



THE PENNSYLVANIA
STATE COLLEGE
LIBRARY



Gift of
The Class of 1932

2-h

300

Mrs. H. A. Langhorne

DISCOURSES AND DIALOGUES

OF THE LATE

REV. SAMUEL PORTER,

WITH A

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

OF THE AUTHOR.

BY THE REV. DAVID ELLIOTT, D. D.

PITTSBURGH:

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY J. T. SHRYOCK, BOOK AND JOB PRINTER

1853.

R 52
P 835d

ENTERED ACCORDING TO ACT OF CONGRESS, IN THE YEAR 1853,

BY J. T. SHRYOCK,

In the Clerk's Office of the United States Court for the Western District of
Pennsylvania.



TO THE
"PRESBYTERIAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY,"
THIS MEMORIAL
OF ONE OF THE EARLY MINISTERS OF
WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA,

IS RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED;

March 7, 1853.

D. E.

327471

THE PUBLISHER'S PREFACE.

In presenting to the public this volume, comprising all that can be recovered of the writings of the late Rev. Samuel Porter, the publisher and proprietor does not deem any apology necessary. It is sufficient to say, that it is done in compliance with the earnest solicitations of many who were familiar with the character of Mr. Porter, and who held him and his labours in high estimation. The few copies of the Discourses which had escaped the common fate of pamphlet publications, must soon have ceased to exist, and these discourses, so highly prized by all who heard them, would then have been entirely lost to the church. Their republication, in the present form, is intended to prevent this result, and to furnish those who may come after us with specimens of the doctrinal opinions and practical teachings of one, who in the forming state of the Presbyterian Church in Western Pennsylvania, was "set for the defence and confirmation of gospel." The Discourses are given as found in the pamphlet edition, the desire of the publisher being to let Mr. Porter, now that he is dead, speak for himself, as he did when he was living. They exhibit, not only maturity of thought, and dauntless energy, but also a love for the truth, which endeared him to his brethren in the ministry, and the people of his pastoral charge.

Some hesitation was felt in regard the publication of the "Dialogues," as they are believed to have been written before he entered the ministry. But the desire of many of Mr. Porter's friends, and the many excellent sentiments which they contain, although in no very polished dress, have finally led to a decision in their favor.

The somewhat peculiar character of the publications comprised in this volume, will, doubtless, lead to a desire on the part of the reader, to know something more of the character and history of their author. This desire will be gratified by the "Biographical Sketch," which has been drawn up by DR. ELLIOTT, at our request, and which we are kindly permitted to publish in connection with the productions of Mr. Porter's pen.

The whole is now submitted to the public, with the sincere desire, on the part of the publisher, that he may hereby be instrumental in diffusing a knowledge of the truths, which the author so ably preached, and in engaging the people of God to seek for a return of those precious seasons of reviving grace, which he so skilfully defended.

JOHN T. SHRYOCK.

Pittsburgh, March, 1853.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH, &C.

THE REV. SAMUEL PORTER, the author of the following work, was a native of Ireland, and was born on the 11th of June, 1760. His parents belonged to the Reformed Presbyterian Church, commonly called Covenanters, and were both persons of approved piety; especially his mother, who devoted him to the Lord at his birth, for the work of the Ministry, in reference to which she called him Samuel. Having thus consecrated him to the Lord, she diligently trained him up for his service. From his early youth, he was faithfully instructed in the doctrines of grace, and in the practical duties of religion. And what was taught him by precept, was enforced by example. His pious mother, whenever she retired for secret devotion, was in the habit of taking her son with her, and on her knees before the throne of grace, and her hand upon his head, of pouring out her prayers to her covenant God on his behalf.

But although God put it into her heart, thus to "lend him to the Lord," for the work of the Ministry, and intended in due time to answer her prayers on his behalf, the door seemed for a long time to be closed against the consummation of her pious desires. His parents were poor, and had no means by which to procure for him a suitable education, to prepare him

for preaching the gospel. They were obliged therefore, to leave the case to the disposal of God's providence, and to adopt the only course left open to them in their straightened circumstances. He was accordingly trained to habits of industry, and as a weaver, in the use of his loom, he found means to sustain himself and, probably, to afford some assistance to his parents.

In this state of things, his opportunities for mental improvement were such only as were common to the laboring classes. These, it appears, he improved with much diligence. But having no expectation of ever being able to obtain a liberal education, he entered the marriage relation, when he was probably about nineteen or twenty years of age; and had two children born to him in his native country. Of the causes which induced him to leave Ireland and come to the United States, we are not informed. Whatever they were, the invisible hand of God was concerned in the matter; and, although he knew it not, was leading him in a way by which he was to be put in possession of the holy office to which his pious mother had consecrated him at his birth. As near as can be ascertained, he arrived in this country, with his wife and children, in the year 1783, about the close of the Revolutionary War.

The first winter after his arrival in the United States, he spent in the vicinity of Mercersburg, Franklin County, Pennsylvania, where a near relative of his, a cousin of the name of Porter, then resided. At the time of his arrival there, so completely were his funds exhausted, that he had but

eighteen pence left, after defraying the expenses of his journey. To account, in part, for his limited pecuniary resources, he was accustomed to refer to the heavy expenses to which, as a member of an Irish Volunteer company, he had been subjected before he left his own country. Like many ardent young men, in similar circumstances, he was led by his associations into an extravagant expenditure of money, which ought to have been reserved for the use and support of himself and his family.

His situation at this time—a stranger in a strange land, and with a dependent family and exhausted means—was one of great trial. But God provided him with kind friends to aid him in this emergency. His kinsman, who was also in limited worldly circumstances, procured for him a room in a neighboring house, in which he and his family resided during the winter. The winter was one of unusual severity, and the snow deep, which lessened the demand for labor, and prevented him from adding to his funds by his own personal exertions. Among those to whom he applied for work, was a Mr. Dunwody, father of Mr. David Dunwody, a venerable Elder, yet living, in the church of Mercersburg. Mr. Dunwody being an intelligent Irishman, was much pleased with Mr. Porter's good sense and social habits; and although he had no work for him to do, he invited him to spend a portion of his time with him, for the sake of his company. This invitation he accepted, and was very frequently during the winter at Mr. Dunwody's house, where he was cordially welcomed and hospitably entertained. His

social, cheerful disposition made him a very acceptable guest, especially to the younger branches of the family. Mr. David Dunwoody has stated to the writer, that although he was very young at the time of Mr. Porter's sojourning at his father's house, there was something about him which made a strong impression on his mind, which has never been erased. His playful humor was exceedingly captivating. When in company with the children, he would amuse them by singing for them the "Battle of the Boyne" and other Protestant Irish songs, and instructing them in the innocent sports of children, as practised in his native land. This cheerful, playful disposition, chastened by religious influence and riper experience, is said to have continued with him throughout life.

While in the neighborhood of Mercersburg, he was induced to go and hear the Rev. Dr. John King, who was then pastor of the Presbyterian church of Upper West Corococheague. His relative, Mr. Porter, who had, like himself, been educated to a rigid exclusiveness, endeavored to dissuade him from hearing Dr. King, lest he might be drawn aside from the true faith and corrupted by the unsound doctrines which he supposed the Doctor preached. But notwithstanding the opposition of his friend, and the recollection of his having been arraigned and admonished by the Session of the church to which he belonged in Ireland, for the crime of "occasional hearing," he determined to go and hear, and judge for himself. He considered himself well grounded in the doctrines of the Calvinistic system, and had no fears of having his faith in them

unsettled by anything which he might hear from the pulpit. That he expected to hear something very erroneous, and went to find fault rather than to be instructed, he himself admitted to Dr. King afterwards. The first time he heard him he returned home disappointed, having heard nothing to which he could object. It was so on a second and third visit to his church. He was still unable to discover anything to condemn, and was surprised to find him so sound and evangelical in all his views. Having heard him frequently during the winter, his objections against the Presbyterian church began to give way; and he came to the conclusion, that so far as doctrines were concerned, his opposition to it was probably the result of blind prejudice, rather than of enlightened conviction. And, doubtless, there are many who have been taught to look upon the Presbyterian church as deeply corrupted, who, if they would do as Mr. Porter did, would come to the same conclusion which he did.

Having spent the winter in Franklin County, and having through the liberality of kind friends obtained the requisite means, Mr. Porter removed with his family, the next spring, to Western Pennsylvania, and settled in Washington County. For a brief period, his residence was within the bounds of the "Razoon church," in that County. Shortly after his arrival in the West he became acquainted with Alex. Wright, Esq. a benevolent Irishman; who finding him to be a man of more than ordinary talent and information, took a deep interest in him, and procured for him a school, with the proceeds of which he was

enabled to support his family. Although his prejudices against the Presbyterian church had suffered some abatement, by his intercourse with the Presbyterians of Franklin County, he was not yet fully prepared to coalesce with them, without farther acquaintance. Knowing that in Ireland many of the Presbyterians were tinctured with Arminian sentiments, he could not divest himself entirely of the apprehension that there might be a partial infusion of the same error here. A season of close and familiar intercourse with his friend and countryman, Mr. Wright, who was a Presbyterian and a sound and intelligent Calvinist, had much influence in removing his distrust, and leading him to juster views and a more extended confidence in the Presbyterians of this country. Being assured by Mr. Wright that the Presbyterians here were as entirely orthodox as the Covenanters in Ireland, and being cut off from all opportunity of worshipping with those of his own denomination, he was led to attend the ministrations of the Rev. Joseph Smith, who was the pastor of the united churches of Upper Buffalo and Cross Creek. He also embraced opportunities of hearing Dr. M'Millan. After attending frequently on the ministrations of these distinguished servants of Christ, and becoming familiarly acquainted with Judge Edgar and other prominent men in the Presbyterian church, he finally entered her communion, being fully satisfied that her ministers preached the pure gospel, and that his usefulness and comfort would be increased by this change in his ecclesiastical relations.

By this change of relation, Mr. Porter became per-

sonally acquainted with Dr. M'Millan and other Presbyterian Ministers of Western Pennsylvania, through whose advice he was induced to enter upon a course of preparation for the gospel Ministry. This was probably about the year 1786. His studies were prosecuted in company with Jas. Hughes, John Brice and Joseph Patterson, partly under the direction of the Rev. Joseph Smith, and partly under that of Dr. M'Millan, with whom he studied Theology. As he was without the means of support, Dr. M'Millan kindly gave him his board and instruction free of expense; and Mr. Wright generously gave him the use of a house and provision for his family, while he was pursuing his studies. Thus did God, in a remarkable manner, meet the wishes and answer the prayers of his pious mother, by providing ways and means to facilitate his admission to the Ministry, to which she had consecrated him.

Up to the time of his prosecuting his studies with Dr. M'Millan, he was strenuously opposed to the use of a New Testament Psalmody in the worship of God. Believing the practice to be unscriptural, he determined to write out and publish a thoroughly prepared refutation of it. In the progress of his investigations, which were accompanied at every step with prayer to God for direction, his mind underwent an entire change on the subject, and he found that the proof was against his view, and in favor of that which he was laboring to subvert. The result was, that he abandoned his opposition, and became the friend and advocate of a New Testament Psalmody. His son,

Mr. John Porter, of Rural Valley church, from whom this information has been derived, has a distinct recollection of the time when his father first sang one of Watts' Psalms in family worship.

As Mr. Porter had made Theology his study from early life, and had a considerable stock of knowledge on various subjects, before he commenced a formal course of preparation for the Ministry, the Presbytery admitted him to preach after a shorter term of study than is usual. Having spent about three years in the prosecution of Academical and Theological studies, he was licensed by the Presbytery of Redstone, on the 12th of November, 1789. Such was the acceptable character of his ministrations, that his labors were soon much in demand. Hence, at a meeting of the Presbytery, on the 20th of April, 1790—a few months only after his licensure—a call was put into his hands from the united congregations of Poke Run and Congruity; one from the congregations of Dunlap's Creek and George's Creek; and one from Long Run and Sewickly. The region embraced by the two congregations first named, especially by Poke Run, was at that time a frontier settlement. Many of the people were wild and uncultivated, and needed much the moulding influence of the gospel, and the restraints of religious instruction and discipline. As evidence of this it has been stated, that on one occasion, while Mr. Porter was preaching in a tent in the woods, two young men withdrew from the crowd, and ran a foot race in full view of the preacher and the congregation.

Mr. Porter having no high aspirations for himself,

and judging himself best adapted to a field like this, preferred it to the others, which in some respects were more inviting. He accordingly accepted the call from Poke Run and Congruity, and was ordained, in company with the Rev. John M'Pherrin, and installed pastor of these united congregations, on the 22d of September, 1790. That in the selection of this as the field of his labors, he did not look to his own personal comfort is evident, not only from what has been already stated, but also from the fact that its frontier position exposed it to the incursions of the Indians, who frequently committed depredations in that vicinity on the other side of the Allegheny river. Such was the alarm often created by this state of things, that during the first year of his ministry, both he and his hearers were obliged to carry their fire-arms with them to the house of God. How different the condition of the country then from what it is now, when the people of God can meet and worship in peaceful security, none to make them afraid!—when through the subduing and refining influences of the gospel of God's grace, they have cast off the rude practices of earlier times, and exhibit in their deportment a becoming regard for the order and proprieties of social and christian life!

In the united pastoral charge over which he had been installed, Mr. Porter continued to labor between seven and eight years, with encouraging evidences of success. Under his faithful ministrations, the congregation of Congruity increased to such an extent, during that period, that they felt themselves able alone to

support a pastor. And as the labors of the united charge were too great for Mr. Porter, whose health had become somewhat impaired, he felt it to be his duty to relinquish Poke Run. Accordingly, upon his application, the pastoral relation between him and that congregation was dissolved by the Presbytery, on the 11th of April 1798, very much against the wishes of the people, who remonstrated against the proceeding. The congregation of Congruity, within the bounds of which he resided, agreed to take the whole of his time, promising him "£120 per annum, one half in merchantable wheat at five shillings per bushel, and the remainder in cash." Considering the difference in the expense of living then and now, this was a more liberal salary than is generally given to pastors in the country at the present time. To this arrangement Mr. Porter acceded and continued in the pastoral charge of that congregation to the time of his death.

In the beginning of the year 1813, he was called to mourn the death of a most promising son, bearing his own name and clothed with the same holy office with himself. He had been educated at Jefferson College, and was settled as a Minister at Cumberland, Maryland, in the fall of the year 1811. He was a young man of a very modest and retiring disposition, but of respectable talents and decided piety. But it pleased God to remove him from his field of labor, at a very early period of his ministry; while his aged father, in the midst of pressing infirmities, was left to toil on for many years in his Master's vineyard,

Towards the close of his life, Mr. Porter became

very feeble, and for a considerable time before he left off preaching, was unable to stand in the pulpit. But although obliged to sit while delivering his sermons, he was able to speak so as to be distinctly heard over every part of the church.

At length his bodily infirmities began to impair the vigor of his mind, particularly his memory. Hence, in his last attempt to preach, he announced his text as usual, and having made some introductory remarks, and stated his divisions, he attempted to recal his first head, but was unable to do so, and was obliged to relinquish the exposition of his subject. Feeling that his days of public labor were over, he became deeply affected, and after giving his people a brief but moving exhortation, he announced to them that he would no more attempt to preach, or minister to them in holy things. The scene was one of solemn interest. The deep fountains of feeling, in many hearts, were broken up, and both pastor and people wept together! Having been thus compelled, through increasing infirmities, to give up his much loved employment, and to confine himself to his own house, his bodily strength rapidly declined, until he was finally removed to his Father's house in heaven. He departed this life September 23d, 1825, in the sixty-sixth year of his age, having been a pastor thirty-five years.

A few years after his settlement as a pastor, he preached two sermons on "The Decrees of God, the Perseverance of the Saints," and "Sinless Perfection," the substance of which was published at the earnest request of the people of his charge. That

which gave occasion to the preaching of these sermons, was a public debate which took place in his neighborhood, between the Rev. John Jameson, of the Associate Reformed church, and the Rev. Valentine Cook, of the Methodist Episcopal church, on the subjects of which they treat. Mr. Porter was present at the debate, but took no part in it. Believing that the truth had not been well sustained by Mr. Jameson, he determined to repair the injury so far as he was able, within the bounds of his own pastoral charge, and for this purpose preached the sermons, the substance of which was afterwards compressed into a single discourse. This Discourse he himself speaks of as a "juvenile performance," doubtless in reference to its having been prepared and published at so early a period of his ministry, and on account of its many imperfections in style and form. But, I apprehend, there are few who have read it, who will not agree that it evinces a maturity and vigor of thought and argument, which prove that it is not the production of "a stripling." This effort of Mr. Porter is reported by contemporaries, who had the best opportunity of knowing, to have been signally efficacious in establishing in the public mind, the truth of the doctrines which he advocated, and in arresting the progress of the contrary errors.

In the year 1802 a very powerful work of grace commenced in Western Pennsylvania. This is generally known by the name of the "Great Revival," and was accompanied with remarkable "bodily exercises." In endeavoring to promote and extend this

revival, the Ministers of the Presbyterian church, in this region, all heartily participated. But the work met with much opposition from persons of other denominations, especially of the Secession church, who pronounced it to be a gross delusion and a work of the Devil. Those who sympathized with the Revival, were denounced as errorists and fanatics, and treated with much harshness. As Mr. Porter was an active friend of the work, and bore his part in the use of all lawful means to carry it forward, he felt deeply the injustice and unkindness of such assaults. Convinced of the scriptural character of the Revival, he believed it to be his duty, not only to exert his influence to promote it, but to employ the faculties which God had given him in its defence. An opportunity to do so was afforded him in the fall of 1805. He had been called to preside over the Synod of Pittsburgh, at its meeting in 1804. Hence it devolved upon him to open the Synod with a sermon the ensuing fall. Dr. M'Millan, it is said, suggested to him the propriety of preaching on the subject of Revivals, and of embracing the occasion to vindicate the Great Revival through which they had been passing, against the cavils and assaults of its adversaries. To this suggestion it appears that he yielded, and the sermon, when preached, was published at the request of the Synod. In justification of the severity employed in this discourse, Mr. Porter refers to the long continued attacks made upon the Presbyterian church, for her approval of the Revival, and her labors in its behalf. The exigency of the case required, as he believed,

something more than "a Quaker system of defence." It demanded the positive infliction of chastisement and rebuke. He ventured upon the experiment, and the result is reported to have been salutary.

A few years after the publication of this sermon, we find Mr. Porter in correspondence with the Rev. James Mitchell, of Virginia, in reference to the doctrine of the Atonement. From a manuscript letter of his to Mr. Mitchell, dated Nov. 16th, 1808,* it would appear that certain advocates of the "Indefinite Atonement Scheme" had found their way into that part of Virginia where Mr. Mitchell resided, and that he had written to Mr. Porter, soliciting an expression of his views in regard to that scheme. In the letter of Mr. Porter we have his reply, in part, to Mr. Mitchell. That it is only in part, appears from a reference in this letter to one which he had previously addressed to him on the same subject, but which we have not been able to recover. Mr. Mitchell was, at the time of this correspondence, one of the leading Ministers of the Presbyterian church in Virginia; and the fact of his inviting an expression of Mr. Porter's views on the subject referred to, shows the high estimation in which he was held by his brethren in the Ministry.

Upon this same subject Mr. Porter had occasion afterwards to express his views and raise his warning voice, in a more formal and public manner. Certain Ministers from the East, had crossed the mountains and settled in the Western Reserve, where they taught

* See Appendix to Discourse on the Atonement.

the doctrine of an Indefinite Atonement. The consequence was, that some of our young ministers in that region, either adopted that theory, or looked upon it with favor. Mr. Porter having heard that this was the case, prepared a sermon on the subject with a special reference to them, which he preached at the opening of the Synod of Pittsburgh, in the fall of 1811. The brethren for whom it was intended were present, as he anticipated, and had the full benefit of the discussion. The Sermon was afterwards published by request. How far it carried conviction to the minds of these young brethren, or led to a change of opinion, we do not know; but some of those conversant with the facts at the time, affirm that it had the effect of silencing the open advocates of the doctrine, and of arresting, at least for a season, its progress in that region.

These three Discourses comprise the whole of his Theological writings which were published during his life. It is believed that they are the only Discourses which he was ever known to have written out in full. And these, as has been seen, were called into existence by emergent circumstances connected with his position. It is known that he occasionally wrote and inserted pieces in the weekly journals, for the purpose of refuting some of the erroneous opinions, or of exposing some of the prevailing vices of the day. Among these was one entitled "An Apology for the Drunkard," which is reported to have been strongly characteristic and satirical. Another was a defence of the Synod of Pittsburgh, which had become the

subject of severe animadversion in the public papers, on account of some action by it in derogation of Free Masonry. The Dialogues which appear in the present volume, were printed for the first time, within the last year, in one of our religious periodicals, from a manuscript copy taken from the original. It is the tradition, that they were written by Mr. Porter before he entered the Ministry. With some things which are not in very good taste, they contain many striking illustrations of human character and of christian experience, which are worthy of regard.

Those who were most familiarly acquainted with Mr. Porter, agree that he was endowed with talents of a high order. He had great aptness both in acquiring and imparting knowledge. His memory was one of peculiar tenacity, enabling him to retain for practical purposes, whatever was deemed valuable by him and worthy of preservation. This qualified him for acting with much efficiency in the public judicatories of the church. It was there that he appeared to the greatest advantage; and it rarely occurred that he embarked in the advocacy of any measure, which he did not carry successfully through. He had a peculiar tact in argument, and his controversial powers were successfully tested on several occasions. He appears to have been qualified by nature for a dialectician, and with comparatively little educational training in the rules of logic, he evinced more than common skill in the syllogistic art. And had he enjoyed the usual advantages of liberal study and mental discipline in early life, he would doubtless have appeared to much

greater advantage, and been entitled to a much higher rank as a writer and controversialist.

By his contemporaries Mr. Porter is represented to have been a very attractive and forcible public speaker. Of his power in this respect, the following graphic description from the pen of the Rev. Robert Johnston, furnished the writer several years ago, will give the reader some accurate conception: "His qualifications as a public speaker were evidently of the first order. His voice was clear and strong; not harsh, but musical and commanding, possessing sufficient volume to be heard distinctly by thousands assembled in the open air. He spoke fast, but his articulation was so distinct, and his thoughts so clearly expressed, as to be easily understood. His was the eloquence of nature, and it was irresistible. Prompted by the energy of his thoughts, the intonations of his voice, and the action of his body, gave emphasis to his theme, and held the attention of his audience entranced. I can never forget the first time I heard him preach. It was in the spring of 1793. He assisted Dr. M'Millan at a communion. It was also a time of refreshing from the presence of the Lord, and a very large assembly of people was present on the occasion. He preached on the afternoon of the Sabbath, from Isaiah 40: 1, 2;—'Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished.' The assembly were seated in a beautiful grove of young beech, gently ascending in front of the tent where he stood. He commenced, and for

two hours held that large assembly in breathless attention, while a torrent of sweet, celestial eloquence poured from his lips, with a rapidity and pathos that dissolved a large portion of the assembly in tears. The mildness and majesty of his countenance, softened by the feelings of his own heart, and glowing with the sublimity and grandeur of his theme, heightened by the flickering rays of the setting sun breaking through the boughs of the beech trees on his face as he spoke, combined with the energy of his voice and the thrilling power of his thoughts, left on my mind, and doubtless on that of others, an impression of intellectual and moral greatness, which I had never before attached to any human being. Such was the originality of his thoughts, and the commanding power of his eloquence, that although he often spoke two hours, with a rapidity of utterance rarely equalled by public speakers, the attention of his audience never appeared to relax."

Mr. Porter was distinguished for his ready wit, which he sometimes carried into the pulpit. In the use of rhetorical figures, he would occasionally startle his hearers by the boldness of his positions, from which it seemed impossible that he should be able to retreat, without injury to the cause of religion. One of his ministerial brethren, speaking of this trait in his manner of preaching, remarked to the writer, that he reminded him of a man angling for fish, who would sport with the fish at the bait, giving it line until it seemed almost beyond his power to draw it up; but at the proper juncture would arrest it and bring it

safely to land. So he acted with his hearers. After indulging in bold sallies of wit, and leading them into scenes of levity, calculated to induce a state of mind adverse to religion, he never failed to bring them back to a proper tone of feeling. If, for a moment he provoked a smile, by a sudden change of subject and manner, he soon restored them to seriousness, and often had them bathed in tears. The following well authenticated anecdote may serve to illustrate this feature of his character and style of preaching.

During the sessions of the General Assembly at Winchester, Virginia, in the year 1799, Mr. Porter, being present, was invited to preach. He accepted the invitation, and took for his text, Ecclesiastes XI. 9. *“Rejoice, O Young man, in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thy heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: but know thou, that for all these things, God will bring thee into judgment.”* In reading the text, he stopped suddenly when he reached the last clause, without announcing it, and commenced his discourse. He spoke of youth as the season of enjoyment, the period in which the animal spirits are buoyant and lively, and the whole man fitted to participate largely in the pleasures of sense. In the midst of this period was the person spoken of in the text. He was *young*, in the heyday of youth; and *a man*, not a child in leading-strings, under parental authority and control; but a man in stature and age, capable of judging and acting for himself, a high minded, independent, daring young man. He was a type of the whole race of such young

men, a model, an example. And according to the counsel given to such in the text, so the speaker urged every other young man to go and do likewise. Hence, he opened up to him the path of sensual pleasure; he sketched, in rich and attractive colors, its gay delights; he invited him to enter, and having entered, he urged him forward in his joyful career of folly and sin, by all the arguments which his powerful intellect could suggest, and by all the allurements which his vivid imagination could depict. At every step in his wild career, he presented him with new pleasures, and caused his soul to swell with new and undescribable joys. With such sober earnestness and overwhelming force did he describe the pleasures of sin, and urge young men onward in the indulgence of their depraved appetites and passions, that many of his ministerial brethren were startled and alarmed at the boldness of his positions, and the alluring richness of the drapery, which he threw around them; and the hearts of the young and profligate portion of his hearers swelled with delight. Such an advocate they had never had before. Their triumph they felt to be complete, and they were ready to go forth and proclaim, that the ways of sin, were ways of pleasantness and all its paths were paths of peace; and that to indulge every sinful desire of their hearts, was the true way to be permanently and truly happy.

Having thus depicted the pleasures of sin, and carried the reckless youth into the midst of his sensual indulgences, where he was sporting and revelling in all the gaieties and extravagancies of unbridled lust, the

speaker suddenly paused, and dropping his eye upon the text, recommenced reading with slow and solemn emphasis; "*But*"—'ah,' said he, 'this *BUT*, is a strange and troublesome little word, and often obtrudes itself at a very unwelcome moment'—"*But, know thou, that for all these things, God will bring thee into judgment.*" "This" exclaimed the preacher, "is the other side of the picture. You have seen the one side, and it shall now be my business to let you see the other." He then proceeded with graphical skill, to present in all its terrible solemnity, the judicial consequences of such a course of sinful indulgences. He spoke of the throne of judgment—of the arrest of the criminal—of his appearance at the bar of justice—of the searching scrutiny of the judge, whose "eyes are as a flame of fire"—of the public exposure of the sinner's deeds of darkness—of the infliction of God's wrath—of the horrors of a guilty conscience—of the final sentence and the "everlasting destruction" of the condemned culprit, "from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power." The scene was one of painful interest and overwhelming solemnity. Every mind was filled with awe; and while with deep and mournful feeling, he followed the gay and misguided youth into the dark regions of despair, and spoke of the agonies of his never dying soul, and of the piercing cries which issued from the midst of "the flame" in which he was "tormented," the whole assembly were moved and melted into tenderness, and gave vent to their feelings, in a gush of tears.

Mr. Porter was a bold and fearless reprovcr of vice

in all its various forms. To him it made no difference whether it appeared in the tattered garments of poverty, or the fashionable and gaudy attire, with which wealth invested its subject; he everywhere met it with rebuke, and sought to expose its deformity, that men might be preserved from its destructive power. It was not his way to mince reproof, or to present it in so indistinct a form as not to be seen or felt by those for whom it was intended. Thus in the case of the reckless young men who ran the foot-race, in the presence of the worshipping assembly, as already noticed, they had no sooner returned to their place, than addressing them personally, he administered to them a pungent and withering rebuke. And in his warnings against vicious indulgences and the formation of sinful habits, none could be more direct and explicit.

It is true that he had a peculiar method of doing things, and would sometimes resort to measures, which it would have been hazardous in almost any other man to have attempted. An illustration of this is furnished in the following letter, written by William Redick, an Elder in the Presbyterian Church at Uniontown, Pa., and addressed to the editor of the Presbyterian Advocate, at Pittsburgh, bearing date August, 1852.

“The Dialogue which appeared in your paper of the 14th ult. from the late Rev. Samuel Porter, together with a brief sketch of the life of the author, naturally led back my thoughts to by-gone days, and awakened the memory of incidents connected with the Reverend author of the Dialogue, and the congregation of Congruity, from which fondly cherished neighborhood, I now have been many years absent.

“It occurs to my mind that it may be of interest to your readers, to learn something of the energy of character, and peculiar tact of the author of the Dialogue for accomplishing what but few others could do. For this purpose permit me to relate an anecdote of him as nearly as I can, just as it occurred under my own observation, some thirty-one or thirty-two years ago.

“A new stone tavern house had been built on the turnpike, scarcely a mile from the church; and was just opened out by the owner, a very clever man. The young folks of the neighborhood, many of them the children of church members, and even baptized members themselves, had agreed to have what was generally known as a *house warming*, by holding a ball there. The arrangements were all made, the tickets distributed, and the guests invited.

“On the sabbath previous to the intended ball, this aged minister, after preaching an eloquent sermon, sitting in his old split bottom armed-chair, for he was too feeble to preach standing, and for many a long day sat and preached in that old arm chair, elevated in the pulpit for his accommodation; and before dismissing the congregation, gave out the usual notices for the ensuing week and Sabbath. After stating that Presbytery would meet the next Tuesday in Greensburgh, and making his usual appointments, he then gave notice that on the next Thursday evening, at early candle lighting, a ball was to be held about three-fourths of a mile from that place. He said it was to be hoped that all the polite young ladies and

gentlemen would attend, as it was said to be a place where politeness and manners could be learned and cultivated, and that many other things could be said in favour of attending such places, which it was not necessary for him to mention at that time. However, it was to be hoped that as many as could, would attend at the time named—"next Thursday evening at early candle lighting!" He remarked, that for his part, if he did not attend, the young folks would excuse him, as it was likely he might be detained at Presbytery; yet, should Presbytery adjourn in time, and nothing else prevent, he expected to attend; and should he be present, he would open the exercises of the night, by reading a text of scripture, singing a psalm, and offering up a prayer. But, as the strong probability was, that he could not be in attendance, and lest he might not, he said he would then and there read the text, the congregation would sing a psalm, offer up a prayer and be dismissed. Then, with a full and solemn voice, and in the most solemn, impressive manner, he read the ninth verse of the eleventh chapter of Ecclesiastes:—"Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth, and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thy heart, and in the sight of thine eyes; but, know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment." Then, with the same solemn, impressive voice and manner, he announced and read the seventy-third Psalm, "Lord, what a thoughtless wretch was I," &c. After this was sung by the congregation, he then offered up a fervent and affecting prayer: praying earnestly for he

thoughtless and gay, and for the power of God's Spirit to guard them all from those vices and amusements which might lead the youthful mind to fritter away precious time, and neglect the one thing needful; and then, with his solemn benediction, the congregation was dismissed.

"The result was, that it produced a seriousness throughout the congregation, that went into the community; and notwithstanding the arrangements had all been made, and many were anxiously and impatiently awaiting the appointed evening, yet none had the hardihood to think of braving the impressive reproof, or dared to outrage the awakened moral sense of the community, and go on with the ball. The set evening arrived and passed away, but the ball never was held.

"If you think this incident worthy a place in your columns, it will perhaps be a relic that may gratify others, who were witnesses of it, and may have let it slip out of mind."

While we would not encourage every minister to adopt Mr. Porter's *method* of proceeding, we may be permitted to remark, that his pastoral fidelity in the matter recited, rebukes the timid, time-serving conduct of those pastors, who allow the members of their churches to *dance*, under their very eye, without ever raising their voices, or uttering a single note of remonstrance against the practice.

But although Mr. Porter was thus rigorous and uncompromising in his opposition to vice, even in its most fashionable and attractive forms; in his ordinary intercourse with society, he was highly cheerful and

familiar. He abounded in anecdote, by which he imparted animation to the social circles in which he moved, and which rendered him a very attractive companion. In his family, he was kind and indulgent, and for the accommodation or relief of a friend, he never considered any sacrifice too great.

His personal piety, although consistent, was not as highly devotional in its type, as that of some others. This has been attributed to his severely intellectual habits and associations, and to his constitutional vivacity. But, that he possessed real piety, those best acquainted with him, never doubted. He himself did, sometimes, call in question the reality of his hope in Christ. His perplexity seems to have arisen from the fact, that he was not conscious of any particular time in which he had experienced that change of heart, of which he knew every one who would enter into the kingdom of God, must be the subject. This occasionally gave him uneasiness. But, he was not without some substantial grounds of encouragement. For, although he could not mark the period of such a change, neither could he recollect any period of his life, in which he did not love to contemplate the character, laws, and government of God, nor in which he did not find comfort in the holy duties of religion: From his earliest years, also, he hated and shunned the society of the wicked. Being conscious of this habitual opposition of heart to the ungodly practices of wicked men, he was encouraged to hope, that he would not be condemned to dwell forever with them, in the world of woe. Accordingly, he was very fre-

quently heard offering up the prayer of the man after God's own heart, "Gather not my soul with sinners, nor my life with bloody men." And, as on the other hand, he loved to think of God, and to hold fellowship with his people in the holy duties of religion, he was led to indulge the hope, that, through riches of grace in Christ Jesus, he would be admitted at last to dwell with them in heaven. Thus did he escape from the perplexities arising from his inability to designate the exact time in which he had experienced the regenerating grace of God upon his heart; and he was led to the conclusion, that if his hope was not utterly groundless, he must have been born into the kingdom of God, in early youth, probably, when on his knees at the side of his pious mother, she poured out her soul to God for his conversion and salvation. This, doubtless, was the true solution of his case. He had the true marks of a child of God, in his hatred of sin, and his love of holiness. These furnished evidence of his regeneration, and his not being able to recollect the time when this occurred, could not disprove the fact.

Upon the whole, Mr. Porter was, in many respects, a remarkable man. Endowed by nature with a strong and active mind, but with very limited opportunities for mental culture in early life, he attained a highly respectable rank among the pioneers of the Presbyterian Church in Western Pennsylvania. By his ready controversial talent, he did good service in defending the truth against the assaults of its adversaries in these outposts of Zion. His memory is still precious among the people of his former charge, and by his

surviving brethren in the ministry, who bore with him "the burden and heat of the day," he is spoken of with affection and respect.

