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REMARKS
ON
DR. JAMES FISHBACK'S
PHILOSOPHY OF THE HUMAN MIND,
IN RESPECT TO RELIGION.

BY WILLIAM L. MACCALLA.

"See to it that no man make a prey of you by Philosophy."
Coll. ii. 8.

LEXINGTON :
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1814.

PREFACE.

IN April, 1813, Dr. James Fishback, of Lexington, Kentucky, published a work, entitled "The philosophy of the human mind, in respect to religion; or a demonstration from the necessity of things, that religion entered the world by revelation. Also, an inquiry into the production, nature, and effects of the christian faith, according to the exposition of Christ and his Apostles—the detection of long standing errors, &c. And the necessary dependence of the American Republics upon the christian religion, for their origin and continuance, evinced."

THIS book is divided into six chapters. The first treats of natural religion, the second of faith—the third is on enthusiasm, the fourth is on the decrees—"Chapter 5. The origin of the division of the scriptures into chapters and verses, and their effects, &c. Chapter 6. The connection between the American governments and the christian religion, &c. &c."

THE subjects contained in the above work are numerous and various, and their order and connexion by no means regular and plain. This has, as might be expected, led the author into tedious repetitions: a fact, which himself could not help perceiving, though he could not remove the cause. "The reader," says he, "will excuse the repetitions with which I am chargeable," &c. page 125, line 6. It is not, therefore, my intention to give a full and formal review of the book or any of its parts, because they want arrangement: nor is it my design to notice all the subjects of which the author treats, however unjustly he may have handled them, because they want great and immediate importance. A great part of his book appears to be in oppo-

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sition to the doctrines of grace : particularly ; regeneration by the supernatural influence of the Holy Spirit. To answer some of his arguments against this doctrine, is the principle object of the following pages. May he who was sent by the Father to remind us of all that Christ has told us, enable me to do it aright.

REMARKS.

REGENERATION is a saving change of a sinner's nature and relation to God. A man comes into the world guilty and unholy—in regeneration he is in Christ justified, and sanctified. He is originally a child of Satan and an object of divine displeasure—in regeneration he is made a son of God and an heir of Heaven.

THIS is the work of the Holy Spirit, in his special, internal, supernatural, effectual operations.

GOD promises by the mouth of Moses; "I will set my tabernacle among you, and my soul shall not abhor you.—And I will walk among you and will be your God, and ye shall be my people." Levit. xxvi. 11, 12.

According to New-Testament expositors, this prophecy has a twofold fulfilment. It relates to the advent of our Saviour and to the sanctifying effusions of his Spirit. John the Evangelist says, "the word became man and dwelt among us"—literally; *pitched his tent or tabernacle among us.* John i. 14. Paul, after the ascension of our Saviour, applies this to the sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit. See 2 Cor. vi. 16.

God again promises; "and Jehovah thy God will circumcise thy heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love Jehovah thy God, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live." Deut. xxx. 6. That is, says Tremellius, "repurgabit vos vi Sui Spiritus, et ad suum obsequium reformabit. He will thoroughly cleanse you by the power of his Spirit, and new mould you to the willing obedience of himself." "Now this," says Augustine, "is an evident promise of grace: for he promises that himself will do what he is wont to order to be done." See Deut. x. 16.

"This is the covenant which I make with them, saith Jehovah: My Spirit, which is upon thee, and my words

which I have put into thy mouth, they shall not depart from thy mouth, nor from the mouth of thy seed, nor from the mouth of thy seeds seed saith Jehovah, from this time forth forever." Isaiah lix. 21. "For I will pour out waters on the thirsty, and flowing streams on the dry ground. I will pour out my spirit on thy seed and my blessing on thy offspring." Isa. xlv. 3. See also Jer. xxxi. 31—34. Ezek. xi. 19. xxxvi. 25—29. "I will put my spirit within you and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments and do them." Ezek. xxxvi 27.

God says by the prophet Joel;—"And it shall afterwards come to pass that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh. And your sons and your daughters shall prophesy; your old men shall have dreams, your young men shall see visions. I will, moreover, in those days, pour out my Spirit upon the men-servants and maid-servants also. And I will shew signs (or *omens) in the Heavens—and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of Jehovah come. And it shall come to pass that whosoever shall call on the name of Jehovah shall be delivered: for in Mount-Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be deliverance, as Jehovah hath said; even for the remnant whom Jehovah hath called." Joel ii. 28—32, or the whole third chapter in Leusden's Hebrew bible.

The above passages and a great proportion of the Old Testament scriptures relate to the blessings of the Christian dispensation; and particularly to the Millennium. The quotation from Joel forms a part of a prophecy which concerns the dispersion and restoration of the Jews, and the continued and increasing success of the gospel among the nations of the earth from the memorable day of Pentecost. 'On that occasion the Apostles were all with unanimous affection standing in the same place: and on a sudden, there

* *Mupet* from *ipet* to *persuade*, signifies "a persuasive fact, event or sign, given for conviction, whether strictly miraculous and exceeding the powers of nature, as Exod. vii. 9. xi. 9, 10; or not, as Isa. xx. 3. Ezek. xii. 6, 11. xxiv. 24, 27."

was a sound from Heaven as of a rushing, violent wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And divided tongues, as of fire appeared to them, and a tongue sat on each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak in different languages, as the Spirit gave them utterance.' Strangers from all nations being in Jerusalem, and hearing the Apostles speak in their respective tongues, admired the display of divine power: 'but others mocking, said; surely these men are filled with sweet wine. But Peter, standing up with the eleven, raised his voice and said unto them; Ye Jews, and all ye that dwell in Jerusalem; be this known unto you, and listen to my words, for these are not drunk as ye suppose, since it is but the third hour of the day. But this is that which was spoken of by the Prophet Joel;—"And it shall come to pass in the last days saith God, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions and your old men shall have dreams. I will, moreover, in those days pour out of my Spirit upon my men-servants and my maid-servants also, and they shall prophesy. And I will give prodigies in Heaven above and signs in the earth beneath—blood and fire and a cloud of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness and the moon into blood, before the great and signal day of the Lord come. And it shall be that whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." Acts ii. 17—21.

DOCTOR FISHBACK endeavours with great solicitude to prove that the above prophecy was fully and finally accomplished, in the external instructions and miracles of the Apostolick day; and that without both instructions and miracles, (the latter of which we now want) it is impossible for such prophecies to be fulfilled. We insert his words.

—"we will, in imagination, abstract from the scene exhibited [on the day of Pentecost,] the miraculous display which the Jews saw and heard, and which amazed and confounded them. By this we have nothing left which is addressed to the mind through the senses; nor is there any fulfilment of the prophecies of Joel and David, concerning the out-pourings of the Spirit; for if that which was seen and heard, were the fulfilment of the prophecies, no-

thing else could have been; no other operations of the Spirit were attended by the Holy Ghost in his revelations through the Prophets, than what were seen and heard, and explained by Peter.”
Page 130: 2d line from bottom, &c.

