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THE
CHRISTIAN CLEANER.

NEW SERIES.

VOL. I.

HALIFAX, MAY, 1838.

No. 12.

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

SACRED EXTRACTS.

THE FUTURE STATE OF MEN IN CONTRAST.

“ The hope of the righteous shall be gladness, but the expectation of the wicked shall perish.” Prov. x. 23.

“ The wicked is driven away in his wickedness; but the righteous hath hope in his death.” Prov. xiv. 32.

“ Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.” Dan. xii. 2.

“ He will gather his wheat into the garner, and will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.” Matt. iii. 12.

“ Wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be who go in thereat; because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.” Matt. vii 13, 14.

“ Not every one that saith, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my father who is in heaven.” Matt. vii. 21.

“ The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them that do iniquity, and shall cast them into a furnace of fire; there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth; then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father.”—Matt. xiii. 40—43.

“ Well done, good and faithful servant—enter thou into

the joy of thy Lord. But cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness ; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." Matt. xxv. 23, 32.

" Then shall the King, say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. Then shall he also say unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment ; but the righteous into life eternal." Matt. xxv. 34, 41, 46.

" He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved ; but he that believeth not shall be damned." Mark xvi. 16.

" Blessed are ye when men shall hate you for the Son of man's sake. Rejoice ye in that day, and leap for joy ; for, behold, your reward is great in heaven. But woe unto you that are rich ! for ye have received your consolation." Luke vi. 22-24.

" God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him, should not perish, but have everlasting life." John iii. 16.

" If any man worship the beast, and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation : and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb : and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever : and they have no rest day nor night." Rev. xiv. 9-11.

" And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beasts and false prophet are ; and shall be tormented day and night forever and ever." Rev. xx. 10.

" Between us and you, there is a great gulf fixed ; so that they who would pass from hence to you, cannot, neither can they pass to us, who would come from thence." Luke xvi. 26.

" We beseech you, that ye receive not the grace of God in vain. Behold, now is the accepted time ; now is the day of salvation." 2 Cor. vi. 1, 2.

" To day, if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts." Heb. iii. 7-11.

" Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God." Heb. xii. 15.

" He that is unjust, let him be unjust still ; and he that is filthy, let him be filthy, still : and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still ; and he that is holy, let him be holy still." Rev. xxii. 11.

SPECULATIONS IN RELIGION.

By Speculations in Religion, we mean religious opinions, (purely human) respecting the truths of the Bible, which do not enter into practice, or which more or less make void, the word of God.

Speculations in philosophy, have been wisely discarded from approved systems. Since the days of Bacon our scientific men have adopted the practical and truly scientific mode. That is, they have stopped where human intellect found a bound, over which it could not pass, and have been contented to go no farther than material objects analyzed gave out their qualities; and left the manner of their existence, as beyond the bounds of created intellect. Since men have become so wise in handling and analyzing material objects, we have heard little or nothing about occult sciences, or been disturbed with the strife, and war of words they created: but the sciences and the arts have advanced with increased velocity to the great good of the human kind—we plead for the same principle in the contemplation of religious truth.—To deduce them, *of practical application, ONLY*, from divine revelation, stopping where it stops, and avoiding all speculation.

As the *Bible alone* was said, and constantly affirmed to be the religion of protestants, it was for some time a mysterious problem:—why the Bible alone, confessed and acknowledged, should work no happier results than the strifes, divisions, and retaliatory excommunications of rival protestant sects. It appeared, however, in this case, after a more intimate acquaintance with the details of sectarian christianity, as in many similar cases, that it is not the acknowledgement of a good rule, *but the walking by it*, that secures the happiness of society. The Bible alone in the lips, and one of the contradictory, speculative creeds in the head, and in the heart, will not, save the Church from strife, emulation, and schism. The Bible alone, is the Bible alone, in word and deed, in profession and practice; and this alone can reform the world, and save the Church, and teach us the will of God.

Speaking the same things, is both rationally, and scripturally proposed, as the most sure and certain means of thinking the same things. But how shall we all speak the same things relating to the Christian Religion? Never, indeed, while we add to, or abstract from "*the words which the Holy Spirit teaches.*"—Never, indeed, while we take those terms *out of their scriptural connection*, and either transpose them in place, or confound them with terms *not in the book.*—If we are not greatly mistaken, the adding to, subtracting from, the transposition of, and mingling the terms of the Holy Spirit with those of human contrivance, is the *only cause, why all who love the same Saviour* are disunited. Now every Sectarian creed in Christendom; either adds to, subtracts from,

or transposes the words of inspiration, or mingles things of *divine*, and *human* contrivance together. No such human compilation, or articles, whether written, or nuncupative, can be *the form*, or a form of sound words. Each *different creed* is a new form of doctrine, just as when metal is cast in a mould, it must assume the size and impress thereof. We have but one apostolic form of *doctrine* in the world, and that is contained in the book of God, and in the words of God, which the Holy Spirit teacheth.

Let silver be cast into a French, Spanish, English, or American mould, and though of the same size, each crown assumes a different stamp. Now the Apostle Paul uses this figure Rom. vi. 17, "but ye have obeyed from the heart, that form (mould) of doctrine which was delivered you." A human conscience cast into the mould of the *Episcopalian, Presbyterian, Methodist, Baptist, and Apostolic coin*, not only wear a different *date*, but a different image and superscription. Martin Luther's head, John Calvin's head, John Wesley's head, John Gill's or Andrew Fuller's head is stamped upon each of these. These may be all silver of equal purity, for aught any one can know, till they are tried in the furnace; but let them be melted down and all cast into the Apostolic mould, and they will come out with a new image and superscription, and pass current through all the empire of that head which is stamped upon them. *Let then THE BIBLE be substituted for all human creeds: FACTS, for definitions: THINGS, for words: FAITH, for speculation: UNITY OF FAITH, for unity of opinion. THE POSITIVE COMMANDMENTS OF God, for human legislation, and tradition: PIETY, for ceremony: MORALITY, for partizan zeal: THE PRACTICE OF RELIGION, for the profession of it:—and the work is done.*

Speculation may seem to be founded on the Scriptures. It is however only a false appearance. The Bible may assert the same things more strongly than men's words can express. It is true, in a true sense—for instance, one party speculating from such a text as dead in trespasses and sins &c. deduce doctrines respecting the *nature* of man, free will &c. so metaphysically obscure, that few can comprehend what is literally meant, and reason so impractically about the imputation of Adam's sin, and man's utter inability by nature to believe, or to obey God's word; that one must indeed not possess his reason, not to conclude, (that if all this be true,) it would be as absurd and unjust to condemn him, for doing what by nature he is obliged to do, or for not doing, what by nature, he is incapable of doing (without a special supernatural change,) as it would be, to punish a man who is born blind, for not seeing.

The Bible has no speculation on these subjects, it reveals the fact that all have sinned, and under condemnation, (or in figure, are dead in trespasses and sins;) that man is guilty and helpless, and justly condemned for his own personal sins, wherein

in time past HE WALKED according to the course of this world; that he may come to the Saviour—or in not coming he without excuse for neglecting the great Salvation.

Another party, reasoning abstractedly, only upon such texts as reveal that there is but one God, decides *ex-cathedra* (as if, by searching, man could find out the mode of existence of the Almighty), that God cannot in any sense, exist in plurality—and that the Son of God is *only* a perfect man.

That God is merciful, and that Christ has died for sinners, are cheering truths of the Bible, but is therefore the speculation true, that they who finally reject this mercy, and despise this great salvation, are equally saved in the life to come, as if they had had repentance towards God, and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ?—Again, who doubts, that it is written, and that it is expressive of a moral change, that “except a man be born of the Spirit, &c. he cannot enter into the kingdom of Heaven.”—But what uninspired man is authorised to enforce upon the Church as “*a fundamental truth of Christianity,*” any of the different modifications of doctrine, which different parties contend, to be the true interpretation of such figurative expressions—or to insist, that our Saviour meant to say to Nicodemus, that he naturally, had not power to believe, or to be influenced by the renewing truths, and motives of the Gospel, which the Holy Spirit was about to reveal, from Heaven to man upon earth—or that this, might not be, precisely, the import of the figure born of the Spirit, or be begotten by the Gospel.

The Bible is consistent, and always leads to practice—speculation leads from practice. Now in favour of all human opinions, have volumes of urgent and devout appeals, and of ingenious reasonings been written—Sermons been preached—Converts been made—Sects formed—and the Church of Christ divided. Men of equal pretensions to learning, and as sincere in the belief of their orthodoxy, zealously enforcing the claims of their respective dogmas, as the faith once delivered to the saints. These all make the same important mistake, of gratuitously assuming their fallible interpretation, to be equivalent, to the text—and as equally binding on their consciences, as articles of Christian faith, and union, as the word of God itself. “Instead of for a moment admitting the reasonable and modest supposition, that the interpretation may perhaps contain more than the Canon will support; and that therefore caution should be used in dealing out anathemas, every artifice of an elaborate sophistry is employed to keep such a supposition out of view.” “*If the interpretation be not indeed divine, it is merely human—a simple opinion: and if so, must be submitted to the common condition of argument.*”—(Author of Fanaticism.)