Mr. Porter's remains lie interred in the burying ground belonging to the congregation of Congruity, a few yards distant from the spot, where for thirty-five years he preached Christ to his dying fellow men. Within the district embraced by his former pastoral charge, three large congregations now assemble weekly, to hear the same gospel preached by other faithful heralds of the Cross. And, it is a significant fact, that from the families which attended on his ministrations, an unusual number have entered the gospel Ministry, and assisted in diffusing the truth which he so much loved.

A DISCOURSE

**ON THE DECREES OF GOD, THE PERSEVERANCE OF THE
SAINTS, AND SINLESS PERFECTION; BEING THE
SUBSTANCE OF TWO SERMONS, DELIV-
ERED AT CONGRUITY, JUNE 16, 1793;**

BY SAMUEL PORTER,

PASTOR OF THE UNITED CONGREGATIONS OF CONGRUITY AND POKE RUN.

Contend earnestly for the Faith once delivered to the Saints.—BIBLE.

TO THE READER.

In composing the following discourse, I labored under almost every disadvantage. I had not a Commentator in my possession, nor a single book on the Calvinistic side of the controversy, except my Bible; and besides the original defects in argument, composition and punctuation, my circumstances and situation would not permit me to correct the press. Therefore, I hope the discourse will be read with candor and charity. It should never have made its appearance from the press, could I have resisted the desires of my people, enforced by the insulting, challenging and triumphing conduct of the avowed enemies of the most fundamental doctrines of the Protestant religion. For I am too well acquainted with the prevailing taste and my own weakness, not to know that this pamphlet will render me as unpopular as the doctrines I advocate are. But when it is considered, that these doctrines are dear to my heart as life itself, and that including their antecedents, concomitants and consequences, they contain my portion and my all, it will not be thought strange that I have attempted to defend them, at the risk of popularity.

As to those who will not permit us to worship God according to the dictates of our own consciences, without abusing and misrepresenting us and the doctrines we believe and teach; if they choose to combat the sentiments I have advanced, let them attend to first principles, and meet me on original ground, where they will find me ready to attend to the issue of the controversy,

With respect to the reception which this juvenile performance may meet with in the world, my expectations are not raised, nor my hopes sanguine. If it escapes the censure of friends, and the disdain of the learned, I shall be greatly surprised. But if the ignorant and well meaning receive any benefit thereby, my end in publishing it will be considerably obtained.

SAMUEL PORTER.

DISCOURSE.

TEXT.—Job xxxii: 10: "I also will show mine opinion."

SOME warm altercation having taken place between Job and his three aged friends, on a subject of importance, Elihu, a junior, steps forward, and after some introductory remarks, informs them in the words of our text, that he also will shew his opinion. From which we observe, that as it has been the custom, so it may be the duty of the junior professors of religion, to shew their opinion concerning controverted points, when those with whom they are concerned are in danger of being misled by error and delusion. Therefore, although my abilities are inadequate to the task of defending truth as it ought to be done, yet the boldness with which the most fundamental errors have lately been exhibited in your hearing, and the overbearing disposition which seems to obtain among those who are enemies to what I call the true religion, appears to be the call of Providence to me, as your minister, to show you my opinion respecting those doctrines which were disputed in your presence, on last Wednesday, between the Rev. John Jameson, of the Associate Reformed Synod, and Mr. Valentine Cook, of the Methodist Episcopal Church. I should have deferred addressing you on the subject, until I had obtained books on the controversy, had it not been my opinion that corroborating circumstances required that I should give you my sentiments, while the dis-

putation was recent in your memory. And as I must now tread disputed ground, where my superiors have gone before me with different success, it becomes me to proceed with caution and humility. And while I desire no credit to be given to my opinion, further than it may appear to you to be supported by reason and revelation, I hope what I may advance on the subject, will have that weight which your candor and impartiality shall pronounce its due.

In addressing you from my text, I design to attend to the following method:

I. SHEW MY OPINION CONCERNING THE DECREES OF GOD, INCLUDING PREDESTINATION.

II. CONCERNING THE FINAL PERSEVERANCE OF THE SAINTS.

III. RESPECTING SINLESS PERFECTION.

But before I proceed to the immediate discussion of the points in question, I shall premise a few things which our opponents will not deny, and by which I design to govern myself in the following discourse.

Firstly. Although there may be some things in divine revelation which reason cannot comprehend, being beyond its reach; yet there is nothing in it contrary to true reason.

Secondly. Reason and revelation form the only standard by which we are to ascertain the quality, and try the purity of religious doctrines.*

Thirdly. The holy scripture must not be taken in a detached capacity, to support any doctrine; it being

* Mr. Porter could not have intended to make reason co-ordinate with revelation, as the standard of truth and duty; but that religious doctrines which were in contradiction to reason and revelation, could not be true.—ED.

a complete system, consistent in all its parts, when carefully compared and properly understood. Therefore, that explanation of scripture which tends to make one part of it contradict another, or destroy the system which it contains, must be wrong, however plausible it may otherwise appear.

Lastly. As the President of the universe, is a God of absolute perfection, delighting in purity, order and uniformity, consequently, that religious system is best, which is most consistent with itself and with the absolute perfections of God; which is best supported by reason, and most agreeable to divine revelation taken systematically.

These things being premised, I now proceed to shew you my opinion concerning the Decrees of God. By the Decrees of God I understand the eternal and immutable determination of Jehovah, by which he has foreordained whatsoever comes to pass; having connected the use of the means with the obtaining of the end, in such a manner, that the rational exercise of the natural powers of the moral agent is not abridged, nor the freedom of choice destroyed. Agreeably to this, we find the scope of divine revelation representing God as having decreed, appointed, foreordained and determined those things which come to pass, according to the independence of his nature, perfection of his wisdom, and counsel of his own will. Acts ii: 23; "Being delivered by the determinate counsel and fore-knowledge of God." 1 Peter i: 20; "Who verily was fore-ordained before the foundation of the world." - Job xiv: 5: "Seeing his days are

determined, the number of his months are with thee; thou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass," Luke xxii: 22: "And truly the Son of man goeth, as it was determined." Job xxxviii: 10: "And brake up for it my decreed place." 2 Chron. xxv: 16: "I know that God has determined to destroy thee." Ps. xxxiii: 11: "The counsel of the Lord standeth forever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations." Eph. i: 11: "According to the purpose of him who worketh all things after to the counsel of his own will." Psalm xi: 7: "I will declare the decree." These, and many other passages of sacred scripture to the same import, plainly exhibit, and abundantly support the doctrine of fore-ordination, teaching us that God has acted according to his own plan, determination and will, in all that he has done, both in general and particular cases. Now, I shall not put these parts of divine revelation on the rack, and torture them, after the manner of my opponents, in order to force them to give testimony in my behalf; but shall submit the evidence which they bring to your judgment.

Reason, also, steps forward, and in the most energetic manner corroborates the testimony of divine revelation, by representing God as independent, self-existent, unchangeable, omnipotent, omniscient, just, &c. acting always according to plan, order, determination and choice. For, to act without order and design, would necessarily imply imperfection and weakness. And as the perfection of the plan depends on the knowledge and skill of the projector, it may be proper to in-

quire if Jehovah is perfect in knowledge; that we may be enabled, on proper principles, to form an opinion of his plan and determination. It is my opinion, that God from all eternity knew all things that ever should come to pass. For if there was any period when Jehovah knew less than he now does, then by the same parity of reason, the time may come when he will lose a part of the knowledge that he now has; for whatever is the subject of addition may be the subject of subtraction, and what can be multiplied may be divided. Besides, if God did not know all things from eternity, then there was a period when he was ignorant, and a time when he received instructions; therefore he must be in a dependant and inferior situation, it being evident, that the pupil is in some degree inferior to and dependant on the preceptor. Moreover, if God at any time obtained knowledge, then he underwent a change at that time, either for the better or the worse; if for the better, then he was once imperfect; if for the worse, then he is now imperfect; all which are absurd and repugnant to reason, revelation, and common sense. Therefore, it appears evident, that God has, and ever had the knowledge of all things that did or shall come to pass. This point being established, it may be proper to inquire whether the fore-knowledge of God is certain or uncertain.

Uncertain fore-knowledge is a term to which there can be no rational idea annexed; for uncertain knowledge concerning things which are to come to pass, is neither more nor less than ignorance. Therefore, it

must be granted that God's knowledge is certain, or admitted that he is ignorant; there is no alternative. Now, certain fore-knowledge owes its very existence to an absolute decree or determination to bring those things to pass which are the objects of fore-knowledge. And as it is self-evident, that whatsoever has not yet existed can never bring itself into existence; unless it can be supposed to exist and not exist, at the same time, or to exist as the cause before it can exist as the effect; therefore, all things which have not yet existed, and shall exist, must owe their existence to some other being. This being the case, that nothing can create itself, but must depend on the will and pleasure of some other being for its existence, it necessarily follows, that there can be no certain fore-knowledge concerning things which are to come to pass, whether they shall ever come to pass or not, but what arises from the determination of some being to bring them to pass. And this determination must be the act and deed of a being of infinite power and wisdom, capable to contrive a proper plan and carry it into execution, in spite of all opposition. For if it was possible that any other being could overthrow his determination, or prevent him from executing his design, then there could be no certainty respecting things which have not yet come to pass. But there is no being of infinite wisdom and power but God. Therefore, God had either a certain and perfect fore-knowledge, from all eternity, of all things that ever did or shall come to pass, because he himself had determined to bring them to pass, and being of one

mind none can turn him, agreeably to the joint testimony of reason and revelation; or it must be admitted that he is ignorant, dependant, imperfect, and changeable. Now, if the troublesome and noisy enemies of the scriptural and rational doctrine of the Decrees, would please to return from their eccentric roving to original ground, and reconcile their doctrine with the immutability, independence, wisdom and power of God, and with the joint testimony of reason, revelation and common sense, then we shall subscribe to their creed; until this is done, I hope they will permit us to believe the doctrine of the Decrees, without abusing us on account of our sentiments.

I shall now proceed to that branch of the doctrine of the Decrees, to which our opponents are most bitterly opposed, viz: The certainty of the salvation of those for whom Christ died.

It is my opinion, that the purchase and application of redemption are of equal extent; or, in other words, that all for whom Christ died will be eternally happy. For the Lord Christ either completely satisfied the demands of the law and justice of God, in behalf of those for whom he died, or he did not. If our opponents say that he did not, I then demand of them to come forward, and shew wherein the imperfection of Christ's obedience consisted, and ascertain the quantity he left undone, for us to do. But if it is admitted, according to the joint testimony of reason and revelation, that the Lord Jesus completely satisfied the demands of the law and justice of God, in behalf of those for whom he died; then, if God shall sentence

to eternal misery any of those persons for whom Christ died, and in whose room and place and on whose account he endured the wrath of God, answering in their names all the demands that were against them, such a sentence must be a flagrant act of injustice. For instance: A certain man is in debt to another; the creditor demands his money; the debtor is not able to pay; the creditor seizes his person, and is carrying him to prison; in the meantime a benevolent friend steps forward and advances the stipulated sum and lifts the bond. Now, if the creditor, notwithstanding that his demands against the debtor were fully answered, should proceed to drag the poor man to prison, and keep him in misery during life, would not such conduct be cruel and unjust in the highest degree? On the other hand, mankind were under the strictest obligation to yield perfect obedience to the law of the moral Governor of the universe; the demands of which are, that men should perform their duty to God and their neighbor, from right principles, in a right manner, and to right ends. Now, although men failed in performing their duty, and consequently became exposed to the penalties of the law, yet the law could not fail to demand perfect obedience; because, the moment it demanded anything less than perfection, it must undergo a change for the worse, and consequently be no longer the perfect law of a holy God. The law, then, continuing to demand that obedience, which man did not, and which in his present circumstances he cannot perform, having destroyed his ability by his own folly, sentence was passed against him, and he became justly ex-

posed to the wrath of God. The Lord Jesus, in the endearing character of Emmanuel God with us, interposed in a very proper time, and in behalf of all, or a number of the human race, endured the wrath of God, which was their due on account of their disobedience, fully satisfying the demands of justice, and paid their debt by his obedience and death.

Now, if God shall send any of these persons to dwell with devouring fire and endless burnings, he must be guilty of cruelty and injustice, contrary to scripture and reason. "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" Moreover, to suppose that God was engaged from eternity in contriving a plan of salvation, but was not certain for whom or what number; and that the divine Mediator endured the wrath of God, and shed his heart's blood in executing that plan, and yet was not certain for whom or what number—whether for all, or any of the human race; such a supposition would lead to charge the Deity with ignorance and folly. Therefore, it must be granted, that either all those for whom Christ died will be eternally happy, and that God was perfectly certain as to their number from all eternity; or it must be admitted, that the Deity is unjust, cruel, ignorant, and destitute of wisdom. I hope from what has been said, it appears abundantly evident, that God will not send any to hell for whom Christ died, and that he is infallibly certain as to the number of those who shall be saved, and that this certainty arises from his own determination, without which there could be no certainty.

It now remains that we inquire, whether all man-

kind will be eternally happy or not. And on this single point the controversy turns. But before I proceed to shew my opinion, it may be proper to observe, that reason cannot ascertain the eternal state of any of the human race; nor can any created being know what will be the issue with respect to men, future events not being within the compass of human knowledge. Therefore, divine revelation is the only source from which we must derive our knowledge concerning the eternal state of mankind

Supported, then, by the authority of the holy scriptures, it is my opinion that only part of the human race will be saved. To support this sentiment divine revelation brings forward a twofold testimony:

1st. That God has predestinated, fore-ordained, elected, chosen, and appointed unto eternal life a certain number of the human race, known only to himself; in the same act and determination, connecting the means and the end, holiness and happiness, in such a manner, that without holiness no man can be happy. 1 Peter i: 2: "Elect according to the fore-knowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience." Rom. viii: 29: "For whom he did fore-know, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son." Eph. i: 4, 5: "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy." "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children." Verse 11: "Being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." 2 Thess. ii: 13: "Because God hath

from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth." Rom. viii: 33: "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?" Mark xiii: 20: "But for the elect's sake, whom he hath chosen, he hath shortened the days." John xv: 19: "Ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world." John xvii: 9: "I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me." And many other passages of scripture to the same purpose, which without strain or force support the sentiment I have advanced.

2d. The scripture holds forth, that a number of mankind will be eternally damned. Mark xvi: 16: "But he that believeth not shall be damned." Mark iii: 29: "But is in danger of eternal damnation." Luke iii: 17: "But the chaff he will burn with fire unquenchable." Matt. xxv: 41: "Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." Verse 46: "And these shall go away into everlasting punishment." Rev. xiv: 11: "And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up forever and ever." And many more to the same purpose.

Here we meet the flimsy criticisms of the Universalists, who inform us that the words forever and ever, eternal and everlasting, do not imply endless duration. To which I reply, that if we should give up reason, grammar, and common sense, to the *ipse dixit* of those gentlemen, their own explanation of these words will not help their cause in the least. For if the words

forever and ever, eternal and everlasting, do not imply endless duration, then they cannot prove the eternity of God, and the endless happiness of the saints. For the very same words which are used to prove the endless misery of the finally impenitent, are used to prove the eternity of God and the everlasting happiness of the saints. And if these words do not imply endless duration, then there is no heaven nor place of endless happiness, to which Universalists may take their devils and finally impenitent sinners; nor is there any eternal God to make them eternally happy. Consequently their scheme falls to the ground; and if the words are taken in their plain natural sense, Universalism cannot stand.

It being now established, by this twofold scriptural testimony, that only a part of mankind shall be saved, it necessarily follows, that either Christ shed his blood for those only whom God determined to bring to everlasting life and glory; or he shed his blood for many who will be eternally damned. And as we are now upon original ground, I call upon the enemies of Predestination to come forward and demonstrate the consistency of their doctrine, viz: that God will send millions to hell for whom Christ died—with the knowledge, wisdom, goodness, and justice of God. Until this is done, we beg leave to differ from them and think for ourselves.

Having now established the doctrine of the Decrees, on first principles, and demonstrated the opposite scheme to be inconsistent with the perfections of God; and having taken that ground which I humbly con-

ceive I am able to maintain; I might with propriety dismiss the subject. But as our opponents have never dared to meet the doctrine of the Decrees on original ground, always contenting themselves with misrepresentation, and abusing the doctrine in a desultory manner, representing it as the doctrine of devils, both from the pulpit and the press; I shall venture to meet the formidable host of their objections, as they advance to the controversy.

Objection: All mankind were seminally in Adam; Christ died for Adam; therefore Christ died for all mankind. Consequently, there is no such thing as Predestination.

I answer: All mankind were seminally in Adam; but Adam had a coat of skins; therefore all mankind have coats of skins. All mankind were seminally in Adam; but Adam is in heaven; therefore all mankind are in heaven. Now, I have proved that all mankind are in heaven, and that they are dressed in coats of skins, by the same strength of argument with which the objection proves that Christ died for all mankind, and consequently that there is no Predestination. For the honor of human nature, I would not have believed it possible that any rational creature would have brought forward such an objection, had I not been present when this objection was brought forward by an eminent preacher and warrior, in order to overthrow the doctrine of the Decrees.

Objection: The doctrine of the Decrees reduces men to mere machines.

I answer: The reverse is the case; the means and

the end being inseparably connected in the Decree, so that the end cannot be obtained without the use of the means. Paul, that rigid Predestinarian, acknowledged this. For after he had told his ship companions, that the Angel of the Lord had informed him that God had given him the lives of all that were with him in the ship, so that none of them should be lost; yet he declared, that except the seamen should abide in the ship, they could not be saved. Moreover, instead of the Decree destroying moral agency, it effectually secures it. The means and the end, holiness and happiness, final impenitency and eternal misery, are inseparably connected in the Decree, as it respects each of these particulars. So that, without the use of the means we cannot obtain the end; without holiness we cannot be happy; without sin we cannot be miserable. Therefore the doctrine of the Decrees secures moral agency, and is an enemy to Antinomianism. Nor has the Decree any undue influence on the human will, in its determinations; it being evident that all objects of volition must first be objects of perception; or in other words, before anything can be the object of the choice of the will, it must approach by the door of the understanding; it being impossible that the will should perform any volitions, or acts of choice, respecting anything of which the soul has no idea. Now, man is entirely ignorant of the Decrees of God respecting future events. These Decrees are not revealed, and therefore cannot be the objects of human perception or knowledge; consequently, they have no irrational or undue influence on the determinations of the will. For although we must believe the doctrine of the De-

crees, if we believe that there is a God of absolute perfection; yet, as the Decrees of God are not revealed, they cannot be the rule of our duty; therefore, we are to act as rational creatures in all that we do, sacred or civil.

Objection: Reconcile the sincerity of God, in the gospel offer to all, with the doctrine of Predestination.

Answer: I am surprised that our opponents should raise this objection, as their main battery against the Decrees, without considering that it bears equally hard upon their own scheme. For, say they, God commands the gospel to be offered to all; yet he knows who will be damned. Now, it is as hard to reconcile the sincerity of God, in offering the gospel to those whom he knows will be damned, as to those whom he did not choose in Christ unto eternal life. Therefore, whenever they will reconcile the sincerity of God, in the gospel offer, with their own scheme, then the objection will come from them with some propriety; until this is done, I hope they will have so much candor as never to name this objection, lest people laugh at their weakness. Although I might pass from this objection without any further reply, yet I proceed to observe, that there are many things in the divine procedure, which we cannot comprehend in our present imperfect state. "The ways of God are in the deep, and his paths in the mighty waters; who by searching can find out the Almighty to perfection?" To us he is not accountable for what he does; who may say unto him, what doest thou? But when we have reason to believe that God does anything, we ought to believe

it is well done, although we may not be able to comprehend everything concerning it. And whatever is revealed in the word of God we have the strongest reason to believe, although we cannot comprehend it; for the word of the Strength of Israel, who cannot lie, is the surest foundation of faith. And whatever we can demonstrate by reason, if we keep our reason in subordination to the word of God, we ought to believe, even though we may not be able to comprehend all the circumstances, or answer all the objections which might be brought against it. For I expect it will be granted, that we have not our knowledge by intuition, but obtain it by reasoning from the effect to the cause, and by comparing one thing with another. Hence, when we consider the brightness and extent of truth, and the weakness of our own perceptive powers, we may be led to doubt whether we can comprehend any truth; at least, we must conclude that there are some truths which we cannot fully comprehend. Therefore, as soon as we obtain sufficient testimony, from revelation and reason, to convince us that anything is true, we ought to admit it as such; although we may not be able fully to comprehend the doctrine, or reconcile every attending difficulty. To us it is enough, if the doctrine is revealed in God's word, and supported by reason, on reasonable principles. Now, as it is self-evident, that God must be independent, self-existent, unchangeable, omnipotent, perfect in wisdom, knowledge, justice, &c. then it is also evident, that he has not only determined all things which come to pass, as hath been already demonstrated from reason and reve-

lation, but is himself the great First Cause of all things which do exist; since nothing can be the cause of its own existence, nor the reason of its own coming to pass. God has also, in divine revelation, expressly commanded his servants to preach the gospel to every creature, and pledged his royal word, that whosoever comes unto him, he will in no wise cast out. Nor has God ever given the least evidence of insincerity, by refusing to admit any of the human race, who came to him in the way of his own appointment. Yea, he gives the strongest evidence of his sincerity, by addressing the reason of sinners, in the gospel dispensation, using arguments well calculated to work on both the hopes and fears of moral agents. So that men must confess, that the arguments which cause their choice to preponderate in favor of sin, are not half so strong as those which God proposes against it. These are facts which we cannot deny, if we believe the existence of a God of absolute perfection, and the authenticity of the Bible. As to any difficulty which may arise in reconciling these things, God is not requiring that task at our hand, it being our indispensable duty to credit those facts, which reason and revelation have firmly established, submitting those things, which we cannot comprehend, to the sovereignty of that God, who is capable of answering for himself, to those who may make it their business to call him to an account for his conduct.

Objection: It is said in scripture that Christ died for all.

I answer: That although the word *all* is a universal term, yet it is scarcely ever used in scripture, but

in a restricted sense. For instance, Eve is said to be the mother of all living, yet, it is evident that she is not the mother of the angelic and animal creation; but only the mother of the human race. God has expressly said, six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work. Now the word all must be taken here in a restricted sense, otherwise men must finish all their work in six days, and work no more until the day of their death, under pain of breaking the fourth commandment. It is also said in scripture, "them that sin, rebuke before all." Now the word all must either be restricted to all the church, or congregation, or the Apostle's meaning was, that sinners must be rebuked in the presence of, or before all men, angels, devils, beasts, trees, birds, &c. Christ also commanded his Apostles to preach the gospel to every creature. Now the word every, must be understood here in a restricted sense; or the preachers of the gospel must follow the example of Saint Anthony, and preach to the fishes, also to every creature, rational and irrational, animate and inanimate. Moreover, Paul expressly said, he could do all things. Now it is evident that he could not create worlds, forgive sin, or govern the universe, with an hundred instances more, which might be added. Therefore we conclude that the words *all* and *every*, in scripture, are generally under restriction, and must always be taken, and understood, in that sense, which is most consistent with the general scope of the scripture. It being evident, that any explanation of any part of the scripture, which contradicts the general sense of divine revelation, and opposes the joint testi-

mony of reason and revelation, must not be admitted, however plausible it may otherwise appear to be. Now, our opponents will not deny, that reason and revelation concur in representing God as a God of absolute perfection and strict justice. But if the words *all* and *every*, in those texts to which the objection refers, are to be taken as extending to all the human race; and if the meaning is, that Christ satisfied the demands of law and justice, by making an atonement for the sins of all mankind; then God is cruelly unjust, in sending to hell any of those for whom Christ died. But God cannot be unjust; therefore the word *all*, must be used in that restricted sense which is most consistent with the joint and uniform testimony of reason and revelation. Indeed, I do not deny that all mankind derive advantages from Christ's death, and that in this sense he may be said to die for all; but I deny that any will be eternally damned for whom Christ made atonement. If our opponents will not agree with me, they must subscribe to the doctrine of the Universalists; there being no alternative but Predestination, or universal salvation. If they will do neither, let them reconcile the justice of God, with his sending millions to hell for whom Christ satisfied to the full; and when this is done, I shall become a convert to their religion. However, I cannot help observing, that argument must be scarce with our opponents, when they lay so much weight upon, and keep so much noise about one single word, whose signification entirely depends on its connections.

Objection: If God is certain as to the number of those

that shall be saved, and if he has exercised any choice respecting that number, then he is partial and unjust:

For my part, I am well pleased, that God should be infallibly certain as to the number of those who shall be saved; nor have I any objections to his having the choice of those whom he adopts into his own family, to dwell with him forever: because I conceive, that he is as capable to transact his own business, as any one is to direct him. But, as our opponents dare not trust God in this important affair; and will not permit him to have this liberty, without stigmatizing his character with partiality and injustice, I proceed to reply in his behalf; that God's choosing to treat a certain number of rebel sinners better than they deserve, and bring them to everlasting life and endless happiness, on account of the meritorious obedience and prevalent intercession of the Lord Jesus Christ, is neither partial nor unjust; unless it can be made appear that God is under obligations to the finally impenitent, which he did not perform, and has not treated them according to their merit. Therefore, before our self-important opponents arraign Jehovah at their bar, and condemn him to act without determination, certainty and choice, or—sad alternative!—to act with partiality and injustice; it would be highly expedient that they bring forward sufficient testimony to support the charge, and prove that God, by his determination and choice, has invaded the rights of the human race, or treated them worse than they deserve. Until this is done, I shall remain of the opinion of an old Predestinarian, who said—“Whom God did foreknow, he

also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son."

Objection: If God has fore-ordained all things that come to pass, then he is the author of sin; for sin is one of those things which come to pass: consequently, God is worse than the devil; for the devil only commits his own sin and tempts others.

To which I reply: That as those gentlemen, in their arguments on the subject, are fond of representing sin as some kind of being, and as the force of the objection entirely depends on this single point,—viz: whether sin is any kind of being, substance, or thing, or not—it will be necessary that we have this point ascertained, that we may decide with precision. And as many of our opponents have attained to sinless perfection, by killing sin, they have had the opportunity of dissecting it, and are well qualified for demonstrating its qualities.

I therefore inquire, is sin self-existent or created? material or immaterial? If material, what are its dimensions and local situation? If immaterial, what are its faculties and powers? Is it an accountable being? If so, what law is it under? If our opponents would please to ascertain these points, the argument would be easily issued; and I would be much obliged to them for light on the subject. Until this is obtained, I shall remain of the opinion, that sin is not a being, dependant or independent; that it is neither any kind of an action, nor any essential part of any action;

*" Sin is any want of conformity unto or transgression of the law of God"—
 "the want of original righteousness, and the corruption of his whole nature."—
Short. Cat. [E]

but merely a want of perfection in moral agents.* Now, this sin, or want of perfection, extends to the motives which influence moral agents, or reasonable creatures, to the ends which they propose, and the manner in which they perform their actions. Therefore, whenever the motives which influence the moral agent, the end which he proposes, and the manner in which he performs an action, are imperfect, then the action is justly denominated a sinful action. On the other hand, when the motives which actuate the moral agent, the ends which he proposes, and the manner in which the action is performed, are all perfectly upright, then the action is justly called a good action. Consequently, the difference between good and bad actions, arises from the reference which the action has to the moral law, and from the motives and ends of the moral agent, and the manner of performing the action. Hence, the same action may be good at one time and evil at another, according to the perfection or imperfection of the motives, manner and designs of the moral agent. For instance, I meet a murderer who has killed many innocent men; he attempts to kill me; I attempt to escape, but all in vain. I then draw my sword and run him through the heart, and he instantly expires. I then proceed on my way, and am met by an innocent man, who never did me an injury. I run him through the heart with the same sword, and he instantly expires. Now, here the action was the same; the same sword and arm pierced the men in the same part of the body, and death was the consequence to both: and yet, in the one instance the action was good and commendable, and in the other it was a

sinful, murdering action; the evil arising not from the action itself, simply considered, which was just the same with that of killing the man in self-defence, but from the evil disposition of the person who killed the innocent man. Therefore, it is my opinion, that although God has decreed all things and actions which come to pass, yet he is not the author of sin. Because sin is not an essential part of any action or thing, being no more than a want of perfection, arising from the evil disposition of the moral agent or performer of the action, on account of which the action is justly termed an evil or sinful action. Moreover, God cannot be the author of sin. At what tribunal shall he be arraigned?—by what law condemned?

I confess it appears strange to me, that our opponents, who pretend to be such friends to the liberty of choice among men, that they allow the very Hottentots and savages can resist the Spirit of God, and do what they please, according to the unbounded freedom of their own will, and agreeably to their own choice; and yet, when we plead in behalf of the amiable and glorious President of the universe, that he has a right to act according to order, determination and choice; they raise the hue and cry against us, and declare that Jehovah must act without any certain plan, decree, determination or choice, or he must be the author of sin and worse than the devil. They will not permit him to have any other alternative, and will represent his friends as the vilest of monsters, if they plead for that liberty to him, which these gentlemen will allow to the worst of savages.

These are my sentiments respecting the Decrees of God; but as I have never yet attained to that perfection which raises men above the possibility of error and mistake, whenever the enemies of this doctrine shall reduce their scheme to first principles, and demonstrate it to be more consistent with the absolute perfections of God, and better supported by reason and revelation than mine is, I shall give up with the Decrees. Until this is done, I hope they will excuse me, if I remain tenacious of the doctrine, and determined to abhor that scheme which condemns God to act without perfect knowledge, certainty, determination, plan, freedom or choice; and at the same time raises men above God, by holding forth that the vilest wretches on earth can do what they please, and act according to their own will and pleasure, in spite of the most powerful opposition of the Spirit of God. Dagon, when prostrate on the threshold, was not in a more lowly position than these men place the God of Israel. Behold him sitting at the feet of men, having no plan of his own, and ignorant of what they are about to do, until they are pleased to inform him; and incapable to hinder them from doing what they please!

I am now to show you my opinion concerning the Perseverance of the Saints.

Taking it for granted, that you understand the import of the word perseverance, I proceed to observe, that it is my opinion, that all those who have been effectually called, united to Christ, made the subjects of saving grace, and have enjoyed communion and fellowship with the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, in

the church militant, shall be eternally happy, and have communion with God forever, in the church triumphant. Or, in other words, none of those who are the subjects of God's saving grace, and the objects of his peculiar favor, attention and regard, shall fall from grace and be eternally damned. This charming and lovely doctrine, supported by reason and revelation, serenely raises its head above the clouds, and with a smiling countenance looks forward to eternity, not doubting the word and promise of the Strength of Israel, who will not lie, and who is not man that he should repent,—1 Sam. xv: 29. Fond of supporting this doctrine, the Apostle Paul, that champion of the religion of Jesus of Nazareth, steps forward and informs us, in Romans viii: 38, 39, that he is "persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." This text alone, is sufficient to prove that true believers cannot fall from grace; and that they will never be separated from the love of God, nor from the God whom they love. Nor can any unprejudiced person imagine that the Apostle had anything else in view, in this chapter. But our opponents, being angry at God for determining to send the finally impenitent to hell, have determined to take satisfaction, by sending thousands of his children along to keep them company. And in order to obtain this valuable end, they put the Apostle's words on the rack, and shew them no more mercy

than the Spanish Inquisition does to heretics; and when they have finished the operation, the amount of their conclusion is this: That although Paul amused believers, by informing them that nothing could separate them from the God whom they loved, neither angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor life, nor death, nor things present, nor things to come; yet he was deceiving them, for he did not name sin, and he knew it could and would carry thousands of them to hell, in spite of all opposition. Reason and common sense start back affrighted, at such gross perversion of scripture. And I am persuaded, that if Paul was alive, our opponents durst not tell him that such was his meaning in the passage quoted. But if any further evidence is required, we have the testimony of our Lord Jesus in support of the doctrine of the Perseverance of the saints. John x: 28, 29: "And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand." "And none is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." But our opponents, finding that some of our Bibles have the words any man and no man, in place of the words any and none, in the verses quoted, they tell us, that although no man can take believers out of Christ's hand, or out of the hand of his Father, yet the devil can take them from Christ and his Father, and carry them to everlasting misery; and has already given the most striking demonstration of his power, by carrying thousands to hell, who once were true believers. To this I reply: That the word man is not to be found in these verses, in

the original, and is improperly added in some of our Bibles. But passing this, the argument can have no weight; for Paul, in the above quoted text, expressly says, that angels cannot separate believers from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Now, the devil is an angel; consequently, he cannot pluck believers out of Christ's hand, nor out of the hand of of his Father. They must have a passionate fondness for that doctrine which sends believers to everlasting perdition, who cannot see that our Lord, in this sacred passage, clearly demonstrates the perfect security and eternal safety of true believers, whose defence is the Almighty, and whose refuge the Most High. Also, Heb. xiii: 5: "For he hath said, I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." Prov. iv: 18: "But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." John iv: 14: "But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him, shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." I might add many other passages of scripture to the same purpose; but it is unnecessary to enumerate them; because the scope of the scripture holds forth the safety and happiness of those who have made the Most High their habitation, and taken shelter under the shadow of the wings of the Omnipotent.