ACCORDING to Joel and Peter, the accomplishment of the prophecy now before us, takes place in the last days.—If then Dr. Fishback's doctrine be correct, that it was finally fulfilled in the instructions and miracles of the Apostles and their contemporaries, and that for the want of miraculous gifts its accomplishment is impossible at any posterior date; the phrase, *the last days* must be limited to the days of the Apostles: it must mean the Apostolick dispensation exclusively.

OUR translators have, without any apparent reason, rendered **aherit eimim* sometimes *the last days* and sometimes *the latter days*. It renders literally *the end of days*, and signifies primarily *futurity* in general—any *time yet to come*. For this translation, authors quote such passages as Numbers xxiii. 10, where *aherit* is in our English Bible rendered *last end*. Deut. viii. 16, where it is *latter end*. Deut. xi. 12, where *aherit sene* is rendered *the end of the year*. Eccl. vii. 8, *aherit deber, the end of a thing*. As to the above explanation, it is taken from the way in which the phrase *aherit eimim* is used in Dan. ii. 28, 29, where “Daniel informs Nebuchadnezzar that ‘God maketh known to him what shall be in *the latter days*, or *at the end of days*’ [where] it is manifest, that futurity in general.....is there intended by the expression; because the king's dream reaches from his own reign to the very commencement of the kingdom of the mountain.....Such, also, as Bishop Newton justly remarks, is the meaning of the phrase in Gen. xlix. 1, Num. xxiv. 14, and Deut. xxxi. 29. (See Dissert. 4.) Such, likewise, is its meaning in Dan. x. 14.” See a note in Faber's Dissert. on the propheties, page 80.

But from Isa. ii. 2, Mic. iv. 8, it is evident that some particular time is sometimes meant by *the end of days*. And that must be either the whole period of the gospel dispensation or the last part of that period. “And it shall come

* Parkhurst's pronunciation is used. We suffer for the want of Hebrew and Greek types.

to pass, that in the end of days, the mountain of the house of Jehovah shall be established on the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow unto it." Isaiah. "At the end of days it shall come to pass that the mountain of the house of Jehovah shall be established on the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills, and people shall flow unto it." Micah.

It is not chimerical to say, that this period of the gospel dispensation, and particularly the last part of it, usually called the Millennium, is the time signified in Joel by *aherit ken, at the end of that time (afterward)* a phrase very nearly related to *aherit eimim, the end of days*, and paraphrased by Peter as if it were precisely the same, by *eschatai heme-rai, the last days*.

In the New-testament the last days are frequently mentioned, and they always mean the whole gospel dispensation, or some part of it subsequent to the times of the Apostles: and never once in the Old or New-testament do the phrases under consideration signify the Apostolick day exclusively. See 2 Tim. iii. 1: 2 Pet. iii. 3—"In the last days perilous times shall come." Paul.—"There shall come in the last days scoffers walking after their own lusts and saying where is the promise of his coming?" Peter.

Now, these last days which are either limited to a period subsequent to the day of miracles, as Mess. Faber, Jeffery and others think, or which more properly, in Acts ii. 17, extend from the day of Pentecost to the end of the world: these last days, are the times in which according to Joel and Peter, the Holy Spirit is to be poured out on all flesh.

The causal particle *ki, for*, in Joel ii. 32, shews that the object of the out-pouring of the Spirit was deliverance to the remnant in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, whom Jehovah *hath called*: (the prophetick language for *shall call*.) Who are this remnant who are to be called and delivered in the latter days? and when do they live? Peter says; "the promise is to you and to your children, even to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God shall call." Acts ii. 39. Here the want of the article *tois*, be-

fore *pasi*, *all*, shews that the expression, "*all who are afar off*," still relates to children; by a rule which has been too well established by *Sharp and Middleton, and too generally received by unprejudiced criticks to be reasonably disputed: and the insertion of the conjunction *kai* (necessarily translated *even* be the same rule) between *humon* and *pasi*, shews that *all who are afar off* does not mean children in the restricted sense, but children's children to the remotest posterity. Let it be observed farther, that the relative adjective *hosous*, *as many as*, emphatically extends the promise of the out-pouring of the Spirit to every individual in the numerous centuries of the last days, whom God shall call, or who shall enjoy that deliverance here held forth. See Luke xi. 13. Rom. viii. 9.

Although it is manifest that the prophecy reaches to the present time, it is not denied that there is, at first view, a considerable difficulty attending this exposition. The author predicts the general diffusion of the gift of prophecy, and the communication of supernatural dreams and visions. Also prodigies in the Heavens and in the Earth, the Sun and the Moon. This is the ground of Dr. Fishback's opinion that nothing else can be the fulfilment of the prophecy, but the miraculous display which the Jews saw and heard on the day of Pentecost, and which was explained by Peter. This is going on the principle that the literal, and nothing but the literal, is the true explanation of the prophetic writings. Mr. Fleming, Bishop Newton, and others fell into the same error with regard to another subject, in the xxth chapter of the Apoc. Dr. Dwight answers them that he can no more believe that the word then

* "When the copulative *kai* connects two nouns of the same case [viz. nouns (either substantive, or adjective, or participles) of personal description respecting office, dignity, affinity, or connection, and attributes, properties, or qualities, good or ill] if the article *ho* or any of its cases precedes the first of the said nouns or participles and is not repeated before the second noun or participle, the latter always relates to the same person that is expressed or described by the first noun or participle: i. e. it denotes a farther description of the first named person." Remarks on the use of the definitive article in the Greek text of the New-testament: by Granville Sharp, p. 3, Rule 1.

before them was to be understood literally, "than that Satan mentioned in the first part of it is a *real* dragon—that he was *literally* bound and had *literally* a seal set upon him—or that, as in the 4th verse, there were thrones *literally* placed, and that those who rose sat upon them, or that the being described under the name of a beast was *literally* a beast, having seven *real* heads and ten *real* horns, and upon his horns ten *real* crowns, and upon his heads the *real* name of blasphemy—or that his votaries received literally his mark, *charagma*, an impression like that of a seal or brand on their foreheads and in their righthands." The dragon, the seal, the thrones, the kings, the beast, with his heads, horns, and crowns, the name of blasphemy and the mark of his votaries are all confessedly symbolical; and so are in fact the numerous similar words and expressions which occur in Joel: such as; the locust and other vermin i. 4. 5.—the nation with lion's teeth, 6—the vine wasted and fig-tree barked, 7—the ripe harvest, the full wine-press, the overflowing fats, iii. 13—the quaking of the earth, and the darkening of the sun, moon and stars, i. 10; iii. 15, 16—the mountains dropping new wine, and the hills flowing with milk—prophecyng, dreaming and seeing visions. If, then, the whole book be figurative, what excuse is there for explaining the last of the second chapter literally? "Indeed," says Dr. Dwight, "this mode of changing the construction from that which is literal to that which is symbolical, and vice versa, has, more than most other things, contributed to perplex the meaning of this book [the Apocalypse], and that of several other parts of the scripture." Lex. edit. of two sermons on the Mill. p. 57.