Many consider it as a mark of great humility, to distrust their own judgment respecting what the statements of the Bible are;

and to submit to the teaching and decision of their favourite preachers, or books on these subjects. Forgetting, that while professing much self diffidence in this, they are really judging for themselves, in a matter that requires greater qualifications, than learning religion from the word of God itself. For is not *the choice* of such men and books, an act of their judgment? And who taught such ignorant persons, *as they reckon themselves to be*, to judge so precisely in so many things, where there was such danger of being mistaken, and yet not to judge of the facts and statements delivered *for their belief and practice*, by the unerring wisdom of God. That the learned and professed teachers of religion have differed so much about these things; is rather a strong reason why we should search the scriptures without any prepossessions, and be thankful that we are directed to examine and judge for ourselves, from a source, which is able to make all wise unto salvation, who really are willing as little children, to be taught, (through it,) by God himself.

Nor is it necessary for us to be skilful logicians to know what the word of God requires us to believe, or bids us to do. Though we may not be able to determine the merits of learned and intricate arguments, any believer, may take the conclusion or the sentiment itself—(these reasonings are intended to produce, and to support,) and bring them into contact with the “law and the Testimony,” and who would not at once be snocked to make many of them, as it were, part and parcel of the word of God?

But besides a general discrepancy which is apparent between, the Bible teaching, and the opinions of men. Human speculations possess some distinct features, by which they may readily be distinguished from the truth itself.

In the 1st. place—They always add to, or take from, or more or less *make void*, what the Bible literally reveals on the subject.

2d. They are generally deduced, *only*, from texts of a figurative, or more obscure character; the assumed interpretation given to these, being made a gloss to explain which is plain and literal.

3d. Consequently, they cannot be defined, or expressed in the literal terms which the Bible uses, or “in the words which the Holy Spirit teacheth.”

4th. Though they should be admitted, they do no good, and discussed, they only produce pernicious consequences—they are scripturally to be avoided as “Foolish and untaught questions knowing that they do gender strife.”

To instance the variety of speculations which exist, and to illustrate, how truly they all bear the marks of fallibility above laid down, would be an endless task. Let it suffice to contrast some popular opinions respecting religious truth, with some explicit declaration of the Bible, on their respective subjects, and mark the discordance.

RELIGIOUS SPECULATIONS.

“ALL MEN will be finally saved and have eternal life.”

The Son of God was *only* a perfect man.

Christ did not die for the sins of the whole world, but **ONLY** for the elect.

God hath only loved and fore-ordained a part of the world to be saved, and has left the rest without a Saviour, in their bankrupt circumstances to perish.

Believers were elect, before they believed, and were children of God, by His sovereign decree, (irrespective of their faith in Christ,) before the foundation of the world.

The word of God is a dead letter to sinners in their unconverted state.

Man has naturally no power to believe the testimony of God.

THE WORD OF GOD.

“All that are in their graves, shall come forth, they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.”

“He that believeth not the Son shall *not* see life; but the wrath of God *abideth* on him.”

“In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, *and the word was God.*”

“And the word was *made flesh*, and dwelt among us.”

“God manifest in flesh.”

“He is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours **ONLY**, but also for the sins of the **WHOLE WORLD.**”

“God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten son, that **WHOSOEVER** believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

“And the Spirit, and the Bride say, come, and let him that heareth say come, and let him that is athirst come, **AND WHOSOEVER WILL LET HIM TAKE THE WATERS OF LIFE FREELY.**”

“Ye are all the children of God **BY FAITH** in Christ Jesus.”

“Were *by nature* the children of wrath, **EVEN AS OTHERS.**”

“The word of God is quick and powerful.” “liveth and abideth forever.” “my words they are spirit and they are life.”

“Now when they heard this, they were pricked to the heart.”

“These are written that *ye might believe*, that Jesus is the Son of God, and believing have life through his name.

Faith is a divine principle wrought in the heart.

Faith comes by special spiritual influences, either previous to, or accompanying the word, &c. &c.

The Spirit is given to an unbeliever, *before*, he believes and obeys the Gospel; *unto faith*.

"It is by the influence of the Holy Spirit *ALONE*, that men are regenerated and turned unto God."

"Unless the heart is first changed by some *higher influence* the *truth of itself* cannot produce love to God."

"This doctrine effectually excludes boasting."

"The light of truth so far from extinguishing the flame of our rebellion is only *oil cast upon the fire*. The *Clearer* views unawakened sinners have of the

"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence (or conviction) of things not seen."

"Faith comes by hearing the word of God."

"The Bereans were more noble than those in Thessalonica in that they searched the word with all readiness of mind, day and night. *THEREFORE MANY OF THEM BELIEVED.*"

"Whom the world cannot receive." "The Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that OBEY him."

"Repent and be baptized every one of you," "and ye SHALL receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."

"AFTER THAT YE BELIEVED ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise."

"That we might receive the promise of the Spirit, *THROUGH FAITH.*"

"Of his own will begat he us *WITH THE WORD OF TRUTH.*"

"Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible *BY THE WORD OF GOD*, which liveth and abideth forever." "And this is the word which by the Gospel is preached unto you."

"I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it is the *POWER OF GOD* unto salvation, to every one that believeth."

"Where is boasting then? It is excluded, *By what law?* of works? *no;* *BUT BY THE LAW OF FAITH.*"

"The law of the Lord is perfect, *CONVERTING THE SOUL*: The testimony of the Lord is sure, *MAKING WISE* the simple, The statutes of the Lord are

truth, the more this ardour is enflamed."

Baptism is NOT essential—is NOT for the remission of sins.

"Men are justified by faith ALONE."

"Christ has not prescribed any particular form of government for the Church," "had there been but one denomination, it seems highly probable, that in such a case, the whole Church would have been a Dead Sea."

It is expedient for Christian Ministers to be distinguished by titles, and honours, as,

His Holiness,
His Grace,
The Reverend,
The Fathers, &c. &c.

right REJOICING THE HEART :
The commandment of the Lord is pure ENLIGHTENING the eye."

"He that believeth AND IS BAPTIZED shall be saved."

"Repent and be baptized every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins."

"Except a man be BORN OF WATER, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God."

"Faith if it hath not works, is dead, BEING ALONE."

"Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, AND NOT BY FAITH ONLY."

"Neither pray I for these (Apostles) alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; that they all may be one."

"Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, THAT YE ALL SPEAK THE SAME THING and that there be NO DIVISIONS AMONG YOU, but that ye be PERFECTLY JOINED TOGETHER in the SAME MIND and in the SAME JUDGMENT."

"Timotheous," "shall bring you into remembrance of my ways which be in Christ, AS I TEACH EVERY WHERE IN EVERY CHURCH."

"Holy and Reverend is His name."

"BUT BE YE NOT CALLED Rabbi; for one is your master even Christ, AND ALL YE ARE BRETHERN."

"And call no man your father upon the earth, for one is your father, which is in Heaven; neither be ye called masters, for one is your master, Christ."

It is expedient to have only one Pastor, or Elder to one Church; or, as is more often the case, several Churches under the care of one preacher.

It is not expedient for churches to observe all the ordinances of Christ, except an ordained minister be present to administer them.

It is not expedient, on the Lord's day, that the brethren SHOULD EXHORT.

It is not expedient, to come together to break bread, on every first day of the week.

To reject these popular views, is considered as a rejection of Divine Truth.

"By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. For this is the love of God that ye keep his commandments—and his commandments are not grievous."

"And when they had ordained them ELDERS in EVERY CHURCH, they commended them to the Lord."

"For this cause I left thee in Crete, that thou shouldst set in order the things that are wanting; and ordain Elders in every city, as I had appointed thee."

"And from Melitus he sent to Ephesus and called the ELDERS of the Church."

"To all the saints which are at Phillippi with the BISHOPS and DEACONS."

"Now I praise ye BRETHREN that ye remember me in all things and keep the ordinances as I delivered them TO YOU."

"Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is; but EXHORTING ONE ANOTHER."

"Let us wait on our ministry: or he that teacheth, on teaching: OR HE THAT EXHORTETH, ON EXHORTATION."

"Wherefore comfort yourselves together, and EDIFY ONE ANOTHER even as also ye do."

"They continued stedfastly in the Apostles doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in Prayer."

"And upon the first day of the week when the Disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them."

"Ye reject the commandments of God, that ye may keep your own traditions."

EXTRACTS FROM "UNIVERSAL REDEMPTION,"

BY THE REV. RICHARD WATSON.

Of a divine election, a choosing and separating from others, we have three kinds mentioned in the Scriptures.

The FIRST is the election of individuals to perform some particular and special service. Cyrus was "elected" to rebuild the temple; the twelve Apostles were "chosen," elected, to their office by Christ; St. Paul was a "chosen," or elected, "vessel," to be the Apostle of the Gentiles. * * With respect to others, the Apostles, were "elected" to preach the Gospel in order to the salvation of all to whom they had access.