Reason also, with a smiling countenance, steps forward, and informs us that if Jehovah becomes a covenant breaking God, and deceives those who have ventured their salvation on his word and promise, loved him with all their hearts, forsaking father,

mother, house and lands for his name's sake, if required, expecting to dwell eternally with him in the regions of bliss beyond the grave; in those mansions purchased for them by the blood of their Redeemer, who has taken possession of them in their name, and promised that where he is, there they shall be also—I say, reason informs us, that if after all this, God deceives his own children, tears them from his bosom, expels them from his family, and notwithstanding their heart piercing cries, and the intercession of his well beloved Son, who pleads in their behalf before the throne, shall plunge them into everlasting misery; such conduct must be owing to cruelty, weakness or want of wisdom. Moreover, if God contrived a plan of salvation, for the purpose of saving sinners from sin and Satan; if Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, executed that plan, at an infinite expense; and if the co-equal Spirit of God has, by the exertion of almighty power, delivered a number of sinners from under the dominion of sin and Satan, made them subjects of saving grace, and objects of Jehovah's peculiar favor and regard—which I expect will be granted—then it is evident, that if after all this, sin and Satan can drag all or any of those persons, whom I call believers, from between the arms of the love and faithfulness of that God “who so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him might not perish, but have everlasting life;” it must be owing to a defect in the wisdom or power of God. For, if God had wisdom to contrive a proper and sufficient plan of salvation, and if he

has wisdom and power to execute that plan with energy and propriety; then it is evident that he never will permit sin and Satan to counteract his plan, by dragging his children out of his bosom into everlasting misery. Besides, if the power and wisdom of God are not adequate to the protection of believers on earth, believers cannot be protected in heaven; unless it can be made appear that God is stronger in heaven than on earth. Therefore, Satan may go to heaven and take from thence any believer he pleases; and if there are any believers yet in heaven, or on earth, who have not been carried away into everlasting misery, they may thank sin and Satan for the favor, and not God, who was either not able or not willing to protect them. Now, if God is not able to protect his children, then he is ignorant and weak; if he is not willing, then he is a cruel deceiver; because he has uttered in his word the warmest expressions of love, and made the largest promises to his children; declaring that the mountains might depart, and the hills be removed, but he would never depart from them, nor remove his loving kindness. Therefore, it must be granted, that God will not permit Satan and sin to carry any of his dear children into everlasting misery; or admitted that he is ignorant, cruel, unjust, deceitful and weak. There is no alternative. This is undoubtedly original ground; and since our opponents have forced us to draw the sword in our own defence, on this ground we meet them, in order to decide the controversy. But I am aware; that rather than meet us on this ground, our opponents will venture to lay

aside the cloak of their pretensions, to obtain salvation on account of the perfect obedience of the Lord Jesus Christ, which has long hung loose about their shoulders, and inform us that man's standing is entirely in his own hand. On this ground, also, we meet them. Therefore, the debate assumes a new appearance, and we must again have recourse to first principles, in order to decide with propriety.

I then proceed to observe, that it is self-evident to all who believe that there is a Devil, that he is disposed to do mankind all the injury in his power; and that if his power was adequate to his malevolent disposition, he would drag all the human race to hell, and torment them forever. It only remains to be ascertained, whether our opponents and such believers as them, who choose to have their standing in their own hand, or sin and Satan are the strongest. The argument hinges on this single point. If this sort of believers are strongest, then they will get to heaven; but if sin and Satan are strongest, then all these believers will be carried to hell. I suppose it will be readily granted that our progenitors, Adam and Eve, were as strong, and as likely to go to heaven, in spite of sin and Satan, as any of these believers are, whose standing is in their own hand. But sin and Satan proved stronger than they, and overcame them. Therefore, we conclude that sin and Satan are stronger than these self-supported believers; consequently, not one of them will get to heaven. For, if God will not protect them, and if they are not able to defend themselves from their powerful enemies, then perish

they must. Now, I am surprised that our opponents do not lay aside preaching altogether. To what purpose do they encompass sea and land to make proselytes, torment sinners before their time, and boast of the number of their converts, when sin and Satan can carry them to hell as fast as they can convert them. The result of all is this, that either all believers have their standing in Christ, their new covenant head, having their lives hid with Christ in God, and cannot fall into eternal misery, according to the joint testimony of reason and revelation; or all believers have their standing in their own hand, and consequently will be eternally damned; unless it can be made appear that they are stronger than sin and Satan, which we presume can never be done. It is my opinion that the strongest believer on earth, could not stand one moment against the united attacks of sin and Satan, were he left to himself, or his standing in his own hand. Says Christ, "without me ye can do nothing." Therefore, while our opponents proudly march through this world, supported by their own strength, and boasting that they can do all that God requires of them, let us, conscious of our own weakness, go up from this wilderness, humbly leaning on Jesus, the beloved of our souls; saying, "In the Lord have we righteousness and strength."

Having shewed my opinion respecting the final perseverance of the saints, and established the doctrine on these principles, viz: that it would be perfectly inconsistent with the veracity, justice, power, wisdom and love of God, to send any to hell for whom Christ

died, and to whom he has promised that he will never leave nor forsake them; and that if any of the children of God perish everlastingly, then the Deity may be charged with deceit, injustice, ignorance, cruelty and weakness. Having also supported the sentiment by abundant testimony from divine revelation, I now proceed to take notice of those objections brought forward by our opponents, by which they hope to overthrow this precious and lovely doctrine, and open the door to everlasting misery, that they may have the opportunity of thrusting many thousands of the children of God into the gloomy regions of everlasting darkness. I have many times enquired what can be the reason that our opponents are so strenuously set upon this doctrine of sending believers to hell; but my inquiry has been vain.

Objection: Saul and Judas were true believers; but they fell from grace, and are now burning in hell: Therefore, true believers may be eternally damned.

To this I reply: That although our opponents may be accustomed to make use of noise in place of sentiment, it will not do with us; we expect argument. Therefore, whenever they shall prove that Saul and Judas were once true believers, or, in other words, subjects of saving grace, and that they are now in hell, then the objection will deserve attention. Until that time, I hope they will excuse us, if we treat their assertions, suppositions and possibilities as they deserve, when offered to us in place of argument; and desire them to bring forward facts in testimony against this doctrine, or acknowledge they cannot overthrow it.

Objection: Many passages of scripture seem to hold forth the doctrine of falling from grace.

I answer: The whole scope of divine revelation holds forth the opposite doctrine, so plainly and strongly, that it is scarcely possible to misconstrue it. Nor is there one text in the Bible that holds forth that any of the children of God will be eternally damned. But as our opponents make a great noise about Hebrews vi: 4, 5, 6: I shall make a few strictures on this passage of sacred scripture. The point to be ascertained is, whether those persons were true believers or not, of whom Paul spoke in these verses. On this point the argument will turn. Now, I am of opinion, that without straining or torturing one single word in this chapter, it will appear that the Apostle, instead of proving that believers may fall away and be eternally damned, has carefully and firmly established the opposite doctrine, and that by a twofold testimony.

First: That those persons spoken of in the 4th, 5th and 6th verses, who were the subjects of great privileges, high attainments, and much joy, and yet might be guilty of the sin against the Holy Ghost, or apostatize from truth so far and in such a manner, as never to be renewed again to repentance, were not true believers, but very different from them. This difference is abundantly held forth in verses 7 and 8: "For the earth, which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God. But that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and

is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned." As if he had said, "by their fruits ye shall know them." For, as that part of the earth which drinketh in the rain, and is the subject of cultivation, bringeth forth herbs or fruit, and is blessed of God; so believers who enjoy the means of grace, the privileges of the gospel, and the waterings of divine influence, bring forth fruit unto God the great husbandman, and meet with his approbation. But as that part of the earth which, though it may receive the benefit of the rain and culture, yet on account of its sterile, barren disposition, brings forth only briers and thorns, is rejected, the end whereof is to be burned; so those blazing professors, who have high attainments, enjoyed many precious privileges, had great hopes of heaven, and consequently much joy in the prospect thereof, yet manifest their unrenewed and sterile disposition, by bringing forth the briers and thorns of evil works, and apostacy from God and religion; such are exposed to the curse of God, they are to be burned, nor can they be renewed again to repentance. Now, if the words of our Lord are to be believed, when he says that a good tree bringeth forth good fruit, and an evil tree evil fruit, then these persons, notwithstanding their attainments, proved that they were evil, by the briers and thorns which they brought forth; consequently they were not true believers, but apostatized hypocrites.

Secondly: Lest what the Apostle here said concerning the certain destruction of these who might apostatize from the true religion, and demonstrate to

the world by their practice that they never were united to Christ, and that all their joys were only like these which the stony ground hearers experienced—lest this might stagger the faith of weak believers, he proceeds to inform them that he hopes better things of them, and shews them what the grounds of his encouragement are. Ver. 9, 10, 16, 17, 18, 19. “But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation.” “For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labor of love.” “For men verily swear by the greater, and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife. Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath. That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil.”

Now, upon what ground was the Apostle persuaded better things of believers, even things that accompany salvation? Wherein does it appear that God did not forget their work and labor of love? And what sure and stedfast hope could they have, who had fled for refuge to the Lord Christ? What strong consolation could there be to the heirs of promise? And for what purpose did God show unto them the immutability of his counsel, confirming his promise by an oath, if after all this, the heirs of promise may be damned? Therefore, we conclude, that either God and Paul were

engaged in mocking believers, in this chapter, and that the meaning is, that believers ought to have strong consolation and hope, as an anchor of the soul, sure and stedfast, fastened on Christ within the veil: and at the same time firmly believe that they may go to hell, and dwell forever with devouring fire and everlasting burnings. Or the meaning is, that these persons, of whom it is said that they may fall away, are only hypocritical professors, who, notwithstanding their high attainments, are in great danger of falling into perdition; but the children of God, being the heirs of promise, have the most strong consolation and firm hope, founded on the immutable counsel, promise and oath of the God of Israel, who cannot lie, and who is not unrighteous to forget their work and labor of love. But the first cannot be true, being inconsistent with the general scope of the scripture, and contrary to the perfection of God, who never mocked or deceived true believers. Therefore, we conclude that the latter is true, and that instead of any part of this chapter proving that believers will perish everlastingly, it contains undeniable evidence in support of the perseverance of the saints. Moreover, the Apostle Paul, in all his epistles, speaks so confidently of the certainty of the eternal happiness of true believers, that he cannot be supposed to contradict himself here, and become the teacher of the gloomy, miserable, irrational doctrine of falling from grace. Nor is the objection which our opponents bring from Heb. x: 29: of any importance. For the word sanctified, about which they keep so much noise, signifies dedica-

ted, or set apart for sacred use, the word sanctification being more frequently used in scripture, for dedication or setting apart, than for any other purpose. Now, in that sense, many may be sanctified or dedicated to God, who never loved him; and so may perish everlastingly. Besides, if we attend to the relative and the antecedent, as they stand connected in the above quoted verse, we will readily discover, that the term sanctified, in that place, does not by any means refer to believers.

But I am surprised that our opponents should attempt to bring forward testimony from Paul's writings, in support of this or any other of their distinguishing doctrines. Because Paul and they are at present on very unfriendly terms. For, if we should lay aside our reason for a time, and suppose, with our opponents, that Paul in the sixth of the Hebrews, approved of the doctrine of falling from grace, yet he in that chapter expressly holds forth, that it is impossible for such as thus fall to renew them again to repentance: consequently, according to our opponents' own explanation, these persons who fall from grace, will be eternally damned; for if they fall, and do not become the subjects of repentance, then they must perish. Now, admitting that Paul has taught the doctrine of falling from grace, in the above quoted chapter, he has clearly taught, as has been already demonstrated, that those who fall will perish eternally. But our opponents, in the Philadelphia edition of their Government and Discipline, expressly give Paul the lie, and say that those who fall, even from a state of

perfection, may be renewed again and again. Therefore, I am of opinion, that either Paul or they must become the subjects of reformation, before they can have much communion with each other.

Objection: The doctrine of the final and certain perseverance of the saints, opens a door to licentiousness, by weakening the motives to obedience.

I answer: The reverse is the case. For God has connected the means and the end together, communicating that grace by which his children are enabled to persevere in his service unto the end, through the medium of divine ordinances; which, as so many conduit pipes, convey the sacred and vital influence, from the great reservoir of the covenant of grace to the souls of true believers. And on these ordinances God has required his children to attend, in order to receive necessary communications of that strength by which they are enabled to quench the fiery darts of the Devil, and eventually become conquerors, and more than conquerors, through him that loved them. Thus the use of the means is necessary, being connected with the obtaining of the end. Hence those who would have communion with God, must attend upon divine institutions for that purpose. And when the children of God act improperly or become lazy in his service, their heavenly Father chastises them for their profit; but never takes away his loving kindness, nor alters the words which have gone out of his mouth. Therefore, while our opponents drag their christians to the duties of religion, as slaves to the service of an austere master, actuated by motives of terror and

fear of punishment, true believers, being actuated by the noble motives of love and reverence to their heavenly Father, delight in his service, and find drawing near to God, in the discharge of commanded duty, to be their sweet employment; making the law of God the rule of their life and conversation, and his statutes their songs in the house of their pilgrimage. The language of their hearts is to the following import: "We love our heavenly Father, who looked in pity upon us in our low estate, and contrived a method of salvation suited to our circumstances, and consistent with the perfections of his nature. We love our divine Redeemer, our elder brother, Jesus, who redeemed us by his blood, and drank the cup of his Father's wrath, that we might drink out of the cup of consolation to all eternity. We love the Holy Ghost, who in the day of almighty power, sweetly persuaded and enabled us to lay down the weapons of our rebellion, and accept of Jesus Christ, as freely offered to us in the gospel. We love our divine Master, his service, his children and servants. We believe his promises, and that however unworthy in ourselves, yet on account of what our Redeemer has done, we shall be heirs and joint heirs with him. We have unlimited confidence in the Lord who changeth not, and know that he is able to keep our souls which we have committed to him. Therefore, bound by the indisputable ties of love and gratitude, we shall, through divine grace, serve our God with cheerfulness and delight; and when our work and warfare is ended, we expect, through the riches of sovereign grace, to join the

ransomed of the Lord, in that country where love unmerited, almighty and eternal, reigns triumphant in the hearts of the blessed inhabitants, who in songs celebrate the praises of that God who never deceived any that trust in him." Now, the slave that inwardly hates God, and only serves him while the whip of eternal misery is brandished over his head, can have no such strong incentives to obedience as those which I have mentioned; nor can he please God by his service, or persevere in it; for as soon as the paroxism of his terror is over, he quits the service of God. Having no stronger motive to influence his service, than the fear of hell, when the strength of that motive subsides, so does the effect which it produced; it being evident that the effect cannot exceed the cause. And this is the reason why so many of the converts of our opponents fall from grace. For, whenever their preachers come amongst the ignorant, they dwell upon the terrors of the law of God, without opening up the nature of either the law or the gospel; they distort their countenances, grin, stamp, bawl and groan, until the minds of the weaker sort are greatly agitated; and then, instead of opening up the nature of the covenant of grace, and leading the poor and distressed souls to the Lord Jesus Christ for righteousness and strength, they lead them to the covenant of works methodized, and set the poor creatures to work out their own salvation, in their own strength, telling them that their ability is adequate to the task. And, as this doctrine is pleasing to the native pride of the human heart, the affrighted creatures swallow it greedily,

commence the business, convert themselves, and soon become so intoxicated with conceit, as to think they can live without sin; while at the same time their conceit is supported by their ignorance of the law, the gospel, and their own hearts. But, as these motives to obedience soon subside, these converts fall away by hundreds and thousands, turning again to their old vicious practices. Therefore, the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints, instead of opening a door to licentiousness, affords the strongest and most permanent incentives to obedience and morality. I am surprised that our opponents should amuse and deceive mankind, with their talk about free grace, and Christ's righteousness. Cannot they tell us at once, that Christ has enabled us and all mankind to save ourselves, and we have no more to do with him, but can justify and sanctify ourselves when we please, and stand or fall, just as we choose? Their printed principles mean this, if they mean anything; and yet they twist and hide them from the people as much as possible.

Objection: The Rev. Henry Pattillo, a Presbyterian minister, in a book lately published in his name, has inserted a note at the bottom of one of the pages, wherein he argues strongly in favor of the possibility of the Mediator's sinning or falling from perfection, during the time he was exposed to temptation on earth. Hence, if the Mediator might have fallen, may not believers? As this objection has been really offered by our opponents, it deserves our particular attention.

I answer: That although I am not acquainted with the Rev. gentleman mentioned in the objection, yet I have perused the note to which the reference is made, with the greatest care, and must say, that it does not contain scriptural or Presbyterian principles. Therefore, I openly testify against the doctrine which that note contains, as dangerous, ill-founded and unscriptural. And I am persuaded that I speak the sentiments of the Presbyterian church in North America. Nor do I believe that the judicatories of the Presbyterian church would have passed over that note, without taking cognizance of the author, had it not been that the Rev. gentleman did not mention the doctrine as his own opinion, but as a supposable case, in behalf of which he adduced some arguments. Therefore, as we deny the doctrine on which the objection is founded, the objection necessarily falls to the ground.

Objection: The doctrine of the perseverance of the saints cannot be proved from scripture; because all those passages of scripture, in the Old Testament, which treat of perseverance, were spoken primarily to David and the Old Testament church, and those passages to the same purpose in the New Testament, were spoken primarily to the disciples and believers in that day. Consequently, these things were confined to them, and have no reference to us.

To this I reply: That by the same parity of reason, we have no more to do with the Old and New Testaments than with the Alcoran; for all the doctrines contained in the Bible had a reference, in a greater or less

degree, to those to whom they were immediately delivered, and consequently they have no reference to us. Therefore, we may lay aside the word of God altogether. But before I pass from this doctrine, I must say, that I am sorry for the advocates of that gloomy, miserable, joyless, cruel religion; who, not content with sending to hell the unregenerate, for whom they say Christ shed his blood and endured divine wrath, proceed to open the door to endless misery, and thrust in the children of God by hundreds and by thousands. Ah! will nothing satisfy the cruel Moloch of their religion but the purchase of Christ's blood—the children of the King of heaven, to burn in its brazen arms to all eternity? Infatuated people! my heart bleeds for them and their poor deluded followers. May the Lord forgive them, and reform them, for they know not what they do.

I am now, lastly, to give you my opinion concerning Sinless Perfection; or, in other words, whether a man may live in this world days, months and years, without sin.

It is my opinion, that in the very moment a man is regenerated and united to Christ, he commences soldier; and, armed in panoply divine, marches forth against his spiritual enemies, under the displayed banners of the Lord Jesus, a name dreadful to Satan and his servants, resisting unto blood, striving against sin, until at length he becomes a conqueror, and more than a conqueror, through him that loved him. And as soon as indwelling sin, the worst and principal enemy, is subdued, the warfare is ended; and the triumphant conqueror is not unnecessarily detained

in the hostile field, where he has no more business, but is immediately called home to the land of peace and joy, where the groans of the wounded, the shoutings of the warrior, and the clangor of trumpets, shall disturb his tranquillity no more forever. Therefore, we conclude that no man lives on earth without sin, even the greatest believers have sin to fight against, until it is overcome, and then they are immediately called away by the voice of death, to the land of triumph. For as Jehovah delights in propriety, we cannot suppose that he would keep his conquering soldiers in the field of war, days, months and years after they had conquered their enemies. This appears so plain, that it would be unnecessary to bring forward testimony to support the sentiment, were it not that the pride, laziness and cowardice of a number of those who profess to be soldiers of the Lord Christ, prevent them from joining his army, where the soldier is enlisted during life, and bound to follow the Captain of his salvation, in that spiritual and bloody war, from which he is discharged with honor, glory and triumph, at a dying hour, and never until then. Now, these proud, cowardly and lazy soldiers, rather than submit to be commanded by the Captain of the Lord's host, become his soldiers for life, and engage in the spiritual warfare, have formed a different camp of their own, and given the command to self-conceit and enthusiasm, who have so completely intoxicated them, that many of them dream that they have conquered their enemies and can live without sin; when, alas! it is to be doubted, that the poor deluded creatures are so deeply

sunk under the oppression of indwelling sin, and so strongly intoxicated with pride and ignorance, that they are rendered past feeling. These poor souls are like the dead carcase, which, though worms by thousands prey on its inwards, yet never feels them. The want of spiritual life hinders them to feel the powerful influence of indwelling sin; and while they are dreaming of sinless perfection, their pride, vanity and ostentation, clearly discover that sin is preying on their vitals and leading them to destruction. And while the soldiers of Jesus are cutting their way to immortal glory, through the embattled legions of their enemies, these perfectionists are trumpeting forth their own praise to the world, and informing us that they can live without sin, being perfectly delivered from all evil thoughts and tempers, from inward and outward sins, having the love of God and man filling their hearts. But as these perfectionists, according to their usual manner, have enveloped the doctrine of perfection in clouds of indefinite, loose harrangues, without clear statement or conclusive argument, it will be necessary that we trace the doctrine of christian perfection to its origin, and come to first principles if possible. And in order to obtain this end, we must fix on some invariable criterion or standard, by which we are to ascertain the quality and quantity of perfection; and then our opponents and we will be able understande ach other, and decide with propriety.

Now, as the moral law is a transcript of the moral perfections of Jehovah, and like himself unchangeable, it will be readily admitted that it is the best model of

perfection; and when it is considered that the All-wise Legislator and moral Governor of the universe has already given us that law as the standard of our obedience, we will not hesitate a moment in allowing it to be the criterion, by which alone we can try the perfection of that obedience. Therefore, it is evident that obedience to the law of God, from right principles to right ends, is perfect obedience, and the person who performs this obedience for days, months and years, must be in a state of perfection; but the least deviation from this perfect rule must be imperfection, or sin. But to be a little more particular, as this unerring and unchangeable standard extends to the inward, as well as to the outward man, measuring the motives by which the moral agent is actuated, and the end which he proposes in his actions. Then it is self-evident that the following things are essential to every act of perfect obedience:

1st. The principle from which the action proceeds, or the motives influencing the performer of the action, must be perfectly pure; including supreme love to God, benevolence to mankind, and a well regulated self-love.

2d The action must be performed in a holy, submissive manner; without pride, hypocrisy, or sin of any kind, small or great.

3d. The end proposed must be the glory of God, the most glorious of all beings.

In a word, the principles from which the action proceeds, the manner in which it is performed, and the end proposed, must be such as a God of infinite knowledge and purity will approve of, before that

action can be called perfect, or sinless. This is what I call perfect obedience; and whenever a person arrives at such a state, that he can habitually perform such actions, in the manner described, then he has attained to what I call sinless perfection; but if he is one hair's breadth beneath the standard, in thought, word or deed, then he is in a state of imperfection and sin. Now, I call upon our perfectionists to come forward and try their boasted perfection by this standard. We are now upon original ground, and here the doctrine of perfection must stand or fall. And I am persuaded, that notwithstanding all their great abilities to keep the law, and live without sin, which they keep so much noise about, there is something in their breasts that will inform them that they have never yet performed one act of perfect obedience.

But our perfectionists finding that the moral law, as a rule, would not bend to their crooked perfection, have contrived to lay it aside altogether; and have substituted in the room thereof an innocent, good natured, flexible law of faith and love, that does not stand with them upon trifles, but will take any kind of obedience from the poor people which they have to give, and pronounce their obedience perfect, notwithstanding many little infirmities, such as pride, vanity, hypocrisy, and the like. Thus, when they could not bring up their obedience to the inflexible rule, they have made a rule that will easily bend to their crooked obedience; and having brought the rule and their obedience to an agreement, they pronounce their obedience perfect, and their conduct sinless. This is

the boasted perfection of our perfectionists, which owes its existence to the death and burial of the moral law. And lest they should be detected in the act of destroying the law, they have contrived to lay all the blame on God the Father, and his Son Jesus Christ. For the proof of which I refer you to that ever memorable one hundred and twenty-fourth page of their Government and Discipline, Philadelphia edition; wherein they inform us that the law given to Adam, required that he should always think, act and speak precisely right. But Adam fell, and his corruptible body became a clog to his soul. Therefore, no man can yield the obedience which that law requires, nor does God require it of any man. Christ having put an end to both the Adamic and Mosaic law, so that no man living is bound to observe either the one or the other, being wholly freed from the Adamic law by the death of Christ, that law expiring with him. And in the room thereof he has given us a law of faith, which is fulfilled by love. Now, in order to understand their meaning here, it is highly necessary that we attend particularly to the definition which they themselves have given of that law, which they say God requires no man to obey, because Christ has abolished and put an end to it by his death. Take it in their own words: "This law required that Adam should always think, always speak, and always act precisely right." Then certainly their meaning, in the above quoted page, must be, that when God made Adam he required that he should always think, speak and act precisely right; but man having fallen and lost his ability to keep the

law, the Lord Jesus Christ, by his death and obedience, has put an end to that law, which required that men should think, speak and act precisely right. So that no man is under obligation to think, and speak, and act precisely right, nor does God require it of any man; because Christ has put an end to that rigid, inflexible law which demanded such obedience, and has given to us in the room thereof, a law which does not require any man to think, speak and act, precisely right. Therefore, men may arrive at perfection, and live days, months and years without sin, yielding perfect obedience to the law, and yet never come to the length of thinking, speaking, and acting precisely right.

Oh! glorious law! Inimitable perfection! And does the moral Governer of the universe require no man to think, speak and act precisely right? Then, certainly, he allows men to think, speak and act precisely wrong; there being no medium between right and wrong. And did Jesus Christ come into the world to deliver mankind from all obligation to think, speak and act precisely right? Glorious errand! Then he is undoubtedly the minister of sin; and those who said that he magnified the law and made it honorable, and that he came not to destroy the law, but to fulfil it, were grievously mistaken. This, then, is the honorable foundation of that glorious scheme, about which so much noise was made, a few days ago, in your hearing, viz: That the moral Governer of the universe, willing to put up with such obedience as men in their fallen state could give him, and finding that

his moral law was too strict, sent his Son into the world, that by his death and sufferings he might put an end to this perfect law, and give men an imperfect law in the room thereof, which only demands such obedience as all mankind have ability to perform. Agreeably to this, hear the moral Governor of the universe addressing sinners—"O! sinners, once, indeed, I insisted on absolute perfection, and required that all men should think, speak and act precisely right. But since Christ is come, and the gospel dispensation introduced, I can dispense with some degree of sin and imperfection, you need not be much concerned about inward sins, if you keep straight in the eyes of the world. My Son has destroyed the strict law, and because you are weak, I have suited my demands to your feeble condition, and demand no obedience but what you can easily perform."

Now, this is the foundation of the whole scheme of our opponents; and as their perfection must stand or fall on this ground, this being the spot which they have chosen to defend, I call upon them to come forward and demonstrate the consistency of their sentiments respecting the law, with the holiness and honor of the moral Governor of the universe, and with those passages of scripture which hold forth that Christ magnified the law and made it honorable, and that he came not to destroy the law, but to fulfil it. Until this is done, they must either grant that the moral Governor of the universe, as a God of purity and justice, demands that all mankind should think, speak and act precisely right; and that although the Lord

Jesus completely satisfied the demands of the moral law in the form of a covenant of works, in behalf of all who are or may be united to him by saving faith; yet believers are still under this law, as the rule of their life and conversation, and according to the constitution under which they are, can never attain to perfection, nor enter the land of purity and joy, until they are conformed to the moral law in heart, word and deed. I say, our opponents must grant this, or admit that Jehovah is an imperfect legislator, having given to mankind an imperfect law, which demands imperfect obedience; and that our Lord Jesus Christ, instead of yielding a perfect obedience to the moral law, as the only ground of the sinner's acceptance with God, came into this world as the minister of sin, in order to weaken our obligation to duty, and deliver us from the necessity of thinking, speaking and acting precisely right.

The controversy might rest here with propriety, as it would be vain to follow our opponents through all the unmeaning pages which they have written in defence of Sinless Perfection, many of which, I am persuaded, neither man nor angel can understand; but I observe a number of objections coming forward in hostile array, therefore I shall meet them with pleasure, and feel their weight in the field of argument.

Objection: Some of our ministers, and many of our people have experienced this perfection. At all times their souls are even and calm, their hearts are stedfast and unmovable. Their peace, flowing as a river,

passeth all understanding, and they rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory.

To this I reply: That although I am a friend to the doctrine of christian experience, yet as my experience has never arrived to that degree of perfection which our opponents have obtained, it would be ungenerous in me to bring my arguments from thence, to confront their experience; nor can I take experience for argument, without examination. But as our opponents seem willing to risk the doctrine upon the testimony of experience, I shall meet them upon that ground, and bring forward the experience of some decent, sober men, whose testimony, when laid in the opposite scale, may have some influence in enabling us to decide with precision; although I must confess they were far inferior to our opponents in spiritual attainments.

David, the man after God's own heart, the sweet psalmist of Israel, who enjoyed much intimacy, communion and fellowship with God, seems not to have attained to this perfection until his death. On the contrary, we find him not only at particular times, but generally through life, confessing his sins, acknowledging his imperfections, and the prevalence of iniquity against him. Sometimes groaning and weeping until his bed was made to swim with tears; at other times crying, "How long shall mine enemies be exalted over me?" Nor did he, in his most sweet and lofty exercises of mind, ever dream of leaving the field of war until he should be regularly dismissed, and honorably discharged, at a dying hour. Besides, he expressly gives us his sentiments concerning per-

fection: "There is none that doeth good, no not one." Asaph gives us a large account of his experience in the 73d Psalm. Instead of living without sin, he tells us that he was foolish and ignorant, and such a view had he of his sins, and imperfections, that he compares himself to a beast. Yet he expresses his confidence, that God would guide him by his counsel, and afterward receive him to glory, not then, but afterward, when his sins would be all slain, his warfare accomplished, and his work finished.

Paul, that fearless ambassador of the King of Kings, was effectually called, in an extraordinary manner, and afterwards caught up to the third Heaven, where he heard unutterable things; yet he had a thorn in the flesh given him, and a messenger of Satan sent to buffet him. And instead of amusing mankind, by telling them that he could live without sin, he informed them that he had his infirmities. And in the seventh to the Romans, gives us a large account of his exercises, saying, "when I would do good, evil is present with me. I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. And instead of boasting like our perfectionists, of his perfection and ability to do whatever he pleased, he cried out, "O! wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" But our opponents, with their usual candour, observe that Paul did not mean himself in the latter part of the seventh to the Romans, but personates some old Jew, or unconverted person.

If they had said, this Paul was an inveterate enemy

to all our distinguishing tenets, therefore, the testimony of an enemy ought not to be admitted against us, then their argument would have had some weight. Does not Paul tell us in the twenty second verse, that he delighted in the law of God, after the inward man and then immediately subjoins, as already quoted, that he saw a law in his members, warring against the law of his mind, &c. Pray, was this the exercise of an unconverted man? Do such delight in the law of the Lord, after the inner man! I think a small portion of common sense, without much sinless perfection might prevent men from perverting the scripture in such a wretched manner and keep them from displaying their own weakness to the world.

The beloved apostle John, who had leaned often on Christ's bosom, and enjoyed a long season of sweet communion and fellowship with his Lord and master, being near an hundred years of age, informs us, that he had never attained to this perfection. John 1, 8, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us."

As if he had said, if we christians, if we old believers, if we who are apostles, say that we have no sin, do not believe us, for if we say so, we are only deceiving ourselves, and the truth is not in us, therefore no credit is due to our testimony. Now this abundantly serves to show us what the Apostle intended in the latter part of the epistle, where he says, "that he who is born of God sin not." That is, they who are born of God, do not live habitually, in the love and practice of any known sin, nor in the omission of any

known duty. And although it is true, that if any of them should say, even if they were the greatest Apostles, that they have no sin, they are deceiving themselves, and the truth is not in them; yet sin has not the dominion over them, it is the object of their hatred, and they hold it as an enemy. Therefore, those who are born of God, sin not as the unregenerate do. This is perfectly consistent with the scope of the epistle, and with the tenor of divine revelation. But our opponents tell us, that the Apostle John, in the above quoted passage, was personating the ungodly; and his meaning is, if we unbelievers, if we drunkards, we swearers, and we adulterers say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

I shall not make one single remark on this comment which our opponents have favoured us with; but only observe, that it is perfectly consistent with that excellent method of explaining scripture which obtains among them, viz: every stubborn text of scripture that is backward to speak in favor of their distinguishing tenets, they put immediately on the rack; and without any regard to the entreating cries of the preceding and subsequent context, torture it, until it declares in their favor. And when they meet with a text that expressly condemns their tenets, then they very gravely tell us, that the penman was personating some old Jew, or drunken sinner. Thus they can make every text in the Bible speak in their favour.

But as I cannot at present, altogether approve of their method of explaining scripture, I must remain of the opinion, that the Apostle John, in the above

quoted passage, clearly informs us, that the believers of that day, and even the Apostles themselves, had not attained to sinless perfection, and that those who say they have no sin, are deceivers, and the truth is not in them. In a word, the Old and New Testament saints, the patriarchs, prophets, apostles, and martyrs, all acknowledged their sins and imperfections, and looked on a dying hour, as the time when their sanctification would be finished, and they delivered from the remainder of indwelling sin. Now, in the one scale, you have the experience of all the prophets, patriarchs, apostles, and martyrs, against the doctrine of living days, months and years in this world without sin. And in the other scale, you have the experience of our modern perfectionists, in favor of it. And which ought to preponderate, judge ye.

I cannot avoid taking notice of the advantages which our opponents have obtained by baptism. Since they began to administer this ordinance, their party has increased in a fourfold proportion; for those persons, such as fornicators, drunkards, blasphemers, &c. who could not obtain baptism for their children in any regular church, without reformation and repentance, flock to their standard, and are admitted by them without censure or any rational evidence of reformation or repentance. This cannot be doubted, being supported by facts. Nor does the advantage of their baptism rest here. It has a powerful influence on their living without sin. For our perfectionists observing, that sin was not easily conquered in that way in which our Lord Jesus Christ, and his soldiers carry

on the war against it, contrived to obtain the victory with less fatigue, and conquer sin by baptism. Now those things, which in scripture, are called sins, ignorance, pride, iniquities, transgressions, &c., have been solemnly baptized by our opponents, and at their baptism have got their names changed, and are now known by the pretty soft names of mistakes, infirmities, defects, imperfection, frailty, weakness of the bodily organs, &c., as you may see in their books on sinless perfection. Thus by baptizing sin in the water of enthusiasm, and changing its name, while its nature remains the same, they can attain to perfection in a few hours; while the soldiers of Jesus seek after it all their days, and are glad to obtain it at a dying hour. Indeed, our perfectionists very politely inform us, that we may call their mistakes, defects, &c., sins if we please, but they will not call them by that name. However, I must confess, that sometimes, when I have taken a view of their boyish airs, conceit, self-importance, boasting and deceit, I have been tempted to think that they had their sins, as well as other people; but when it is considered that these things, and a thousand more are not sins, but mistakes, infirmities, defects, imperfections, frailties and weakness of the bodily organs, the matter is easily adjusted.

Objection: The term perfect, is applied to believers in several parts of scripture. Therefore, believers may live without sin.

I answer: Every person who will take the trouble to compare the text and context, will abundantly discover, that the term perfect, when applied to believers

in scripture, does not hold forth, that they can live days, months and years without sin; but has a reference either to that perfection, with respect to justification, which believers have obtained on account of the righteousness of Christ; or to that perfection, with respect to sanctification, which they have obtained in part, and will at length completely obtain, through divine grace, at their dying hour.

Objection: If believers do not obtain perfection until death, then death is a purgatory to take away sin.

Our opponents make great use of this objection, and sneeringly tell us, death is the purgatory of the Calvinists. But certainly their conclusion cannot be found in the premises. We say that the children of God have their sins and imperfections, while in this world, and whenever God completely finishes their sanctification, he takes them home to himself. We say a dying hour is the time when believers are made perfect in holiness. But does this imply that death is a purgatory to make believers perfect? Surely, no person having the use of their reason will imagine, that the time when any piece of work is done or finished, is the instrument or mean by which that work was accomplished. It would certainly require more sagacity than any created being has, to be able to discover the least connection between the premises of our opponents and their conclusion.