Taking this view of the subject, the Heavens may mean the church, and the earth some universal empire at enmity with the church. The darkness of the luminaries of Heaven, and the blood, fire, and smoke which are upon the earth, may denote entire and universal revolutions, accompanied with dismal wars. This is variously explained by commentators who believe that the prediction has yet to receive its principal accomplishment; and until that time these things must be imperfectly understood: but all, even Dr.

Fishback's favourite expositors, agree that the words in question have a figurative meaning in the prophetic writings.

But what is meant by dreams, visions, and prophecyings? Merely the reception and communication of religious instruction. "By supernatural dreams, God of old informed men of his mind. In this manner he informed Abimelech that Sarah was Abraham's wife,—informed Eliphaz of his incomparable greatness—shewed Jacob, Joseph, Pharaoh, and his butler and baker, the Midianitish soldier, Nebuchadnezzar, Daniel, and Joseph the husband of Mary, what was to happen; and sometimes, added proper instructions." "God speaketh once, yea twice; (yet man perceiveth it not,) in a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed. Then he openeth the ears of men and sealeth their instruction." Job. xxxiii. 14—16. As the symbolical signification of dreaming is the receiving of instruction, so that of prophecying is imparting it to others; as the two Apocalyptic witnesses are doing to this day. "And I will give power to my two witnesses, and they shall prophecy a thousand two hundred and three score days clothed in sackcloth." Rev. xi. 3. This is a very common signification of the word as appears by Paul's explanation. 1 Cor. xiv. 3.

The meaning of that section of prophecy now in hand, appears then to be this: that through the numerous ages of the latter days, but principally at what are called the first and second advent of our Saviour, God would give a remarkable out-pouring of his Spirit. And that amidst dreadful revolutions, that religious information which was heretofore confined to the Jews and chiefly to their great men should then be disseminated through all nations, and all classes of society, old and young, male and female, bond and free. The wars and the Bible societies of the present day appear to have been the object of the Holy Spirit in these predictions.

The explanation given above, it will be remembered, does not deny that this prophecy received an inceptive and imperfect accomplishment in the miraculous gifts and stu-

pendous events of the first century, or even before that time. In Joel ii. 20, the destruction of a large army between the east-sea and the utmost-sea is foretold. Here Sennacherib, who was disappointed in an expedition against Jerusalem, and soon afterward at Libnah lost, by the destroying Angel, 185,000 of his men, may have been primarily intended. See 2 Kings xix. 8, 35. "But," says Mr. Faber, "I think it is sufficiently evident that the prophecy can only have received a sort of inchoate accomplishment in that event, even granting that it at all relates to it, which is by no means certain." It is not so doubtful whether it regards the destruction of Jerusalem and those prodigies which preceded that event. But this is among the predictions which, in the words of Bishop Horsley, "had in that only an inchoate accomplishment and have yet to receive their full completion."

In addition to the assertion of Peter, and other arguments already advanced in proof of this position, let the following be considered. It is said in Chap. iii. 1, that in the days of the effusion of the spirit, &c. mentioned in the last of the preceding Chap. God will restore the captive multitude of Judah and Jerusalem. The spirit was poured out in the days of the Apostles: but the Jews were then dispersed and continue so to this time. They are however to be restored in the days of these divine effusions: therefore they continue to be poured out to this day, and will hereafter.

In perfect conformity with this, our Saviour in his consolatory discourse, in as plain words as language affords, promises the *Paraclete, the Monitor, the Guide, Instructor*; who, in his absence, was to be a father to them—whose influence was equivalent to his personal presence—and who was to continue with them forever. "I will entreat the Father, and he will give you another Monitor to continue with you forever; even the spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither seeth him nor knoweth him: but ye shall know him, because he will abide with you and be in you. I will not leave you orphans, (*orphans*) I will return unto you." John xiv. 16—18.

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What a pity that Dr. Fishback does not with avidity seize this precious promise, instead of uselessly endeavouring to pervert its meaning, or elude its force. Although our Lord expressly promises that the Monitor shall continue with us forever, the Dr. glides over the long word FOREVER without one reason for refusing to give it its just weight, though in a section of his book which professes to prove that our Saviour's promises on this subject were finally fulfilled in the times of the Apostles, by the "miracles, and signs, and wonders, addressed to the senses, to the eye, and ear, and words explanatory of them."——The following is the notice which he takes of it :

"In John xiv. 16, 17, Christ told his disciples that he would pray the Father, and he shall (said he) give you another Comforter, or Monitor, that he may abide with you forever, even the spirit of truth——ye know him; for he dwelleth with you and shall be in you. He also told them that the spirit should take the things of Christ, and shew them unto them, and glorify him——that the spirit should testify of him, and the Apostles also bear witness; and in a particular manner the keys of the kingdom of Heaven were committed to Peter who was to open the gospel plan and the reign of grace, and discover to the world the glorious Redeemer in his mediatorial throne. Accordingly, Peter received the Holy Ghost, Acts ii. 4, by which he was enabled to do this; on account of which, together with the previous teaching of Christ, he was distinguished in supernatural knowledge from the amazed Jews—for no man knoweth the things of God but the spirit of God, which things he revealed in his own words, that they might be known. 1 Corinth. ii. 12, 13," page 128, at the bottom.

In page 122, at the top, the above promise of our Saviour is quoted with a larger context. His whole comment in that place is in one short sentence. "These were promises made to the twelve disciples."

Let it be remembered, that it is the Dr.'s object to prove, that our Saviour promised the spirit for no other purpose than the external working of miracles, and that, of course, his operations do not reach to us, but are confined to the days of Miracles. Let us state his premises and the conclusion which he expects us to infer from them.

1st. "These were promises made to the twelve disciples." Page 122; 17 line.

2ndly, "Accordingly, Peter received the Holy Ghost." Page 129; 10.

3rdly, Therefore, "the spiritual gifts never were promised to, neither were they ever bestowed upon, or received by, any description of persons after Christ's ascension, except believers; who were made so, not by the internal, secret operations, but such as I before expressed of an external, supernatural and miraculous kind." Page 118; 8 line from the bottom.

That the above is a fair statement of his chain of reasoning, will be seen by any one who will examine the Dr.'s book. He lays before us the last quoted proposition as containing the point to be proved. He then makes an impressive appeal to our candour while he is developing the evidence.

"I must here," says he, "entreat the christian reader to attend with care to the facts upon which I rely for the support, and establishment of what I have alleged. The proof which I shall adduce is divine, and supernatural, because it will be taken from the declarations and promises of the Saviour himself, and their literal fulfilment after his ascension." Page 119: 13.