The SECOND kind of election which we find in Scripture, is the election of nations, or bodies of people, to eminent religious privileges, and in order to accomplish, by their superior illumination, the merciful purposes of God, in benefitting other nations, or bodies of people. Thus the descendants of Abraham, the Jews, were *chosen* to receive special revelations of truth; and to be "the people of God," to be his visible church, and publicly to observe and uphold his worship. "The Lord thy God hath *chosen* thee to be a peculiar people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth." * *

To understand the nature of this "election," as applied sometimes to particular bodies of Christians, as when St. Peter says, "The church which is at Babylon, *elected together* with you," and sometimes to the whole body of believers every where; and also the reason of the frequent use of the term *election*, and of the occurrence of allusions to the fact; it is to be remembered, that a great religious revolution, so to speak, had occurred in the age of the Apostles; with the full import of which we cannot, without calling in the aid of a little reflection, be adequately impressed. This was no other than the abrogation of the CHURCH-STATE of the Jews, which had continued for so many ages. They had been the only visibly acknowledged people of God in all the nations of the earth; for, whatever pious people might have existed in other nations, they were not, in the sight of men, and collectively, acknowledged as "the people of Jehovah." * * There was then a NEW ELECTION of a NEW PEOPLE of God, to be composed of Jews, not by virtue of their NATURAL DESCENT, but through their faith in Christ, and of Gentiles of all nations, also believing, and put, as believers, on an equal ground with the believing Jews. * * *

It was not the calling and the electing of one nation in particular to succeed the Jews but it was the calling and the electing of believers in all nations, wherever the Gospel should be preached, to be in reality, what the Jews had been but typically,

and, therefore, in an inferior degree, the visible church of God "his people," under Christ "the Head." * *

The THIRD kind of election is personal election ; or the election of individuals to be the children of God, and the heirs of eternal life. * * * *

The individuals properly called "the elect" are they who have been made partakers of the grace and saving efficacy of the Gospel. "Many," says our Lord, "are called, but few chosen."

What true personal election is, we shall find explained in two clear passages of Scripture. It is explained negatively by our Lord, where he says to his disciples, "I have chosen you out of the world : " it is explained positively by St. Peter, when he addresses his first Epistle to the "elect, according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus." To be elected, therefore, is to be separated from "the world," and to be sanctified by the Spirit, and by the blood of Christ.

It follows, then, not only that election is an act of God done in time ; but also that it is subsequent to the administration of the means of salvation. The "calling" goes before the "election ;" the publication of the "doctrine of the Spirit," and the atonement, called by Peter "the sprinkling of the blood of Christ," before that of "sanctification" through which they become 'the elect' of God. * * * *

We have no such doctrine in Scripture as the election of individuals *unto* faith ; and it is inconsistent with several passages which expressly speak of personal election.

"Many are called, and few chosen." In this passage we must understand, that the many who are called, are called to believe and obey the Gospel, or the calling means nothing ; in other words, they are not called. * * And if the election be, as is plain from the passage, consequent upon the calling, then it can mean nothing else but the choosing of those "few" of the "many," who, being obedient to the "calling," had previously believed and obeyed, into the true church and family of God, which is the proper and direct object of personal election. * *

Let this notion of personal election *unto* faith, be tested also by another passage, in which, like the former, personal election is spoken of : "I have chosen you out of the world." (John xv. 19.) * * Here the personal electing act is a choosing out of the world, a choosing, manifestly, into the number of Christ's disciples, which no man is capable of without a previous faith ; for the very act of becoming Christ's disciple was a confession of faith in him.

A third passage, in which election is spoken of as personal, is 1 Pet i. 2. Here obedience is not the end of election, but of the sanctification of the Spirit ; and both are joined "with the

sprinkling of the blood of Jesus," (which, in all cases, is apprehended by faith,) as the *media* through which our election is effected,—“elect *through* sanctification of the Spirit,” &c. These cannot, therefore, be the *ends* of our personal election; for if we are elected “*through*” that sanctification of the Spirit which produces obedience, we are not elected, being unsanctified and disobedient, in order to be sanctified by the Spirit that we may obey.

Very similar to the passage just explained is, 2 Thessalonians ii. 13, 14: “But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren, because God hath from the beginning chosen you unto salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth; whereunto he called you by our Gospel to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.” * * But the calling of the members of this church is not represented by the Apostle as the *effect* of their having been chosen, but, on the contrary, their election is spoken of as the effect of “the sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth;” and these, as the effects of the calling of the Thessalonians by the Gospel, “whereunto,” to which sanctification and faith, “he called you by our Gospel.”

There are scarcely any other passages in the New Testament which speak expressly of personal election; but there is another class of texts in which the term “election” occurs, which refers to believers, not distributively, but collectively; not personally, but as a body, either existing as particular churches, or as the universal church. * * Thus the Synod of Dort quotes, as the leading proof of its doctrine of personal election, Ephes. i. 4—6: “According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love; having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ, to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved.” * * If, indeed, the election spoken of in this passage were personal election, the Calvinistic doctrine would not follow from it; because it would admit of being questioned, whether the choosing in Christ before the foundation of the world, here mentioned, was a choice of certain persons, as *men* merely, or as *believing men*; the latter of which is surely the most rational. * * But, according to the Calvinists, this election was made *arbitrarily*, that is, without any reason but that God would have it so; and to this sense they bend the clause in the passage under consideration, “according to the *good pleasure* of his will.” This phrase has, however, no such arbitrary sense. “The good pleasure of his will” means the benevolent and full acquiescence of the will of God with a wise and gracious act; and, accordingly, in verse 11, the phrase is varied, “according to the COUNSEL of his own will,”

* * this has the advantage of being entirely consistent with his own published and express decree: "He that believeth shall be saved; and he that believeth not shall be damned." *This revealed and promulgated decree, we must believe, was according to God's eternal purpose: and if from eternity he determined that believers, and only believers, in Christ, among the fallen race, should be saved, the conclusion is inevitable, that those whom he chose in Christ "before the foundation of the world" were considered, not as men merely, * * but as believing men; which harmonizes the doctrine of election with the other doctrines of Scripture instead of placing it, as in the Calvinistic scheme, in opposition to them. For the choice not being of certain men, as such, but of all persons believing, and all men to whom the Gospel is preached being called to believe, every one may place himself in the number of persons so elected. * **

But though this argument might be very successfully urged against those who interpret the passage above quoted of personal election, the context bears unequivocal proofs, that it is not of an election, or predestination of this kind of which the Apostles speak; but of the election of believing Jews and Gentiles into the church of God; in other words, of the eternal purpose of God, upon the publication of the Gospel, to constitute his visible church no longer upon the ground of natural descent from Abraham, but upon the foundation of faith in Christ. For upon no other hypothesis can that distinction which the Apostle makes between the Jews who first believed, and the Gentile Ephesians who afterward believed, be at all explained. * * "In whom also ye trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth;" the preaching of which truth to them as Gentiles, by the Apostle and his coadjutors, was, in consequence of God "having made known unto them the mystery of his will, that in his dispensation of the fulness of times he might *gather together in one* all things in Christ;" which, in the next chapter,—(a manifest continuance of the same head of discourse,)—is explained to mean the calling in of the Gentiles with the believing Jews, reconciling "both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby." The same subject he pursues in the third chapter, representing this union of believing Jews and Gentiles in one church as the revelation of the mystery which had been hid "from the beginning of the world;" but was now "manifested according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Verses 8—11.) Here, then, we have the true meaning of the election, and predestination of the Ephesians spoken of in the opening of the Epistle: it was their election, as Gentiles, to be, along with the believing Jews, the church of God, his acknowledged people on earth; which election was according to God's "eternal purpose," to change the constitution of his church; to establish it on the

ground of faith in Christ ; and thus to extend it into all nations.

* * * * *

The phrases, to be "IN Christ," and to be "CHRIST'S," are, doubtless, equivalent to the personal election of believers ; and these, and similar modes of expression, are constantly occurring in the New Testament ; but no man is ever represented as "Christ's" or as "in Christ," by an eternal election *unto* faith ; but, on the contrary, as entering into that relation which is termed being "IN Christ," or being "Christ's," through personal faith alone. The Scripture knows no such distinction as *elect unbelievers* and *elect believers* ; but all unbelievers are represented as "of the world ;" under "condemnation," so that "the wrath of God abideth upon them ;" and as liable to eternal ruin. But if Calvinistic election be true, then there are elect unbelievers ; and with respect to these, the doctrine of Scripture is contradicted ; for they are not "of the world," though in a state of unbelief, since God from eternity "chose them out of the world ;" they are not under condemnation, "but were justified from eternity ;" "the wrath of God does not abide upon them," for they are objects of an unchangeable love which has decreed their salvation ; subject to no conditions whatever ; and therefore no state of unbelief can make them objects of wrath, as no condition of faith can make them objects of a love which was moved by no such consideration. Nor are they liable to ruin. They never were, nor can be, liable to it ; the very threats of God are without meaning as to them ; and their consciousness of guilt and danger under the awakenings of the Spirit are deceptive and unreal ; contradicting the work of the Spirit in the heart of man, as THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH. For if he "convinces them of sin," he convinces them of danger ; but they are, *in fact*, in no danger ; and the monstrous conclusion follows inevitably, that the Spirit is employed in exciting fears which have no foundation.