Objection: God requires believers to seek after perfection; therefore, it is attainable.

I answer: God requires believers to seek after per-

fection, and the very requisition proves that they have not attained to it. And instead of denying that perfection is attainable, we hold that all the children of God arrive to perfection, and never fall from it again. But the question is, do believers live days, months and years, in this world after they have attained to sinless perfection? For my part I absolutely deny it; and if there can be one sound argument brought from reason and revelation, to prove the point, I would be glad to see it, for noise in place of argument will not satisfy me.

Objection: The Calvinists themselves allow that a believer may attain perfection one minute before his death. If one minute, why not one day? If one day, why not one month? If one month, why not one year? If one year, why not many years? Therefore, believers may live days, months and years without sinning.

I answer: John Wesley died before the year ninety-three. If he died one minute before it, why not one day? If one day, why not one month? If one month, why not ten years? If ten years, why not ten thousand years? Therefore, John Wesley died ten thousand years ago. Now, I have as completely proved that John Wesley died before the beginning of the world, as they have proved, by their objection, that believers may live years without sin.

Certainly, arguments must be scarce with our opponents, when they are reduced to such sorry shifts in support of their wretched cause. It is surprising to me, that above all the sectaries who have endeavored

to destroy the purity and disturb the tranquillity of the church of Christ, they have found out a scheme which, when reduced to first principles, appears to bend all its force against the glory, honor and perfection of the President of the universe, strikes at the root of all the solid joy, peace and comfort of the children of God, and weakens the force of moral obligation by laying aside the moral law.

Is this the way they manifest their love to God, by holding principles which I have already demonstrated, represent him as dependant, changeable, ignorant, cruel, deceitful, weak and unjust; acting without any certain plan, decree, determination or choice, in all that he does? Is this the manifestation of their love to Jesus Christ, to make him the minister of sin, the destroyer of the moral law, and the deliverer of men from all obligation to think, speak and act precisely right? Is this their love to the Holy Ghost, to place him in a degraded situation at the feet of men, who, they say, can do what they please, in spite of his most powerful and gracious influence? Is this their love to the people of God, to sacrifice thousands of them to their new scheme, and send them to hell to burn eternally, and not permit the remainder to have any certainty concerning their salvation, nor any solid comfort, joy or confidence in God. If these are the evidences which their distinguishing tenets give of their love to their friends, what idea can be formed of their love to their enemies, of which they boast so much?

I have now shewed you my opinion, according to the plan proposed. I have stated our much abused

doctrines on original ground, have answered the objections brought against them by our opponents, and have laid the opposite scheme in the scales of reason and revelation; and I trust the conclusions I have drawn, were deducible from the premises. But you are the judges at present; I have addressed your reason, and I wish every man to think for himself. I desire no credit to be given to my sentiments, further than they are supported by reason and revelation.

I am sorry that our opponents by their insulting, triumphing conduct, have forced me to appear in defence of my religion, and expose their weakness and errors to the world. I would rather have been the instrument of their reformation, than their shame; but I had no alternative; truth was suffering, and I must defend it, or own it defenceless. I am far from blaming any man because he differs in opinion from me. But I blame the man, who will not permit me to see with my own eyes, and worship God according to the dictates of my own conscience, without making my religious sentiments the objects of his abuse, and misrepresentation. Therefore, while it is my determination, never to commence an unprovoked attack upon any of the human race, because their religious sentiments are different from mine; at the same time, it is my resolution, to defend my religious principles, when unjustly attacked, and dispute the ground, inch by inch, with the invading foe. I shall conclude with a few observations.

From what has been said, we may be informed of the dangerous nature, and tendency of error, it is in-

consistent with itself, an enemy to our happiness, and strikes at the very being and perfections of God. On first principles, truth can always be reduced to a system, error never fails to contradict itself; and that is the reason that the erroneous are always afraid of original ground.

We may also be informed, from what has been said, that those very doctrines of our Confession of faith, which our opponents have called the doctrines of devils, are perfectly consistent with reason and revelation. Let us buy the truth, and sell it not—that is, let us use every means in our power to obtain good principles, founded on a knowledge of the truth, and take care not to part with those principles on any terms. But above all, let us seek to obtain love to God, it is the best antidote against error; where there is genuine love to God, error will meet with a cold reception. In vain do we contend about truth; if we do not love the God of truth. And if we love God, we will be disposed to keep his commandments; that religion which does not lead the possessor of it to do his duty to God and man, from right principles, and to right ends, is not the religion of Jesus of Nazareth. And as human nature in its depraved state, natively tends to extremes, let us beware of a dead frozen formality on the one hand, and a fervid enthusiasm on the other. Both are opposed to the glory of God, and the real happiness of mankind. Moreover, if we wish well to our spiritual Zion, and desire to see error, delusion and immorality, as ashamed, hiding their heads, let us plead with God, to pour forth his Spirit upon his

churches, according to his promise, that sinners may be convinced and converted, and believers built up in holiness and comfort, through faith unto salvation. Let us in our several places and stations, endeavor to promote vital and experimental piety; it has ever been found an enemy to error and immorality. A dead, lifeless religion, is little better than an erroneous religion; and a nothingarian is not much worse than a formalist. Therefore, while I am an open and determined enemy to error and enthusiasm, I am a warm friend to that religion, which incorporates light and heat, principles and practice, warming the heart and operating on the life and conversation. This is the religion I advocate, and wish mankind to possess. And, although I expect to be the butt of the rage and malice of the enemies of the doctrines which I have attempted to vindicate; and though my reputation should sink amongst men, yet come of me what will, my heart rejoices in the prospect, that when I shall be silent in the grave, the sweet and precious truths of the gospel, shall obtain in the world, the crown of my Redeemer shall flourish on his head, and his cause shall triumph over error, and all opposition.

NOTE.—Sensible that my natural and acquired abilities are inadequate to the purpose of writing for the press, I designed to have had the foregoing discourse, transcribed and corrected by some of my fathers in the ministry, whose learning and experience, would have enabled it to appear in the world to greater advantage. But corroborating circum-

stances prevented the execution of my design, and it now appears from the press, in its uncultivated and original form. Therefore, if there is anything found in it, with respect to matter, or manner, which may be thought prejudicial to the cause of truth, I request that the blame may not be laid upon the Presbyterian Church, to which I have the honor to belong. The blame, if there is any, lies at my door, and I alone have to be responsible.

I expect this discourse will meet with many enemies. All Calvinists, whose Gallic temper disposes them to permit the truths of the gospel to be trodden under foot, with impunity, will at least depreciate it. Some will be enemies, because they hate the doctrines which it contains. Some because the author is an obscure person, not known in the literary world, and is an inhabitant of the back woods, where the people are supposed to be on a level with the savages. And some, because the author does not belong to their denomination of professing christians.

But I have counted the cost, expecting the very worst, and have delivered my own sentiments in my own way, with that fortitude and freedom, which becomes a man, and a christian. And whenever these sentiments are demonstrated to be inconsistent with reason and revelation, I shall publicly renounce them; until that time, it may be expected, that I shall defend them to the last extremity.

A
Revival of True Religion Delineated

ON

SCRIPTURAL AND RATIONAL PRINCIPLES,

IN A

S E R M O N

DELIVERED AT THE OPENING OF THE SYNOD OF
PITTSBURGH, OCTOBER 2, 1805:

WITH

A N A P P E N D I X,

CONTAINING

NOTES TO THE DISCOURSE.

BY THE REV. SAMUEL PORTER,

MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL AT CONGRUITY, IN THE COUNTY OF WESTMORELAND.

"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."
Psalm cxix: 105.

"But this I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call
heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things
which are written in the law and in the Prophets." Acts xxiv: 14.

PRINTED AT WASHINGTON, PA. 1806.

THE SYNOD agreed to request Mr. Porter to furnish them with a copy of the Sermon, for publication, which he delivered at the opening of the Synod. Mr. Porter complied with the request, and allowed the profits arising from the sale to go into the Missionary Fund.

Extracted from the Minutes of the Synod of Pittsburgh, by
JOHN M'MILLAN, S. C.

ADVERTISEMENT.

IN proportion as the author of the following Discourse has advanced in age and experience, his aversion to religious controversy has increased; under the idea that it seldom answers any valuable purpose. Therefore, although his feelings were frequently wounded by the treatment to which his denomination was exposed, yet he determined to leave that controversy, into which he was convinced the Presbyterian Church would be forced in its own defence, to men of superior abilities and a more polished education, and to spend the remainder of his days in the peaceable discharge of the duties of his office. But when the time came that the work, under which a number of the human family were apparently turned from darkness to light, and from the power of sin and Satan, to seek and serve the living God, was treated in the most illiberal manner, from the pulpit and the press, and represented as a work which had taken place under the influence of error, enthusiasm, and the delusions of the Devil; and it appearing evident to him, that under the mask of lifting up a testimony against error and enthusiasm, the real object was to disgrace the Presbyterian Church, in order to promote the recruiting system; he was then convinced that the period had arrived when neutrality would be criminal. Therefore, as a member of the Presbyterian denomination, he believed it to be his duty, in the face of those anathemas which he knew would be hurled at his devoted head, to avow the sentiments of his heart, and appeal from the decisions of prejudice and party spirit, to the tribunal of divine revelation and reason. And he now stands at their judgment seat ready for trial.

An accurate knowledge of the principal transactions which have taken place in the Presbyterian Church, in the Western country, for upwards of twenty years, has given the author access to all the testimony, relative to facts, which the nature of the case will admit. As to opinions and reasonings, he can only say, that he has taken the holy scriptures for his guide, exercised his own understanding, and expressed the genuine sentiments of his own mind in his own

way. It may also be observed, that although the Synod did request a copy of the following Discourse, and the notes, for publication, yet as they now appear in their original dress, without any alteration, the author holds himself responsible for the sentiments which they contain.

We are aware, that those persons who are not acquainted with the treatment to which the Presbyterian Church in the Western country has been exposed, may allege that there is something too severe in the Discourse in question, and in the notes. At present we shall only say, that for many years we have tamely submitted to the lash of our unfriendly neighbors, and in proportion to our submission, their insolence has increased; until that our patience, pierced by many wounds, has given up the ghost. Therefore, as they have forced us to take our ground in behalf of our rights, and sentiments relative to that religion which is dearer to our hearts than the blood that fills their veins, we are neither obliged nor disposed to adopt a Quaker system of defence.

THE AUTHOR.

Congruity, October 29, 1805.

A REVIVAL OF TRUE RELIGION DELINEATED, &c.

TEXT.—Habakkuk, iii: 2: "O Lord, revive thy work."

OUR text is a short but comprehensive prayer, addressed to God by an inspired Prophet, for a revival of religion. In this prayer the truly pious, both under the ancient dispensation and the new, have heartily joined. But while the professors of Christianity agree as to the propriety of praying for a revival of religion, it is evident they have annexed very different ideas to the term. This might be abundantly proved from the history of the church, in those periods when such reformation, in principle or practice took place, as arrested the public attention. But evidence derived from history is rendered unnecessary, by unquestionable testimony at hand. For while we are engaged in expressing our gratitude to God for reviving his work and promoting true religion amongst us, a number of professing christians are employed in representing this work as the work of the Devil, and in giving thanks to God for preserving them from its influence. This view of the subject evinces the propriety and necessity of attempting to ascertain what a revival of true religion really is, that we may know when we ought to give thanks to God for answering the prayers of his church, as expressed in our text, and that we may be enabled to decide on proper principles, whether

or not God has any claim on our gratitude on account of those events which have lately taken place in this corner of his vineyard. In order to attain these objects we shall pursue the following method:

I. *Describe true religion.*

II. *Describe a revival of true religion, and bring forward those evidences which prove its existence.*

Lastly. *Make some improvement.*

In the prosecution of our plan, in an humble dependence on divine aid, we shall endeavor to follow truth wherever it may lead, without being intimidated by the menacing aspect of those frigid, or those fervid prejudices, which stand in hostile array on each side of the subject.

I. We are to describe true religion.

The various contradictory opinions which exist amongst men relative to religious subjects, render it impossible for us to ascertain what true religion really is, without having recourse to some unerring standard.

Creeds and Confessions, Decrees and Decisions, Covenants and Testimonies, hammered on civil and ecclesiastical anvils, into different and hostile forms, by Councils and Popes, Bishops and Divines, Kings and Parliaments, have assumed the name of Standards of Religion; and the terrors of the visible and invisible worlds have been summoned to support their jarring claims. But when that prejudice which judges without testimony, and that stupidity which feels the force of no argument, are laid aside, and all these systems candidly examined and compared, it will appear unquestionably evident, that their mutability and imperfection, their

number and reciprocal hostility, prove them to be destitute of that unity and purity, immutability and certainty, which a standard of that religion which has a holy and unchangeable God for its object, ought to possess. Human creeds and confessions, judiciously composed, are of great utility in the christian church, in this mixed and imperfect state, where so many contradictory opinions are supposed to be derived from divine revelation. By these creeds and confessions the sense in which their friends understand the scriptures is ascertained; and thereby the persons who are united in religious sentiments can discover each other, and join in that real communion, which is always in proportion to the existing union among its subjects. Therefore, we are disposed to treat judicious creeds and confessions with all that deference to which they are entitled, when confined to their own proper sphere. But when human creeds and confessions, covenants and testimonies, pass the limits which God and reason have assigned to them, and trample on the rights of men, and invade the throne of Jehovah, under the absurd title of human standards of divine religion, the groans of the human victims, which have been immolated on the altars of religious tyranny, rouse and enlist all the energies of the intelligent mind in opposition to the lawless usurpation; and with a noble ardor in the cause of God and man, it defends the government of the one and the rights of the other, and disdains submission to the tyrant of the conscience, whether it be of Popish or Protestant extraction. And disgusted with the jarring noise of angry christians, and

their hostile claims, it gladly perceives in divine revelation all that unity and purity, immutability and certainty, which a standard of true religion requires, and which the importance of the subject demands. Therefore, the christian scriptures are pronounced to be the only proper standard of the christian religion, by which all religious opinions, experience and practice must be tried. Isaiah viii: 20: "To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." And if the scriptures are carefully examined and compared, it will be found that true religion consists in faith in Jesus Christ and obedience to him. John iii: 36: "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him." John xv: 14: "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you."

That faith in Jesus Christ which the scriptures require, consists in that persuasion of the truth and importance of the divine testimony respecting his person, character, offices and mission, which leads the subject of it to receive and rest upon him, for all the purposes for which he is offered in the gospel. This faith is accompanied by love, repentance, humility, and all the graces of the divine Spirit, and includes cheerful submission to the instruction of Christ as a divine teacher; the utmost confidence in the truth of all that he has revealed as the Prophet of the church; and a firm reliance on his obedience and atonement, for justification before God.

That obedience to Jesus Christ, or to God in Christ, which the scriptures require, consists in conformity to the moral law, as a rule of life, in thoughts, words and actions. This obedience includes a heart-affecting perception of the glory and beauty of the moral character of the Deity, as it shines in the face of the Lord Jesus Christ; zeal to promote his glory; a strong attachment to his person, laws and people; and the most unreserved and cheerful submission to the divine government administered by him, as supremely equitable, excellent and glorious.

But it is carefully to be observed, that the existence of truly religious principles in the human heart, (at least in adults) is preceded by a conviction of guilt, depravity and danger, attended with fear and terror, to a less or greater degree, according to the sovereign will and good pleasure of God. Hosea xii: 13: "The sorrows of a travailing woman shall come upon him: he is an unwise son; for he should not stay long in the place of the breaking forth of children." Psalm cxvi: 3, 4: "The sorrows of death encompassed me, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me; I found trouble and sorrow; then called I upon the name of the Lord." Acts ii: 37: "Now, when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter, and to the rest of the Apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?" John xvi: 8: "And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment." And as God has not informed us in his word, what the precise degree of that fear and terror will be, which shall accompany genuine convic-



tion of sin, we may conclude, that those persons proceed without knowledge, without testimony, without authority, and with great arrogance, who presume to decide what the precise degree of that terror shall be, and say, here it shall come, but no further, in any instance. Isaiah xi: 13: "Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or being his counsellor, hath taught him?" Lam. iii: 37: "Who is he that saith, and it cometh to pass, when the Lord commandeth it not?"

The ordinances of divine institution, especially the preaching of the gospel, are the ordinary means by which the Spirit of God convinces and converts sinners, and builds up believers in holiness and comfort, through faith unto salvation. Mark xvi: 15, 16: "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned." Romans x: 17 "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Romans i: 16: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." Acts ii: 42: "And they continued stedfastly in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers." We may also observe, that although true religion, from the very first moment of its existence in the human soul, by the regenerating influence of the divine Spirit, possesses those moral features which prove its origin to be divine; yet it is carried on gradually, and does not arrive to perfection, until the

work of sanctification is finished. Proverbs iv: 18: "But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day."

Now, if the preceding observations, and description of true religion and its standard are just, then we may safely conclude, that those persons, to whatever nation or religious denomination they may belong, who, from all the testimony which the nature of the case will admit, appear to be the subjects of that faith in Jesus Christ, and to be conscientiously engaged in endeavor to render that obedience to him which the scriptures require, are the subjects of true religion; notwithstanding that such persons may not have arrived to perfection in knowledge and practice, and may not have subscribed our Confession of Faith, nor joined in a particular declaration and testimony against the sins of all religious denominations except their own. We are aware that a charge of error will be brought against us, because we have not required subscription to our Confession of Faith, as an evidence to prove the existence of true religion. But the truth is, that while we firmly adhere to our Confession of Faith, as a human system, which represents with propriety the sense in which we understand divine revelation, the only standard of our religion, we are at the same time inclined to believe, that neither the venerable Assembly of Divines who met at Westminster, nor the Long Parliament, nor the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, nor the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, had sufficient wisdom and power to enable them to compose

a Confession of Faith, obliging Jehovah to admit no person into heaven who has not subscribed that Confession. Therefore, men may be admitted into heaven, and consequently may be the subjects of true religion, who have not subscribed our Confession of Faith.

II. We are now to describe a revival of true religion, and bring forward those evidences which prove its existence.

When the knowledge and practice of true religion are introduced into any nation or country, where it has been a stranger hitherto; in a strict and limited sense of the words, this cannot be a revival of religion; it is only an extension of the knowledge of its doctrines, and of its influence to places where it was formerly unknown. If this opinion be correct, a revival of religion can only take place in those nations and countries, where the knowledge and practice of the Christian religion exist in a less or in a greater degree; for that cannot be revived, which does not exist. And as a revival of true religion is a relative term, in order to have a just idea of it, we must have recourse to its subjects, and its standard. The subjects of a revival of true religion, may all be included in two classes.

1. Those persons who are already pious with respect to whom, growth in grace, progress in sanctification, and a revival of religion, are synonymous terms, expressing the same idea in different words.

2. Those persons who have some knowledge of religion, more or less, but whose hearts and lives have not been under its governing influence in the time

past. When such persons, whether they have been professors or profane, intelligent or ignorant, become the subjects of genuine piety, religion is revived with respect to them, because it has a lively influence on their hearts and lives, which it had not formerly.

The nature of the case will not admit of any difference between the standard of true religion, and the standard of a genuine revival of that religion; because a revival of true religion, with respect to those persons who were pious heretofore, is neither more nor less than a higher degree of conformity to the standard of religion; and a revival of religion, with respect to those persons who were not under its governing influence in the time past, is neither more nor less than true religion brought to exist in, and operate on such persons. Hence we must ascertain the existence of a revival of religion by the very same standard by which we ascertain the existence of true religion. But it has been proved, that Divine Revelation is the only proper standard of true religion. Therefore, Divine Revelation must be the only proper standard of a revival of that religion. And as it has been established, that true religion consists in that faith in Jesus Christ and obedience to him which the Scriptures require; we may safely affirm, that when, from all the testimony which the nature of the case will admit, we have reason to believe, that pious persons have become the subjects of growth in grace, and that persons formerly irreligious, have become the subjects of that faith in Jesus Christ, and have commenced that course of obedience to him which the Scriptures require; we

may then conclude, that such persons are the subjects of a revival of religion, whether they are many or few. Nor can the merits of the cause be affected by the consideration, that many persons who were the subjects of serious impressions, at the same time under the same ordinances, may have proved themselves to be way-side, stony ground, or thorny ground hearers of the word; because the parable of the sower delivered by our Lord, places the subject above all controversy.

The first inquiry now is, what is the testimony which the nature of the case will admit, and which can be brought to bear on the point in question?

The nature of the case will not admit of miracles as evidence to prove the existence of a revival of religion in our day, because we have no authority from scripture to expect such testimony. Besides, although revivals of religion may be more or less general, and attended with circumstances more or less extraordinary, and notwithstanding that enemies and strangers to every thing warm, and deeply heart affecting in religion, look upon a revival of it as something so extraordinary, that nothing short of miraculous or extraordinary testimony can prove its existence; yet revivals of religion are so far from being uncommon events in the Christian Church, and therefore, so far from requiring miraculous evidence to prove their existence, that we have authority from scripture to say, that wherever true religion does exist in this world, there it will certainly be revived, in a manner more or less visible. Hosea xiv. 5, 7, "I will be as the dew unto

Israel: he shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon. They that dwell under his shadow shall return; they shall revive as the corn, and grow as the vine; the scent thereof shall be as the wine of Lebanon." Nor will the case with respect to us, admit of direct testimony; for we cannot have access to the proper sources thereof, and God who is the only proper judge of the heart, has postponed the publication of his decision until the last day. Therefore, we must conclude, that the only species of evidence to which we can have access, and which the utmost efforts of human power and ingenuity can bring to bear on the point in question, is testimony by induction from certain particulars, ascending as effects to the cause, and uniting in the general issue. Now if we can ascertain with precision, the sources from which we ought to bring this testimony, then rational decision will be placed within our reach. But as there is a great diversity of sentiment in relation to this subject, before we proceed further, it will be necessary to pass in review those evidences which have been brought forward by some men, but which cannot be admitted by any tribunal where Revelation and reason preside.

1. Some allege that certain acts and testimonies are evidences essentially necessary to prove the existence of a revival of religion. This evidence we reject, because Divine Revelation does not demand such testimonies as those in question, nor approve of such dogmatical, censorious, angry evidences of a revival of the benevolent and mild, humble and peaceable reli-

gion of the Prince of Peace; nor are they mentioned amongst the fruits of the Spirit. Galatians, v: 22, 23: "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, faith, meekness, temperance; against such there is no law." Besides, while these testimonies are avowedly and bitterly hostile to each other, each party maintaining that *their* one is the only pure, genuine, scriptural testimony for the truth, and as this cannot be true with respect to all of them, therefore, we hope to be permitted to reject their contradictory claims, until their respective friends decide the controversy, and join in producing the only pure, genuine, scriptural, human testimony.

2. It has been repeatedly and boldly asserted, that those persons who use New Testament doctrines and language in the praises of God, are guilty of error and idolatry, deism and blasphemy; and while they persist in that practice, true religion cannot be revived amongst them. This testimony we reject, because the ground on which it stands, will sink at the approach of rational investigation. But as the contest respecting Psalmody has been triumphantly managed by the late Reverend and venerable Messrs. Black and Latta, it is not necessary at this time, to enter largely into the merits of the cause. However, we will grant that men of boasted genius and education, may soar so far above the vulgar atmosphere, as to be able to believe without any testimony from scripture, sense, or reason, that they perceive clearly, that while it is the duty of Christians to use New Testament language in the worship of God, and praise him for the incarnation,

obedience, atonement and resurrection of the Divine Mediator, as events which have already taken place, if they express themselves in prose; yet if the same persons use the very same language, and express the very same sentiments in metre, and sing them, they immediately become guilty of error and idolatry, deism and blasphemy, and true religion cannot be revived among them. But men like ourselves, of ordinary capacity and attainments, who are confined to move in the humble regions of common sense, will never be able to perceive the truth and consistency of this proposition until it is supported by testimony derived from the sacred Scriptures and sound reason. And until this is done, we shall believe that true religion may be revived amongst those persons, who in obedience to the divine commandment, praise God in psalms, hymns and spiritual songs.

3. It has been affirmed by certain persons, who can find grievous errors in every part of the Christian Church, except their own, that where errors, enthusiasm and delusion exist in any part of the Church, we have sufficient evidence to believe that true religion is not revived there.

This evidence cannot be admitted, because the Scriptures abundantly inform us, that real and grievous errors, in principle and practice and gross delusion, enthusiasm and hypocrisy, existed in the church during the ministry of our Lord and his Apostles; and yet we learn from the same source, that true religion was gloriously revived in those periods. Error in any form which it may assume, when it is perceived

will be opposed with zeal and perseverance by genuine Christians ; but in spite of all their efforts, it will remain an infallible truth, that the tares will grow together with the wheat until the harvest. Therefore, the same evidence that will prove the existence of the tares in the gospel field, will not prove that there is no wheat on the same ground. It might also be observed, that if those officious persons, who make so much noise about the tares which they imagine that they see in the fields of their neighbors, were to examine impartially, it is highly probable that they would find tares in their own fields, and might possibly be convinced, that it would be their duty to cease from being the angry keepers of their neighbors' vine yards, and pay a little more attention to the cultivation of their own.

4. It is asserted with great confidence, that where falling down, crying out and bodily agitation, accompany any apparently religious work of which men are the subjects, we have sufficient evidence to prove that the work in question, instead of being a revival of true religion, is a work which owes its existence to the influence of the Devil and natural causes.

Some of the friends of this opinion have given undeniable evidence, that they believe that they are perfectly acquainted with the texture of human nature, and accurately understand the nature and operation of those laws, by which sensations of the body produce emotions of the mind, and emotions of the mind sensations of the body; and that they can trace the history of human sensation along its chain of

causes up to the first one, with such unerring precision as to be able to describe every link of that chain; and without waiting for the testimony which time will afford, pronounce instantly what is from God, what from man, and what from the devil, in all those sensations and emotions of which human nature may be the subject. But we stand on much lower ground.—Our ignorance of the laws of the union, and the existing sympathy between the soul and the body, and also of the organization, powers, and functions of the nerves and animal spirits, together with our ignorance of the precise limits of the power which good and evil spirits may have over human nature, all combine to render us incapable of tracing the operations in question through all their proximate causes to the original, with so much certainty as to justify a hasty decision. Therefore, we shall confine ourselves to prove, that from bodily agitations no evidence can be brought to bear on the subject.

Bodily agitations are no certain evidences of a revival of true religion; for when they may be traced to affecting exercises of mind, which has generally been the case in this part of the church, they only prove the existence of those exercises, but afford no certain testimony respecting their origin, nature and tendency. Matthew, vii: 20: "By their fruits ye shall know them." On the other hand, bodily agitations afford no conclusive evidence that the work to which they are appendages, is not a revival of religion; because we learn from Divine Revelation, that crying out, trembling and falling down, have been the

consequences of religious impressions made by the Divine Spirit on the hearts of men; and it must be admitted, that similar causes are capable of producing similar effects, until it is proved that God has determined that such causes shall not again produce such effects.

5. The most pertinent exhortations of lay persons during the time of public worship, are no evidences of a revival of religion; because it is contrary to the dictates of Scripture and common sense, that any two persons, even if they were Ministers of the Gospel, should both be engaged in addressing the same auditory at the same time, when the voice of any one of them could extend to the whole assembly. This unjustifiable practice which has not generally prevailed in our bounds, may be traced to that untempered zeal and that enthusiasm which God has permitted in a less or in a greater degree to accompany revivals of religion in every period of the Church, and which prove the existence of human depravity and weakness.

6th. It has been alleged, that in order to prove the existence of a revival of religion, we must prove that all the attending circumstances are similar to those which attended the revivals of religion mentioned in the Scriptures. To this we reply, that although we learn from Divine Revelation what are the principal features of that work, by which God has, in every age promoted his own glory and the salvation of men; yet from the same source we also learn, that with respect to the attending circumstances, God has not confined himself to carry on his own work in any one period,

precisely in the very same manner in which he proceeded in time past. Nor has he, at any period in the time past, prevented his work from being accompanied and disgraced in its process in this world, in a less or in a greater degree, by human imperfection and disorder, and by diabolical influence. As these are facts which cannot be questioned, and as we have reason to believe that God will act as sovereignly in the time to come, as he has done in the time past; therefore, we conclude, that in order to ascertain the existence of a revival of religion, we are not bound to vindicate all the attending circumstances, and prove that they are precisely similar to those which have taken place in the time past. Neither is it necessary to be able to account for every particular circumstance, as all the works of God are beyond our comprehension and our knowledge respecting any of them, little more than ignorance.

7th. It has been affirmed that we must judge of the circumstances attending a revival of religion, by the promises relative to that subject. To this opinion we would cheerfully subscribe if God had revealed what all the circumstances will be, which shall attend the accomplishment of those promises which relate to the revival of religion in the latter periods of the world; but as this is not the case we cannot judge by a standard to which no man has access.

Having candidly examined the evidence which we were constrained to reject, we shall proceed to observe that the doctrines of the cross, by which we principally mean those doctrines of Divine Revelation,

which evidently relate to the glorious plan which God has revealed for the salvation of sinners of the human family, through the obedience and atonement, intercession and government of the Divine Mediator, and by the agency of the Divine Spirit employed in convincing and converting sinners, and in building up believers in holiness and comfort, through faith unto salvation, are the doctrines which in every period of the Christian Church, have been the wisdom and the power of God unto salvation. First Corinthians, 1: 18: For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved, it is the power of God.

We shall now point out the only sources from which in our opinion, testimony can be brought to prove the existence of a revival of religion.

1st. The doctrines of the Cross. True religion, through the agency of the Divine Spirit, takes place under, and is promoted by the preaching and influence of the doctrines of the cross, in connection with the other ordinances of Divine institution. And those persons who are the subjects of that faith in Jesus Christ, and who are engaged in that obedience to him, which the Scriptures require, are warmly and firmly attached to Divine Revelation in general, and to the doctrines of the cross in particular, and they entertain a high respect for all the ordinances of God. Psalm cxix: 103, 140: "How sweet are thy words unto my taste! yea sweeter than honey to my mouth!" "Thy word is very pure: therefore thy servant loveth it." First Corinthians, ii: 2: "For I determined not to

know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." Psalm, lxxxiv: 10: "For 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.

2d. Religious Experiences.—The religious experiences of those persons, who are the subjects of that faith in Jesus Christ, and who are engaged in that obedience to him which the Scriptures require, are such with respect to everything to which they relate, as Divine Revelation gives us reason to expect from Christians in this mixed and dark state, where they see but in part, and know but in part, and are frequently constrained to adopt the language of the Apostle—Romans vii: 23: "But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members."

3d. Moral Conduct.—The moral conduct of those persons who are the subjects of that faith in Jesus Christ, and who are engaged in that obedience to him which the Scriptures require, is such as the word of God gives us reason to expect from Christians, in this imperfect state, where there is a great difference between what Christians really are, and what they ought to be; and where the best Christians can too often say with Paul, Romans, vii: 21: "I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me."

Now, when from all the evidence which we can collect from these three sources, by examination, information, comparison and all the means in our power,

we have reason to believe, that in any part of the Christian Church, any number of Christians have become the subjects of growth in grace; and that any number of persons, formerly irreligious, have become the subjects of that faith in Jesus Christ, and are engaged in that obedience to him, which the Scriptures require; then we are in possession of all the testimony to which men can have access, to prove the existence of a revival of religion in that place, in a less or in a greater degree. And if we proceed on scriptural and rational principles, we must ascertain the degrees of a revival of religion, not by the number of persons who have been the subjects of great bodily agitation, or affecting exercises of mind under the influence of terror or joy, but by the number of those persons, who, from all the testimony which we can collect from the above mentioned sources, appear to have become the subjects of genuine piety and growth in grace. Acts, ii: 47: "And the Lord added to the Church daily, such as should be saved."

We will indeed, grant that some men may be orthodox in their opinions, regular in their attention to the ordinances of God, free of gross immorality, and under the influence of such an enthusiastic fear of enthusiasm, as to oppose every thing warm and heart-affecting in religion. While others may be so much afraid of everything cool and rational in religion, as to plunge into the vortex of enthusiasm, where the passions despise the dictates of the understanding, and revolt from her government.

That some persons may arrive to such a high degree

of faith, as to possess a strong assurance, that the Christian religion was in its minority during the ministry of Jesus Christ and his Apostles, and never arrived to maturity until they arose and brought it to such a state of perfection, that if Paul was alive, he would scarcely know it; and therefore, the standard of true religion, and all revivals of it until the end of the world, will be found in their Acts and Testimonies and not in the sacred Scriptures, which were written when religion was in its infancy.

That large batteries, constructed of paper testimonies against the sins of our neighbors may be erected to overthrow the kingdom of Satan, by beating down all religious denominations except our own; and in subserviency to this purpose, men in the garb of the Ministers of the Prince of Peace may condescend to blow the trumpet of schism, and become the mere recruiting officers of a party, and instead of promoting the glory of God, and peace and good will to men, may prostitute their time and talents to the ignoble purpose of promoting discord among their brethren, who have the same Lord, the same faith, the same baptism and the same God and Father of all. And some men may rally round their standards, who may be as cold as the Alpine snow in the cause of genuine piety and morality, and at the same time may possess such a fervid zeal for the distinguishing tenets of their party, and for the human appendages of Divine religion, as to be disposed to say to those Christian disciples who do not follow all the traditions of the Elders, "Stand off, for we are more holy than you."

The the pride of opinion and party zeal may forge chains on the anvils of bigotry and superstition, to bind the human conscience to the horns of their altars, and those Christians, who will not barter the liberty wherewith Christ has made them free for these human inventions, may be stigmatised as ignorant and erroneous, enthusiastical and idolatrous persons.

That certain men of an enthusiastic temperament who have as much business to do at home as any of their neighbors, may, under the influence of that religious Don Quixotism to which such persons are unhappily addicted, spend their time in ranging through the Church, sword in hand, to find dreadful errors and grievous idolatry where they have no existence, and then combat the gigantic offspring of their own disordered imagination ; and also to encounter all the revivals of religion, which take place in any part of the Christian Church except their own, as horrid monsters, propagated by the Devil and enthusiasm. And in the paroxysm of their zeal against all those revivals of religion which have taken place in the Presbyterian and Congregational parts of the Christian Church during the last eighty years, they may not only pour their vengeance on the friends of those revivals who, are yet in the land of the living, but they may also violate the last terrestrial asylum of human nature, by discharging their artillery into the graves of the dead.