There is a dispute between Dr. Fishback and a certain class of christians. We are led by the above prepossessing address to expect that he will enter minutely into the merits of the controversy, and give an elaborate refutation of the opinion which he is opposing. In the present instance, the subject is this: Our Saviour promised, as in John xiv. 16, that he would ask the Father, and that he would send the Spirit to continue forever. Both parties believe that this promise was made to the Apostles, and that it was fulfilled to them, and to a great multitude of all the nations to whom the Apostles preached, during the time of their ministry. The literal fulfilment of the promise, shortly after it was made, need not, then, be produced in argument, because the fact is admitted. The dispute is, whether this be a total, final completion of the promise, or only a partial and typical fulfilment. The Dr. asserts the former, and undertakes to refute the latter, and promises to support and establish his allegation with *divine* and *supernatural* proof. The proof is this; that the promise was made to the twelve disciples and literally fulfilled in them—a thing which

was never disputed : but which, on the contrary, his antagonists maintain with as unyielding pertinacity as himself. But they say moreover, that as the spirit was promised to continue with us forever, so his operations must reach far beyond the time of the twelve disciples ; and the naked promise itself is ample evidence in support of the position. This is the point which Dr. Fishback promises to refute ; but the appearance of a refutation is not to be found. Instead of it, he almost immediately quotes John xvii. 20, a passage which confirms and illustrates the explanation here given. And what makes this appear strange, is that it has little or no connexion with what precedes or follows it : but seems providentially thrown in to counteract the erroneous tenets by which it is accompanied. In page 122, he first mentions our Saviour's promise that he would pray for the spirit. He then says that this promise was made to the twelve disciples, and within a few lines, gives a part of his prayer, which shews that it was not for the twelve only or even for those who lived in the Apostolick day. The following is the text, with the insertion of a parenthesis by the Dr.

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

It appears then, that the promise of the spirit by the mouth of Joel, and by the mouth of him who was greater than Joel, extends to all those who are saved to the end of time.

Another promise of great extent is in Mat. xxviii. 20. "Lo! I am with you always, even to the end of the world."

Dr. Fishback quotes Mark xvi. 15—20, in full, and then writes as follows :

"The latter part of Mark's history, in which he details the promises of Christ in respect to the gifts of the Holy Ghost, and the various promises of the same character, which are enumerated by John, are correspondent with the concluding part of Matthew's history :—[See Matt. xxviii. 18—20.]—Mark says, 'and they went forth and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following ;' by which he has explained the sense in which the expression in Matthew, Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world, made to the eleven disciples, was used and intended." Page 123 ; 7.

By this, I understand the author as insinuating, that our Lord's promise to be with his disciples to the end of the world, meant nothing more than that he would be with them during the age of miracles, a short period. I look for the promised proof; but no proof is here. He only says, that the sense of the promise is explained by a passage in Mark, which contains an account of its partial accomplishment; resting still on the false assumption that the inchoative and imperfect fulfilment of a prophecy limits it to the time of that fulfilment.

But here again a difficulty occurs with which we have had to contend some time ago. The Dr. seems still to think, that the literal, and nothing but the literal, is the true explanation of prophecy; and the promise in Mark contemplates the exercise of miraculous gifts, which have long since ceased. Those who believe are to expel demons, speak new languages, handle serpents, drink poison without injury, and heal the sick by the imposition of their hands.

Our Lord makes a promise of the same import to the seventy disciples in Luke x. 19: "Lo! I empower you to tread on serpents and scorpions and all the might of the enemy and nothing shall hurt you."

With regard to these texts, we are both agreed that they were literally fulfilled. Demons and diseases were literally removed by a miraculous power, and serpents and scorpions were literally handled with impunity. But I think moreover, that on both these passages, Theophylact, an ancient expositor, is a much better commentator than Dr. Fishback. After mentioning, on Mark xvi. Paul's taking up the viper with safety, as in Acts xxviii. 5, he adds, "*or, to handle serpents*, is to destroy them; whether they be *aïsthetous, sensible*, or whether they be *noëtous, intelligent* serpents," that is whether they be literal or symbolical; whether they be real serpents, or Devils and wicked men typified by serpents. Satan goes by the name of the serpent from the commencement to the close of the sacred writings. In Gen. iii. 15, it is promised that the seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head, and in Rev. xii.

2, he who is the devil and satan is called the old serpent and the great dragon; a large and fierce species of serpent. The ancient critick, mentioned above, explains the serpents and scorpions in Luke x. 19, to mean *hai ton daimonon phalangges*, the armies of devils.—See Gregory's Greek Testament on the place.

Some men, on account of their cunning and deceit, malice and cruelty, are called vipers and serpents, foxes and wolves, &c. Mat. iii. 7: vii. 15: xxiii. 33; Luke xiii. 2; Jer. viii. 17; Canticles ii. 15; Ezek. xiii. 4. They are called the children of serpents and the children of the devil, because they are under his influence, of which the demoniacal possession was emblematical. This influence is not confined to the early period of our Church any more than the countervailing operations of the Divine Spirit. "The Spirit expressly saith that in the last times some shall apostatize from the faith; giving heed to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons, through the hypocrisy of liars." 1 Tim. iv. 1. The spirits, which have for many years past been deceiving the Potentates of Europe and other parts of the world, are said by the Apostle John, to be "Spirits of Demons working miracles, *semeia*, signs," "things wonderful and astonishing," says Dr. Dwight. Rev. xvi. 14. And Rome, the Babylon of the Apocalypse, is said to be "a habitation of Demons, and a hold of every unclean spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird." Rev. xviii. 2.

As the word of God is held forth under the emblems of the most delicious and salutary liquors, (see Ps. xix. 10; cxix. 103; 1 Pet. ii. 2) so the opinions, tempers, and communications of these wicked men and evil spirits are represented as poison. Moses says "their wine is the poison of dragons and the cruel venom of asps." Deut. xxxii. 33. David says "their poison is like the poison of a serpent." Ps. lviii. 4. "They have sharpened their tongues like a serpent—the poison of asps is under their lips." Ps. cxl. 3. comp. Rom. iii. 13. "The tongue no mortal can subdue. It is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison." Jas. iii. 8. To say, then, that believers shall drink poison without injury,

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is saying that they will remain holy in the midst of surrounding wickedness, and safe in the midst of surrounding dangers.

As the poison of serpents induces bodily disease, so does this moral poison, of which we have been speaking, infect the world with spiritual maladies. And although it is admitted that the prophecy in Mark xvi. 18, contemplated the first, it is equally certain that it embraces the latter also. Our Saviour says, "they who are whole need not a physician, but they who are sick." Matth. ix. 12. Here, as in Ezek. xxxiv. 4, 16, the sick mean those who are under spiritual and not corporeal complaints. See also Rev. xvi. 10, 11. From Acts iv. 8—12, it is evident that the latter is typical of the former. The word in verse 9th which regards the healing of the body, and the word in verse 12th which expresses the salvation of the soul, are both from the same root, *soo* or *sodzo*, *to heal or to save*.