* * * * *

The terms, "to call," "called," and "calling," very frequently occur in the New Testament, and especially in the Epistles. Sometimes "to call" signifies to invite to the blessings of the Gospel, to offer salvation through Christ, either by God himself, or, under his appointment, by his servants ; and in the parable of the marriage of the King's son, Matt. xxii. 1-14, (which appears to have given rise to many instances of the use of this term in the Epistles,) we have three descriptions of "called" or invited persons. First, the disobedient, who would not come in at the call ; but made light of it. Second, the class of persons represented by the man who, when the King came in to see his guests, had not on the wedding garment ; and with respect to whom our Lord makes the general remark, "For many are called, but few are chosen." The persons thus represented by this individual culprit were not only "called," but actually came

into the company. Third, the approved guest ; those who were both called and chosen. * * It is to this offer of saivation by the Gospel, this invitation to spiritual and eternal benefits, that St. Peter appears to refer, when he says, " For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall CALL:" (Acts ii. 39.) * *

These views will abundantly explain the various passages in which the term " calling" occurs in the Epistles : " Even us whom he hath CALLED; not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles ;" (Rom. ix. 24 ;) that is, whom he hath made members of his church through faith. * * Who hath saved us, and CALLED us with a holy calling ; not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began ; but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ." (2 Tim. i. 9, 10.) On which passage we may remark, that the object of the " calling," and the " purpose" mentioned in it, must of necessity be interpreted to mean the establishment of the church on the principle of faith ; and not, as formerly, on natural descent. For *personal election*, and a purpose of *effectual personal calling*, could not have been hidden till manifested by the appearing of Christ ; since every instance of true conversion to God in any age prior to the appearing of Christ, would be as much a manifestation of eternal election, and an instance of personal effectual calling, according to the Calvinistic scheme, as it was after the appearance of Christ. The Apostle is speaking of a purpose of God, which was kept *secret* till revealed by the Christian system ; and, from various other parallel passages, we learn that this secret, this " mystery," as he often calls it, was the union of the Jews and Gentiles ; in " one body," or church, by faith. * * *

John vi. 37 : " All that the Father giveth me shall come to me ; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."

1 The first objection to the view usually taken by Calvinists of this text, is, that, in the case of the perverse Jews, with whom the discourse of Christ was held, it places the reason of their not " coming" to Christ, in their not having been " given" to him by the Father ; whereas our Lord, on the contrary, places it in themselves, and shows that he considered their case to be in their own hands, by his inviting them to come to him, and reproving them because they would not come. " Ye have not his word" (The word of the Father) " abiding in you ; for whom he hath sent, him ye believe not." (John v. 38.) " And ye will not come to me that ye may have life." (Verse 40.) " How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another ?" (Verse 44.) " For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me ; for he wrote of me." (Verse 46.) Now these statements cannot stand together ; for if the true reason why the perverse Jews did not believe in our Lord was, that they had not

been given to him of the Father, then it lay not *in themselves* : but if the reason was, that "his word did not abide in them ;" that they "*would not come to him ;*" that they sought worldly "honour," finally, that they believed not Moses's writings ; then it is altogether contradictory to these declarations, to place it in an *act of God* ; to which it is not attributed in any part of the discourse.

2. To be "*given*" by the Father to Christ, is a phrase abundantly explained in the context, which this class of interpreters generally overlook.

It had a special application to those pious Jews who "waited for redemption at Jerusalem ;" those who read and *believed* the writings of Moses, (a general term, it would seem, for the Old Testament Scriptures,) and who were thus prepared, by more spiritual views than the rest, though they were not unmixed with obscurity, to receive Christ as the Messiah. Of this description were Peter, Andrew, Philip, Nathanael, Lazarus and his sisters, and many others. Philip says to Nathanael, "We have found him of whom *Moses in the Law and the Prophets* did write : " and Nathanael was manifestly a pious Jew ; for our Lord said of him, "Behold an *Israelite indeed*, in whom is no *guile*." The light which such honest inquirers into the meaning of the Scriptures, obtained, as to the import of their testimony concerning the Messiah, and the character and claims of Jesus, is expressly attributed to the teaching and revelation of "the Father." So, after Peter's confession, our Lord exclaimed, "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar Jonah ; for *flesh and blood* hath not revealed it unto thee, but *my Father* which is in heaven." This teaching, and its influence upon the mind, are, in John vi. 44, called the "*drawing*" of the Father : "No man can come to me, except the Father *draw* him : " for, that "*to draw*," and "*to teach*," mean the same thing, is evident, since our Lord immediately adds, "It is written in the Prophets, And they shall be all *taught of God* ; " and then subjoins this exegetical observation : "Every man, therefore, that hath *heard*, and hath *learned of the Father*, cometh to me." Those who truly "*believed*" Moses's words, then, were under the Father's illuminating influence, "*heard and learned of the Father* ; " were "*drawn*" of the Father ; and so, by the Father, were "*given to Christ*," as his disciples, to be more fully taught the mysteries of his religion, and to be made the partakers of its saving benefits. * * All in this view is natural, explicit, and supported by the context ; all in the Calvinistic interpretation appears forced, obscure, and inapplicable to the whole tenor of the discourse. For to what end of edification, of any kind, were the Jews told, that none but a certain number, elected from eternity, and given to him by the Father before the world was, should come to him ; and that they to whom he was then speaking were

not of that number ? But the coherence of the discourse is manifest, when, in these sermons of our Lord, they were told that their not coming to Christ was the proof of their unbelief in Moses's writings ; that they were not taught of God ; that they had neither " heard nor learned of the Father," whom they yet professed to worship and seek ; and that, as the hinderance to their coming to Christ was in the state of their hearts, it was remediable by a diligent and honest search of the Scriptures, and by listening to the teachings of God. To this very class of Jews our Lord, in this same discourse, says, " Search the Scriptures : " but to what end were they to do this, if, in the Calvinistic sense, they were not given to him of the father ? The text in question, then, thus opened by a reference to the whole discourse, is of obvious meaning : " All that the Father giveth me " by this preparing teaching, " shall or will come to me ; " (for it is simply the future tense of the indicative mood which is used ; and no notion of irresistible influence is conveyed) " and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out."

* * * * *

John x. 26 : " But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you." * * * *

Men are called the sheep of Christ by our Lord himself, not with reference to any supposed transaction between the Father, and the Son in eternity, which is never even hinted at, but because of their *qualities* and *acts*. " My sheep *hear* my voice, and I know them ; and they follow me." " A stranger will they not *follow*." Why then did not the Jews believe ? Because they had not the qualities of Christ's sheep : they were neither discriminating as to the voice of the shepherd, nor obedient to it. The usual Calvinistic interpretation brings in our Lord, in this instance, as teaching the Jews that the reason why they did not believe on him was, that they *could* not believe. * * This was not likely to be very edifying to them. But the words of our Lord are manifestly words of reproof, grounded, not upon acts of God, but upon acts of their own ; and they are paralleled to the passages, " If God were your Father, ye would love me ; " (chap. viii. 42 ;) " Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice ; " (xviii. 37 ;) " How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another ? " (v. 44.) * * * *

2 Timothy i. 9 : " Who hath saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." * * * *

" The purpose and grace," or gracious purpose, " which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began," is represented as having been " *hid* in past ages ; for the Apostle immediately adds, " But is *now* made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ." It cannot be the personal election of believers, therefore,

of which the Apostle here speaks; because it was saying nothing, to declare that the divine purpose to elect them was not manifest in former ages; but was reserved to the appearing of Christ. Whatever degree of manifestation, God's purpose of personal election, as to individuals, receives, even the Calvinists acknowledge, that it is made obvious, only, by the personal moral changes which take place in them through their effectual calling," faith, and regeneration. Till the individual, therefore, comes into being, God's purpose to elect him cannot be manifested; and those who were so elected, but did not live till Christ appeared, could not have their election manifested before he appeared. Again: if personal election be intended in the text, and calling and conversion are the proofs of personal election, then it is not true that the election of individuals to eternal life was kept hid until the appearing of Christ; for every true conversion, in any former age, was as much a manifestation of personal election, that is, of the peculiar favour and "distinguishing grace" of God, as it is under the Gospel. A parallel passage in the Epistle to the Eph. (iii. 4-6,) will, however, explain that before us: "Whereby, when ye read ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ, which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is *now* revealed unto the holy Apostles and Prophets by the Spirit; that *the Gentiles should be fellow-heirs*, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the Gospel:" and in verse 11, this is called, in exact conformity to the phrase used in the Epistle to Timothy, "*the eternal purpose* which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." The "purpose," or "gracious purpose," mentioned in both places, as formerly hidden, but "*now manifested*," was therefore the purpose to form one universal church of believing Jews and Gentiles; and in the text before us, the Apostle, speaking in the name of all his fellow-Christians, whether Jews or Gentiles, says that they were saved and called according to that previous purpose and plan,—"*Who hath saved us, and called us*," &c. The reason why the Apostle Paul so often refers to "*this eternal purpose*" of God, is to justify and confirm his own ministry as a Teacher of the Gentiles, and an assertor of their equal spiritual rights with the Jews; and that this subject was present to his mind when he wrote this passage, and not an eternal personal election, is manifest from verse 11, which is a part of the same paragraph: "*Whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an Apostle and a Teacher of the Gentiles.*" * * *

The purpose of God is introduced by the Apostle as his authority for making to "*the Gentiles*" the offer of salvation; and as a motive to induce Timothy to prosecute the same glorious work, after his decease. This is obviously the scope of the whole chapter.