That religion may be established by intolerant and imaginary laws, and Church and State may unite to extirpate heresy, and by the sword of persecution,

may compel those persons, whom they pronounce to be heretics, to expiate their errors with their blood or become hypocrites. And civil and ecclesiastical terrors and allurements may enable hypocrisy for a time to assume the appearance of that religious uniformity for the obtaining of which, millions of the human family have been butchered in vain, and the throne and the altar stained with their blood. But all these things may take place, and yet afford no satisfactory evidence, that the Christian religion is revived on Christian and rational principles. Therefore, from whatever ground we view the subject, we are still constrained to conclude, that when, from all the evidence to which we can have access, we have reason to believe, that in any part of the Christian Church, men have become the subjects of scriptural piety and growth in grace, we are then in possession of the strongest testimony which the nature of the case will admit, to prove that true religion has been revived in that place; notwithstanding that the work may have been accompanied with much human imperfection, and that Satan may have been employed in sowing his tares with an unsparing hand.

Christian brethren, we have endeavored to disentangle this interesting and controverted subject from the chaotic and extraneous matter in which it has been involved, and we have placed it before you on plain, definite, rational and scriptural ground; it remains for you to exercise your own understanding, and judge for yourselves.

We are now to make some improvement.

By the principles laid down in the preceding doctrine, we shall examine that work which has been in operation for some years past in our bounds. And, although it is our duty to decide on the testimony which the nature of the case will admit; yet as we cannot have access to direct testimony, and as we are extremely imperfect judges in an affair in which so much depends on the state and operations of the human heart, we shall not pretend to decide with absolute certainty, but shall leave unerring decision to God, who only can search the hearts and try the reins of the children of men. It is indeed, true, that certain persons of superior sagacity and abilities, who have long been in the habit of dictating to mankind in matters of religion, and whose confidence in the infallibility of their own judgment, does not appear to be much inferior to that of his holiness of Rome, have already decided upon the subject in question, without that knowledge of the religious sentiments, experiences and moral conduct of the subjects of the work, which was attainable, and therefore, without that knowledge which the nature of the case admitted and demanded. But it behoves us to move in a more humble sphere, and to keep within the limits of our knowledge, and submit our decision, and the competency and credibility of the testimony on which it is formed to the candid examination of our fellow Christians; only requesting, that if they cannot see with us, that we may be permitted to see with our own eyes, and think for ourselves, without being exposed to misrepresentation and abuse; at least until it is demonstrated on scrip-

tural and rational principles, that the ground which we have taken is not tenable. Therefore, we shall confine our decision within the limits of this Synod, where we have had a personal knowledge of the subjects of the work for some years past, and have it in our power to examine their moral conduct. And while we indulge the pleasing hope, that it will be found, on candid examination, that true religion has lately been revived in other parts of the Church, we shall leave decision on that subject to those persons, who from their situation and opportunities, are qualified to decide with that precision, to which we, who live at a distance, could not pretend with any propriety. Moreover, as the work which has obtained in our bounds, has not tended to that unmeaning catholicism, which pretends to unite in Christian communion, in sealing ordinances, those persons who are so far from Christian union, that their opinions relative to some of the most important doctrines of Christianity, are directly opposite; and as it has not been attended by that religious laughing and dancing, which are a disgrace to the Christian name; these things do not claim our attention at present. Therefore, we proceed to observe—

That the work in question, has taken place under the preaching and influence of the doctrines of the cross, in connection with the other ordinances of Divine institution. And from all the evidence which we have been able to collect from their doctrinal sentiments, from their religious experiences, and from their moral conduct, we solemnly declare, that we do be-

lieve, that under the preaching and influence of the doctrines of the cross, in connection with the other ordinances of Divine institution through the agency of the Divine Spirit; some Christians have made a considerable progress in new obedience, and a very considerable number of persons, formerly irreligious, have become the subjects of that faith in Jesus Christ, and are engaged in that obedience to him which the Scriptures require. Therefore, in the exercise of our own understanding, and without dictating to our fellow Christians, who have an unquestionable right to judge for themselves, we do believe, that God has been graciously pleased, once more to revive true religion in the bounds of this Synod. At the same time, we lament that many of our people appear to be unprofitable hearers of the word, and that a great number of those persons who appeared to be seriously affected, have as yet, afforded no scriptural evidence of genuine piety, and some of them have become as careless and wicked as ever. And we acknowledge, that the best Christians amongst us, both Ministers and people, come far short of their duty, and are unprofitable servants. Moreover, we grant, that it is highly probable, that this revival of religion, like every other one which has taken place in the Christian Church, has been accompanied by enthusiasm and hypocrisy; and that while the Spirit of God has been engaged in convincing and converting sinners, and in building up believers in holiness and comfort, through faith unto salvation, the enemy of God and men has been employed, as usual, in sowing his tares among the wheat.

And we expect that it will appear at the last day, that a number of the subjects of the work did receive the seed of the word in good ground, and brought forth fruit unto eternal life; but that a far greater number of them were only way-side, stony ground, or thorny ground hearers. Therefore, we believe that neither those persons, who, because they find something wrong, condemn every thing; nor those, who, because they find something right, justify every thing, meet the subject on proper ground. You are now in possession of our decision relative to the subject; and it is the result of a deliberate and impartial examination of all the evidence which the nature of the case will admit.

We are aware that it will be said that we have decided upon our own testimony, and as we are friends to the work, it must be considered as *ex-parte*.

To this we reply, that all who are acquainted with the work, are either its open or disguised friends, or enemies, in one degree or another; therefore, although we can ascertain the principles upon which it is necessary to decide, by a different species of evidence, yet we cannot obtain that knowledge of facts, which is absolutely necessary to rational decision, without admitting *ex-parte* testimony. The question now is, what is the best testimony, relative to facts, to which we can have access? We answer, that our testimony is the best. For with respect to credibility, we stand at least upon equal ground with the enemies of the work; and as to competency, we are entitled to the preference; because that, although we are not men of

such profound learning (See Appendix, *a*) and talents, as to be able to decide on any subject, without such evidence as the nature of the case will admit and require; yet we are not destitute of common sense, and we are personally acquainted with the subjects of the work, within our bounds, and thereby have access to all the knowledge which men can obtain, from their religious sentiments, experience and moral conduct. But the enemies of the work stand upon different ground. For the greatest part of them possess no other knowledge of the facts, than what is derived from a species of parol evidence, which would not be admitted in any legal decision; and some of them have not only prevented themselves from obtaining a personal knowledge of the subject, but they have also prostituted the censures of the church, to keep others in equal ignorance. It will be admitted, that the work in question was accompanied with such uncommon circumstances, as to claim the attention of philosophers and divines, especially such as designed to write on the subject, if they intended to write under the government of knowledge and candor; yet some time after the commencement of this work in the Western country, a certain Presbytery did censure one of their young preachers, because he had attended on one of our sacramental occasions, in order to see the work and judge for himself. But strange as it may appear to Protestants, that such an event should take place in the nineteenth century, and amongst men, too, who profess to be displeas'd with Popish tyranny, yet it is consistent with their avowed princi-

ples relative to occasional hearing, which confine them to the light of their own lamp, (See Appendix, *b*) and it was formed upon such principles, that no oil will burn in it that has not been imported from the original manufactory. Hence, it is not surprising that these men, who frequently find their lamp so dim, that they cannot see to manage the business that occurs in their own little sphere, until they send to Edinburgh for oil, should not be able to see that the work in question, which has taken place beyond their sphere, is a work of the Spirit of God. Blind men will always expose themselves, when they attempt to decide upon subjects of which rational ideas cannot be obtained without light. Nor will those men appear to greater advantage, who shut their doors against that light which the nature of the case admits and demands, and sit down beside their own glimmering lamps, and without discrimination, consign to destruction, as heretics and enthusiasts, thousands of their fellow christians; many of whom, by their sentiments, experience and moral conduct, produce scriptural evidence to prove that they are related to God, as their God and Father, reconciled in Christ Jesus. But these unhappy victims to party zeal, praised God in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, did not adhere to the genuine Act and Testimony, and belonged to that church which assumes the name of Presbyterian; (See Appendix, *c*) therefore they must be delivered over to Satan. Now, as it will be granted that our testimony, with respect to credibility, is equal to the testimony of the enemies of the work; and as it must appear to every unprejudiced

person, that it is superior, as to competency, because that we have access, not only to all the sources of evidence within their reach, but we are also in possession of that extensive personal knowledge of the subject, which one part of them had it not in their power to acquire, and which the other part would not obtain. Therefore, we conclude that our decision relative to the work, which has taken place within the limits of this Synod, is supported by the best testimony which the nature of the case will at present admit.

But as truth is our object, we are willing to meet investigation on any reasonable ground; and as the above work has been in operation in the Western country for several years, and thereby time has been afforded to examine its moral tendency, we shall submit the following process: Let any number of decent professing christians, who are opposed to the work, apply to the Minister and Session of any congregation in which the work has extensively prevailed, within the bounds of this Synod, and if they cannot bring before them some of the subjects of it, who, from the evidence obtained, from their religious sentiments and experience, and from their moral conduct as certified by their neighbors, do appear—their enemies being judges—to have become the subjects of that faith in Jesus Christ, and to be engaged in that obedience to him which the scriptures require, then we will grant that the work in question is the work of the Devil, and that its enemies are profound philosophers, and its advocates consummate blockheads.

In the meantime, it is our duty to oppose those

principles which, if admitted, would directly tend to prove, that all the revivals which have taken place in the church of Christ, (See Appendix, *d*) were the offspring of Satan and depraved human nature, because they were all accompanied by error, enthusiasm, and hypocrisy, in a less or in a greater degree. For the truth of which we appeal to the sacred scriptures, and to the histories of the christian church. And when we are engaged in defending revivals of religion, the only scriptural and rational process is to defend every thing which can be traced to the operation of the Spirit of God on the human heart; to condemn all things which evidently proceed from a spirit of error and delusion; and to leave those things which are doubtful until time shall afford the necessary comment. For we ought to tremble at the idea of ascribing the work of God to the Devil, or the work of the Devil to God. Nor let us ever permit the pride of opinion, the honor of our denomination, or untempered zeal, to lead us to defend irregularity or enthusiasm. But let us do everything in our power to awaken sinners from a dangerous security: to enlighten their minds in the knowledge of Christ, and to convince them of the necessity of keeping their passions under the government of their understanding, and their understanding under the government of divine revelation. While men remain in carnal security, they are not exposed to much danger from enthusiasm; therefore, nothing appears more contemptible than a freezing preacher, (whose discourses generally descend like the northern snow,) when engaged in bawling against enthusiasm,

to a congregation cold as the ice in the polar region. Such preachers and such people might well be alarmed at the prospect of being frozen to death; but they are in as little danger of being scorched by enthusiasm, as the inhabitants of Lapland by the vertical rays of the sun. But when the solemn and interesting doctrines of religion are brought to bear on the human mind, with such energy as to bring it under the influence of fear or joy, in a higher degree, such is the depravity of human nature, such the impetuosity of the passions, such the weakness of the nervous system in many persons, and such the malevolence, power and subtilty of Satan, that we ought then to be particularly on our guard against enthusiasm. And in such circumstances, if the spurs are used instead of the reins, and if the ministers of religion promote the paroxysm of the passions, and do not address the understanding in the sound instructive language of the gospel of peace, it is highly probable that in many instances the passions will revolt from the government of reason, and launch into the lawless regions of error and delusion. We have a lamentable instance of this truth in the State of Kentucky and its vicinity, where five ministers and their followers, have turned their backs on the Presbyterian Church, the doctrines of the Cross and common sense, and have proudly plunged into the vortex of enthusiasm.

It has been asked—If this is a revival of religion which has taken place amongst us, why has it not extended to certain denominations in our vicinity? We answer in the words of our Lord, Math. xi: 26:

“Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight.”

As our patience and forbearance have been sufficiently exercised, by that illiberal treatment to which they have been exposed from the pulpit, and sometimes from the press, for many years, we have at length arrived at that point where self-defence becomes the duty of christians, and silence a crime. Therefore, if the people who delight in war will persist in hostility, and let us have no alternative but either to fight or surrender our understanding and conscience to be governed by them, we shall put on our armor, in the face of every consequence, and if the Rubicon must be passed, we know where it is fordable.

At present it may suffice to observe, that we have been repeatedly represented as Methodists and Arminians, by men who can plead the cause of piety, the cause of God and men, with as much coldness as if they were inhabitants of Zembla; but when their fellow christians of other denominations, have the misfortune to come in their way, and they can find them in any text in the Old or New Testament, no volcano can discharge more fire and smoke. But we deny the truth of the charge, and defy its authors to prove it by competent and credible testimony. In the meantime, when it is considered that I am a tenacious Calvinist, which will be admitted by all who know me, and that I am well acquainted with the Presbyterian clergy in the Western country, my testimony relative to the subject, will obtain credit where I am known. And I do affirm, that the doctrines of the Cross are taught by the members of this Synod; and I hope

they are dear to our hearts, not only because they are doctrines contained in our Confession of Faith, to which we firmly adhere, nor merely because John Calvin taught them, (See Appendix, e) but because Jesus Christ and his Prophets and Apostles taught them, and we know that they are mighty, through God, to the pulling down of the strong holds of iniquity. Every intelligent person will admit, that among forty-nine ministers who belong to this Synod, some of whom have been educated in Europe, some in New Jersey, some in New England, some in the Carolinas, some in Philadelphia, some in Carlisle, and others within our own bounds, there must exist a considerable diversity with respect to talents, taste, information, and the method of explaining and applying the doctrines of the gospel. And we grant that some of us may possess more zeal than prudence, and more piety than accuracy; and that it is possible that such men, in their zeal to rouse sinners to those exertions which the scriptures demand, may in an unguarded moment drop an improper expression, and may not always mark the lines which divide Calvinist and Arminian sentiments, with that precision which is desirable. But if our most inaccurate sermons are examined with candor, and one part compared with another, it will appear abundantly evident even from them, that we believe and teach the doctrines of Revelation, relative to salvation through the agency of the Divine Spirit, through the obedience and atonement, intercession and government of the Divine Mediator.

The doctrine delivered may be improved to ascer-

tain our religious character. If we believe and love divine Revelation in general, and the doctrines of the Cross in particular; and if under their influence, by the agency of the Divine Spirit, we have been brought to a heart-affecting sense of our guilt, depravity and danger, and have been enabled and disposed to receive and rest upon Jesus Christ, for all the purposes of salvation, for which he is freely offered in the gospel; and if we are conscientiously endeavoring to render that obedience to the moral law, as a rule of life, which the scriptures demand; then we have reason to believe that God has begun a work of grace in our hearts, which he will bring to perfection in due time. But if this is not the case, we ought to be convinced, that however great our assurance of an interest in Christ may be, and however great our bodily agitations, mental exercises, fears, hopes and joys, may have been, we are yet in the gall of bitterness and bond of iniquity. Truth is truth, and error is error, antecedent to, and independent of any exercise of our minds relative to them; therefore, the truth of any proposition is one thing, and our persuasion of that truth is another thing. And as scriptural and rational assurance is derived from pertinent testimony, therefore, we must be able to prove by scriptural evidence, that we have a saving interest in Christ, before that we can be assured, upon scriptural and rational principles, that we are genuine christians.

Christian brethren, you and thousands more can bear witness, that our clergy teach the doctrines of the Cross, and do not entertain you from the pulpit

with unsupported charges against their fellow christians. Nor have we chained you to our altars, by terms of christian communion which Christ and his Apostles never taught, that we might prevent you from hearing occasionally, regular ministers of the gospel of other denominations, and thereby have it in our power to make you believe that we are the only ministers of religion who are in possession of genius, learning and orthodoxy, and that the clergy of other denominations are unlearned, or erroneous, or enthusiastic, senseless creatures, whom you must not hear preaching, lest you should be poisoned with their errors and disgusted by their nonsense. And you know, that although we are warmly attached to our own denomination, and believe that the ordinances of the gospel are administered amongst us as agreeably to their institution as in any other part of the christian church; yet we have not labored to make you Presbyterians, but have endeavored to the utmost of our power, to use the means which God has appointed, to make you doctrinal, experimental and practical christians, and have left the choice of your denomination to yourselves. In this mixed and imperfect state, a considerable diversity of opinion relative to religion will exist, and some men will be engaged in crying, lo here, and lo there; but as you have to be judged for yourselves, it is your duty to exercise your own rights and think for yourselves. And as you are in possession of the sacred scriptures, the only standard of true religion, search them carefully, and pray to God to enable you to understand and love them; and in them

you will find that human guilt, depravity and misery, and salvation through the obedience and atonement, intercession and government of the Lord Jesus Christ, by the agency of the Divine Spirit, are doctrines plainly and expressly revealed. And you will also find that God, who certainly knew the best method of addressing mankind, has addressed their understanding, in the instruction contained in his word; their fears, in the dreadful penalty of his law, as a broken covenant of works; and their hopes, in the alluring promises of the covenant of grace; that sinners might be excited to flee from the wrath to come, and lay hold of the hope set before them in the gospel of peace. Now, when you find those ministers of the gospel, whose doctrines, whose method of preaching, and whose practice, are most conformable to divine Revelation, let them be the men of your choice, and their denomination yours; but follow no party farther than they follow christ. And if the obligations under which you are, arising from the relation in which you stand to God and men, from your profession of the christian religion, from the seals of the covenant of grace, and from the moral law as a rule of life, are not capable of binding you to perform the duties which you owe to God and men, you may adopt those young covenants and testimonies which imperfect men have made in their own likeness, a few years ago, and then you will be able to judge for yourselves, whether they will answer the purposes of that religion which breathes peace and good will to men, any better than God's eternal, well ordered covenant of grace and peace,

and his sure and sweet testimonies would have done without their assistance. For our part, although we grant that it is sometimes necessary to defend the truth and oppose error, from the press, yet we believe that the profession and practice of the christian religion, as revealed in the sacred scriptures, is a better testimony for the truth, than a thousand paper testimonies against the supposed or real errors of other denominations.

It is to be lamented, that while our conduct has testified, that our claims on our fellow Christians of other denominations, have extended no farther than to be permitted to serve God peaceably, in that way which we believe to be most agreeable to his will; that in the inoffensive exercise of a right so unquestionable, the sentiments and practice of that part of the Christian Church, to which we esteem it our honor to belong, have been repeatedly and grievously misrepresented and abused, by men, who under the influence of an uncharitable party spirit, have pursued our denomination for many years, with an unrelenting animosity, which nothing but implicit submission to their imperious dictates can assuage. But persuaded that the part of the Christian Church to which we belong, notwithstanding its acknowledged imperfection, is still under the friendly government of him who has the key of the house of David, and who has set before us an open door, which no man can shut; these warlike Apostles, who promote the religion of the Prince of Peace, by hurling their anathemas at the heads of their fellow Christians, are so far from being able to

excite terror in our minds, that we view them as objects of compassion. And it is our duty to pity them, and to pray that God may forgive and reform them; for with all their lofty pretensions to superior learning and reformation, it is very evident, that a little more of that sound knowledge, and of that benevolent and humble, forbearing and charitable spirit, which the Christian religion requires and promotes, would do them no harm.

Reverend Fathers and Brethren, it is but a few years since the sacred Scriptures were first read, and the Gospel first preached in this part of the western country, now within the bounds of this Synod. And besides other Christian denominations, there are at present under our care, some thousands of the human family, who have professedly enlisted under the standard of the cross, and attend upon the ordinances of Divine institution. And our eyes have seen one congregation after another, rising into existence with such rapidity, that there are at present, under the care of this Synod, seventy-four congregations which have the ordinances of the gospel statedly administered to them, besides fifty-three vacant congregations, which are occasionally supplied, (See Appendix *f*.) Convinced that a learned education, unless in some very extraordinary case, is absolutely necessary to the Ministers of religion, we have made the utmost exertions in behalf of learning; and although we had not in the time past, and have not now, any permanent funds; yet by the good hand of God upon us, and by the generosity of the friends of learning and piety, we have proceeded from

one step to another, until at length we have the pleasure of beholding a regular College within our bounds, where the learned languages, and the sciences are accurately taught to the youth of all denominations. Nor can our grateful hearts forget, that a number of the once hostile Indians, who but a few years ago carried savage war, with its attendant horrors, through this western country, have given a friendly reception to our Missionaries, and have sent some of their children to us, to be instructed in the Christian religion, and in agriculture. And the enemy of God and men, has heard with infernal amazement, that the standard of the Prince of Peace has been unfurled on the once bloody plains of Sandusky; and that Indian prayers have gone up to God, for salvation through the Divine Mediator.

We might enumerate the difficulties which those members of our body, who have borne the burden of the day, had to encounter, and the obstacles which they had to surmount, in promoting the cause of learning and piety in this western country, and in endeavoring to preserve this infant part of the Church from erroneous, immoral, irregular, or irreligious Preachers. And although a Smith and a Findley, a Clark and a Dodd, have gone to where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest; yet while memory shall exist, their memory will be dear to those of us, who sat at their feet while pertinent instruction flowed from their lips to enlighten the mind; or the penal sanctions of the Divine law, in glowing terrors flashed in the face of unregenerate sinners, to rouse

their fears and prevent them from perishing in the course which leads to destruction; or the sweet consolations of the Gospel of Peace, soothed our throbbing hearts, calmed the tumult of our minds, silenced our fears, and melted our souls in pleasures all Divine. Nor shall our young brother, the late Mr. David Smith, be forgotten, who preached and lived like a Christian; and who died at the commencement of the revival, recommending Christ and salvation to those around him, and rejoicing that the Lord had begun to revive his work. Our expectations were raised, when the late Reverend and learned, accurate and pious, Mr. John Black settled amongst us; but our hopes were nipped in the bud, and the much lamented man lies cold in the house of silence. And painful recollection presents to our view, learning and piety, standing in mourning attitude over the tomb which contains the united ashes of a Watson and a Morehead, who were laid together in the same grave. Nor does Jefferson College, though well pleased with her present learned and venerable Professors, forget to pay the tribute of a silent tear, to the memory of her beloved, modest, and scientific Watson. But instead of detailing our grievances, let us give scope to gratitude and set up our Ebenezer, saying, "hitherto hath the Lord helped us."

Is it so, that we have reason, with gratitude and humility, to acknowledge, that under the preaching and influence of the doctrines of the cross, through the agency of the Divine Spirit, true religion has once more been revived amongst us in a considerable de-

gree? Then let us ascribe to God all the glory of his own work. And equally afraid of Arminianism and Antinomianism, a frozen formality and a lawless enthusiasm, let us rally around the doctrines of the Cross, hold them dearer to our hearts than ever, study them carefully, teach them accurately and plainly, and urge them with zeal, prudence and affection, determining with the Apostle, to know nothing among our people, save Christ and him crucified. And let us address the understanding and the passions of men, their hopes as well as their fears; avoiding a cold, metaphysical, uninteresting method of preaching on the one hand, and a declamatory, eccentric and lawless manner on the other. Nor let us forget to pray, that God may revive his work more abundantly amongst us, and in every part of the Christian Church; and that Anti-christian and Mahomedan, Jewish and Pagan darkness, may soon be dispelled by the illuminating rays of the Sun of Righteousness.

It is indeed true, that our Lord and Maker has left us for a while in an unfriendly and heart-breaking world, where the archers shoot at us, and wound and grieve us; and where our mother's angry sons have uniformly endeavored to weaken our hands, discourage our hearts, and paralyze our efforts, in the service of our common Lord and Father; because, that we will not see with their eyes, nor pronounce their religious Shibboleth. (See Appendix *g*.) But he has promised that he will come again and take his friends with him, that where he is, there they may be also; and it will not be long, until that heart cheering promise shall be

accomplished. Therefore, despising the illiberal treatment to which we are exposed, let us, in humble dependence on Divine aid, conscientiously follow the path marked by Divine Revelation; and with courage and fidelity, prudence and zeal, persevere in the discharge of our duty as Watchmen on the walls of Zion and as private Christians; that when we come to die, each of us may experience that support, and enjoy those consolations which the world can neither give nor take away; and may be enabled, through Divine grace, to say with the Apostle, 2d Timothy, iv : 7, 8: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."

AN APPENDIX,

CONTAINING NOTES TO THE PRECEDING DISCOURSE.

(a) *Page 132.*—The Presbyterian Clergy, in the Western country, have been represented as unlearned men. This charge is not altogether without foundation; for although that we all have some knowledge of the learned languages and the sciences, and some of our number have finished their education at the College of Glasgow, and others at the best colleges in the United States; yet when our people are looking up to us, as stewards in the house of God, to dispense to their hungry and thirsty souls the bread and the water of life, there is not one among us capable of entertaining them from the pulpit, by declining Latin and Greek nouns, and passing the verbs through their moods and tenses. But it is said that this has been done by men of superior education, to the great edification and astonishment of their unlearned hearers. Hence, it is not surprising, that people who are blessed with such powerful means of instruction, should be so far advanced in religion above their neighbors, as to have little more to do than to cast stones at their fellow christians of other denominations. However, it might be observed, that some of the authors of the above charge, have ordained men to the gospel ministry, who obtained their education at the same seminary with our young men. But in justice to their young preachers it must be observed, that although they had no more learning when they left the College than ours, yet when they came in contact with a Presbytery profoundly learned, they obtained a vast portion of erudition by the operation of the laws of sympathy. We

love learning and learned men, and have done everything in our power to promote learning; but genuine learning is one thing, and pedantry is another.

(b) *Page. 133.*—It is well known that certain clergymen, when engaged in declaiming against the dreadful sin of hearing the ministers of the gospel, of any other denomination, have informed their hearers, that such ministers might deliver many truths, but they also delivered many errors; and therefore, that people might as well expect to drink spirits in which a large quantity of strong poison had been mixed, without swallowing the poison, as to receive the truth without the poison of the error. That is, the sermons delivered by ministers of the gospel, of every other denomination except theirs, are as pernicious to the soul, as spirits in which a large quantity of strong poison has been mixed, are to the body. Now, as it must be admitted that the soul is more precious than the body, then it is a greater crime to hear a sermon preached by a minister of any other denomination, than to drink poisoned spirits. But those who drink poisoned spirits are guilty of the crime of suicide; therefore, those who hear poisoned sermons, (and all sermons are poisoned with error, except those preached by the denomination to which these gentlemen belong,) are guilty of a greater crime than suicide. Besides, it is as great a crime to drink poisoned spirits at home, as to drink them in the shop of the apothecary; therefore, it is as great a crime to read poisoned sermons at home, as to hear them delivered from the pulpit, for what is poison in the shop of the apothecary would be poison at home, and what is poison from the pulpit would be poison from the press. Now, such men, upon their own principles, would be guilty of a crime more heinous than suicide, if they should either read or hear a sermon from any other person than one of their own denomination.

But charity will not permit us to believe that they are guilty of a crime more heinous than suicide. Therefore, we must believe that they neither read nor hear a single sermon which does not come from one of their own denomination and consequently, they are confined to the light of their own lamp. Moreover, there are several denominations who hold the same sentiments relative to occasional hearing, and with equal infallibility, each one of them declares, that it is a great crime to hear the other, on account of their errors; and as they are equally entitled to credit, we must believe that they are all erroneous. But it has appeared, that it is a greater crime to read or hear sermons poisoned with error, than to drink poisoned spirits; therefore, upon their own principles, it is a greater crime to read or hear the sermons of any of these denominations, than to drink poisoned spirits. Finally, there is not a denomination of christians, nor minister of the gospel on earth, who are free from error; therefore, according to these principles, it would be a greater crime to read or hear a sermon, from any minister of the gospel of any denomination, than to drink poisoned spirits.

(c) *Page 133.*—Certain gentlemen have, in an insulting manner, expressed their indignation that we should be distinguished by the name of the Presbyterian Church in America, and this has been a subject of complaint for many years.

It is well known that our denomination has never had any other name than that of Presbyterian, and with it we are satisfied. But if they could not be contented with the humble name of Presbyterian, without adopting another name to show that they were better than Presbyterians, it does not follow from thence, that they ought to insult us, because we will not renounce our name to gratify their ungenerous pride. For our part, we shall never quarrel

about names, but leave the subject to querulous old women and petulant boys. However, we cannot avoid observing, that these gentlemen, who have long made war on the sentiments, character and practice of our denomination, without any resistance on our part, until a few months ago, when one Presbyterian unfurled the defensive banner, might have spared our name, as it did not affect the merits of the cause. Every man acquainted with the subject, must be convinced that it is impossible for us to live in peace with men whose hostility extends even to our name, and who endeavor to draw us into a quarrel on that trifling subject. But in justice to them it must be observed, that they were not the first whose religious zeal extended to objects of similar importance; for we learn from history, that "the Tartars, whose religion, it is said, principally consists in their whiskers, once entered into a long and bloody war with the Persians, pronouncing them infidels, because that their whiskers were not of the orthodox cut."

(d) Page 135.—It has been alleged by a certain class of men, that all revivals of religion have led to testimonies against error; but as this has not been the case in our denomination, what we have called revivals of religion are the works of a spirit of error and delusion.

We reply: That if by testimonies, they mean such testimonies as their own, we deny that any revival of religion that ever took place in the christian church, exclusive of their denomination, led to such testimony. But if they can produce one testimony against error, published by any religious denomination in Asia, Africa, Europe, or America, from the day on which our first parents left the Garden of Eden to the present moment, which is similar to their own, taken in connection with its adopting and explanatory acts, and with the decisions and publications under it, relative to

points of testimony, we shall then give up the point. Now, as they avow that their own testimony is the only pure scriptural testimony for the truth, and therefore testify against all other denominations and their testimonies, it is evident that if we were to adopt all the testimonies that ever existed in the world, except their one, they would still testify against us as an erroneous people. Why then do they trifle with the subject, and insult the understanding of mankind by an eccentric harangue about the peculiar ardor with which all sorts of persons, at the reformation from popery, embraced the testimony of the Waldenses, Lollards, Wickliffites and Bohemians, when at the same time that testimony is so far from pleasing them, that if those men were to arise from the grave, and hold the same sentiments which they held before their death, these gentlemen would not so far acknowledge them as christians, as to hold stated or occasional communion with them, or hear a sermon from one of their ministers! And this they dare not deny, while their writings are in existence. Would it not be better, then, for them to come to the point at once, like men, and tell us what all who know them know to be true, that we must either adopt their act and testimony, or be denounced as heretics. Do they not avow, that all other denominations, those who have testimonies and those who have none, are so erroneous, that it would be a sin for them to hear one of their ministers preaching a sermon? Could these people be satisfied with any testimony but their own, or any denomination but their own? They will not say that they could. Therefore we hope, that after this, they will speak and write on the subject with candor, and declare that whenever true religion is revived, it will lead men to embrace their testimony. And as they introduced the testimony of the Waldenses, &c. to assist them in proving that religion was not revived amongst us, because that we had not according to

them, judicially testified against certain errors, and had not embraced certain testimonies, that is, their testimonies, they certainly intended to convey the idea, that the testimony of the Waldenses, Lollards, Wickliffites and Bohemians, was a judicial one, and extended to objects of importance, which the Confession of Faith, Catechisms, sermons, writings, and judicial acts of the Presbyterian Church in America do not embrace. Upon any other ground, this testimony could have no influence on the point in question, except to mislead the ignorant. Now, it will be prudent in these gentlemen, as soon as possible, to publish a copy of the judicial testimony in question, accompanied with proper vouchers, together with a copy of the act by which all sorts of persons embraced it at the reformation from Popery: and it will also be necessary to prove, from some authentic history of the church, that it was the testimony of the Lollards in Scotland, and not the testimony of any other Lollards, in any other part of Europe, that was embraced at the reformation from Popery. Until these things are done, some ignorant people will entertain doubts respecting the existence of any such testimony, and consider the affair as a piece of low cunning introduced for ignoble purposes. That the Waldenses, Wickliffites, and Bohemians, or Hussites, held many sound doctrines, and that some of them opposed the tyranny of the church of Rome, in the face of danger and death, we cheerfully admit; and that there was a great similarity between some of their sentiments and some of the sentiments of the Protestant Reformers, and that the latter adopted some of the opinions of the former, while they rejected others, we grant. But will any man in the exercise of his reason, say, that it follows from thence, that religion is not revived amongst us, because it is alleged we have not judicially testified against Free Masonry and lotteries? That cause must be wretched, which leans upon such arguments for support.

But if their meaning is, that all revivals of religion have led men to testify against error in one way, or in another; then they have taken great pains to establish a truth which no Christian ever doubted. And we must say, that we have testified against errors in principle and in practice, by our sermons from the pulpit and the press; by publications in defence of the doctrines of religion; by the decisions of our judicatories; and by the printed addresses of our Synods and Assemblies to the people under their care. Moreover, we are in possession of a public, explicit and judicial testimony for all truth, and against all error. This testimony is contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, which we have received as the word of God, and the infallible standard of our religion; and in our Confession of Faith and catechisms, which we have adopted as a human system, which expresses the sense in which we understand Divine Revelation. Hence the repeated charges which have been brought against our denomination, for having no testimony for the truth, and against error, are as far from truth, as their authors are from candor and liberality. Now, upon what ground will these gentlemen stand and hold up their faces to God or men, and say that religion is not revived amongst us, because that we have not judicially testified against error? But all this will not do, because, that we have not employed these men to teach us what is truth, and what is error, and to instruct us in the right method of lifting up a testimony. To this we reply, that we have been too long in the practice of thinking for ourselves, to permit them to think for us.

We are aware, that some simple people will allege, that since it is undeniably evident, that we shall obtain no more mercy from certain gentlemen, than a Protestant would have done some years ago from the Holy Inquisition, unless that

we surrender to them our congregations, or adopt their testimony, that it would be best to adopt their testimony for the sake of peace. We reply, that this might be done, if there was but one testimony : but there are several denominations, each one of whom pretends to have lifted up the only genuine scriptural testimony for reformation principles, and they testify against each other as erroneous. Therefore, if we were to adopt the testimony of any one of the parties, all the others would testify against us as heretics, because that we had not adopted the right testimony. Hence, if the angel Gabriel was in our situation, he could not escape the charge of heresy ; and if he discovered much fervor in religion, he would soon find men, who, in order to increase their party, would undertake to prove, that he was Satan transformed into an angel of light, for the purpose of promoting enthusiasm and Watts' Psalms.