But the healing in the prophecy now before us, is effected by the imposition of hands. This shews two things: that it is done by the immediate power of God, and at the same time by the use of means. Peter healed the lame man by the imposition of hands, Acts iii. 7. The High-priest and his train inquired, "by what power, and by whose authority, have ye done this?" Peter answered, "by the authority of Jesus Christ the Nazarene, whom ye crucified; whom God hath raised from the dead——by him doth this man stand before you whole." See Acts iv. 5—12. Thus it is in restoring the spiritual limbs to their proper vigour. It is done by the immediate power of God, though by the use of means.

Among these, the word of God holds a conspicuous place. In that light it is mentioned in the passage now under consideration; "They (the believers) shall speak with new tongues;" meaning, that the truths of revelation should be announced to all the nations of the earth, at first by the miraculous gift of tongues, and afterward in the ordinary way. If the rest of the prophecy can be proved to embrace the whole gospel dispensation, the applicability of this will not be denied, since it is as literally fulfilling at this

day, as in the age of miracles. "They shall speak with new tongues." The Bible is now read in all the modern languages of Europe and in nineteen of the tongues of Asia. And a society was formed at St. Petersburg, in 1812, "for the express purpose of making the gospel of the grace of God sound out from the shores of the Baltic to the eastern ocean, and from the frozen ocean to the Black sea, and the borders of China; by putting into the hands of Christians and Mohammedans, of lamites and the votaries of Shaman, with many of the heathen tribes, the oracles of the Living God." This society has the warm approbation of the Emperor Alexander, "accompanied with a gift of 25,000 rubles [£18,750] and an annual subscription of 10,000 rubles. [£7,500.]" They have been "diligently employed in concerting measures for the formation of branch societies in the chief cities of the Empire."

DR. Fishback says that this passage explains that in Mat. xxviii. 20, where our Saviour says "Lo! I am with you always, even to the end of the world." We admit that they explain each other. In this view it will be plainly seen that Mark develops the matter of the prophecy, and Matthew fixes the date of its fulfilment. They may both be thus paraphrased. "*These signs* or wonder-working powers *shall attend the believers. By my authority* and by my immediate power, *they shall*, in the use of my appointed means, *expel demons*, whether possessing the bodies, as in the age of miracles, or enslaving the souls of men, as in all ages. *They shall*, in the Apostolick day, *speak* the truths of religion in *new languages*, which they have never learned, and afterwards in all the languages of the earth, which, under my direction and protection, they shall learn in the ordinary way. In these endeavours to honour God and save the souls of men, they will be opposed by all the cunning and all the malignity of Satan and his children. But *they shall handle* these *serpents* with safety. And if, in a wise providence, they shall be persecuted or flattered, secretly or openly; or if they should be under the necessity of reading the seductive errors of infidels or heretics, they shall not be injured. And as a type and pledge of these

things they shall in the age of miracles, be literally invulnerable to the bite of the most venomous reptiles; *and if they drink that poison* which royal displeasure or individual malice may prepare for them, in their state of poverty, persecution, or imprisonment, *it shall not hurt them*. These things may, in unbelievers and hypocrites, destroy the health and endanger the life of both soul and body. But in these cases *they* who believe *shall* in the first age of the Church, *cure the sick* in body, *by laying their hands upon them*: and in all ages they shall heal the distempers of the soul by the means appointed. Think not that these things are too wonderful to be atchieved, or when atchieved that it is by any other power than that of the Paraclete, the Monitor, the Holy Spirit, whom I send in my name. "For *behold I am always with you*, to support and comfort you, and in some measure at least to succeed your labours; and I will, to such purposes as these be with all my faithful ministers, who shall succeed you [the Apostles] in the work, *even to the end of the world*. Amen! O blessed Jesus, so may it indeed be! and may this important promise be fulfilled to us and to our successors, to the remotest ages, in its full extent."

It may be proper before this subject is dismissed, to notice one Palagian gloss, which, though not observed in Dr. Fishback's book, he may hereafter discover and think a matter of considerable importance. The word *aion* translated *world*, is thought to have a general and ambiguous meaning, and accordingly Campbell of Aberdeen translates Matt. xxviii. 20, as follows; "behold I am with you always, even to the conclusion of this state." Without elaborately stating or refuting the argument drawn from this criticism, I shall merely copy a note on the text from Doddridge, who is also the Author of the latter part of the above paraphrase.

"As Christ's presence with his surviving Apostles and other ministers was as necessary after the destruction of Jerusalem as before it, nothing seems more unreasonable than to limit these words by such an interpretation as to refer them only to that period; nor does it indeed appear that

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the end of the world is ever used in any other than the most extensive sense." Compare Matt. xiii. 39, 1 Cor. xv. 24.

Let the reader draw to a focus the evidence contained in the above prophecies, and he will see but little necessity for continuing these remarks. It appears that in prophecies relating to the christian dispensation in general, God promises to *set his tabernacle among* his people, and to *walk among* them—to *dwell in* them, and *walk in* them—to *circumscribe* their heart—that his *Spirit* which is *upon* them shall not *depart from* them *from this time forth forever*—that he will *put his Spirit within* them—that he will pour out his Spirit upon their seed—that he will *in the last days* pour out his Spirit upon all flesh—that he would give them *another Comforter or Monitor to abide* with them *forever; even the Spirit of truth*—that he (Jesus Christ) will be with them *always even to the end of the world*.

In the first age of this remarkable effusion of divine influence, he bestowed extraordinary gifts for working miracles and speaking new languages, for the honorable attestation and speedy circulation of religious truth. But let any one examine the above passages of Holy Writ, and say whether this was all for which it was intended. It is to make them *love Jehovah their God with all their heart and with all their soul that they may live*—that his words may *not depart from their mouth*—that they may *walk in his statutes and keep his judgments and do them*—the Spirit is to bring his *blessing* upon them as *waters on the thirsty, and flowing streams on the dry ground*—and he is to be their *Father* and their *God*; relations which plainly make his agency in their regeneration and sanctification

This agency is special and effectual. It is called special, because it is peculiar to them who are saved; and effectual, because it is sufficient to answer the end, and infallibly does so. See Eph. iv. 16.