Acts xiii. 48: "*And as many as were ordained to eternal life believed.*" * * * *

But if the only reason why the Gentiles believed was, that they were "ordained," in the sense of personal predestination, to "eternal life;" then the reason why the Jews believed not was the want of such a predestinating act of God, and not, as it is affirmed, an act of their own,—the PUTTING IT AWAY from them.

2. This interpretation supposes that all the *elect* Gentiles at Antioch believed at that time; and that no more, at least of full age, remained to believe. * * * "As many as were ordained to eternal life believed;" so that such commentators must take this inconvenient circumstance along with their interpretation, that all the elect in the city of Antioch were, at that moment, brought into Christ's church. * * * *

4. But we may finally observe, that, in no place in the New Testament in which the same word occurs, is it ever employed to convey the meaning of destiny or predestination; a consideration which is fatal to the argument which has been drawn from it. The following are the only instances of its occurrence:—"Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them." (Matt. xxviii. 16.) Here the word means *signified* or *agreed upon* beforehand, and certainly conveys no idea of destiny. "For I also am a man set under authority." (Luke vii. 8.) Here the word means "placed, or disposed." "They determined that Paul and Barnabas should go up to Jerusalem." (Acts xv. 2.) Here it signifies mutual agreement and decision. "Arise, and go into Damascus; and there it shall be told thee of all things which are appointed for thee to do." (Acts xxii. 10.) Here it means committed to, or appointed in the way of injunction; but no idea of *destiny* is conveyed. "And when they had appointed him a day;" (Acts xxviii. 23;) when they had "fixed upon" a day by mutual agreement; for St. Paul was not under the command or control of the visitors who came to him to hear his doctrine. "The powers that be are ordained of God;" (Rom. xiii. 1;) clearly signifying "constituted and ordered." "They have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints." (1 Cor. xvi. 15.) Here it can mean nothing else but "applied, devoted themselves to." Thus the word never takes the sense of predestination; but, on the contrary, when St. Luke wishes to convey that notion, he combines it with a preposition, and uses a compound verb:—"And hath determined the times before appointed." * * * *

The word is very variously applied. The prevalent idea is that of settling, ordering, and resolving; and the meaning of the text is, that as many as were fixed and resolved upon eternal life, as many as were careful about, and determined on, salvation, believed. For that the historian is speaking of the candid and serious part of the hearers of the Apostles, in opposition to the blaspheming Jews, that is, of those Gentiles "who when they

heard this, were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord," is evident from the context. The persons who then believed, appear to have been under a previous preparation for receiving the Gospel; and were probably religious proselytes associating with the Jews.

Luke x. 20: "But rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven." The inference from this text is, that there is a register of all the elect in the "book of life," and that their number, according to the doctrine of the Synod of Dort, is fixed and determinate. Our Calvinistic friends forget, however, that names may be "blotted out of the book of life;" and so the theory falls:—"And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall *take away* his part out of the book of life." * * *

1 Cor. iv. 7: "For who maketh thee to differ from another?"

The context shows that the Apostle was here endeavouring to repress that ostentation which had arisen among many persons in the church of Corinth, on account of their spiritual gifts and endowments. This he does by referring those gifts to God, as the sole giver,—“For who maketh thee to *differ*?” or, Who confers *superiority* upon thee? as the sense obviously is; “and what hast thou that thou didst not receive?” * * *

It is a question which the Apostle asks with no reference to a difference in a religious state, but only with respect to gifts and endowments. * * *

Calvin has at large opened his sentiments on election, in the Third Book of his Institutes: (1) “Predestination we call the eternal decree of God; by which he hath determined in himself what he would have to become of every individual of mankind. For they are not all created with similar destiny; but eternal life is fore-ordained for some, and eternal damnation for others. Every man therefore, being *created for one or other of these ends*, we say, he is predestinated, either to life, or to death.” * * *

The main characteristic of all these theories, from the first to the last, from the highest to the lowest, is, that a part of mankind are shut out from the mercies of God, on some ground irrespective of their refusal of a sincere offer to them of salvation through Christ, made with a communicated power of embracing it. * * *

That it had its source in a course of induction from the sacred Scriptures, though erroneous, is not probable; for, if it had been left to that test, it is pretty certain that it would not have maintained itself. It appears rather to have arisen from metaphysical hypotheses and school subtilities, to which the sense of Scripture has been accommodated, often very violently; and by subtilities of this kind, it has, at all times, been chiefly supported.

POWER OF DIVINE MEANS.

The following incontrovertible facts have much meaning, and disprove the theories opposed to us :—

1. In the vegetable kingdom God *creates* all that has vegetable life by a *POWER* which *never* operates out of an established channel. Nature cannot produce an oak without an acorn, the soil, and the influences of atmospheric air, solar rays, and moisture. Thorns bear not grapes, thistles yield not figs, nor vines olive berries, says James ; and so says our observation. God has not, in six thousand years, or since the first creation, exerted any power to produce any vegetable product but in an authenticated and established channel. This is the law of God's creative power. We speak not of miracles, but of the established order of things in vegetable life and being.

2. In the animal kingdom God *creates* all that has *ANIMAL LIFE* by a *POWER* which never operates out of an established channel. Wolves bring not forth lambs, nor lions kids. From the egg of the serpent there is not hatched a dove, nor are the feathers of the ostrich plucked from the wings of a raven. His power to create all these operates only in immutable channels, subject to undeviating laws.

3. In the spiritual kingdom God *creates* all that has *SPIRITUAL LIFE* by a *POWER* which never operates out of an established channel. Men will sooner see with their fingers and hear with their hands, than man or woman have one spiritual idea without the written word. Hence where this vision is not, the people sit in darkness and dwell in the region and shadow of moral death. What does the native Hindoo, the Japanese, the Tartar, or the Colombo Indian know of the sacrifice of Jesus or the remission of sins through the blood of the Son of God ? As soon as we discover a human being possessed of any *spiritual idea*, without oral, or written tradition, we will find apples without trees, lambs without dams, and infants without mothers. It is God creates us anew in Christ Jesus—it is the power of God that gives us spiritual life—and it is the power of God which gives us a kid, a dove, a fig, and an apple ; but this power is subject to laws, and operates in channels which are unchangeable. And until men can explain how the bones of a child are formed in the womb, how the plumes of the peacock are developed from the egg, and how the orange emanates from the germ of a shrub, they will not be able to explain the operation of the Spirit of God, which gives spiritual life to the soul dead in trespasses and sins. Our wisdom is not to speculate, and worry and devour each other because of our discordant theories of vegetable, animal, and spiritual life ; but our wisdom is to sow wheat in the earth, to plant corn in the soil, to look for lambs from the fold, grapes from the vine, and *spiritual ideas* from the revelation of God.

Did not these analogies exist, our Saviour would not have borrowed his illustrations from parents and children, from quickening and being born, from the plant and the vine, from the earth and its fruits, from sowing and reaping, from bread and water, from life and death, from nature and society.

But here is the folly of speculators, they tell us that they cannot explain how any one is born of the Spirit, and yet condemn others for not receiving and teaching their theory! Reader, remember this.

BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION.

An important means of judging of the *sense* of words—is an examination of the *Context*.

Many of the controversies, which have been carried on in the Christian Church, have arisen in consequence of their authors having overlooked this rule, which is of the very broadest extent in Biblical Interpretation.—Every Theological doctrine which has been broached, however absurd or monstrous its character, has been surrounded and supported by a multiplicity of *texts*—which having been forcibly absconded from their respective contexts, were pressed into a service for which they were never designed. Mr. Locke has somewhere said, that “If the Holy Scriptures were but laid before the eyes of Christians, in their due connection and consistency, it would not then be so easy to snatch out a few words, as if they were separated from the rest, to serve a purpose to which they do not at all belong, and with which they have nothing to do. But, as the matter now stands, he that has a mind to it, may, at a cheap rate, be a notable champion for the truth—that is, for the doctrines of the sect that chance, or interest has cast him into.—He need but be furnished with verses of sacred Scripture, containing words and expressions that are but flexible (as all general, obscure and doubtful ones are,) and his system, that has appropriated them to the orthodoxy of his Church, (of whatever denomination it may be,) makes them immediately strong and irrefragable arguments for his opinion. This is the benefit of loose sentences, and Scripture crumbled into verses, which quickly turn into independent aphorism. But, if the quotation in the verse produced, were considered as a part of a continued, coherent discourse—and so its sense were *limited* by the tenour of the context, most of these formidable and warm disputants would be quite stripped of those, which they doubt not now to call Spiritual weapons, and they would often have nothing to say, that would not shew their weakness and manifestly fly in their faces.”

EXTRACTS FROM "CHRISTIANITY RESTORED."

REGENERATION OF THE CHURCHES.