(e) *Page 138.*—We highly respect the memory of the Protestant Reformers and Martyrs, from Luther and Zuinglius, Melancthon and Calvin, down to James Renwick ; and we are much indebted to them for light on many important subjects. But as they were uninspired men, and entertained different ideas relative to religion, we shall not surrender that liberty of conscience for which they nobly contended, and disgrace the glorious principles upon which the reformation took place, by adopting their opinions implicitly as the standard of our faith and practice. Nor will we believe, that any of them had authority from God, to enter into covenants which should bind their posterity, under the penalty of perjury, to do some things, which it is absolutely impossible for them to do in their present circumstances ; and to do other things, which appear to be inconsistent with some of the doctrines taught by Jesus Christ and his Apostles ; until

the original charter is produced, by which God appointed these men to be the federal heads and representatives of all their posterity, and invested them with full power and authority to make such covenants as they thought proper, in a national capacity, which should bind the understanding and conscience of their posterity, to the latest ages, even when they ceased to be in a national capacity, and could not fulfil the covenant engagements. When this charter is brought forward, we shall submit, but not until then. The Protestant Reformers appealed from human decrees, decisions and traditions, to the Sacred Oracles, and renounced all authority in matters of religion, not derived from God, and maintained that every man had a right to search the Scriptures, and judge for himself. Now we stand upon the same ground, and those men who undertake to chain our understanding and conscience to their footstool, must produce their authority from God for the purpose; until this is done, we shall treat their angry fulminations with deserved contempt.

(f) *Page 143.*—On account of those persons who are strangers to our arrangements, it may be necessary to observe, that those members of our denomination, who reside in the state of Kentucky and the parts adjacent, have a Synod of their own, distinguished by the name of the Synod of Kentucky. And we must say, that we are highly pleased with the late address of that Synod, to the people under their care, relative to those unhappy men, whom they have justly excluded from their communion.

(g) *Page 146.*—By our mother's angry sons, we do not mean those Christians of other denominations, who are disposed to attend to their own business, and permit us to serve God peaceably, in that way which we believe to be agreeable to his will. Against such we have brought no complaint.

They have their faults, and we have ours, and we both stand in need of reformation; but snarling testimonies against each other, are just as likely to produce that reformation, as the Roman Catholic holy water is to answer the purposes for which it is used. They are both of human derivation, and the one is as powerful a remedy against moral evil as the other. But we do mean those Christians, to whatsoever denomination they may belong, who are conscious, that their conduct has been such as we have described; and they are the only persons who will be offended; but we assure them, that they have our hearty consent, to adopt those measures in relation to the subject, which to them may appear proper. At the same time we must say, that we respect these men, on account of their attachment to the doctrines of Grace; and we believe there are pious men amongst them, who are led astray, by a violent prejudice against other denominations, with whom they will not permit themselves to be acquainted; by an enthusiastic fear of enthusiasm; by an unreasonable attachment to the human appendages of Divine religion; and by an inordinate desire to raise their own party, on the ruins of all other denominations. And we are so far from desiring to quarrel with them, that it would afford us great pleasure, if they would agree with us, to unite our influence in promoting the cause of scriptural piety and morality; and to permit each other to entertain different opinions respecting those things of human invention, which they call acts and testimonies, until that happy period shall arrive, when Christians shall see eye to eye, in the things of God. Therefore, we are sorry, that their conduct for many years has been such, that our duty to God, to ourselves, and to the rising generation, would not permit us to let it pass any longer without animadversion. The unsupported and grievous charges, of almost every species of er-

ror in principle and in practice, which they have repeatedly brought against the Presbyterian Church in America, sometimes from the press, but more frequently, and with less disguise, from the pulpit, have at length roused us, as a part of that denomination, to resistance, and brought us to determine, that we will not be insulted any longer with impunity. Therefore, though we earnestly desire peace, and beseech them to permit us to worship the God of our Fathers in that way which we believe to be most agreeable to his will, without devoting us to destruction as heretics; and notwithstanding that we shall never commence an unprovoked attack upon them, yet if they continue to furnish the text at our cost, we shall certainly furnish the comment at their expense, and meet the consequences. They may indeed have convinced themselves of their own infallibility; but we must be convinced also, before, that we shall permit them to dictate to us in matters of religion. God alone is Lord of the conscience; and to his authority only, will we submit. Therefore, that species of Popery which usurps the authority of God and invades the rights of conscience, we shall spurn with contempt and abhorrence, whether it is derived from Rome, or from Scotland, or from any other origin. The blood of our Protestant ancestors, who met death in all its horrors, *

* NOTE.—The copy from which we print is here deficient. It is believed that a very small portion only is wanting.—*Ed.*

A
DISCOURSE

RELATIVE TO

THE ATONEMENT OF CHRIST,

DELIVERED IN THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, IN PITTSBURGH
OCTOBER 1, 1811, AT THE OPENING OF THE
SYNOD OF PITTSBURGH,

BY THE REV. SAMUEL PORTER, SR.

MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL AT CONGRUITY,

"I lay down my life for the sheep."—John x: 15.

"Pardon for infinite offence! and pardon
Through means that speak its value infinite!
A pardon bought with blood! with blood divine!
With blood divine of him I make my foe!"—Young.

PUBLISHED BY REQUEST,

And the profits arising from the Sale devoted to Missionary Purposes.

PRINTED AT PITTSBURGH, IN 1811.

14*

ADVERTISEMENT.

It is alleged by many, that a gospel sermon ought not to appear in a controversial dress. This is a good general rule; but exceptions must be admitted, when it is recollected, that the Apostles themselves, who were good judges of propriety, frequently illustrated the doctrines of the gospel, in a style highly controversial and argumentative. And it would require some logic to prove that an humble imitation of their example, would on no occasion be admissible. The late discoveries, relative to the injury which religion would sustain, by an argumentative defence of its doctrines, and to the certainty of promoting its interests, by permitting it to be trampled on with impunity, must remain in the archives of modern philosophy, along with congenial inventions, for preserving civil liberty, independence and respectability; until it is demonstrated that the laws of nature and reason are repealed; that self-defence is criminal; and that to *contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints*, is an unchristian practice. It is granted, that controversy managed in such a manner as to violate the laws of decorum, politeness and benevolence, injures the cause of religion, and disgraces the christian character; and it is also admitted, that meekness and forbearance are virtues which distinguish and adorn the Christian. But the mind disposed to hold fast *the liberty wherewith Christ hath made it free*, will spurn that pusillanimity, whatever name and garb it may assume, which disposes its subjects to act in such a manner, as to invite insult, and court degradation; and will never admit it as a substitute for genuine meekness and forbearance which prove the dignity of their origin, by their consistency with a decent and manly defence of the doctrines of the gospel. At all events, it must be admitted, that it is a law of our nature, which never has been violated, that any object, superlatively dear to our hearts, will be defended by us to the extent of our power, if our courage is equal to the danger.

The author of the following discourse was perfectly aware, that the prevailing taste is hostile to religious controversy, unless it

executed in an accommodating, sceptical, frigid manner. Animation, decision and zeal are admissible on every other subject; but a man must not touch religion, until the mercury in his thermometer is at the freezing point. But on the altar of that taste, he could not sacrifice the independence of his mind, by acting contrary to his own ideas of duty and propriety; he has, therefore, expressed the sentiments of his heart, with that precision, ardor and honesty, which he allows every other man to exercise, in defence of what he believes to be truth. An enemy to bigotry and intolerance, which would chain Christian liberty to the footstool of every little party that might wish to play the Pope, and govern the faith and conscience of mankind; equally hostile to a lawless catholicism, which would immolate the doctrines of the gospel on the altars of its communion; disposed to violate no man's rights, but determined, through divine grace, to exercise and defend his own: his humble attempt to illustrate and defend, what he believes to be the doctrine of God our Savior, is submitted to that destiny, to which it will inevitably be directed, by the truth or the error of the sentiments which it contains. If these sentiments are true, God and good men will patronize them; but if they are erroneous, no patronage which they can obtain, will prevent them from sinking into merited contempt. Truth is immortal; but error will die.

The above advertisement was finished, when the writer obtained information, that several excellent essays on the Atonement, had appeared in the Christian's Magazine. But though he never had the pleasure of seeing any of those essays, yet he is highly gratified to learn, that men of talents and piety are beginning to perceive the necessity of resenting the treatment to which the doctrines of the gospel of Christ are exposed, by certain chemical divines of the present day. These gentlemen have ardently endeavored to amalgamate the doctrines of God with the lawless speculations of men, in order to produce the New Gospel Plan which in various shapes, has issued from their laboratory. But, owing to some of those untoward occurrences, to which chemical experiments are liable, truth escaped from their crucible, before their gospel was moulded; "And there came out this calf," Exodus, xxxii: 24. For his own part, poor as the widow of other times, he had only two mites; but if he had been as rich in science and eloquence as Demosthenes, Cicero, and Saul of Tarsus were, he would have cast all into the treasury, for

the defence of the good old Gospel plan, against the tinselled theories of yesterday, which assume its name, usurp its place, and demand its banishment. *'For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ,'* Romans, i; 16.

THE AUTHOR.

DISCOURSE.

TEXT.—Galatians : iii, 13.—Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us ; for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.

THE leading object contemplated by the Apostle, in the epistle to the Galatians, of which our text is a part, was the illustration and defence of the fundamental doctrine of justification, by faith in Christ. And in our text, their attention was turned to the divine atonement, on account of which that justification is obtained. In this passage of scripture we are taught, that believers in Christ are redeemed, or ransomed, by their Redeemer, from the curse of the law; from condemnation, misery and death; and that he redeemed, or ransomed them, by his being made a curse for them; enduring the curse in their stead, and on their account, and finishing the work which his Father gave him to do, by dying the accursed death of the cross, offering up himself as an atoning sacrifice, acceptable to God. As the late distinction between redemption and atonement, which has for its object the representation of redemption as definite, and the atonement as indefinite, is not recognized in our text, we shall not submit to its government.

In addressing you from the subject, we shall be governed by the following method :

I. We shall make a few general observations relative to the atonement of Christ.

II. We shall prove, by such arguments as the nature of the case will admit, that the atonement of Christ was vicarious and special.

Agreeably to the method proposed, we shall now make some general observations relative to the atonement of Christ.

Many respectable men, maintain, that Christ made some kind of atonement for the finally impenitent, who shall live and die, and remain forever under the wrath and curse of God. But we are so profoundly ignorant of the nature, properties and advantages of this unavailing species of atonement, that it would be impertinent in us to say a single word on the subject. We shall, therefore, leave its definition, illustration and defence, to those men whose talents and information are adequate to the task, and confine ourselves to the atonement made for those, who, on its account, will escape the wrath and curse of God, and obtain the enjoyment of everlasting happiness. It is also well known, that some divines have treated the active and passive obedience of Christ, as entirely distinct parts of that righteousness, on account of which believers in him are justified. But rather than attempt to trace lines, not clearly marked in the Holy Scriptures, we shall leave the distinction to those who are capable of giving its dimensions with greater precision.

Atonement is a relative term, and always has a reference to some law that has been violated, and to some standard, by which its own value is ascertained, and its admission fixed. The demands of the offended

party compose the standard of atonement, whether these demands are confined to that which will entitle the offender to impunity only, or extended to that which will entitle him to the favor and happiness which he had forfeited. But these demands must be governed by law and justice; and if the offended party chooses, he may require the atonement to be made, by the offender in person, or accept the atonement of a voluntary substitute, if by his choice no moral principle is violated, and the object for which the atonement was demanded is obtained. An atonement rendered by the principal, or his voluntary substitute, is a term which we can understand in some degree; but an atonement made, neither by the offender, nor by his substitute, is a new term in theological science, to which we are not capable of annexing any idea, good or bad. The little human atonements which imperfect men, demand from, and render to each other, may shed a glimmering light on our path; but if we commit ourselves to their direction, and attempt to reduce the atonement of Christ to their standard, we will certainly go astray, because the divine atonement stands on higher ground, and embraces objects to which no human atonement ever extended. At all events, if we wish to avoid intoxicating speculation, and to pursue the path of sober enquiry, we must be governed by the word of God, from whence all accurate ideas relative to the subject are derived. And as the terms used in the scriptures, in relation to the atonement, frequently comprehend all that Christ did and suffered in order to procure the justification of his people, and

open the way to everlasting happiness: if we understand his atonement in this comprehensive sense, we shall be able to proceed with more certainty and safety, than if we were to be governed by distinctions not easily found in the word of God. In order, therefore, to have a pertinent idea of that atonement, it will be necessary, under the government of divine revelation, to pass in review the circumstances in which the Son of God found those whom he came to redeem; and the objects which he contemplated in that transaction.

Those whom Christ came to save, were human creatures, moral agents, under indispensable obligations to render perfect obedience to the moral law, as the rule of their conduct, in whatever form revealed, and in whatever circumstances they might be placed. This is abundantly evident, from their nature, their dependence and their relation to God, as the Creator and moral governor of the universe. But as the divine law was violated by the breach of the covenant of works, Adam and all his posterity became depraved, degraded and exposed to its awful penalties, which included the eternal wrath and curse of God. And as the divine law required an adequate, perfect obedience, commensurate with its precepts and penalties, before they could obtain justification and happiness, in consistency with the honor of the divine character and government—it follows, that the attainment of those objects was impossible by any effort of their own. To the truth of this lamentable conclusion, the concurring testimony of scripture facts, and the nature of the case, bear such abundant evidence, as to render scepticism inexcusable.

In these deplorable circumstances the Redeemer found those whom he came to save. The object which he contemplated, by interposing between God and those whom he came to redeem, was the execution of the divine plan relative to their salvation, in such a manner as to procure their reconciliation to God and eternal happiness, in that way best calculated to promote the glory and honor of the divine character and government. Psalm xl: 7, 8: "Then said I, lo I come, in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O, my God; yea, thy law is within my heart." In order to execute this plan, the Son of God appeared in our world, as God man Mediator, and in that character rendered a complete perfect obedience, every way commensurate with the precepts and penalty of the violated law. On account of this propitiatory obedience, believers in Christ obtain the pardon of all their sins, acceptance in the beloved, and become entitled to, and qualified for the possession of the inheritance of the saints in light. Rom. v: 14: "For as by one man's disobedience, many were made sinners; so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous."

We are aware, that a late writer of considerable talents, confidence and address, imagines that he has discovered, that obedience to the moral law was no part of the condition of the covenant of works. And that the active obedience of Christ to the moral law was no part of that righteousness, on account of which believers in him are justified. As these sentiments approach our view of the subject in a menacing atti-

tude, we shall meet them fairly on the field of argument and try their strength.

First. Is it true, that obedience to the moral law was excluded from the condition of the covenant of works? We answer in the negative.

1st. The moral law, or law of nature, to which Adam was bound to render unremitting obedience, extended to the utmost possible exercise of all his moral powers; and as this law was a transcript of the moral character of God, and unchangeable as its author, it is impossible, from the nature of the case, to require from Adam any species of obedience, in any form, within the limits of his capacity, to which the law did not extend. Therefore, obedience to the moral law was not excluded from the condition of the covenant of works.

2d. If the moral law was violated by the breach of the covenant of works, which the scriptures teach, then the law must have been included in the covenant; for if it had been excluded, the violation of the covenant could not have been a violation of the law: and Adam might have been punished for breaking the covenant, and blessed for keeping the law. But Adam could not have been cursed and blessed, miserable and happy, at the same time. Therefore, obedience to the moral law was not excluded from the condition of the covenant of works.

3d. All moral obligation is derived from the law of nature, or moral law, the only perfect standard of human action; and our opponents admit that Adam was under a moral obligation to fulfil the condition of the

covenant of works. But if Adam was under a moral obligation to fulfil the condition of the covenant of works, then the breach of that covenant was the violation of a moral obligation, which owed its existence to the moral law; and the violation of moral obligation is a violation of moral law, and the command of the moral Governor of the universe is moral law, whether that command is found in the decalogue, or in the covenant of works. Therefore, the moral law was not excluded from the condition of the covenant of works.

4th. If obedience to the moral law was excluded from the condition of the covenant of works, then there must have been an evident distinction between a violation of the covenant and a violation of the law. But to the existence of such a distinction the penmen of the scriptures were so entirely strangers, that they have not used a single expression that can be tortured to give evidence in its favor; and as they were as likely to understand the subject as our author, we are disposed to believe that no such distinction ever existed. Therefore, we conclude that obedience to the moral law was not excluded from the condition of the covenant of works.

Lastly. The moral law, in whatever form revealed, or made known to man, as the rule of his obedience, is the only perfect moral standard; obedience to it is duty, and disobedience sin; and nothing but a violation of the law can be sin. Rom. iv: 15: "For where no law is, there is no transgression." But God has pronounced the breach of the covenant of works to be a sin productive of dreadful consequences.

Rom. v: 12: "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." Therefore, the violation of the covenant was the violation of the law, and consequently, obedience to the moral law was not excluded from the condition of the covenant of works.

Secondly. Is it true that the active obedience of Christ to the moral law, was excluded from that righteousness, on account of which believers in him are justified before God? We answer in the negative.

1st. Our opponents admit, and the scriptures teach, that the Son of God was made under the law, and in our nature did yield a perfect active obedience to that law. Gal. iv: 4, 5. "But when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." Matt. iii: 15: "For it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness." Rom. x: 4: "For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness, to every one that believeth." Heb. vii: 26: "For such an high-priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners." John xvii: 4: "I have glorified thee on earth, I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." The question then is, for whom did Christ render that obedience—was it on his own account, or on the account of those for whom he became obedient unto death? On this single point the fate of the controversy is suspended. We answer, that the moral law, in whatever form revealed, or given to man as

the rule of his obedience, is the standard of human action only; to it the original nature and powers of man were precisely suited and conformed; from human persons, and from no other person, angelic or divine, it demanded obedience. It is indeed true, that God always acts agreeably to the original and eternal principles of rectitude, on which the moral law is founded; but impertinence herself would blush at the absurdity of supposing that the moral law, in that form in which it is applicable to the human subjects of the moral government of God, as the rule of their obedience, is also applicable to God himself, for the same purpose. But the Son of God never did lay aside his Godhead, and become a human person—the thing was impossible. He appeared in our world, in the character of God man mediator, Emmanuel, God with us, an extraordinary, infinitely holy, and divine person, to whom the law as given to man did not extend, and on whom it had no claim for obedience, on his own account; and in that character did yield an active perfect obedience to the law, in the form in which it was given to man as the rule of his obedience. Therefore, the obedience in question, was not rendered on his own account, but on the account of those for whom he became obedient unto death. As our opponents cannot overthrow the self-evident principle on which the conclusion is founded, they are reduced to the necessity of admitting that the active obedience of Christ to the moral law, was not excluded from that righteousness, on account of which believers in him are justified before God.

2d. From the testimony of scripture, and from the moral character of God, we are authorized to believe that no man has ever been justified by him, in such a manner as to be entitled to eternal life, without perfect obedience to the law, by himself or his surety. Rom. ii: 13: "For not the hearers of the law are just before God; but the doers of the law shall be justified." Matt. xix: 17: "But if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments." But we learn from the scriptures, that believers are justified, not on account of their own obedience, but through Jesus Christ. Rom. iii: 24, 26: "Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." "To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness; that he might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus." John iii: 15: "That whosoever believeth in him might not perish, but have everlasting life." Therefore, the active obedience of Christ to the moral law, is not excluded from that righteousness, on account of which believers in him are justified before God.

3d. The history of our Savior proves that his active obedience was commensurate with his passive, and equal to the demands of the law. But the active obedience of Christ to the moral law, was inseparably connected with that which was passive. For if the passive obedience of Christ to the penal sanction of the law was perfect, which is granted, then it must have been accompanied in every instance, and in every moment, by the active exercise of holy obedience to that law. Passive obedience to the moral

law, rendered by the principal, or the surety, without being accompanied in every stage of its process by the unremitting exercise of an active holy obedience in thought, word and deed, would have been an imperfect, unfinished, wicked thing, on account of which a holy God would never justify any person. Therefore, the active obedience of Christ to the moral law was not excluded from that righteousness, on account of which believers in him are justified before God.

Lastly. Our sentiments are supported by direct scripture testimony. Rom. v: 19: "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners; so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." Our opponents allege, that by the obedience of Christ in this text, we are to understand his passive obedience only. But sound criticism will oblige us to understand the disobedience and obedience, in the text, to be directed to the same moral standard, and contrasted, for the purpose of illustration, in such a manner, that if the disobedience was passive, then the obedience was passive also; But if the disobedience included action, which cannot be denied, then the obedience also included action; every argument that will prove one, will prove the other. Therefore, we conclude, that the active obedience of Christ to the moral law, was not excluded from that righteousness, on account of which believers in him are justified before God.

Having brought the subject back again to the plain, solid ground marked by our Confession of Faith, and restored it to the government of scripture and reason, we are under no obligation to follow our speculating

opponents in their moonlight excursions through the regions of fancy. We shall, therefore, dismiss the subject by observing, that it is to be wished that ethereal divines, when they ascend in their balloon to discover new doctrines of religion, would condescend to recollect that there are christians in our lower world, accustomed to the dense atmosphere of the old school, whose faculties are so obtuse, that they can neither perceive the utility, nor admit the truth of any doctrine without evidence possessing more specific gravity than is to be found in strong assertion, wire-drawn hypotheses, metaphysical hair-splitting, and bold conjectures.

II. As it is becoming fashionable to degrade the character of God, by holding that the divine Redeemer, in the execution of the eternal councils of peace, relative to the salvation of sinners, endured the wrath and curse of God to which they were exposed, as much for Judas as for Paul, for the damned in hell as for the glorified in heaven; and by teaching that his atonement was neither vicarious nor special, nor made by him as the federal head, representative, substitute, or surety of any man or class of men; but that it was made to give such a display of the moral character of God, as would render it consistent with the honor of his character and government, to shew mercy to all or any of the human race; being under no obligation from the atonement, to shew mercy to any of them. In decided, avowed and conscientious opposition to these illegitimate doctrines, which owe their existence to certain semi-Calvinists, who have introduced them under the

protection of the Arminian and Pelagian artillery, we shall now proceed to prove, by such arguments as the nature of the case will admit, that the atonement of Christ was vicarious and special.

1st. If it is true, as our anti-federal gentlemen allege, that the object contemplated in the atonement of Christ, was such a display of the moral character of God, as would render it consistent with the honor of his character and government, to shew mercy to all or any of the human race, being under no obligation from the atonement or any covenant of which the atonement was the condition, to shew mercy to any of them; then it is undeniably evident, that the honor of the divine character, if that character includes benevolence, would be more promoted by the salvation of all mankind, than by the eternal punishment of any of them. Because, if the atonement rendered it consistent with the honor of the character and government of God, to save all the human race if he pleased, their salvation would certainly promote his glory, as a God of benevolence and mercy, in a higher degree than the eternal punishment of any of them possibly could. And if the honor of the moral character and government of God would be as fully displayed in their salvation as in their punishment, then the eternal punishment of any of the human race would be unnecessary and cruel vengeance. Hence, these gentlemen, by the plain natural tendency of their own principles, are placed between the horns of a dilemma, which they cannot break; and they must maintain, that although the honor of the character and government of God has

the attempts of our opponents to reduce it to mere indefinite hyperbolic phraseology, will for ever prove abortive. Isaiah, liii: "But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and by his stripes we are healed." "The Lord hath laid on him the iniquities of us all." "For the transgressions of my people was he stricken." "When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed." "For he shall bear their iniquities." "And he was numbered with the transgressors, and he bare the sins of many." But we learn from the new testament, that these, and similar predictions, had their accomplishment in the person of Christ. Luke, xxiv: 26: "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" Therefore, the atonement of Christ was vicarious and special.

Lastly. Our Lord Jesus Christ has distinguished mankind, by the characteristic appellatives of sheep and goats, and has informed us, that the sheep, as blessed of the Father, will inherit the kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world; while the goats will depart accursed into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels. Now, as it must be admitted, that Christ accurately understood the nature and extent of his own atonement, and his own intention, relative to the sheep and the goats in that transaction, his testimony in relation to the subject, must decide the controversy. But he has declared, in explicit and definite language, that it was his

intention to die, or make atonement, not for the goats who were to depart accursed into everlasting fire; but for the sheep, who were to inherit the kingdom prepared for them, from the foundation of the world, John x: 15: "I lay down my life for the sheep." Therefore, the atonement of Christ was vicarious and special.

We are aware, that it will be said, that the doctrine of the atonement, is expressed in the scriptures, in both general and particular terms; but that we have passed the general terms in silence. The fact is admitted, and we observe that as it is agreed on all hands, that the general and particular terms used in the scriptures, relative to the atonement of Christ, are consistent, the laws of sound criticism, require, that we understand the general and indefinite expressions, in that sense, which is consistent with those terms which are definite and special. By this principle we have been governed, and we understand all the general and indefinite expressions used in the holy scriptures, relative to the atonement of Christ, in that sense, which is consistent with those terms, which are precise, special and definite. But if we had followed the example of our opponents, we must have generalised all the definite, special and precise terms found in the scriptures, relative to the atonement of Christ, and rendered them indefinite, in order to obtain a definite, particular and precise sense of their meaning, which would have been to launch into the ocean, without helm or compass, in order to reach the object of destination with certainty.

It must also be observed, that the authors and ad-

vocates of the new atonement, declare, that on any other principle, they cannot reconcile the gospel doctrines ; and therefore, if they could not inform their hearers, that the general offer of the gospel is founded on an atonement, which was neither vicarious nor special, but made to remove all legal obstacles out of the way of the salvation of all men, they could not hold up their faces to preach the gospel.*

This declaration, which does not come with a good grace from professed Calvinists, shall meet all the attention which the limits of this discourse will admit. But, as we are not obliged to adopt, without examination, a theory, which holds a sword at the throat of the faith of all the Protestant reformed churches, relative to the vicarious atonement of Christ, we are at liberty to enquire, Who gave these men authority to preach, that the atonement of Christ was neither vicarious nor special ; “that he was not wounded for our transgressions, nor bruised for our iniquities ;” and that the gospel offer to every man, is founded upon an atonement made for no man ? Will they be so obliging as to exhibit their credentials, and silence scepticism ? From whence did they obtain the information, that they ought to be ashamed to preach the

* We know of no other foundation for the general offer of the gospel, than the declaration, command, and invitation of God, in his word, And though this may not satisfy speculators in religion, it is a fact, that all men, who under a governing sense of their deplorable state, circumstances, and character, have fled for refuge to the hope set before them in the gospel, have found the declaration of God, relative to the person, offices and character of Christ, and his command and invitation to accept of him, for all the purposes of salvation, for which he is freely offered in the gospel, to be a sufficient and satisfactory warrant and foundation for their faith and obedience.

gospel of Christ, unless they can reconcile all its doctrines, and remove all the inconsistencies, which every little jaundiced eye imagines it perceives in the divine system; and tell the secret reasons, which disposed God to arrange the plan of salvation in such a manner that the gospel offer is general, and saving grace special? And are they adequate to the task? and do they stand on ground sufficiently high for the purpose? At all events, however humiliating it might be to men, who feel themselves qualified to open the way through unexplored regions, it would probably be safest for them to follow the old path, marked by the apostles and other good men, who were not ashamed of the gospel of Christ. They took up the doctrines of the gospel, just as they were revealed, and explained them according to the rules of rational criticism, and left it to God himself, to tell the reasons, why the gospel offer is general, and saving grace special; and to reconcile the doctrines relative to certain prescience, moral agencies and accountability. The Apostle Peter, who preached the gospel to as much advantage as any of the divines of the new school, on a certain occasion, informed his auditory, that Christ was delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, and at the same time, he charged them with the crime of murder in taking away his life, and then urged them to repent and believe the gospel. And he left the consequences of his honest masculine sermon to God and conscience, without attempting to palliate, fitter, or melt down its doctrines, to meet the fastidious taste of proud depraved human nature. The re-

sult was happy, and three thousand souls increased the number of the converts to christianity. The truth is, that though a very considerable knowledge of the doctrines of the gospel and their consistency, is attainable, and ought to be attained, yet if they could be brought down to the level of our vitiated taste, and feeble comprehension, to us they would answer no valuable purpose. Therefore, in order to enjoy the advantages to be derived from them, our taste must be raised to their standard, and our minds brought into such a state, that the divine testimony will be to us, the highest and most satisfactory evidence of the truth of any doctrine.

The character of God affords every reason to believe, that the gospel system is perfectly consistent in all its parts; but the ground on which we stand is too low, to enable us to trace that consistency in every point of view, with unerring precision; nor is it our business. God has placed us in a sphere suited to our nature, where we have ample scope for the legitimate exercise of all our powers, and has marked the limits of our duty. From us, he demands neither more nor less than that our faith shall be governed by divine testimony; our obedience by divine authority; and our religious knowledge by divine revelation. Therefore, those men who attempt to furnish the church with a more consistent edition of the gospel plan, than that which God has revealed, and venture to assign reasons for the divine doctrines and conduct, relative to the salvation of men, which God has not assigned; expose themselves to merited contempt, by underta-

king business beyond their sphere and capacity, and pretending to communicate knowledge which they do not possess. "The secret things belong unto the Lord our God; but those things which are revealed, belong unto us;" Deuteronomy xxix: 24. The new theory, by which the doctrines of the gospel were to be reconciled; the Arminian conquered; and many wonderful works performed, is fairly reducible to the following proposition: That by the atonement of Christ, which was made for no man, all legal obstacles are removed out of the way of the salvation of all men; and, therefore, God might, if he pleased, save all mankind, in the most perfect consistency with the honor of his justice, his law, his character and his government; but he has determined that he will not shew mercy to a number of them: hence they will as certainly sink under his eternal wrath and curse, as if the atonement had never been made. Now, as the authors and advocates of this theory profess to believe the doctrines of election and special grace, we ask them, what object have they attained by it, what difficulty removed, what obstacle surmounted, what doubt resolved, what objection answered? And is this the theory which represents the character of God in the most amiable point of view, and removes the difficulties and dispels the darkness which surround the doctrines of election, atonement, the general offer of the gospel, and special grace! Wonderful discovery! Exuberant light! Dazzling refulgence! From the cloud capped pinnacle of thy temple, thy enraptured votaries enjoy the pleasing prospect of Christians of all

denominations, hastening to pay their homage at thy shrine, and bind their superannuated systems to the horns of thine altar. However, as they have made such progress in conquering the Arminians, that they are already at the gates of their camp, and in the practice of borrowing their artillery to cannonade Calvinism, would it not facilitate the attainment of the object, and appear more consistent, if they were to put on the Arminian uniform, and deny the doctrines of election and special grace? For it is certainly a truth, that the doctrines of election, special atonement, and special grace, will stand or fall together. But it would be as easy to bring the extremities of the poles into contact, as to bring about a union between the divine doctrines of election and special grace and the earth-born doctrine of an atonement, made, not for all mankind, not for the elect, but for nobody. That atonement always includes the expiation of the guilt of some person; and that those persons, whose guilt has been expiated, cannot be punished eternally for their expiated offence, without violating the laws of justice, honor and propriety, are principles as evidently true, as that two and two make four. Therefore, when the febrile anxiety to discover new doctrines of religion has subsided, and reason has regained her throne, the friends of the new theory will find that it has evaporated in smoke; and that they will be obliged to admit, either that by the atonement of Christ the guilt of all mankind was expiated, and all men will be saved; or that by his atonement, the guilt of a part of the human race was expiated, and a part

only will be saved. We shall now dismiss the theory of our opponents, by observing that it rests upon the supposition, that the atonement was made for sin, and not for the sinner. But this was impossible, because an atonement could not be made for a nonentity; and sin, abstractly considered, never had any existence. It is not sin that gets drunk, and commits adultery; it is the sinner, whose act and deed sin is; therefore, an atonement made for the sin of the sinner, is in the language of the scripture, philosophy and common sense, an atonement for the sinner, an expiation of his guilt. And until they demonstrate the possibility of making an atonement for sin, and not for the sinner; for guilt and not for the guilty; and prove from scripture, that such an atonement was made, their theory can have no foundation, and must be classed with those eccentric meteors, which frequently glide through the lawless regions of speculation, and rapidly descend below the horizon of truth.*

Objections have been brought against the doctrines, the government, the word, and the existence of God, and therefore it could not be expected that the subject would be placed beyond their reach. But no objection, however specious and strong, can overturn truth and fact. And that the above doctrine is truth and fact, we believe, in concord with the Apostles and

* In justice to the advocates of the anti-vicarious atonement, it must be admitted that though their doctrine is too young to have obtained the patronage of the prophets, or apostles, or protestant reformers; yet it has been sanctioned by high authority. For the sublime Baron Swedenborg, whose revelations were of a much later date, and therefore much more refined than those of Paul, has informed us, "That redemption consisteth not in the vicarious sacrifice of the Redeemer." SWEDENBORG'S WORKS.

martyrs, and millions of the ransomed of the Lord, who died in the faith of it, and are now engaged in praising God for a vicarious and special atonement. Revelation, v: 9: "And they sung a new song, saying, thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof, for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred and tongue, and people, and nation." But it is your duty and your privilege to judge for yourselves; and to facilitate your process, we have met the subject fairly on its own ground, and brought its radical principles to the test of scripture and reason, and having addressed your understanding in the honest language of the heart, and directed your attention to the proper sources of evidence, it only remains to make some improvements.

In the divine atonement, we have a glowing display of the moral character of God, and of the nature, tendency, and consequences of sin, calculated to convince every rational mind, that the salvation of sinners is impossible on any other principles than those of that atonement. From this subject we learn, that the atonement of Christ, and its application, are commensurate, precise and definite, and therefore, worthy of their divine author, who never does any thing without a definite object, and always accomplishes his purpose. Isaiah, xlvi: 10: "My council it shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." We may also infer, that as salvation is altogether of free grace, flowing through the divine atonement, it is our duty and our interest to seek it in that way, and no other. And though we

can neither fully comprehend the divine system in general, relative to salvation, nor the atonement of Christ in particular, which is a fundamental part of that system; and notwithstanding that the pride and ignorance of depraved human nature are hostile to the atonement in every shape, and more particularly in a definite one; yet we are under the strongest obligation to believe and receive the doctrine, because it is revealed in the word of God, the only source of certain information on the subject. The testimony of God revealed in the holy Scriptures, relative to salvation, is our warrant to believe; and the command and invitation of God to accept of salvation freely offered in the gospel, through the atonement of Christ, is our warrant to obey. And the man who will not believe on such testimony, who will not obey such authority, until his little mind can comprehend and reconcile every part of the divine system, relative to salvation through the atonement of Christ, will never become the subject of that faith and obedience which God requires from men. All attempts to bring such men to the required faith and obedience, by accommodating the doctrines of the gospel to the darkness of their minds, and depravity of their taste, are as weak as they are wicked, and will certainly prove abortive. In order to derive any real advantage from the religion of Christ, it must be taught and received just as it is, without any alteration. Salvation worthy of God, and every way suitable to our circumstances, is offered to us freely in the gospel, through the atonement of Christ, on the highest authority, even the authority of

the command and invitation of God. And if we reject that salvation, our objections to any part of the divine plan will not deliver us from the punishment annexed to disobedience, in that day *when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel.* Besides, it will be acknowledged by every intelligent person who has examined the subject impartially, and traced it to first principles, that notwithstanding all the objections which have been brought against God's sovereign, distinguishing; definite plan of salvation, by men of all descriptions, from the refined Anti-federal christian, who disclaims all connexion with Christ as a federal head, representative, substitute, or surety, and for whom, according to his own faith and principles, Christ made no atonement, down to the avowed infidel; yet every substitute which they have proposed, is surrounded with greater difficulties, and exposed to stronger objections. But if we wish to have all our objections to the divine system satisfactorily answered and our doubts resolved, let us wait upon God, in the urgent and persevering use of the means which he has appointed, * seeking to him for the regenerating influences of the Holy Spirit, to persuade and enable us to receive and rest upon Jesus Christ for all the purposes of salvation, for which he is freely offered in the gospel; and when this object is attained, we shall

* The means and the end, holiness and happiness, are connected in the divine plan; therefore the means must be used in order to attain the end; and with out holiness we cannot be happy.

find that a happy revolution has taken place, not in God's doctrines and system, but in our own ideas relative to the subject.