In page 120: 2 line, and 132: 24, and 181: 13, 14, of Dr. Fishback's work, he seems to think that the word *special* is used to distinguish those operations of the Spirit, which are supposed to take place in our day, from the miraculous agencies which were experienced in the Apostolic day. "Against this distinction," says he, "I must here

enter my protest, and *** deny the distinction as being untrue in fact——”

By a miracle is generally understood an effect, (not necessarily inferring salvation,) which is produced by Divine power as distinct from that of any created agent or the use of means: though sometimes accompanied with them.—The Scriptures however, are far from confining the word to this sense, as has been already shewn from Rev. xvi. 14, and other places; where it only means those wonderful and extraordinary facts, which Satan and his emissaries are performing on the earth at this day. As far then, as that supernatural agency which sanctified the hearts of the Apostles, and primitive christians may be called miraculous, so far does the divine Spirit exercise a miraculous influence at this day. And as far as this influence is necessary to gain a triumphant victory over the miracles of Satan and his incarnate fiends so far are miracles now wrought by the Spirit of Jesus. Moreover, since the christians of the primitive church enjoyed *special*, saving communications, which were not common to the people of the world, and since they were the *special* property of the Redeemer, to the exclusion of all other Lords; the *special* operations are far from being confined to our day. They extend to all the Redeemed from Adam, to the consummation of all things.

A very moderate acquaintance with the present state of Christendom, will enable Dr. Fishback's readers to ascertain those churches, divines, and creeds, against which he has entered his protest. I believe that I have spoken their real sentiments in the above remarks. If this be the case, the Dr. is offended at them without cause.

Regeneration is effected, moreover, by the supernatural and internal operations of the Divine Spirit.

With regard to the term regeneration, our author speaks as follows:

“These things, [the doctrines of the Scriptures] believed by their proper evidence, constitute the new birth, as far as the term regeneration is applicable to man on this side the grave. According to the absolute meaning of the term regeneration, I must needs think that the glorious resurrection of the body, from the dead, as Paul described it, is an essential part of it, which is hereafter to be realized.” 196: 9.

Persons not acquainted with the source from which the Dr. has drawn this explanation, may understand him as asserting that Paul has called the general resurrection a regeneration: a thing which he probably did not intend, and which, if he did, is incorrect. The only place in which there is the least appearance of its having this meaning, is Matt. xix. 28. And if it be true in this case our common translation must be wrong. Divines of eminence think that it is; and give the preference to Dr. George Campbell's version; "Verily I say unto you, that at the renovation [common translation *regeneration*,] when the Son of Man shall be seated on his glorious throne, ye my followers, sitting also upon twelve thrones, shall judge the twelve tribes of Israel." "We are accustomed," says Campbell, "to apply the term *regeneration* solely to the conversion of individuals; whereas its relation here is to the general state of things. As they were wont to denominate *the creation, genesis*, a remarkable restoration or *renovation*, of the face of things, was very suitably termed *palinggenesia*, [a being created again.] The return of the Israelites to their own land after the Babylonish captivity, is so named by Josephus the Jewish historian.....The principal completion will be at the general resurrection, when there will be, in the most important sense, a *renovation*, or *regeneration*, of Heaven and Earth, when all things shall become new: yet in a subordinate sense it may be said to have been accomplished when God came to visit, in judgment, that guilty land; when the old dispensation was utterly abolished and succeeded by the Christian dispensation, into which the Gentiles, from every quarter, as well as Jews were called and admitted."

If, by the *absolute meaning* of the word, Dr. Fishback intends that we shall understand its *primary* meaning, I would reply that a *renovation* of the general state of things is farther from its absolute meaning than any other sense in which it is used in scripture. Its primary signification is the literal second birth of particular persons, in the way in which Nicodemus understood it in his conversation with our Saviour. John iii. 4. Thence it came to be applied

to the spiritual renovation of the souls of individuals, as our Saviour uses the term in speaking to Nichodemus.— And thirdly, it signifies, as in Matthew, that general renovation of the state of things, which presupposes and partly implies, that spiritual regeneration which the term generally signifies among us.

The word occurs in the sense of a saving renewal of the nature in Tit. iii. 5. “He saved us by the laver of *regeneration* and the renewing of the Holy Spirit.” One of its conjugates occurs in the same sense in John iii. 5. “Jesus answered; verily, verily, I say unto you; unless a man *be born* of water and Spirit he cannot enter the Kingdom of God.”

A difficulty which attends these and very many other passages of Scripture, claims our attention in this place, before we proceed to draw from them the most prominent doctrine which they contain. In the idiom of the original language, *loutron palinggenesias*, *laver of regeneration* means *regenerating laver*. We are then, it may be said, taught in Titus iii. 5, to ascribe our salvation and regeneration, to the instrument used in baptism; and in John iii. 5, the fluid used in that ordinance is made essentially necessary to these ends. Accordingly, notwithstanding Rom. iv. 11, 12, thousands have believed that without baptism salvation is impossible; and the Roman Catholicks believe, according to the decree of the Council of Trent, that this sacrament confers grace *ex opere operato*, by the mere administration of it.

When our Saviour says, “he that believeth not shall be condemned,” he does not mean to exclude from justification those infants, &c. who may be renewed by his Spirit and are incapable of the exercise of faith: but only to condemn those who actually rejected the gospel. So when he affirms that unless a man be born of water.....he cannot enter the kingdom of God, he does not mean to exclude those believers to whom this sacrament is inaccessible, but such as disregard those ordinances of religion which are within their reach.

“There is in every sacrament a spiritual relation or sa-

cramental union between the sign and the thing signified ; whence it comes to pass that the names and effects of the one are attributed to the other." Thus our Saviour says of the bread and wine ; *this is my body*—and *this is my blood*. This was true, yet it was not true of the visible emblems, but of the Holy Spirit which accompanied them, and gave the receivers a real spiritual union to Jesus Christ ; which was the only thing meant by their partaking of his flesh and blood, a very common and intelligible figure to denote the natural as well as the adventitious relations of society. Thus again Paul says,—"Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word." Eph. v. 25, 26. The church is not literally sanctified by water, or by any thing sensible, but by the Spirit of God, of which water is emblematical, and who purifies the soul as water is suited to cleanse the body ; and who makes what he pleases to appoint a sign and means of sanctification. This remark may extend to the text above cited in Titus, and the Gospel according to John ; to the latter of which we will now return. This Dr. Fishback says,

—"Is thought to establish the physical operations of the Spirit in regeneration, in concomitance with, but distinct from, and independent of the word of God in the Gospel. This error has deprived the Gospel of its instrumental character, properly speaking, for the spiritual renovation of the understanding, will, and affections of men. The expression in the concluding part of the verse, "so is every one that is born of the Spirit," is rarely ever taken in connexion with the preceding part of it—the hearing the sound of the wind. We hear the sound of the wind, but cannot tell whence it cometh or whither it goeth ; so also we hear the Spirit through the word—he is no more an object of corporeal vision than is the wind ; and it is by the sound of his voice in words that he is known to exist, and by which the knowledge of spiritual, and eternal things, is communicated to the mind. The things of God are made known to the understandings of men by the words of God."—195 : 27.