* * * * *

One would imagine, from the voluminous arguments, debates and sermons upon the theory of regeneration, that a sound theory was essential to salvation : that it must be preached in every sermon, in order to regenerate the hearers. Nothing can be more preposterous. Who can think that any theory of the resurrection or regeneration of the body, can effect the body in the grave ! As little can any *theory* affect the unregenerate, or those dead in trespasses and in sins. A sermon upon generation, or upon natural birth, would be as efficacious upon those unborn, in bringing them into this life, as a sermon upon moral or physical regeneration. This explains the fact, that in all the accounts of apostolical preaching to Jew and Gentile—in all the extracts of their sermons and speeches found in the New Testament, the subject of regeneration is not once mentioned. It is, in all the historic books of the New Testament, but once propounded, but once named ; and that only in a private conference with a Jewish Senator, on the affairs of Christ's kingdom. No theory understood or believed by the unregenerate ; no theory proposed to them for their acceptance, can avail any thing to their regeneration. We might as reasonably deliver a theory of digestion to a dyspeptic, to cure his stomach—or a theory upon vegetation to a scion, to hasten its growth, as to preach any view of regeneration to a sinner, to make him a Christian. * * * * *

The use of this theory, if it have any, is, as a guide to those who are labouring publicly or privately for the regeneration of sinners. If we have assigned a proper place to *facts, testimony, faith, feeling, action, the bath of regeneration, the renewing of the Holy Spirit, and a new life*, the course is fairly marked out. We are to present the great facts, to declare the whole testimony of God to sinners, in order to their conversion or regeneration. Like Paul, in his account of his labors in Corinth, we must go out, not in the strength of human philosophy, "but declaring the testimony of God," and laying before our hearers, "the wonderful works of God." * * * * *

I speak not of the regeneration of any sectarian establishment. They are built upon another foundation—upon the foundation of decrees of councils, creeds, formularies, or acts of Parliament. But we speak of those societies that professedly build upon the foundation of Apostles and Prophets, without any human bond of union, or rule of life—our brethren of the reformation, or regeneration, now in process.

Should any one imagine that the state of things to which we

have attained, is the sole, or ultimate object of our aspirations, or our efforts, he would do us the greatest injury. Societies, indeed, may be found amongst us, far in advance of others, in their progress towards the ancient order of things ; but we know of none that has fully attained to that model. It is, however, most acceptable to see so many societies formed, and forming, under the banners of reformation, with the determination to move onwards in conformity to the sacred oracles, till they stand perfect and complete in all the will of God.

Our opponents cannot, or will not, understand how any society can be in progress to a better order of things, than that under which they may have commenced their pilgrimage. Their sectarian policies were soon formed, and the limits of their reformation were soon fixed ; beyond which it soon became heretical to move. The founders of all new schisms, not only saw through a glass darkly, but their horizon was circumscribed with human traditions, that they only aimed at moving a few paces from the hive in which they were generated. A new creed was soon adopted, and then their stature was complete. They bounded from infancy to manhood in a few days, and decided, if any presumed to advance farther, they should be treated as those who had refused to move from the old hive. Hence it became as censurable to grow beyond a certain standard, as not to grow at all. This never was our proposition, and never can be our object. We have no new creed to form, no rules of discipline to adopt. We have taken the Living Oracles as our creed, our rules and measures of faith and practice ; and in this department, have no additions, alterations, nor amendments to propose. *But in coming up to this standard of knowledge, faith, and behaviour, we have something yet before us, to which we have not attained.*

That we may be distinctly understood on this subject, we shall speak particularly on the things wanting in our individual characters, and of the things wanting in our church order, to give to our meetings that interest and influence which they ought to exert on the brotherhood, and on society at large.

It will be understood, that our remarks on the things which are wanting in the disciples, are applicable not to every individual, but to the general mass. And first of all, there is wanting a more general and particular knowledge of the Holy Scriptures, than is possessed by the great majority of the disciples. There is, perhaps, wanted a taste or disposition for that private devotional reading of the oracles of God, which is so essential to a growth in that knowledge of God and of Jesus Christ, which constitutes the most striking attribute in christian character.

To read the scriptures for the sake of carrying out into practice all that we learn, and to read them for the sake of knowing what is written, are very different objects, and will produce very different results. Their influence on the temper and behaviour,

in the former case, will soon become manifest to all with whom we associate ; while, in the latter case, there is no visible improvement. David said that he “ hid the word of God in his heart,” or laid it up in his mind, “ that he might not sin against God ;” and that he had “ more understanding than all his teachers, because God’s testimonies were his meditation.” It will be admitted that the sacred writings of the Apostles and Evangelists of Jesus Christ, ought to be as precious and as delightful to the christian, as were the ancient oracles to the most pious Jew. Now as an example of what we mean by a private devotional reading and study of the oracles of Christ, we shall permit a Jew to tell his experience :—

“ The law of thy mouth is better to me than thousands of gold and silver. With my whole heart have I sought thee ; my soul breaketh for the longing that it has to thy judgments at all times. Thy testimonies are my delight and my counsellors.—Teach me, O Lord, the way of thy statutes, and I will keep it to the end. Give me understanding, and I shall keep thy law ; yes, I will observe it with my whole heart. Make me to go in the path of thy commandments, for in it do I delight. Thy statutes have been my songs in the house of my pilgrimage. At midnight I will rise to give thanks to thee, because of thy righteous judgments. O how I love thy law ; it is my meditation all the day ! How sweet are thy words to my taste ; sweeter than honey to my mouth ! Thy testimonies have I taken as a heritage forever, for they are the rejoicing of my heart. Great peace have they that love thy law,—nothing shall cause them to stumble. ’ * * * * *

In the second place, there is wanting amongst disciples, who are heads of families, more attention, much more effort, to bring up their children ‘ in the correction and instruction of the Lord.’ The children of all disciples should be taught the oracles of God from the first dawning of reason. The good seed should be sown in their hearts, before the strong seeds of vice can take root. *From a child* Timothy knew the Holy Scriptures, and they were able to make him wise to salvation, through the christian faith. How many more Timothies might we have, if we had a few more of the daughters of Lois, and a few more mothers like Eunice ! Most saints, in this generation, appear more zealous that their children should shine on earth, than in heaven—and that they may be rich here, at the hazard of eternal bankruptcy. They labor to make them rich and genteel, rather than pure and holy ; and spend more time in fashioning them to the foolish and wicked taste of *polished* society, than in teaching them in precept and example the word that is better than gold, and more precious than rubies. Well, they sow tares, and cannot reap wheat. * * * * *

Every christian family ought to be a nursery for God.

Their offspring should be trained for the skies. For such are the promises of God, such are the facts on record, and such is the experience of christians, that every parent who does his duty to his children, may expect to see them inherit the blessing. Their didactic labours, aided by their example and their constant prayers, will seldom or never fail of success in influencing their descendants to walk in their ways. The very command to bring up their children in the Lord implies its practicability. And both Testaments furnish us with all assurance that such labors will not be in vain. * *

When God gave a revelation to Jacob, and commanded a law to Israel, he gave it in charge that they should "teach it to their children, that they might put their trust in God, and might not be, like their fathers, a rebellious race." The Apostles of Christ have also taught the christians the same lesson. This is our guide, and not our own reasonings. Now let the disciples make this their business, morning, noon, and evening, and then we shall see its effects. * * *

And before any one says, I have found an exception to the proverb of Solomon, which says, "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it,"—let him show that this child was "trained up in the way he should go."

In the third place, there is wanting among many disciples, a stricter regard to relative duties—we mean, not only the dues which justice, truth, and moderation claim; but *all* relative duties. So long as christians live after the manner of men in the flesh, according to the fashion of this world, they must, like other men, contract debts which they cannot promptly pay, make covenants and bargains, give promises which they cannot fulfil, and stake pledges which they are unable to redeem. All this is wholly incompatible with our profession. Such were not the primitive disciples. Sceptics of every name, men of the world who have ever read the New Testament, know that such behaviour is utterly incompatible with the letter and spirit of Christianity. A christian's word or promise ought to be, and is, if Christ be honoured, as solemn and obligatory, as any bond. And as for breach of a bargain or covenant, even where it is greatly, or wholly to the disadvantage of the christian, it is not even to be thought of—"he changes not, though to his hurt he covenants." How much has the gospel lost of its influence, because of the faithlessness of its professors! * *

Were all the common (now-a days rather *uncommon*) virtues of justice, truth, fidelity, honesty, practised by all christians, how many mouths would be stopped, and how many new arguments in favor of Jesus Christ could all parties find! But even were these common virtues as general as the christian profession, there are the other finer virtues of benevolence, goodness,

mercy, sympathy, which belong to the profession, expressed in taking care of the sick, the orphan, the widow—in alleviating all the afflictions of our fellow-creatures. Add these virtues, or *graces*, as we sometimes call them, to the others, and then how irresistible the argument for the divine authenticity of the gospel !

* * * * *

In the last place, there is wanting a more elevated piety to bring up the christian character to the standard of primitive times. We want not fine speeches nor eloquent orations on the excellencies of christian piety and devotion. These are generally acknowledged. But we need to be roused from our supineness, from our wordly-mindedness, from our sinful conformities to an apostate generation, to the exhibition of that holiness in speech, in behaviour, without which no one shall see the Lord. What mean the numerous exhortations of the Apostles to watchfulness and prayer, if these are not essential to our devotion to God, and consecration to his service ?

