisonous contents of such a vessel, should, under the pretext of "proving all things," take frequent and copious draughts of the pleasing, but fatally injurious, narcotic? O for grace ever to prove by experience what is *right*, and to leave the unhappy experiment of what is *wrong* to those "who love darkness rather than light." And let us pay much respect to those who are "over us *in the Lord*;" and who we know are "watching for our souls as they that must give account." O for the childlike spirit of the sons of God, equally remote from the childishness, or rather servility and abjectness, of passive obedience, and from that perverse and proud contempt of authority and government which sets light by the counsels and opinions of superior age, experience, learning, talent, and piety, and counts for *nothing* "the anointing of the Lord," to the Chair of Office! The spirit of Elihu (see Job 32d) may well consist with the devout respect and awe of David, who would not dare to stretch forth his hand against "the Lord's anointed," though that individual was hunting him "as a partridge in the mountains." Let us cultivate their society; seek their counsel; and, in weighing their sentiments, when opposed to our own, let us endeavour to give them all that weight due to them, from the above considerations; but, for the honor of Him who is jealous of his honor as our *Supreme Guide, Counsellor, and Teacher*; "who teacheth as no man teacheth;" who may make any one now, as David aforesaid, "wiser than his teachers;" (Psalm 119,) and who "will not give his glory unto another,—let us, then, *judge ourselves*, and for ourselves. This we must do, if we would not put the foot of the Pope

upon the neck of our conscience and right reason; though it is, indeed, taking upon ourselves an onerous responsibility when we decide to act contrary to the judgment of those who are "set over us in the Lord." But the child of God, even in such circumstances, may sweetly sing—

Behold me of affections mild :
Behold me humble as a child,
That soft and sweetly sinks to rest,
Weaned from its tender parent's breast.

O fonder than the parent see,
Thy Maker Israel cherish thee;
On Him to latest years depend,
Thy Guide, thy Guardian, and thy Friend!

Yes, dear friends! happy is the man who trusteth in Him, and who "holds fast" all the gracious truths which the Heavenly Teacher, sent from God, has imparted; and "remembers and forgets not" His mighty work in his soul: who takes heed to "magnify His work which men behold:" who is continually endeavouring to "separate the precious from the vile:" and sitting loose to the chaff and dross which ever mixes with human teaching, and even with human experience. May Divine grace preserve and deliver us from denying the work of the Holy Ghost in our souls, instead of declaring in the gates of the Daughter of Zion what He hath done for us." If we do so, must we not fear that we shall be given up to strong delusion, and to believe a lie, because we received not the love of the truth, and be bewildered with the "signs and lying wonder which Satan oft times makes use of." (2d Thes. 2.) Blessed Lord! pity, pardon, help, and appear for us, that every error and delusion, though veiled in the garb of an angel of light, may be so resisted by the "sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God;" and prayer, that it may take its speedy flight, with all its unearthly circumambient exhalations, and leave the humble worshipper of the one living and true God in admiring astonishment, at that grace and power by which he has in this contest with "the prince of the power of the air, been brought off more than conqueror." Remember human intellect is no match for Satan, the fallen arch-angel. None less than he who has the key of the bottomless pit can cast out Satan, and those to whom he gives the power. And now, dearly beloved, in the *unity* of the one Faith, one Hope, and one Baptism of the Protestant Church—in the *humility* of deeply lamented error, division, and consequent weakness—in the *joy* of faith and hope, with patience, that there is "Balm

in Gilead and a Physician there," and that he cometh "mighty to save,"

I remain in our beloved,

VERO CATHOLICUS.

As bird from fowler's snare set free,
Soaring sings:—"Sweet liberty!"
As the roe from hunter's hand,
Darting, bounds o'er stream and land;
So from Satan's slavish band,
So from this world's iron hand,
Our soul's set free!

Our spirit breathes its native air,
The vault of heaven ascends in prayer;
Hinder her not—her God is there.
The spirit breathes its purest fires,
Gives utterance, too, to its desires,
The world abash'd, beholds, admires,
And Satan from the field retires;
Our soul's set free!

P. S.—I know that the best of arguments may be gained. Witness the cavils against even the Redeemer's reasonings, and how much more these hasty and desultory remarks; but they are my best, so except them; and if they exhibit any useful and seasonable truth, may it fall into "honest and good hearts," and then, though "but as a grain of mustard seed," it will, with that blessing which maketh effectual, bring forth some fruit to his glory whose grace and power is magnified in the insignificance of the agency he is pleased sometimes to make use of. I ask the witness of his spirit to the truth I have here endeavoured to vindicate, and I ask no more; in his hands I leave it, whose name, as I believe, most assuredly is in these ministrations most falsely assumed. "He that eateth of their eggs dieth, and that which is crushed breaketh out into a viper."—*Is.* 59.