From what has been already said, every one must know that the dispute between the Dr. and myself is, whether the agency of the Divine Spirit in regeneration is or is not supernatural. Here I use the word supernatural in its true

sense; to denote the exercise of *divine* power, as distinguished from the agency of any creature or the use of means. Dr. Fishback uses the word in a different sense. See page 114: 9, 19. 119: 15, 24. 226: 17. In these and very, very many other places he understands by the term, nothing more than the use of means. He thinks himself authorized to use it in this way because these means (the sacred writings) are significant of truths, which came originally by supernatural communications. It appears to me that if this were thoroughly examined it would make every thing supernatural; because, according to Moses, "in the beginning God made the Heavens and the Earth." But as this would leave nothing natural, nothing of course could be supernatural or above nature. Such confusion appears the legitimate consequence of the inaccurate use which the Dr. has made of this word.

These perversions of language have often been used with two designs: though I do not affirm that Dr. Fishback is guilty of either; and I make the remark, not to excite in his breast a sinful resentment, but to get him to examine his heart. Some men, knowing that the members of the church, both learned and unlearned, believe in the supernatural operations of the Spirit, use the same expressions that they do though with an entirely different meaning; that they may, in the first place, escape excommunication, and in the second, delude the ignorant and unwary into their errors.—The phrase now in hand would, in the mouth of a true believer, mean the special, immediate, and irresistible influence of the Spirit of God: with Dr. Fishback it excludes all this, and means nothing more than that superficial impression which the scriptures make upon the unregenerate heart, as other books would, which discuss the same subjects, relate the same facts, or propound the same doctrines. And the only reason why the impressions, produced by the other books are not ascribed to supernatural power, is that their authors were not inspired. In speaking of the christian faith he says, that it "differs from every other description of belief, as much as the objects and the evidence, which are divine and supernatural, differ from

natural ones." 114: 9. Again; "every truth in the Bible is an object of faith, whether it be merely political, historical or evangelical." 226: 17. Therefore; a man who believes in any political or historical truth in the Bible, believes in a supernatural object by supernatural evidence.—Wherefore, his faith differs from every other description of belief, as much as its supernatural object and evidence differ from natural ones; and is itself supernatural of course. Suppose some idolatrous Roman, who never read the scriptures, had read in Josephus that Herod in conducting a warlike expedition against Aretas, took Machoerus, a fortress, near the Dead Sea in his way. He believes the account: But his faith is only natural, because Josephus was not inspired. Suppose that the next day he dines with a neighbour who had been converted by Paul's preaching, and had read Luke iii. 14. This neighbour tells him that in this very fortress of Machoerus in the wilderness of Paræa (see Luke iii. 3,) one John was prophecying in the name of the God of Israel, at the time that Herod and his army were there, and that "the soldiers likewise demanded of him, saying; and what shall we do?" The visitant believes this fact also; or at least as much as is contained in the words quoted from the evangelist. Here the object of his faith is supernatural, according to the Doctor; for it is a historical truth of revelation; and the evidence is supernatural, and his faith itself of course according to the same authority. He then goes home, and like many such believers, lives and dies in the worship of stocks and stones. If this man did not undergo a *supernatural* change, I advise the reader to erase the two first syllables of this word, wherever it occurs in Dr. Fishback's book. This is a belief which devils have; and this is a belief which is held by thousands of fair professors, who must hereafter dwell with devils. In Lexington itself there is an increasing call for humiliation and exertion, and among professors there is a remarkable increase of pride and sloth. They never show any thing like humility except in the company of the rich and the great, nor any thing like zeal except against those who reprove their sinful practices. They would shudder

at denying one proposition in the scriptures: for, like the Jews who persecuted our Lord, in them they think they have eternal life. Their lives show that though like Simor the magician, they *believe*, they are yet, like him, in the gall of bitterness and bond of iniquity. The reason is that the real exercise of a supernatural agency, is necessary to change the natural enmity which the heart has against God and every thing which is good. "Verily, verily I say unto you; unless a man be born of water and Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God."

In this expression, a thing is said of a material object, which is intended to be understood of a spiritual one; and the design is to shew in the most forcible manner, the impossibility of the spiritual regeneration, concerning which, some are always ignorant; by informing us that with respect to its author, it is like the literal regeneration, which every one knows is impossible, without the physical exercise of divine power. "How can a man be born again when he is old? It is impossible. As well may a man rise from the grave—as well may a man be created a-new out of nothing—it is as easy for a camel to go through the eye of a needle. With man, these things are impossible, but with God all things are possible: And to the blessed spirit of Jesus are the spiritual creation, resurrection and regeneration ascribed in the Scriptures. "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature. Old things are past away, behold, all things are become new!" 2 Cor. v. 17; Gal. vi. 15. "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love which he exercised toward us even when we were dead in sins, has quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved) and hath raised us with him, and made us sit together in Heavenly places in Christ Jesus." Eph. ii. 4—6. John v. 25. | Col. ii. 12, iii. 1. "Unless a man be born," &c. John iii. 5.

The dullness of Nicodemus did not make our Lord retract what he had said, but he explains and establishes this doctrine. "Wonder not that I said unto thee, ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it chooseth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence

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it cometh or whither it goeth: so is every one who is born of the spirit." John iii. 7, 8—*so is every one that is born of the spirit.* How is every one that is thus born? The design of our Heavenly teacher here is evidently to illustrate the operations of his spirit upon the mind by the operation of the wind upon the body. First ascertain the latter and then you may have the outlines of the former. The operation of the wind, then, is special and not common, for it bloweth where it listeth—it is sensible and effectual, for thou hearest the sound thereof—but it is not to be fully comprehended or explained, for thou canst not tell whence it cometh or whither it goeth. So is every one that is born of the spirit. His influences, though in some respects inexplicable, are special, effectual, and sensible. Under the word *sensible* we imply what is meant by *immediate* and *physical*; understanding the last word in its technical sense, in which Dr. Fishback uses it, page 213: 29. He there says, that the *physical operations of the spirit* are they by which the resurrection of Christ was effected. By these very operations, faith is said to be produced in those who do believe. Eph. i. 19, 20. The wind acts immediately upon the bodily organs, so does the divine spirit upon the mind. The body is frequently sensible of the one, and the mind of the other. "The spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are children of God." Rom. viii. 16. A man may deceive himself and think that he has the spirit when he has not: So he may in thinking that he hears the wind. God has in mercy given us reason to correct the imperfection of the senses, and revelation as a rule by which to try the spirits. "Beloved; believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they be of God." This precept, however, is held at naught by those who deny the operation of spirits, and it may be justly said to them, that they do not believe or understand that word which they undertake to teach to others: as our Saviour said to the Israelitish teacher; "art thou a teacher of Israel, and *knowest* not these things? Verily, verily, I say unto you, we speak what we know, and testify to what we have seen; and do ye *not receive* our testimony? If I have told you

earthly things and ye *believe* not, how will ye believe if I tell you heavenly things?" John iii. 10—12.