If our affections are not placed on things above, we are unfit for the kingdom of glory. To see the folly of a profession of christianity without the power of godliness, we have only to put the question, How is that person fit for the enjoyment of God and Christ, whose heart is filled with the cares, anxieties, and concerns of this life—whose whole life is a life of labor and care for the body—a life of devotion to the objects of time and sense ? No man can serve God and Mammon. Where the treasure is, the heart must also be. Thither the affections turn their course. There is no room for the residence of the Spirit of God, in a mind devoted to the affairs of this life. The spirit of the policies of this world, and the Spirit of God, cannot dwell in the same heart. If Jesus, or his Apostles taught any one doctrine clearly, fully, and unequivocally, it is this doctrine, that “the cares of this world, the lusts of other things, and the deceitfulness of riches, stifle the word, and render it unfruitful.” * *

A few remarks on the things wanting in the order of Christian assemblies, to give to their public meetings that influence on themselves and on society at large, will finish this section of our essay. * * * *

In the church are all the institutions which can promote the individual, and social good of the christian community. In attending upon these institutions on the Lord’s day, much depends upon the preparation of heart, in all, who unite to commemorate the death and resurrection of the Son of God. * *

But is it compatible with experience, or is it accordant to reason, that any can delight in God, and rejoice in commemorating the wonders of his redemption, while his thoughts are dissipated upon the mountains of a thousand vanities ?—while, like a fool’s eyes, his thoughts are roaming to the ends of the earth ? Can he say, with a pious Jew, “How amiable are thy taber-

nacles, O Lord of hosts! My soul longs—yes, even saints, for the courts of the Lord! My heart and my flesh cry out for the living God. Happy they who dwell in thy house; they will be still praising thee! A day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a door-keeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.”—“One thing have I desired of the Lord, and that I will seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in his temple. O send out thy light and thy truth! Let them lead me, let them bring me to thy holy hill and to thy tabernacles. Then will I go to the altar of God, to God my exceeding joy; yes I will praise thee, O God, my God!”

There is, in the words of Solomon the Wise, a season, and time, for every object, and for every work:—There is the Lord’s day, the Lord’s table, the Lord’s house, and the Lord’s people; and there are thoughts, and frames of mind, and behaviour compatible, and incompatible with all these.

In the public assembly, the whole order of worship, ought to do justice to what is passing in the minds of all the worshippers. That joy in the Lord, that peace and serenity of mind, that affection for the brethren, that reverence for the institutions of God’s house, which all feel, should be manifest in all the business of the day. Nothing that would do injustice to all, or any of these, ought ever to appear in the congregation of Jesus Christ our Lord. No levity, irreverence, no gloom, no sadness, no pride, no unkindness, no severity of behavior towards any, no coldness, nothing but love, and peace, and joy, humility, and reverence should appear in the face, in the word, or action of any disciple. * * We speak rather of the *manner* in which all things are to be done, than of the things themselves, their necessity or value.

After noticing what in some instances appears to be wanting, in the manner of coming together on the Lord’s day, we proceed to notice in order the things wanting in many congregations, for the purposes already specified.

And first of all, be it observed, that in some churches there appears to be wanting a *proper method of handling the Scriptures, to the edification of the brethren*. It is admitted by all the holy brethren, that the Scriptures of truth, called *the living oracles*, are the great instrument of God for all his purposes in the saints on earth. Through them they are converted to God, comforted, consecrated, made meet for an inheritance among the sanctified, and qualified for every good word and work. Every thing, then, depends upon the proper understanding of these volumes of inspiration. They can only operate as far as they are understood.

The system of sermonizing on a text is now almost universally abandoned, by all who intend that their hearers should understand the testimony of God. Orators and exhorters may select a word,

a phrase, or a verse; but all who feed the flock of God with knowledge and understanding, know that this method is wholly absurd. Philological lectures upon a chapter are only a little better. The discussion of any particular topic, such as faith, repentance, the christian calling, &c. may sometimes be expedient: but in a congregation of christians, the reading and examining the different books in regular succession, every disciple having the volume in his hand, cannot fail to make us learned in the knowledge of God, and in the knowledge of men. The Bible contains more real learning than all the volumes of men. It instructs us in all our natural, moral, political, and religious relations. Though it teaches us not astronomy, medicine, chemistry, mathematics, architecture, it gives us all that knowledge which adorns and dignifies our moral nature, and fits us for happiness. Happy the person who meditates upon it day and night! He grows and flourishes in moral health and vigor, as the trees upon the water courses. His leaf never fades—his fruit never fails.

The congregations of the saints want system, in furthering their knowledge of this book. The simple reading of large portions in a desultory manner, is not without some good effect; for there is light, and majesty, and life, in all the oracles of God: no man can listen to them without edification. But the profit accruing from such readings, is not a tithe of that which might be obtained in the proper systematic reading, and examination of them. * * * * *

There appears to be wanting in some congregations a proper attention to discipline, and a due regard to decorum, in the management of such cases as occur. In every family, and in every congregation, there is occasional need of discipline. Offences, delinquencies, and apostacies, did occur in the congregations over which the apostles either were, or had been, presidents; and they will happen again in this state of discipline and trial, in which we are all placed. They must be expected; and every congregation ought to be prepared to act upon the emergency with intelligence and decorum. Much injury has been done to the progress of churches, by a remissness in attention to such cases, and in the manner, they have been disposed of, when taken up.

Nothing can be more preposterous and revolting to every sentiment of good order and decorum, than that every offender, and offence should, at the very offset, be dragged into the public assembly. Persons who have the care of a congregation, the Elders whose age and experience have taught them prudence, ought to be first informed of such cases; and they ought not to lay a case before the congregation, till they have prepared it for the action of the congregation. Every novice is not to feel himself at liberty to disturb the congregation by presenting, on his own responsibility, and at his own discretion, a complaint against a brother, whether it be of a public or private nature.

But we are now speaking of the *manner* of procedure in such cases. The most tender regard for the feelings of all, the utmost sympathy for the offender, the most unyielding firmness in applying the correctives which the Head of the church has commanded, and the necessity of acting promptly in accordance with the law in the case, are matters of much importance.

No passion, no partiality, no bad feeling—nothing but love and piety, but faithfulness and truth ; nothing but courtesy and gentleness, should ever appear in the house of God. And when any one is found guilty and excluded from the society, it should be done with all solemnity, and with prayer that the institution of Christ may be a blessing to the transgressor. * *

A few persons walking together in the bonds of christian affection, and under the discipline of Christ, is better than the largest assembly in which there are visibly and manifestly, many who fear not God, and keep not his commandments.

In the house of God, all should be purity, reverence, meekness, brotherly kindness, and love. Confidence in the honesty and sincerity of our brethern, is the life of communion. To feel ourselves united with them who are determined for eternal life, and resolved to seek first of all, chief of all, above all, the kingdom of heaven: and the righteousness required in it, is most animating, comforting, exhilarating. But to be doubtful whether we are uniting with a mass of ignorance, corruption and apathy, is as rottenness in the bones ; love waxes cold, and then we have the form, without the power of godliness.

That the Church may have a regenerating influence upon society at large, there is wanting a fuller display of christian philanthropy in all her public meetings ; care for the poor, manifested in the liberality of her contributions ; the expression of the most unfeigned sympathy for the distresses of mankind, not only among the brotherhood, but among all men ; and an ardent zeal for the conversion of sinners proportioned to her professed appreciation of the value of her own salvation, and to her resources and means of enlightening the world, on the things unseen and eternal. The full display of these attributes, are the most efficient means of causing the gospel to sound abroad, and to achieve new conquests amongst our fellow citizens. * *

It follows, then, that it is the duty of all to labour according to their respective abilities in this work. All are called to labour for the Lord. I hold that every citizen in Christ's kingdom is bound to take up arms for the King, as much as I am ; and if he cannot go to fight the battles of the Lord, he must take care of the wives and children of those who can, and who will fight for their King and country. * * *

In filling up these outlines, other matters still more minute, but, perhaps, equally important, will present themselves to the attention of the brethern. Now we cannot set about these mat-

ters too soon. The time has again come, when judgment must begin at the house of God. The people who have long enjoyed the word of life and the christian institutions, must soon come to a reckoning. They must give an account of their stewardship, for the Lord has promised to call them to judgment. An era is just at the door, which will be known as the *Regeneration* for a thousand years to come. The Lord Jesus will judge them who have broken the covenant, and formed alliances with the governments of the earth. Now the cry is heard in our land, "Come out of her, my people, that you partake not of her sins, and that you may not receive of her plagues." The Lord Jesus will soon rebuild Jerusalem, and raise up the tabernacle of David which has so long been in ruins. Let the church prepare herself for the return of her Lord, and see that she make herself ready for his appearance.

REMISSION OF SINS.

An Extract from the same.

As christian faith rests upon, and christian practice proceeds from the *testimony of God*, and not from the reasonings of men;—I will, in this recapitulation, only call up the evidences on one single proposition, assumed, sustained, and illustrated in the preceding pages. We wish to leave before the mind of the diligent reader, the great importance attached to christian immersion, as presented in the Evangelists, the Acts, and the Epistles.