Reverend fathers and brethren, we have been called in the providence of God, to the awfully responsible office of the gospel ministry, in a perilous time. A spirit of innovation, hostile to all existing systems, has gone forth into the world, and is to be found in operation within the precincts of the christian church. For the purpose of uniting in communion, professing christians of every species and description, and thereby to render the church perfectly analogous to the ancient Babel, those religious systems in which the church of Christ has expressed the sense in which she understood the holy scriptures, and which men of superior learning and piety have long considered as necessary barriers between truth and error, are attacked, *in toto*, by men in our vicinity and elsewhere, who have sagacity enough to perceive that they stand in the way of the execution of their schemes; whilst others are engaged in brandishing their javelins at doctrines contained in those Confessions of faith to which they profess adherence, as systems founded on the word of God. Human nature in avoiding one extreme, tends to the other; and the candid and well informed will grant, that if a bigoted attachment to human systems prevailed in some of the periods that have passed, the present tendency is to a lawless catholicism, which would fill the church, and people heaven with men of the most heterogeneous and hostile principles and dispositions. The prevailing taste is so

much in favor of a liberality in sentiment, which affects to look down with contempt on systems and confessions of faith, as old fashioned, musty, useless lumber, not calculated for this enlightened, refined, philosophic age, that the man who aspires to celebrity and fame must endeavor to gratify that taste. Therefore, clergymen of science, talents, and ambition, are under a strong temptation to sail with wind and tide, and acquire the character of men of enlarged, cultivated, generous minds, superior to narrow systems and vulgar faith. And whatever their governing motives may be, it is a lamentable fact, that many of them are actually engaged in bringing down the doctrines of the gospel to the taste of those who abhor the idea of a sovereign distinguishing exercise of love, grace, and mercy. But men of science and talents are not the only persons engaged in placing the doctrinal system of the Apostles and Protestant reformers in the shade—a system which has illuminated and directed the path of the church for more than eighteen centuries of her perilous journey—for there are clerical boys, of no gigantic talents, who have scarcely passed the threshold of christian science, or read the title page of one half the accessible books on divinity, until they are disposed to enlighten the world, and bless the church, by the introduction of new theological doctrines, which they have discovered in those regions of illumination and refinement, which lie far beyond the hazy atmosphere of scripture and common sense. However, it will not escape the attentive observer of men and things, that every one

of those great and little apostles of liberality, who are engaged in emancipating the church from the tyranny of old biblical Calvinistic systems, has a system, or class of opinions, of his own, which he is anxious to have adopted in their stead, and to which he adheres with all the tenacity which he condemns in a Calvinist. But as art and address are employed in representing human creeds and confessions as dregs of popery, and chains forged by ecclesiastical tyranny to abridge christian liberty, it becomes our duty, on this suitable occasion, to review our principles in relation to the subject, of which the following is a summary.

That all human creeds and confessions are, like their authors, more or less imperfect; that creeds and confessions can only be legitimately supported by scripture and reason; and that all attempts to promote the interests of religion, by endeavoring to snatch the balance of justice out of the hand of the Supreme Judge, in order to stain the altars of christianity with human blood, and exercise cruelty in the name of the Prince of Peace, have been and will be nugatory, and are perfectly anti-christian. That the holy scriptures are the only perfect standard of faith and practice; and that human creeds and confessions are correct in proportion to their agreement to that standard; That men entertain very different, and often very incorrect ideas of the meaning of the scriptures; but as God has appointed no human tribunal, civil or ecclesiastical, with authority and capacity to govern the faith and conscience of men, and furnish

them with an infallibly correct interpretation of divine revelation, every man has a right to adopt that human explanation of the word of God, which, on serious examination, appears to him to be the best; and for the exercise of that right he must render an account unto God, the only Lord of the conscience. That it is a fact, that diversity of sentiment, relative to the meaning of the scriptures, has divided the christian church into distinct societies, each of whom profess to hold communion with Christ the head; and while this diversity continues to exist, and while it remains to be a truth, that union and rational communion are commensurate, every attempt to bring all professing christians to hold communion together in sealing ordinances, will prove the scheme to be perfectly Utopian. That in order to preserve its own existence, and promote regularity, every christian society has a right to judge of the qualifications of its own members, and to adopt a suitable standard for that purpose; and the adoption of that standard, and the requiring conformity to it, from all those who voluntarily choose to join that society, is perfectly consistent with every legitimate principle of civil and religious liberty. And that creeds and confessions are necessary and useful; by them christians of kindred sentiments become acquainted and united in communion; and by them the sense in which professing christians of different denominations understand the scriptures, is ascertained, and every christian has thereby the privilege of discovering and joining that society of christians, whose religious sentiments are most congenial with his own.

By these general principles our attachment to creeds and confessions is governed. And it is worthy of observation, that after all the noise that is made about a bigoted attachment to human systems, it is undeniably a fact, that every christian or body of christians, actually have some kind of a system of opinions relative to the meaning of the scriptures, to which they cling tenaciously. Since, then, from the nature of the case, we must and will have a system, of one species or another, if the subject is stripped of its disguise, we will find that the real questions at issue are—Shall we retain our venerable old system, or shall we commit our doctrinal faith to the government of any of those fresh water pilots, who with all their rant about christian liberty and the danger of following human guides in attaining a knowledge of the scriptures, appear to be extremely willing to take the helm, and guide the faith of the church? But before we decide, it will be profitable to recollect, that a few years ago, in a sister state, a number of the clergy raised the hue and cry against creeds, confessions, and systems, renounced the doctrine of special atonement, opened the doors of their communion to everything in human shape, that professed to be experimentally acquainted with religion; and then siezed the helm of the vessel in which multiudes were embarked, and boldly launched into the ocean of dangerous experiment. The consequence was, that a number of the party were soon engulfed in the vortex of Shakerism, or Satanism, and the remainder dashed on the rocks in its vicinity. Nor let it be forgotten, that

when these men commenced their career, a number of respectable but mistaken christians exclaimed, "let them alone, their heads are wrong, but their hearts are right; they will soon come to their senses; but if you meddle with them, you will turn the attention of the people from experimental religion to controversy about doctrines, and ruin everything." Convinced that a more preposterous idea had never been forged on the anvil of absurdity, and knowing that if the doctrines of the gospel are discarded, the species of experimental religion that will remain behind, will do his kingdom little injury, the Prince of Darkness smiled and said, "amen!" well pleased to execute his scheme and ruin thousands, without opposition. In circumstances so interesting, and with facts so awfully instructive in our view, under the influence of rational conviction, that error is best opposed in its infancy, and that in proportion to its increase, genuine piety will leave the church, let us meet the approach of doctrinal and practical error, in every shape which they may assume, with decided hostility. And let us with firmness and courage, prudence and zeal, rally round the good old doctrines contained in our Bible and Confession of Faith, relative to salvation by sovereign grace, flowing through the meritorious, vicarious and special atonement of our Lord Jesus Christ. Against these doctrines, in the inflexible attitude and original dress in which they appear in the holy scriptures, the united efforts of earth and hell have long been directed in vain. Truth is almighty, and will prevail.

By these doctrines, which are the artillery of Zion's King, and the terror of the Prince of Darkness, the grim tyrant has been made to tremble on his throne, while he beheld his most impregnable strong holds beaten to the ground, and millions of his captives immured in their dungeons, introduced to light, to life, to liberty, and to joy. And is there within these walls a minister of the gospel, an officer of the army of Jesus, called to the post of danger, the post of honor, and sworn at the altar to follow the standard of the cross through the hostile legions of hell and earth, to triumph, to honor and to glory, who at this eventful crisis can indulge the puerile, the ignoble wish, to exchange the good, old, long tried, conquering weapons of our warfare, furnished by the captain of our salvation, for the Lilliputian artillery of yesterday's invention? We spurn the degrading idea, and answer in the negative. The period has indeed commenced, when those who reject the new doctrines of religion, to which Paul was a stranger, and will not accept them as substitutes for the good old doctrines of the cross, may expect to be stigmatized as weak, illiberal, bigoted creatures, who disgrace this liberal, this enlightened age. But despising unmerited reproach, let us, though weak in ourselves, yet strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might, as a band of brothers, placed at the head of this little western section of the christian army, by the captain of the Lord's hosts, bravely meet the storm, and continue, in dependance on divine aid, to teach the doctrines of our holy religion, in their purity, without mutilating,

disguising, or frittering any of them to accommodate the pride and depravity of human nature. It is also our duty, to receive with gratitude all the light which we can obtain from human systems, ancient and modern, without chaining our faith to the footstool of any of them, as an infallible standard of religion. And while we believe, agreeably to our profession at our ordination, that our Confession of Faith contains the system of doctrine taught in the holy scriptures, let us adhere to it with precision and firmness. But if we ever become convinced, on proper principles, that it contains unscriptural doctrine, candor, honor, and duty, will then demand its rejection. A man cannot profess adherence to a system which he believes to be erroneous, without violating the laws of dignity, honesty and truth.

Finally: We learn from the subject, that the salvation of sinners, in subordination to the glory of God, was the grand object contemplated in the atonement of Christ; it is, therefore, our duty, with energy, zeal, and perseverance, to endeavor to promote that object. Earth-born doctrines of religion, calculated to meet the vitiated, degraded taste of the carnal mind, may flutter in the sunbeams for a day, and rise and fall in succession, liké other noisy troublesome insects; yet we have no cause to be discouraged; the church of our Divine Redeemer, *purchased with his blood*, will retain the doctrines of God her Savior, until the last trumpet shall sound. And we know him in whom we have believed, and that he has promised to be present with his faithful ministers, in the pertinent discharge

of their duty, until the end of the world ; and his gracious presence will support them, in work and warfare, life and death. We may then, in the persevering and conscientious discharge of our duty, on gospel principles, indulge the exhilarating hope, that when our work is done, and our warfare accomplished, we shall be permitted to join *the ransomed of the Lord, who shall return to Mount Zion with songs, and with everlasting joy upon their heads.* Now unto him, *who was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification—by whom we have received the atonement,* be ascribed glory, and honor, and wisdom and power. Amen.

. NOTE TO THE READER.—Since the above discourse was delivered from the pulpit, the author has been asked the following questions: In treating the doctrine of the atonement, who were they whom you designed to oppose, besides the Arminians? You certainly did not include Fuller, and those great and good men who have adopted his, or similar views of the subject? In answer to all such questions, he once for all declares, what is well known to those who have attended on his ministry, that he is a uniform, tenacious Calvinist of the old school; and he believes that the doctrinal system of the Calvinists, in which the vicarious and special atonement of Christ is a fundamental article, is a system founded on the Holy Scriptures, and contained in the Confession of the Faith of the Presbyterian Church, which is the Confession of his Faith. Therefore, in composing the discourse in question, he had in his eye every man, however great, learned, or pious that man may be, who, from the pulpit or the press, directly or

indirectly, makes war on the old Calvinistic doctrine, relative to the atonement of Christ. To men of superior learning, talents or piety, he is disposed to bow with deference, while his rights as a man and a christian are not concerned; but when these are in question, he is inclined to believe, that he has as good a right to defend a doctrine dear to his heart, as any other man can have to attack that doctrine; and for the exercise of that right, he is not disposed to make any apology.

THE AUTHOR.

APPENDIX.

The following is the letter referred to in the Biographical Sketch, page 20.

WESTMORELAND, PA., Nov. 16, 1808.

To the Rev. Mr. Mitchell, Virginia.

REV. SIR:—I am

well acquainted with the origin and history of that system, to which the sentiments you mention belong. The doctrines of special substitution and vicarious atonement, which are doctrines of explicit revelation, have been received as such by the pious, learned and unlearned, in every age, from the commencement of the Christian Era, until the latter part of the eighteenth century; when lo! a class of moral chemists arose, who alleged that they could mend God's system, by decomposing it, and purging it from those crudities, which render it unpalatable to the vitiated and sickly taste of the age. Therefore, they have taken the Scriptural, Calvinistic doctrines, relative to imputation, substitution, expiation, propitiation, and vicarious atonement; together with the Arminian and Pelagian doctrines on the same subject, to which they have added a large quantity of attenuated, hypothetical jargon; and they have put all down together into a crucible, formed of New England metaphysics, and placed on a Virginia fire; and the consequence has been, that during the process, all that was Divine escaped from the crucible, and the chemists had nothing to bring forth but a human, generalised, indefinite, frittered, metaphysical, unmeaning thing, which they called the atonement, which was made for

everybody, and nobody—as much for Judas as for Paul—as much for the damned in hell, as for the glorified in heaven.

According to them, although Christ underwent the most extreme agony and suffering, on account of sin, yet it was not on account of his own sin, for he had none; and it was not on account of the sins of any other person, for he was not a substitute for any; nor were our iniquities laid upon him as the prophet vainly imagined; therefore, he must have suffered in violation of every principle of justice known to us; for no innocent person can justly suffer on the account of sin, but on the principles of representation, imputation, or substitution. The Scripture doctrine of atonement and election are in perfect unison. But, the old, sublime, specific, dignified, and divine doctrine of election, will never condescend to hold communion with the earth-born Yankee, Virginia atonement, a creature of yesterday; which fallen men have begotten in their own image.

As the authors and votaries of the new atonement do not hold an universal atonement, but hold that the atonement was made for no person; and consequently that the damned in hell are as much indebted to Christ for his Mediatorial interposition, obedience and atonement, as the glorified in heaven, the dispute lies in a very narrow compass, and depends for its issue entirely on the fate of the following proposition, viz: According to every rule of sound criticism which can be brought to bear on the subject, it appears undeniably evident, that the doctrines of special substitution, and vicarious atonement, are taught in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. If this proposition is true, the new atonement must be false, and *vice versa*. There is no alternative—the one must be truth, and the other error. On this simple point, the controversy must turn. If the above proposition, can be demonstrated to be false, I shall

yield the controversy; but, until that is done, I shall believe the proposition to be true, and the opposite doctrine to be false. Nor will any arguments or objections alter my mind; because no argument or objection can make a true proposition false, or a false one true.

Objections may be brought against any thing and every thing, and are frequently brought against God himself; and we can bring as many, and more important objections, than our opponents. But, objections never decide anything, where the truth of a proposition, depending on a matter of fact, is in question. But, here we stand on original ground. Is the proposition true or false? On this single spot, we meet the foe, and will not leave it one inch until the contest is decided. In a former letter which I sent you, I substantially answered all the objections mentioned in your letter, either in a direct or more indirect manner; therefore, I shall not add anything more now, as I am convinced, that I am not capable of advancing anything on the subject, worthy of your consideration.

It is, indeed, true that the new atonement did not exist when Dr. Owen wrote his piece on redemption, and therefore he did not oppose it by name; but it is true that if his view of the subject is correct, the new scheme, like Noah's dove, cannot find a place on which to rest the sole of its foot. Dr. Owen's view of the subject, and the holy scriptures, from which it is taken, will remain insuperable obstacles in the way of the new scheme, until the last trumpet shall sound. For my part, I am a disciple of the old Biblical, Calvinistic school. And I cannot avoid looking with pity and contempt on all endeavors to refine religion until it evaporates, and to bring it down to the taste of depraved human nature, by decomposing, deranging and torturing it, in order to get clear of those unpalatable doctrines which

God has thought proper to reveal as articles of faith. It grieves my heart to find pious and respectable Presbyterian ministers advancing to controversy at the head of a host of Arminian objections, learned in the Arminian school and dressed in their uniform, and to see them pointing the Arminians' artillery at some of the most fundamental doctrines of our most holy religion; doctrines clearly expressed in the Bible, and in that Confession of Faith which they have adopted, as expressing the sense in which they understand the scriptures.

For my part, I am not disposed to pin my faith to the sleeve of any uninspired man—John Calvin, or any other. I choose to see with my own eyes, and think for myself. At the same time, I am inclined to believe that the millions who have gone before us, many of them men of the first talents, learning and piety, some of them having access to the Apostles, and opportunities of conversing with them, and who died in the belief of the doctrines of imputation, substitution, and special vicarious atonement, were as capable of understanding the scriptures, as any of our modern luminaries, who have arisen to enlighten the world, by informing them that a vast number of the most endearing, interesting and soothing expressions of God in the scriptures, relative to the salvation of his people, are only mere expletives, or figures of speech.

A letter from you will always be extremely welcome, on any subject. Permit me to assure you, that with every proper sentiment of respect, I remain your friend and brother.

SAMUEL PORTER.

DIALOGUES

BETWEEN

DEATH AND THE BELIEVER;

AND

DEATH AND THE HYPOCRITE.

BY REV. SAMUEL PORTER.

IT IS THE TRADITION, THAT THESE DIALOGUES WERE
WRITTEN BY MR. PORTER PREVIOUS TO HIS
ENTRY UPON THE GOSPEL MINISTRY.

A DIALOGUE

BETWEEN DEATH AND THE BELIEVER.

Death—Good morning.

Believer.—Good morning.

D.—Where have you been?

B.—Taking a walk.

D.—I suppose you have been praying?

B.—I know not, whether ever I have prayed or not, and, unless I get a better cast, I fear I never shall.

D.—You have certainly been praying and weeping too; your eyes are wet with tears?

B.—I must acknowledge, I was trying to pray, but I cannot; my heart is too hard to weep; I pray because I cannot pray; I weep, because I cannot weep.

D.—You are a strange sort of a creature; what is your name?

B.—My name is Changeable; sometimes it is Believer, on Sunday—Doubting Christian on Tuesday—Unbeliever on Thursday—and Hypocritical Deceiver on Saturday.

D.—You are an odd Proteus kind of a being as ever I met with; whose son are you?

B.—I am the son of Adam in the morning, the son of God in the middle of the day, and the son of the Devil in the evening; of the three I resemble the Devil the most.

D.—I have some business with you, and must be admitted into your house.

B.—I am affrighted at you; you have such a grim countenance; I would be glad you would not call at this time; but, then I see by your face that you will not pass by; walk in.

D.—You need not be afraid of me, if you are a servant of Christ, but if you are not, I will tear you in pieces.

B.—I doubt I have not an interest in Christ.

D.—My name is death, and Death I am to all that are not united to Christ. But your countenance, if I am not mistaken, proves you to be a son of God; and if you are, I am a rough, but trusty friend, that will without fail, bring you home to your father's house and family.

B.—If I was sure that God was my Father, I would not be afraid of you.

D.—Let us call Conscience, if he be not sleeping, or abroad, and hear his account of the matter.

B.—He has not slept an hour these three years; shall I call him now?

D.—Call him immediately.

B.—Conscience.

Conscience.—Here, what do you want?

D.—I want your opinion of this man; is he a servant of Christ, or a servant of the Devil?

C.—I cannot tell what to make of him; sometimes he brings me a receipt from under the hand of the Lord Christ, for the pardon of all his sins, and then we are good friends for awhile; but, anon, he begins to

dig up his old lusts out of their graves, after they have been buried four or five days ; hugs and kisses them, and says, my pretty little darlings are you here ; then I get angry with him ; in a word we fight the one half of our time.

D.—Does Believer ever try to kill you ?

C.—Sometimes in a passion he will seize me by the throat, but upon second thought he will let go his grips and weeps so sore for his folly, that one would think his heart would break.

D.—Can you condemn him ?

C.—I cannot.

D.—What shall be done ?

C.—We shall command him to bring forward the inhabitants of his house.

D.—That is a good method to get light.

C.—Believer, go call your servants.

B.—I shall in a few minutes, but, alas ! I am like to faint ; where is my Physician ?

Physician.—Here sir.

B.—Bring me some drops.

P.—(*Exit.*) Here are the drops.

B.—What sort have you brought ?

P.—I have brought you some Firm Resolutions, to search to the bottom, and bring up the worst.

B.—That is just what I want.

C.—Obey my commands in a minute, or I will tear you to pieces.

B.—I am about to execute your orders. Ho ! Pride, Unbelief, Hypocrisy, Satan's Humility, Formality, Laziness, Hate God's Law !

Servants.—Here, sir!

C.—Are you servants to this Believer?

S.—Sir we would rather be servants to the Devil, by the one half!

C.—And how come you here, if you are not his servants?

S.—We were once servants or rather friends to this tyrant; yea, we were fathers and mothers and children, and lived together like brethren, until a certain evening (may that evening forever be accursed!) when there came a stranger and asked lodging. We persuaded our master to keep the door shut; our master asked his name. He then answered, "My name is Holy Spirit." We laughed at him, and said we were as holy as any of our neighbors already. But Holy Spirit, as he called himself, slipped quietly up to the door, and with a little drill which he had for the purpose, as we understood afterwards, cut a small hole in the door, through which he put in a fiery serpent, the very sight of which was enough to frighten the devil; and the first shake it gave its tail, it set the house on fire, which would have been burnt to ashes in a few minutes; but as good luck would have it, there was one Mr. Duty, an old gentleman, sleeping in the barn, who in his youth had been so excellent at slackening fire, that he had been often sent for, to London, Edinburgh, Philadelphia, &c. and has performed wonders in all these places. Our master sent for him with all speed. The gentleman came as fast as could be expected, considering the stiffness of his limbs, and with some fatigue got the fire put out. He went next to

the fiery serpent, whose name is the Law of God, and threw some water on it, which made it be quiet. All danger now seeming to be over, we advised old Mr. Duty to go to bed, lest the want of sleep should hurt his health; but fearing that sudden danger should arise, we brought his bed out of the barn, and put him to sleep in the parlor that he might be ready on occasion. We now thought all was safe, and went to bed. But, alas! we were far mistaken; for we had scarcely got to sleep, when Holy Spirit put his mouth to the hole which he had made in the door, and gave one blast, which roused the fiery serpent, and made it worse than ever; for in two minutes it set every corner of the house on fire. And which was worse than all the rest, the venomous creature flew into the parlor, and with one switch of its tail, set fire to the bed on which old Mr. Duty lay, and burnt him to ashes. Our master was much burnt, for the clothing on his back took fire, and if Holy Spirit had not plucked him out of the flames, and threw him into a well called the Blood of Christ, he had certainly been burned to ashes. We attended our master through all, though at the risk of our lives; for between the fire and the blood we were almost suffocated, and we believe had our master stayed any longer in the blood of Christ we had all been drowned; but as soon as our master got the fire put out, he comes out of the fountain, and was led by Holy Spirit into a new house, called the house of Grace. But indeed it was a house of murder, for as soon as we came out of the water, being joined by a genteel young man called Build Hope on Feeling

and Frames, grandson to the old gentleman who was burnt in the house. Being thus recruited we followed our master into his new house, expecting to be made welcome, and to be admitted to his bosom as formerly. But how we were disappointed, when, instead of a hearty welcome, he cried, "Begone," and set a great dog upon us, which he called Prayer. The very barking of this dog is enough to make hell shake, and in all probability this dog had torn us to pieces, had it not been for the following stratagem:—There was one among us whose name was Pride, an excellent fellow to tame dogs. He comes up to the dog and whispers in his ear, "Well done!" The dog had liked to have snapped the nose off him, but Pride repeated "well done" so often, that the dog gave over his worrying, and contented himself with barking a little now, and then. But what displeased us worse than all the rest, we had scarcely sat down, when a little impudent rascal, whose name was Self Examination, observed us. He immediately cried "Murder." In the meantime, in comes an unrelenting old villain, whose name was Preacher. He had in his hand an apparently trifling kind of instrument, made of ram's horn, which he no sooner put to his mouth, and gave one blast, than a number of imps, not above three days old, sprang out and seized upon us. We laughed at their madness, and told them we would chastise them for this insolent behavior to strangers; so we seized them by the throats, and in all probability would soon have put an end to the contest, had not our master called up his great growling dog, and pointed his finger to Unbelief,

who by this time had nigh slain Faith. This Faith was the greatest enemy we had. The dog immediately seized him and at the first grip cut a vein, and as bad luck would have it, some of the blood which ran from the wound fell into the mouth of Faith, when he lay gasping under Unbelief. Faith had no sooner tasted the blood than he leaps up, and seizes Unbelief by the throat, and between the two, Unbelief would soon have been slain, had it not been for the following:— That again we sent Satan's Humility to the howling dog, who whispered in his ear, that he could not bark like other folk's dogs, and that he was too weak to bark; and likewise, that he was such an unworthy dog, that his noise would not be heard among other dogs, for he had done no good by his barking all his days. Upon this, the foolish dog sat down, and did nothing but grumble a little. In the meantime, we sent Pride to Faith, who whispered in his ear that Unbelief was dead, and that it was he that slew him, and also advising him, seeing he had conquered, to sit down and sing a song of triumph. At last Faith complied, and Unbelief had time to gather strength.

C.—What were the names of those little boys you fought with?

S.—They were not all boys; there was one little girl among them that did us more harm than all the rest—her name is Humility; and young as she is, she has got two breasts; the name of the one is Contentment, and the name of the other is Self-denial—and these breasts have always milk in them, summer and winter. Now if any of her brothers, whose names are

Faith, Hope, Zeal, Love, Resignation, get wounded, she runs and puts one of these breasts into their mouths, and so soon as they taste the milk they begin to recover strength. Now, as long as this wicked little bastard lives we have little chance to gain the battle.

C.—Did you meet with any other enemies besides those you have named?

S.—O yes, we met with many others, that never weary in doing us hurt. We mentioned one of them before, called Self Examination. His eyes can see through every corner of the house, and to keep his sight he has got two glasses, the one is the glass of the Law, and the other the glass of the Gospel ; and, lest these should not do, Holy Spirit sends him now and then a little eye salve, by that unrelenting villain, the Minister, and when he gets his eyes anointed with this, he could see fifty feet through an oak plank. Now his business is not so much to fight, as to find us out and tell our enemies, and bring them upon us. He not only finds out in the most secret corners, but being an excellent physiognomist, can tell by our countenances the strength of our bodies, and the attack is managed accordingly. The name of the other is Mortification. This is as great an enemy as we have, for when he cannot get us slain with the sword, he carries a little crab tree staff, the name of which is—I-would kill-you-if-I-could. With this, he is always breaking our shins, striking us across the face or fingers, or pushing it into our eyes, so that we have not the lives of dogs for him.

C.—Whose children are these?

S.—They are the children of the Holy Spirit, and though they are very small, they are as tight as whale-bone, and will fight up and down, and when one would think them nigh dead and ready to be buried, they will start up in a minute, and be worse than ever. In a word, they will neither burn nor drown, and to hang them is impossible, for they are as light as a feather. The only method is to put them to sleep, and then we must rock them carefully.

C.—Withdraw for a little.

D.—I am inclined to favor believer, but cannot without your consent.

C.—I am not satisfied, but if you will detain a little, I will examine these rascals one by one.

D.—I will detain a few hours.

C.—Go, Believer, and bring Pride here.

B.—My heart breaks with fear, but I shall obey your orders. Here is Pride!

C.—Come, Mr. Pride, give an account of the work and wages you have from Believer.

Pride.—Believer is not my master. It is true we made a bargain never to part till death, but the unfriendly usage he gave me and the rest of my fellow servants, these exasperated me to such a degree that I am fully resolved to take his life or lose my own; so I sometimes lead him up to the hill of Self Conceit, and present him with a glass which represents to him his own features, at which he looks so earnestly that he forgets; he falls down and perhaps breaks a limb. At another time, when he is about to enter on some great enterprise, I whisper in his ear, "Push on, you

can do the business in the time many others would be thinking about it." Without more noise he leaps into a mire over head and ears, and to see him weltering is sweet revenge. He has a maid servant called Humility, which I hate; sometimes, if I meet her in a corner, I snap her up and swallow her alive. When Believer comes to know this, he runs for Mortification, who is brother to Humility. This fellow always carries a horrid long knife, and at first coming up, he will dash it into my body and rip me up, and take Humility out of me, who is, by this time, nearly suffocated; but after receiving some drops of my blood, mixed with a little Repentance, she gets stout again. In a word, I follow him wherever he goes, and cry—"Well done;" though many a severe beating I get from him for it.

C.—How did you make out with the wound in your body?

Pr.—We had an excellent surgeon in our house, whose name was Old Man. He gathered up my entrails, and thrust them into the orifice, and stitched up the wound; and in two weeks I was sound as ever.

C.—I have heard enough of you. Call Build Hope on Feelings and Frames.

Build Hope.—Here, sir!

C.—Give an account of your behavior to believer.

B. H.—I am grandson to a noble gentleman, whose fame has been spread all over Europe. His name was Mr. Duty, or Do-well-and-gain-salvation.

C.—I care nothing for your family; proceed to my question in a minute.

B. H.—I accompany Believer wherever he goes—to sermons, sacraments and societies; and whisper in his ear, that feelings and melting frames are beautiful foundations to build hope upon. Anon he sets a building, and soon raises a beautiful fabric, at the very sight of which he cries, “It is good to be here;” and he thinks to find heaven on earth. But he has scarcely got home from the sacrament or sermon, but Old Man steals the foundation from under his new house, and down it comes. Then we laugh to see the doleful case Believer is in, for want of his feelings and frames. Perhaps at this instant an opportunity turns up for him to give us a dreadful blow; but, happily for us, he will not strike, but runs up and down, high and low, seeking his feelings and frames. Instead of fighting, he cries out, “I dread I have no religion;” and then we get hard living for a while. But, by and by, Believer finds this will not do, and then he will build hope on nothing but Christ, and resolves never to trust to feelings and frames. In the meantime, I accompany him, and while he is busied in building, I take some feelings, and cast them among the mortar he is using; and these feelings, &c. being made up of tears, prayers, &c. make the mortar work easier. And so all appears well, till the first rainy day, when behold! the first shower washes out the mortar, and Old Man pulls out the stones, and down comes the building. So I keep Believer the one half of his time hunting feelings and frames, and the other half trusting too much to them.

C.—Withdraw. Call Unbelief.

Unbelief.—Here, sir!

C.—How do you stand affected to Believer?

U.—I hate him with all my heart, and do him all the damage I can. When he goes to prayer, I tell him that God will not hear him; I tell him that the Holy Spirit will never come back again; that God does not love him; that he will never conquer his enemies. In a word, I tell him that Faith and Hope are liars, and if he trusts to them he will be undone. Yet, for all this he often gives me sore bones.

C.—Withdraw. Call Hypocrisy.

Hypocrisy.—Here, sir!

C.—Give me an account of your behavior to Believer.

Hy.—I follow Believer to all public places, and whisper in his ear, to weep there, if he should live unconcerned at home; but I can do him little harm, as I scarcely ever get into his house; and when I do get in, which is but seldom, it is like to cost me my life; yea, his hatred to me is so great, that he will raise Self Examination out of bed twice in one night, to search the house for me, when perhaps I am twenty miles off. Yet I hate him as bad as if I could do him more harm.

C.—Withdraw. Call Satan's Humility.

Satan's Humility.—Here, Sir!

C.—Have you any dealings with Believer?

S. H.—O yes, I often sleep in his bosom. When he goes to prayer, I tell him he is not fit to pray; if he attempts to speak a word to any in distress, I tell him it is a sin for such an unworthy wretch to open his mouth about religion. In a word, if he attempts

to do any work for God, I whisper in his ear, "Are you not a pretty devil to talk about working!—shame, hide your head!" So I carry my point, and often bind him hand and foot.

C.—Withdraw. Call Hate-God's-Law.

Hate God's Law.—Sir!

C.—Give an account of your employment in this house.

H. G. L.—Believer bears such a hatred to me, that I dare hardly show my face. But I watch my opportunity, and when I find Believer toying with some pretty lust and just ready to take it in his bosom, then I draw near, but speak not a word until I hear the Law saying, "Believer, thou must kill that darling of thine." Believer will say, "I would rather kill all the rest of the family than this poor thing; it looks in my face so pitifully, that I think it would be murder to kill it." At hearing this, the Law gets angry and cries, "You must kill this darling, or I shall burn your house with fire!" At the hearing of this, I step up to Believer, and whisper in his ear, "Is not this a cruel Law—how can you love it?" Perhaps Believer gives ear to me, and for a few minutes looks sour at the Law; but when he looks about and sees me, he will get into a dreadful rage, and draw his knife; and before I can fly, he will plunge it into my heart; and in all probability I would not live three minutes, were it not for the kindly assistance of Mr. Old Man, the physician.

C.—Withdraw. Call Formality.

Formality.—Here, sir!

C.—What is your employment in this house?

F.—I claim as large a share in beauty, though I say it, as any of my neighbors; and although I have seen more than four thousand revolving summers, yet my features are as smooth, and my limbs as strait as they were three thousand years ago.

C.—You impudent rascal, have you come here to prattle about your beauty?

F.—I cannot put up with such rough handling. I would have you to know that I am kindly entertained wherever I come, and have good usage from the greatest part of mankind that are acquainted with me, except a few ragged wretches in the back-woods, that have neither sense nor breeding to entertain a gentleman.

C.—You are an impudent rascal to name rough handling; your head ought to be chopped off.

F.—Why so proud now, Mr. Conscience? Have you forgot the time when you and I lived seven years together in one house, and by the by, I was your mother? Pray, look back to old times, and show not so much pride; yea at this present time I can find ten clergymen that will make me their equal, for one you will find that will make me their inferior.

C.—Silence, you smooth-faced deceiver! *You* entertained among clergymen and christians! You are entertained by those that will entertain the Devil, and will burn with him forever, unless they turn you out of doors. As to your formal notions, and as for the time when you and I lived together, which you brag of so much, I was sick all that time; and the old

rotten hypocrite, the head of the family, by your assistance, put out my eyes. But I would have you know that the property is altered. Now, answer my question in a minute, or I shall stain your garments with your blood!

F.—I was but jesting; pray, be not angry; call to mind the cordials I brought you when your family took the fits.