1. *In the Evangelists*—It is called *the forgiveness of sins*. Matthew and Mark introduce the Messiah in his own person in giving the commission. Luke does not. Matthew presents Jesus, saying, "Go, convert the nations, immersing them into the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things which I have commanded you." This, of course, in order to salvation. Mark presents him, saying, "Go into all the world, proclaim the glad tidings to the whole creation: he who believes, and is immersed, shall be saved; and he who believes not, shall be condemned." Luke, however, does not introduce the Lord in his own person in giving the charge; but records it, in his own conception of it, in the following words:—That "reformation and forgiveness of sins should be announced in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." No person, we presume, will question but that Luke thus records the commission;—and, if so, then it is indisputable that, as Luke neither mentions faith nor immerses on, he substitutes for them the received import of both, when and where he wrote. Metonymically he places repentance, or rather *reformation*, for faith; and *remission of sins*, for immersion. In

Luke's acceptance, and time, forgiveness of sins stood for immersion, and reformation for faith—the effect for the means, or cause. The only reference to the commission found in John, occurs xx. 21. “As the Father has sent me, so send I you:—whose sins soever you remit, are remitted to them; and whose sins soever you retain, are retained.” Here is neither faith, repentance, nor baptism; but the object, *remission of sins*, is literally proposed. In the commission, salvation is attached by the Lord Jesus, to faith, and immersion into his name. He that believes, and is immersed, shall be saved. Thus immersion is taught in the testimonies of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.

2. *In the Acts of the Apostles*—Sermon 1, Peter says, “Reform, and be immersed, every one of you into the name of the Lord Jesus, for the remission of your sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.” Sermon 2, he says, “Reform and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out; that seasons of refreshment from the presence of the Lord may come, and that he may send Jesus,” &c. In the same discourse, he says, “God having raised up his Son Jesus, has sent him to bless you, every one of you, turning from his iniquities.” In his 3d Sermon, recorded Acts x. he says, “To him all the Prophets bear witness, that every one who believes in him shall receive remission of sins by his name.” Paul at Antioch, in Pisidia, declares that through Jesus was proclaimed the remission of sins; and by him all that believe are justified from all things. Ananias commanded Paul to arise and be immersed, and to wash away his sins, calling upon the name of the Lord. Thus it is spoken of in the Acts of the Apostles.

3. *In the Epistles*—The Romans are said to have been immersed into Christ Jesus—into his death; to have been buried with him, and consequently, to have risen with him, and to walk in a new life. The Corinthians are said to have been washed, justified, and sanctified by the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God. The Galatians “were immersed into Christ, and had put him on.” The Ephesians were married to Christ by immersion, as brides were wont to be washed in order to their nuptials. The assembly of the disciples, called the congregations of the Lord, making the bride of Christ, were said to be cleansed by the bath of water, and the word. The Colossians were buried with Christ, raised with him, and are said to have been forgiven all trespasses, when they were raised with him, where their resurrection with Jesus and their having all sins forgiven are connected. (Colossians ii. 11, 13, 14.) All the saints are said to be saved by immersion, or “the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Spirit.” (Titus iii. 5.) The believing Jews had their hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and their bodies washed with clean water, or water which made clean. Peter taught all the saints in Pontus, Galatia,

Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, that the water of baptism saved them, as the water of the deluge saved Noah in the Ark; and that in immersion a person was purged from all his former sins. And John the Apostle represents the saved as having "washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb," and all the baptized little children as "having their sins forgiven." Such are the evidences found in the Epistles. How numerous! how clear! and how unequivocal! Are we not, then, warranted to say, Except a man be born of water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God? and that all who, believing, are immersed for the remission of their sins, have the remission of their sins in and through immersion?

EXTRACT FROM A. CAMPBELL TO MR. SKINNER,
ON UNIVERSALISM.

* * * * *

22. Your theory, sir, is the most baseless conceit in the universe. It has not a single fact nor arguments to support it. It is the superlative of the weak and beggarly elements of assumption. Your hypothesis is without fact, without philosophy, without analogy, as well as without Bible authority.—— Let us take a parable from the brutal creation. Look at yonder boundless plain: see how many beasts of burden, sheep, cattle, and domestic animals of every species are oppressed and tortured by human hands, or by a thousand accidents. Add to these all the wild beasts of every species that have been lacerated, torn, and bruised by one another. See the millions of birds, beasts, and reptiles—not to invade the inhabitants of rivers, lakes, seas, oceans, the *animalcule* that people every thing that grows. Hear, sir, the myriads of groans, shrieks, and agonies that rend the heavens and melt the stony heart of man. Who could endure for a single day to look on all the writhings, wrestings, distortions, convolutions of this congregated mass of sinless sufferers! Who, sir, could endure to hear and see so much misery for an hour without melting into sympathy! And do you not believe that God, who is infinite in mercy and benevolence, whose goodness is boundless and unsearchable, has had all this groaning and travelling creation before his mind, not only for six thousand years, but from the dateless records of a past eternity, and that in full sight of it he called all those beings into existence, and permitted these sufferings for reasons to man or angel, perhaps, for ever inscrutable; but to his mind perfectly wise, just, benevolent, and merciful in reference to a boundless whole, an infinite system, which his eye alone surveys and understands. I ask you then, sir, to show how you can reconcile this with your

idealism, your *a-priori* reasonings, your hypothetical divinity ? If God in all his power, wisdom, justice, mercy and benevolence, did give birth to such a system and allot such sufferings to sinless and unsinning brutes ; may he not I ask, for ever punish wicked men and spirits, by whose rebellion all these miseries, groans, and agonies have diffused themselves over the face of animated nature, and cast at least a temporary gloom over universal being.

23. If farther evidence be yet wanting in demonstration of the quicksands on which your temple of reason stands, I would inquire whether from your own reasonings on the power, wisdom, goodness, justice, benevolence and compassion of the Creator, could you fling yourself back before sin and sorrow were conceived or born, you could have expected or inferred from all the perfections of the Deity that he could possibly have originated such a mixed system of good and evil as now obtains, as far as known to us through the whole rational creation ? From what attribute or excellency of the Almighty Father could you, before the event of sin and punishment occurred, have inferred the probability of the catastrophes of angels and men ? I am bold to say, sir, you never could, from any premises or *a-priori* reasonings in reach of human faculties, have anticipated such events. How then, sir, let me compassionately and benevolently ask you, dare you, from the empty storehouses of your ephemeral experience, memory, and reason—from your little horizon—from the deep valley covered with the mists of multifarious ignorance in which you stand, presume to say that a state of endless misery for wicked agents is useless, pernicious, dishonorable to God, malevolent, unmerciful, unwise, unjust, and impotent on the part of God ; when, upon your own philosophy, present sin and suffering—nay, the origination of a mixed system of good and evil, is equally to be reprobated as useless, pernicious, dishonorable, &c.?

24. But to cap your climax of unfounded reasoning, you add that the eternal punishment of wicked men is contrary to the veracity of God. This is your ninth weighty argument. Your proof ?—You say, “ For he has declared that *he will not contend forever, nor be always wroth*, [with a certain people I trow] and that he will not cast off *for ever*.” I thank you for this proof ; for it proves that when you please *for ever* and *always*, your *aei* and *aion*, do signify *endless*. Your only proof for this weighty argument is a positive disproof of all your reasonings upon *aei* and *aion* ; for here you rely upon it three times as certainly intimating *without end*. God, you say, will not contend—*without end*, or for ever !!! Never was there on earth a system more suicidal than your Universalism. It is *always* knocking out its own brains upon its own reasonings and upon its own verbal criticisms. It will not wait for the sentence of the law.

THE BLISS OF HEAVEN ETERNAL.

But has not man some seat of bliss,
 Some rest, more durable than this,
 Some home, from whence a guiding ray
 Cheers the poor pilgrim on his way,
 Bids Faith with eagle eye aspire,
 And Hope light up her vestal fire ?
 Yes ! wait the few appointed years,
 A scene beyond the tomb appears !
 A scene—but ah ! what mortal hand
 May sketch the glory of that land ?
 Eye hath not seen, nor ear, nor heart
 Heard, or conceived, the thousandth part
 To Death's cold grasp alone 'tis given
 To lift the veil that hangs o'er heaven !—
 Yet though so much lies hid from view,
 One truth shines clearly, brightly, through,
 The glory, whatsoe'er it be,
 Is linked to immortality !
 Once reach it, child of love divine,
 Once enter, 'tis forever thine !
 No flight of Time prescribes a bound,
 No mockery now is in that sound !
 No change is there—no sad decay—
 No shades of night, 'tis one long Day !—
 No seasons in their circle bring
 Winter and storms, 'tis one sweet Spring !
 Nor weekly cares nor wordly pains
 The spirit vex, one Sabbath reigns !—
 All, all is fixed on that blest shore,
 And fixed in joy for evermore !

SOCIAL WORSHIP.—Religion links men with each other, unless self-love and fanaticism render it a cause of jealousy and hate. To pray together, in whatever tongue or ritual, is the most tender brotherhood of hope and sympathy that men can contract in this life.

* * Persons who have not paid for the *Gleaner*, are requested to do so—Six Shillings for the volume, and One Shilling additional, where it has been sent by post.

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