C.—You murdering villain, if it was not for other reasons, I would dispatch you in a minute; but proceed without delay, or I shall!

F.—If I differ in disposition from all the rest of the family, I am always in a good humor; and when all the rest of my brethren are fighting with Believer, I am laughing at him, and advising him to attend to all ordinances; and if he gives me leave, I attend him to them all; yea, on account of my good behavior, Believer will sometimes entrust me with his family affairs ten days at a time. And then my first work is to go up to the great prowling dog—I mean Prayer—and stroke his head. I then pull out a little file, which I always carry in my pocket, called Blind-to-Danger, and with this I file down his teeth, that he cannot bite; and lest Believer should fear roguery, I have the dog out barking every morning, wet and dry. Believer sleeps in a sound skin; and trusting to the constant barking of his dog, and my care, he fears no robbers, nor dreams of danger, until the robbers be in and the knife at his throat. Then he starts up in a rage, and his first race is to me, and cries, “Thou traitor!” and it is but a word and a blow, and down

he knocks me; yea, his fury is so great, that I would not get away with my life, were it not for Mr. Old Man, the physician, who in the mean time steps up to Believer and says, "You are too warm, I am afraid your health will suffer; pray, sit down a minute and and take a little of this cordial, called, 'Wait-till-you-get-more-strength.'" Believer sits down, and then I get time to crawl away into some corner, and sometimes dare not show my face for half a year.

C.—Begone, I have enough of you; call Laziness.

Laziness.—Coming sir!

C.—Mend your pace.

L.—I cannot walk fast, my joints are very stiff.

C.—Step forward quickly, or I shall oil your joints.

L.—I am come; your will sir!

C.—What exercises do you follow?

L.—I must blow a little, if your Honor will please to order me a seat.

C.—I shall order you a seat in the fire, if you do not proceed in a moment.

L.—I always sit in the corner, and if I see Believer preparing to go abroad I tell him he is a sickly man and ought to take care of his health; I tell him the Lord does not want him to risk his health, by going out to prayer in a cold night, nor to toil his weakly body, by exposing himself to fatigue in the service of God. But if I find I cannot make him believe he is sick, I change my name to Mortification-to-the-world, and then tell Believer that he should follow Religion and nothing else, and trust to God for provision to his family, and if I find his stomach empty, I tell him the

people of God are not in their duty, unless they divide with the poor, and every one share alike; and if they will not do this, then I tell him that there is a proud worldly Devil gets into the heart of God's people. Sometimes I get him to believe all this trash, and then we laugh heartily at him; but our joy is not long; for Anon! Believer begins to doubt, and sends Self-Examination to search, and this mischievous creature when he gets a candle in his hand, he could see through a mountain; it is impossible to evade his search in any corner of the house, and as soon as he finds me he cries, Laziness, Laziness, and Believer cries, Mortification, Mortification; Mr. Old Man cries, fly for your life, and conceal yourself, or you are a gone man; so I am under the necessity of finding my feet for once, and making my escape into some corner and then wait until the next opportunity of doing evil presents itself.

C.—Withdraw. Call Worldly.

Worldly.—Here sir!

C.—What is your occupation?

W.—I have a large quantity of cases to attend, and I have no help this year, so I hope you will detain a few weeks, until I get the hurry of the work over, and then I shall be fond of conversing with you.

C.—I regard not you hurry, answer my question in a moment!

W.—I lodge very near Believer, and sometimes when I find him intending to go to a sacrament, I tell him that if he does not improve the present opportunity of clearing for corn, or fencing meadow ground

&c., in all probability, in a few days the weather will change, and if rain should come it will break him, and so I advise him to stay at home; if I find him intending to assist any poor man in distress, I whisper in his ear, that the person in need is lazy, or he might be in better circumstances, and so I shut the door against charity. Sometimes when I find religion is warm in the house, I am under the necessity of changing my name to Industry, to elude the search that is made for the Enemy, and when thus disguised I am about the fire, and put in my word among the rest of the family; but if Self-Examination happens to come along, if his candle is burning bright, he soon takes notice of the cheat, and I am kicked out in a moment.

C.—I want no more of you; call Discontent.

Discontent.—Here sir!

C.—What is your occupation?

D.—I do not care for talking much, but in a word, my main business is to attend Believer at home and abroad, and if I see the least appearance of gratitude I cut its throat, and Believer has to answer and be punished for the murder; but I hate to be answering questions, farewell.

C.—You are a cross pet indeed, away with you.

Death.—What do you think now.

C.—I hate these fellows every one.

B.—So do I, many a black heart they have given me. (Believer weeps, and cries, Alas! my poor heart will break.)

D.—I cannot look kindly at you, nor deal friendly with you, unless conscience is fully satisfied.

C.—I shall not be satisfied with Believer, until he brings me a new receipt from Christ for the pardon of all your sins.

B.—I am afraid that my sins have been so many that Christ will have nothing to do with me.

C.—I have told you all I have to say.

D.—Delay not, your time is near an end.

B.—O faith come and carry the petition to Christ.

C.—What's the matter!

B.—I fear all is not right. Ho! Self-Examination.

Self-Examination.—Here sir!

B.—Go search for faith, and bring him here with all speed.

S. E.—I shall search for him, (*Exit.*)

S. E.—Here again but bad news; Faith and Unbelief had a quarrel this morning, and Faith is almost dead; he is wounded in the left wing and in the right leg and in the throat, so that he can neither fly, nor run, nor cry.

B.—Murder, murder! what I always feared, is come upon me at the last; O my Faith; Hope, take my hand and help me along to see Faith, but oh! I faint; I downward in deep mire do sink.

Holy Spirit.—What is the matter?

Fear.—My Master is dead and Faith is dead.

Hope.—They are in a very low condition, but not dead yet.

H. S.—Oh! Believer, what is the matter with you?

B.—What sound is this I hear; can it be Holy Spirit?

Faith.—It surely is, for my wounds are half healed since I heard his voice.

B.—Welcome, welcome! Blessed Spirit, I never had more need of you.

H. S. Here take this cordial, more grace, take a little of it inwardly, and Faith and Hope will both get stronger by degrees.

B.—I thank you for your visit, and if you please, you are welcome to lodge in my house for ever, rent free.

H. S.—Take care; be on your guard.

B.—Ho! Faith;

F.—Here sir.

B.—Are you able to walk?

F.—I am above walking, I could fly to the heavens in three minutes.

B.—Are you strong as formerly?

F.—I am a thousand times stronger than ever, and if you will look I will convince you; here Unbelief take that, giving him a blow on the ear, which knocks him down; Mr. Old Man, here's another for you, giving him a bleach which makes the blood fly out of his mouth and nose.

B.—I am right glad to see you so stout. Fly to Jesus Christ; cast yourself at his feet, and beg a sealed pardon of all your sins.

F.—Pray give me a little more of that cordial which Holy Spirit left here.

B.—You may take a full draught.

F.—That is an excellent cordial.

C.—Have you brought the receipt yet?

D.—You have but half an hour.

B.—Run Faith, run. (Faith goes out, Unbelief enters in disguise, crying bad news.)

B.—What news?

Unbelief.—Here is a man of veracity, you may enquire at him.

B.—Stranger will you be so kind as to inform me what these bad news are, and if they respect me?

Stranger.—I hear that one of your servants, named Faith, went to the Lord Christ for a sealed pardon of all your sins, but I understand that Christ is so displeased with you, that he has sent Faith away empty.

B.—If this be so, I am undone.

S.—It is true, I can take my oath of it, for I heard Christ saying, that you made such a bad use of the last you got, he would never give you any more.

B.—What is your names gentlemen, I think one of you talks very like one Unbelief, that I was formerly acquainted with?

Strangers.—We are not fond of telling our names, we only desire to tell you that your affairs are not going to your mind.

Hope.—I am not out of heart yet. (Enters Self-Examination.)

S. E.—O! Mr. Unbelief and Mr. Temptation, are you here? (Enters Faith.)

B.—Have you got the receipt from Christ?

F.—Yes, here it is; give it to Conscience, and turning about to Unbelief, knocks him down the first blow, and gives temptation such a kick in the body that makes all his entrails come out; at this old man comes up with his cordial, but being observed by Faith, he runs up to him and breaks his back at one blow, but does not kill him altogether.

B.—Mr. Conscience are you pleased with the receipt?

C.—I am reading it.

B.—Read it loud, that I may hear it.

C.—I shall. The receipt and pardon is as follows :
To our well beloved and trusty Conscience, our deputy in the soul of Believer, Peace be multiplied, for as much as Believer has not only fled from all his sins to our court for refuge, but also from all his duties, prayers, groans and tears, but has likewise, behaved becoming that allegiance that is due to us; not only by fighting against our enemies, but what we account equal; crying murder, when his enemies are too strong for him, &c. It is, therefore, our royal will and pleasure, that you make proclamation in open court, that Believer is acquitted of all his crimes, &c., given under our hand at our court in heaven.

JESUS REX.

D.—Are you satisfied?

C.—Yes, and am just about to call the Court Ho! Mr. Examination and other of the members of my Court. Come forward; here are orders from your sovereign Lord. (*Reads the orders aloud.*)

Court.—We have no objections, we are satisfied. Your Honor had better proceed to make proclamation.

C.—Be it known to all and every one, to whom these presents may come, that by virtue of an order, from our Lord the King, Believer is completely acquitted at our court of inquiry, and all processes against him cast out of this court and buried in oblivion. Given under our hands at our court in the soul of Believer.

CONSCIENCE.

EXAMINATION.

Death.—You are a friend, now I thank Conscience, yes, and never will be an enemy, or make him uneasy any more.

B.—Come forward, gentle Death, sit down on the bedside, and let us have some conversation, methinks you are wonderfully altered in respect of beauty; yea, there is something in you so engaging, that I cannot help loving you.

Welcome! O gentle death;
I think thy face appears not grim,
But hath a pleasant grace,
Sweet Christ hath turned for us,
All blacks to white, all woes to joy;
All sadness to delight.—*Wellwood*

D.—There is something in my nature, terrible to the sons of men, to saints and sinners, but when the former have clear views of their interest in Christ, they will view me in a friendly light.

B.—Pray, what do you mean to do with me?

D.—My orders concerning you are to put an end to your life, and as soon as I loose the cord that unites your soul and body, your sins will be at an end. I am also to put an end to all your sorrows and convey you to your father's house, when God shall wipe away all tears from your eyes, and when there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, &c.

B.—You are a kind friend, Indeed,

O gladsome boatman, giving safe convoy,
From weeping earth unto the land of joy;
O safe refuge, sweet eternal port,
To which all weary pilgrims do resort.—*Wellwood.*

The sight of you causes joy in my heart; but pray, permit me to put a question to Faith.

D.—You may, and welcome.

B.—Well, Faith, did you see the Lord Christ when you went with my petition? F

F.—O yes I saw him.

B.—What did you think of him?

F.—I always thought well of him, but this time he appeared a thousand times more beautiful than ever.

B.—Sit nigh me gentle Death, the longer I look at you th emore I think of you; but tell me Faith, did he tell you anything concerning me?

F.—Here is a cordial, set-heart-on-fire, that he sent you, pray take a little of it, and then I will tell you what he said.

B.—Why, did you not give me this cordial when you came first?

F.—I was in such a haste when I got the pardon, and so glad to get it, that I forgot it, but went back this morning, make haste and taste it.

(*B.*—Takes a great draught.)

B.—My heart is all on fire, O make haste and tell me what he said.

F.—He said, if you earnestly desired to see him, and would send me for him, he would come and pay you a visit.

B.—Run, run and bring him, my heart is all in a flame of love; I cannot want him two minutes.

F.—I shall go with all speed, and while I am gone, sing a verse of this song which I formerly taught you.

Welcome, O sweet eternal dawn,
E're long the curtain shall be drawn;

Sweet Jesus come and stop my breath,
And kiss my longing soul to death.

(Enter the Lord Jesus.)

B.—Welcome! Welcome! my dearest Lord; welcome to my house, welcome to my poor soul; if I had a thousand souls, my dearest Lord should have them all.

Lord Jesus.—And you are welcome to my arms, there still to stay, and you shall never more be banished, never more weep as an orphan far from home; you shall hunger no more, nor thirst any more, nor complain of enemies within or without; the divisions or afflictions of Zion shall no more cause the briny tears to flow for your weeping eyes; in a word, I shall never chastise nor frown upon you to all eternity. Believer faints with joy, but recovers again.

Enter Holy Spirit.—I will cleanse Believer's soul completely, that as soon as Death looses the silken cord of life, the soul may be ready to present itself without spot or stain to God.

B.—Amen, even so.

D.—*(Comes forward and says,)* shall I loose the thread of life now?

J.—I shall give you orders when. Ho! Trumpeter.

Trumpeter.—Here my Lord, your will.

L. J.—Stand to horse and arms, and in my name order two hundred thousand of the heavenly cavalry to appear in the space of three minutes well mounted, with their swords drawn, to escort Believer's soul to the regions of bliss. And order also one of the best bands of Music to attend on the spot.

T.—My sovereign's orders shall be done. *(Exit.)*

B.—My sight is failing, strength is abating, and my sickness is increasing.

L. J.—Come out of that, father, mother, wife, brother, &c. you cannot attend a dying Believer, let me behind him in the bed; now Believer lean your aching head on my tender breast, you have nothing to fear, my everlasting arms shall support your fainting head, and administer every needful supply.

B.—O how sweet it is to die in the arms of a living Lord; now I can bid defiance to hell, and to spiteful powers. Faith will please to sing a song.

F.—I will sing,

Should all the hosts of death, and powers of hell unknown,
Put their most dreadful forms of rage and mischief on
I shall be safe, for Christ displays,
Superior power, and guardian grace.

(Enters the Heavenly host, invisible to Believer, and falling down at the feet of Jesus Christ, says, dread sovereign, what's your will?)

L. J.—My Royal will is, that you mount and draw your swords, and in open ranks wait at the portals of Believer's lips, to receive his soul as soon as Death looses it from the body, and convey it to my Father's bosom.

Cavalry.—Our Sovereign's orders shall be punctually obeyed.

B.—And of music, your will Great Sovereign,

L. J.—My will, that you incessantly play the Martyr Stephe'ns March. (The music begins.)

B.—What sound? what heavenly sound? what sweet music is this that I hear? Heaven is surely come down to

earth. Were placed here all griefs, all woes of creatures, could the not change into melodious waters.

L. J.—Is not this music preferable to that which the Devil and the world, and the flesh formerly played you.

B.—Beyond comparison, preferable; yea, one half hour surpasses all that the sons of men can boast, could they add eternity to the duration of their music; but who do these musicians belong to, or where are they going?

L. J.—They are come at my orders to play to you; behold, also two hundred thousand cavalry ready to assist and escort you to my father's house.

B.—O what a ravishing sight; O sweet escort, with what a pleasing Grace do heavenly hosts surround me in this place. O my soul, what manner of love is this, guards and musicians to escort me, poor worthless me, what shall I render to the Lord for all his kindness!

L. J.—I want nothing from you at present, only liberty to convey you to heaven.

B.—You shall have that, and a thousand welcomes. I long to join that sweet assembly on high; my Father calls, the Spirit and the Bride say, come, and my soul says, come, Lord Jesus, let us go; I am ready when you please.

L. J.—You had better take leave of your friends before you go.

B.—I can scarcely wait, but if you stay along with me, I shall.

L. J.—I shall never withdraw my comfortable presence from you, while eternity is running its perpetual rounds.

B. Farewell, sin, and sorrow; adieu to doubts and fears, groans and tears; farewell to weary nights and comfortless days; interposing clouds, your portentous shades shall never more eclipse Christ's lovely face; farewell calumny, malice and reproach, I go where you cannot transmit your baleful influence, nor intercept my felicity, for ever; begone forever; Satan and all your train, you never shall send me to bed supperless again, nor force the briny tear from my weeping eye; your triumph is at an end, my Lord Jesus shall drag you in triumph at his chariot wheels; farewell bigotry and schism, infernal sisters, I go where your hell-born sanctimony shall never show its face; farewell ungodly men and women, my sorrow to see Satan carrying you to the regions of horror, is now at an end; I shall never more plague you with soul searching conversation, adieu forever and ever; farewell my dear wife, unclasp your tender arms and let me be gone, my strength will not admit of these tender caresses, that once crowned our felicity, say, my heart's delight, why all in tears, we shall meet again and sit down together at the feet of Jesus, and there find a heaven into which death shall never enter; weep not, my darling, I go to my God and your God, heaven will now be dearer to you, when you think that I am there before you, that same Lord that has taken care of us, and dealt friendly with us when far from friends, will take care of you and our dear children, and bring us together again in a better country. Grieve not, my darling, I shall only be in heaven a little before you, and when you come, methinks I shall meet you with

joy, and bid you welcome, (if the expression may escape censure,) and sit beside you and recount the wonders of redeeming grace which we have experienced ; but O what surpasses all, we shall be admitted to join that praising throng which stand day and night in the immediate presence of God, saying "worthy is the Lamb that was slain, &c." Farewell, dear children, and let me entreat you by the prayers and tears of a dying father, to make religion your main business, and when you come, as I, to a dying bed, you will find religion sweet, death gentle, a saviour kind, God reconciled, and all comfortable. I leave you, my little darlings, I leave you; but God will not leave you; I have committed you to him, who will take care of you and though you loose your earthly father, your God will be your father, weep not my poor things, weep not, if any wrong you upon earth, your father which is in Heaven will hear your complaints and avenge your quarrel ; farewell, my mother, the Church, I shall no more seek nourishment from the kindly breasts of your sweet ordinances, no more shall my soul long to meet my dearest Lord in the Courts of his house on earth ; no more shall I weep in secret to see my brethren and sisters tearing the eyes out of each other ; no more shall my heart strings rend at the sight of my dearest Lord, upon the threshold of my father's house about to take his leave ; no more shall my untender brethren, with whom I have held communion in my father's house on earth, debar me from my father's table on high, or load me with opprobrious characters, because I cannot run with them in all their untender

rounds ; no more shall I hang my harp upon the willow trees, and refuse to be comforted because of the captivity and widowhood of the daughter of my people. Farewell, I never more need your ordinances, but may your Lord and his presence, always dwell with you, may you bring forth many sons and daughters, may the Lord bless your sweet sermons, sacraments and societies ; many a time my soul has been refreshed at them ; may the Lord bless your watchmen, strengthen your sons, and cause peace to dwell within your walls for ever ; farewell, minister of the gospel, many a sweet feast the Lord has sent my soul by you, I thank you for the kindly assistance you often gave me when sinking in the mire, but I shall no more need your sweet soul searching doctrines, nor healing instructions ; farewell, until that day, on which we shall meet in Immanuel's fair land, where your Lord and Master will pay you down your unmerited wages, and graciously reward you for all your half done works. Farewell, blood relations and sweet christian friends, particularly those who have been kind to me, when far from friends, and dealt tenderly with me in the day of my distress ; farewell, I never more shall need your friendly counsels and advice, my soul shall no more pour forth its sorrows into your compassionate bosoms, no more shall my bitter complaints bring forth friendly sighs from your heaving lungs, nor the briny symptoms of sympathetic sorrow from your eyes ; I shall never more need your friendly assistance ; I shall soon be at home in my Father's presence, I shall no more stand in need of food and clothing, my Father shall feed and

clothe me for ever, nor shall I ever be troublesome to you any more; but may that God who caused you to show kindness to a worthless stranger, reward you double, even in this life, and at last bring you home where you and I shall spend an eternity in those holy regions; where love eternal, unlimited, and almighty reigns for ever. But I must away, my father calls me, farewell my poor sickly body, many a day we lived friendly together, but we must part for a season, you are now unfit for the mansion on high, you must take a sleep, my lord has made your bed and will take care that no intruding foe shall disturb your repose, nor unwary stranger with hasty tread, break your rest or shorten your sleep, until that joyful day, when you and I shall meet and re-unite, never to part to all eternity.

L. J. Ho, Death.

D. Here, my Lord.

L. J. Go loose the silken cord that unites Believer's soul and body; see you do it tenderly; Angels stand to your posts, Musicians strike your most melodious strings, and give Believer's soul a safe and joyful convoy to my Father's bosom.

B. Welcome eternal day, welcome communion with God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, welcome the song of my elder brethren and sisters, welcome the song of Moses and the Lamb, welcome the society of sweet Ministers and dear natural and Christian friends, whom I once enjoyed on earth, now we meet never to part again; welcome Church triumphant, welcome my once tuneless harp, now tuned by the King

of Kings, welcome my once bigoted brethren, who on earth held me as an alien, and used me as an enemy, I say welcome to my heart, for ever welcome, joy unspeakable and full of glory, and welcome what crowns all, Eternity! Eternity! He swoons away, but *after* a little revives again, saying, what do I see? Wonder! Wonder? Praise! Praise! to free grace; I go! I go! I am drowned in love! free unmerited love! Hallelujah!

A DIALOGUE

BETWEEN DEATH AND THE HYPOCRITE.

Death.—I want in.

Hypocrite.—It is our humiliation day, and I have all my sins to mourn over, so that I cannot take time to talk to you. Pray, call some other time, when I shall have leisure to wait on you.

D.—I demand entrance.

H.—Speak easy, or you will disturb the family; if you have business with any of the neighbors, I shall direct you.

D.—I care not for your family, nor will I pass by your house; so open the door, or I will break it open.

H.—Pray, be not angry. Walk in; take a seat and sit down a little, and then pursue your journey.

D.—I am at my journey's end; my business is with you; nor will I sit down until my work be finished.

H.—I suppose you are mistaken. My affairs are settled long ago, nor do I owe any one a farthing.

D.—You are a rascal, and soon you will be convinced of your mistake.

H.—Suppose the charge be true, I have not time to settle accounts with you to-day, nor do I choose to settle accounts on the humiliation day.

D.—My name is Death, and I am come for you!

H.—That cannot be possible. I have a great quantity of work to do for God at this sacrament. We have also to hold Society this evening; and I prayed so well at the last Society, that I expect to be employed this time also; and I have a prayer prepared that may be of great service, if the Lord will enable me to water it with tears.

D.—No allegations. You have not a day to live!

H.—Suppose it be true, which I cannot believe, yet you ought to come in a friendly manner, for I am a servant of the King of kings, and you dare not tyrannize over me.

D.—You are a servant of the Devil, and a soldier of his.

H.—You are a hard mouthed fellow, and if I did see it to be your natural turn, I would be angry. Do you not see my regimentals hanging up? and if you wait till I be ready for meeting, you may see them on.

D.—The servants of Jesus Christ do not hang up their regimentals; they have them always on.

H.—So have I. But I have a half worn suit that I wear about home, and think that it is most for the honor of my General to reserve the best for the public. But if you still doubt, ask Mr. M'Millan, Mr. Smith, and Mr. Henderson, and they will tell you that I can keep my regimentals clean, and can march to the music, and have my arms as bright as any.

D.—Were ever your weapons stained in the blood of your sins?

H.—Yes: I have stained them in the blood of Hypocrisy, Pride, and Unbelief.

D.—You are a lying hypocrite; but you need not think to beguile me. However, this matter shall be tried. Where is Conscience?

H.—He is not to be had at present.

D.—Bring him in this moment!

H.—Speak easy, gentle Death, or you will awake him. I have just given him a sleeping cordial of prayers, tears and groans, and he sleeps soundly. For the Lord's sake, do not disturb him, for he is ill natured out of sleep.

D.—Conscience! Conscience!

H.—Be entreated to let him alone. I will awake him myself. But I would fain have the house to ourselves. Pray, withdraw a little.

D.—Your Conscience shall sleep no more to all eternity. I am sent by the great God to awaken your conscience, and take the state of your soul from its mouth, and send you to heaven or hell, according as I find you prepared. Conscience! Conscience! in the name of the great God, come forward!

Conscience. O, murder! murder! O, to get revenge on my murderer!

H.—Good Conscience, you are warm; pray, take a little of this cordial; it will be of service to you.

C.—Thou vile miscreant, how darest thou name that cursed cordial that you murdered me with before? But I shall wet these hands in thy heart's blood!

H.—You are too fast; I have a receipt from Christ, that all my sins are pardoned, and so you dare not wet your hands in my heart's blood. The receipt is as followeth: "As I have received from the bearer two

pounds of tears wept in public; one quarter of an ounce wept in secret; three pounds groans; twenty pounds of duty; two ounces of wishes for an interest in Christ; ten pounds of desires to be thought religious; nine pounds of religious conversation: it is therefore my pleasure, that as soon as you see this receipt, you shall cease to disturb the sinner."

C.—I see no subscriber's name at the bottom of that receipt. Therefore I will not take it.

H.—I never noticed that before; but I am sure it was Christ that gave it to me.

C.—But how do you know it was Christ that gave you that receipt?

H.—I know him from his mild countenance, and the peace he gave my soul; also from the joy I had in believing; yea, after that I always loved the company of the people of God, and when I saw any weeping, I could not help weeping along with them. In a word, whatever came from the minister, cold or hot, praying or preaching, general or particular, always melted my soul, at least for the time I was hearing it.

C.—Did you ever doubt of it being Christ that you met with?

H.—All the ministers that ever tried it, could not make me doubt of that altogether; although some of them tried it with all their might. Yet I remember once at Shirtee, and once at Cross Creek, I was within one half inch of doubting that I had met with the true Christ; but as I could not see any other, I thought it hard to be nacked altogether, and I held my opinion.

C.—It was a devil that you got the receipt from for the pardon of your sins, and it is his religion you have!

H.—Good Conscience, say not so; you begin to make me afraid. Surely, if it had been from the Devil, it would have set you and I at odds, and not made us friends; nor would it have enabled me to kill my enemies.

C.—Made you and I friends! I wonder if the Devil himself durst be so bold! I wanted to be your friend, but you would not hear me; for when I told you of your faults, you got mad, and rather than hear my proposals for friendship, you went and sold yourself to your imaginary Christ, which in reality was a devil, on purpose to get as much poison as would kill me; and when you got it, you came home with a saint-like face, said you had been to Jesus Christ, and got some drops of his blood, which would cure my disorder, and entreated me with tears to take it, which at length I did; and when you got me asleep, you took the thick cloth of frames and feelings, woven at sermons and society, and dipped it in tears shed at all public places where there were any of God's people to notice, and spread it over my face, and then you thought I was killed indeed. But thanks to my friend Death that awakened me, and that you shall know while eternity is running its perpetual round! Death! Death! come and put this cruel hypocrite in my hands, that I may tear him to pieces!

D.—I shall separate his soul and body in less than an hour. But what I called you for, was to hear

from your mouth if he stained his weapons in the blood of Christ's enemies.

C.—I shall soon convince you that they are all alive. Hi, lo Mr. White Devil!—

H.—Ho! Mr. Humility! Mr. Hate-sin! Mr. Faith! Mr. Repentance! Mr. Love-God's-people! Mr. Testimony-against-sin!—

C.—Mr. Humility, what is your occupation?

Humility.—I ride with my master to sermons, sacraments and societies, and my business is to go to ministers and elders, and other noted christians, and tell them my master is a bad man; that I doubt he has no religion; that his heart is hard; that he can't pray one word; and also that I doubt he will never get to heaven. But if they do not contradict me, I would be ready to knock out their brains.

C.—I perceive your name is Pride.

Hyp. Pray, do not look so surly on my servants.

C.—Silence! Mr. Hate-sin!

Hate-sin.—Your will, sir?

C.—What is your occupation?

Hate-sin.—My master always keeps me riding thro' the neighborhood and congregation, finding other folks' sins, and hating them. Sometimes I used to be at home hating sin for fear of hell, but it was before you fell asleep. But all the time you were sleeping, I never was at home unless we had strangers, and as soon as they went away I took my horse and set off with all speed.

C.—I see your name is Love-sin-at-home if you had liberty. Come, Mr. Faith, what is your occupation?

Faith.—I attend my master, come or go what will, up or down, day or night, and believe in God that my master will be happy; yea, my trust is as good in the dark as when I have light, and although my master cannot see any comfortable evidence that he is one of the people of God, yet many of the children of God are in the dark as well as he; and I believe it will be well with him. And I never was in danger of being destroyed, only once on a Sabbath day, I went with my master to one of the hell-fire ministers, and I had scarcely got into the seat before the ill-natured parson cast one of his balls at me, and set me on a blaze. But, as good luck would have it, my fellow servant, Repentance, was along, and my master cried “Fire! fire!” and bade him bring his bucket, and in a crack he watered out the fire, and I was saved. But after that I would rather meet the Devil himself than one of those ministers.

C.—I perceive your name is Presumption.

Faith.—Oh—oh—oh! I am sick! I am gone! Farewell, my master, farewell forever! Fain would I mourn, but Death stops my speech!

Hyp.—Misfortune, death, and horror! Oh, the grief? Oh, my Faith! my Faith! my Faith! Would to God all my friends had died, rather than you! Run for Mr. Hope, the physician.

Hope.—Your will, sir.

Hyp.—Horror seizes my soul! Faith is dead! dead! dead! For the Lord’s sake bring him to life again, if you can!

Physician.—Bring me some water from Mr. Repentance, to make a cordial.

Servant.—Mr. Repentance has none for himself; his well has gone dry.

Phy.—Oh—oh—oh! What's this? I faint! Carry me to bed! I fear I shall die! See that you do not bury Faith until I be ready to go to the grave with him.

Hyp.—What shall I do? Was there ever sorrow like unto my sorrow?

C.—Silence! or I shall knock out your brains! Come, Mr. Repentance, give an account of your employment.

Repentance.—I can do nothing at present, I am very sick. But when I had health, I attended my master to all public places, where there was any religion astir, and my business was to water his soul, or rather his cheeks, in the time of prayer and sermons. I always took care to be seen, and if the minister prayed, I took care to keep my master near him, and to water his cheeks there, if they should be dry all the week.

C.—Your proper name is Hypocrite. Mr. Love-God, what is your occupation?

Love-God.—I lend my master affection to God, because he is merciful, and because he has a heaven for him, and because my master will not go to heaven unless he loves God.

C.—Your name is Love-sin-if-you-durst. Mr. Love-God's-People, what do you follow?

Love-God's-People.—He keeps me always loving God's people when it is consistent with character, or any advantage to be had; also to love God's people, because it is a mark of grace.

C.—I suppose your name is Self-love. Come Mr. Testimony-against-sin, what do you follow?

Testimony.—I have been always abroad and fighting. I have fought all through Europe and America against sin; in particular, against some evils which latitudinarians call circumstantials in principle. Yea, my zeal has been so great, that I have chosen rather to hold communion with some servants of Satan, who were clear in testimony against all error, than to join some servants of Christ that were wrong in the least of what they ignorantly call circumstantials. Nay, I would rather stay at home and sleep all the Sabbaths of my life, than go over the threshold to hear any minister that ever Christ sent, if he did not please me in testimony. In a word, I would rather never hear the gospel, than hear it from a man, be he ever so pious, that used Watts' version of the Psalms twice. But I cannot tell how affairs go at home, for I never was in my master's house before your honor called me.

C.—I perceive your name is Bigotry, and may be Englished thus—Fight abroad, and let the Devil and sin reign at home. However, I shall dismiss you all together when I have asked you one question, and I demand your answer upon the spot, in the presence of Death. The question is, how came you to get your names changed?

Ser.—We suppose your honor remembers when you had the last fever, you told our master that if he did not kill us you would make his life bitter. He then called us into a room, with all the servants and

children in the house, and said, "My dear friends, you and I must part, or this cruel conscience will burn the house, if I do not kill you or send you away." Withal, his heart was like to break. He could say no more for a while, but wept bitterly, and kissed us, and said at last, "Heaven is witness that I would not part with you if I could help it." While we were thus employed, in came a man with a smiling countenance, and said he was a minister, and if our master pleased he would baptize us all over again, and wash us so clean that no one would know us. Our master and we both were glad to hear it, and bade him proceed. He first called Hypocrisy, and changed his name to Repentance, and gave him a little bucket, which he had full of tears in less than half an hour after his baptism. Then he called up one of the rest, and washed him out of the bucket; and so on with all the rest. And ever since my master knows how to baptize and wash as well any one.

C.—You and your master shall have the honor of burning together. Are you now satisfied, Death?

D.—O yes; and I am awaiting orders, which I expect in a few moments.

Hyp.—Horror! horror! horror! seizes my soul! Who is that comes yonder? My blood runs cold in my veins! O, Death, hide me from yonder monster! O, that I had never been born!

C.—It is the Devil, your master, and I am to assist him in paying you your wages! (*Enter Devil.*)

Devil.—Ha! ha! ha! my friend! Is it come to this with you? I thought you would have been in

heaven before now! Where is your Faith and Repentance? Where are your complaints about the dominion of sin and a hard heart? Many a time you made me blush to hear you! Come, speak up? Now how do you like your master? But I long to get you home! O Death, put him into my hands! O, to have him, and his prayers and his tears, into my burning furnace!

Hyp.—O for one gospel season, and one day to live! O thou Jesus Christ, that saves sinners, save me from this cruel, roaring Conscience! O, mercy! mercy! mercy! O, my poor soul, you are undone forever!

Christ.—You shall not be heard! I called and entreated you day and night to quit your old religion, and come to me, but you would not! I entreated you by all the groans I spent on Calvary, to examine and cast away your hypocrisy. Yea, I followed you to your house, and entreated you to let me in, but you would not give me one night's lodging! Yea, I sent my servants to invite you to my supper, but you refused! But let me tell you, I have provided a supper for you in hell! Your table shall be set in the midst of the devouring flames; your attendants shall be ten thousand devils; your music shall be the groanings of the damned! and your meat and drink to all eternity, shall be as much of the wrath of God as the omnipotent Jehovah can communicate, with the one hand pouring it in, and the other hand upholding the soul from annihilation! And, Conscience, I command you to accompany this soul to all eternity; and to take in

one hand my blood that was trodden under foot by this wretch, and in the other hand his mispent seasons and opportunities, and hold them before him forever ; and as you have been slighted by him, I now put him under your power. Call as many devils as you please, and take full revenge. Death, I command you, within the space of three minutes, to wet thy javelin in the heart's blood of this hypocrite. And thou, Satan, I command you to bring here in a moment, two thousand of your hellish train to carry this miscreant to the regions of woe!

Hyp.—O! and must despair be my eternal companion? Oh! oh! oh! what is this I feel? O for annihilation! Oh! hell is begun! To have boiling lead poured down my throat would be a heaven to this! O for one hour to live! for one slighted opportunity! But what am I saying? Hell is my portion—my bed the flames—my tormentor, roaring conscience! Farewell heaven, light, and all happiness! Come, everlasting night, despair and damnation! Ah, murder! I sink! I am gone---forever and ever!

THE END.



PENN STATE UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES



A000053021670