If our Lord in his precious remarks meant nothing more than that the scriptures or the appointed means of grace would regenerate the soul, Nicodemus did *know* this—he would have *received* his testimony—and he would have *believed* this earthly doctrine. But this was not the doctrine which our Saviour taught. He declared the necessity of a supernatural change by the divine spirit. And this was the thing which Nicodemus *knew* not, and which he could not *receive* or *believe*.

As a dangerous and unscriptural dependence on means is Dr. Fishback's great error, so it was of Nicodemus and the Jews. In the Scriptures, they think they have eternal life, though they reject Christ of whom they testify; in the Scriptures, Pelagians think they have eternal life, though they reject the spirit of whom they testify.

All the institutions of true religion testify of Christ, and are only different ways of expressing the same doctrines which are recorded in the bible; and, like the bible, they have all been abused. When Israel was compassing the land of Edom, they were, for their sins, visited with fiery serpents. "And Moses," by a divine command, "made a serpent of brass and put it upon a pole. And it came to pass that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass he lived." Numbers xxi. 9. The exhibition of this type to the people was one way of communicating the very same doctrine which is written in connection with the conversation which we have just been discussing. "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the son of man be lifted up, that every one who believeth on him may not perish, but have eternal life." John iii. 14, 15. This passage of Scripture is written with ink upon paper, and when spoken, it makes articulate sounds, as Dr. Fishback will have it: but if accompanied with the immediate influences of the spirit, it may be the means of saving souls; for it holds forth Christ crucified. The sight of the serpent, accompanied by the spirit which gave faith in its antitype, saved many souls and healed ma-

ny bodies; for it preached the Saviour lifted up on the cross. In both cases the praise should be given to God, and not to another. But this has not always been done; and when those humble means, such as brass and paper, and articulate sounds, through which God means to magnify the glory of his peculiar power, are abused to the purposes of idolatrous superstition, as if God did not, while using them, act independently of them, they lose their dignity and efficacy. The brazen serpent was a very significant and venerable type, of God's own appointment: but "Hezekiah brake in pieces the brazen serpent that Moses had made; for unto those days the children of Israel did burn incense to it. And he called it Nehushtan, *a serpent of brass,*" by way of contempt. 2 Kings xviii. 4.

We conclude, therefore, that as the Jews were obstinately prone to depend on means, and as our Saviour's doctrine on regeneration was one which they did not believe, the spirit of which they must be born does exercise an influence distinct from the means and independent of them. And as these operations are necessary to every one who perceives or enters the kingdom of Heaven, they must, of course, continue to the end of time.

If it be true, as we have attempted to shew, that the divine influences are special, effectual, and supernatural; and that all christians, in all ages, enjoy them, it is evident that they must be internal. Dr. Fishback denies that they were internal even in the Apostolick day.

"—— the operations of the spirit were not secret, immediate, and internal in the Apostolick day, but consisted in miracles and signs, and wonders, addressed to the senses, to the eye, and ear, and words explanatory of them, by which they were applied to Jesus Christ, as a proof of his death, resurrection, ascension, and character as a mediator, &c. &c." page 128, top.

In this assertion, as in many others, the Dr. has entirely forgotten, or at least deserted the rule by which he promised to regulate his investigations. "I design," says he, "to stick close to the record, and to admit nothing into the investigation but what is supported by a '*thus it is written.*'" 121: 20. Where is it written that the spirit never made

internal suggestions to the Apostles and primitive christians, but always addressed them in words, &c.? It is written that "all Scripture is given by inspiration." 2 Tim. iii. 16. "There is a spirit in man, and the breathing of *Shaddai* (*the pourer-forth*,) giveth them understanding." Job xxxii. 8. comp. Joel ii. 28. Jesus "breathed upon them, and saith unto them, *receive ye the Holy Spirit*." John xx. 22. "But when they deliver you up, be not anxious how or what ye shall speak, for it shall be given you in that hour what ye shall speak. For it is not ye who speak, but the spirit of my father which speaketh in you." Mat. x. 19, 20—"The Holy Spirit shall teach you in that hour what ye ought to say." Luke xii. 11, 12. "Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit." 2 Pet. i. 21.

These operations were evidently internal. Now where is it *written*, that when the spirit works internally in bestowing the gift of tongues, or the gift of healing, or of revealing the will of God, he works externally in regeneration and sanctification? Concerning the Monitor, the spirit of truth, who is to continue with the church forever, our Saviour says, "he shall abide with you and shall be in you." John xiv. 17. Paul, who was thoroughly and infallibly instructed by this blessed teacher, speaks thus to the Corinthians; 1 Epistle iii. 16. "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the spirit of God dwelleth in you?" Paul had experienced the warfare which is between the principle of grace in the regenerated heart, and the law of sin in the members, and he was taught that the spirit must dwell in the body as well as in the soul. "Know ye not," says he, "that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit which is in you, which ye have from God, and that ye are not your own?" 1 Cor. vi. 20. "As God hath said, I will dwell in them and walk in them, and I will be their God and they shall be my people." 2 Cor. vi. 16. It was for this purpose that the son of God became a sin-offering. "For that which the law could not do, because it was weak through the flesh, God *hath done*, in sending his own son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for a sin-

offering: [that is;] he hath condemned sin in the flesh; that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit." Rom. viii. 3, 4. Having peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, we have familiar and pleasant intercourse with him through the Holy spirit. "Behold!" says he, "I stand at the door and knock. If any man will hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." Rev. iii. 20. "If ye, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more will your father, who is in Heaven, give good things unto them who ask him?" Mat. vii. 11—"how much more will your father who is in Heaven give the Holy Spirit unto them who ask him?" Luke xi. 13. Without the Spirit of God there is no salvation from sin here or hell hereafter. "Ye are not in the flesh but in the spirit, if indeed the spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the spirit of Christ he is none of his." Rom. viii. 9. It is he who opens our hearts to believe, as he did that of Lydia and the Apostles. Acts xvi. 14. Luke xxiv. 45. It is he who must refresh our knowledge and faith, and love, and joy, as he did in the case of the disciples going to Emmaus, Luke xxiv. 32—he must prepare us for acceptable prayer, and every duty, Rom. viii. 26. John xv. 5—and he only can preserve our whole constitution, (*holocleron*) spirit and soul and body blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. 1 Thess. v. 23. "Yea though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me." If we die in the faith, the spirit which dwelt in our bodies here, will keep them united to Jesus Christ while mouldering in the grave; and when the last trump shall sound, "them also who sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." 1 Thess. iv. 14.

PROCEEDINGS,
OF THE SESSION
RELATIVE TO DR. FISHBACK'S BOOK.

THE Session of the first Presbyterian Church in Leg-ton met, at the special request of Mr. William L. Maccalla, to receive certain Charges against Doctor James Fishback, and issue process thereon, for maintaining and publishing false doctrine, in a work printed in this place, by Mr. Thomas T. Skillman, about April, 1813, entitled, "*The Philosophy of the Human Mind, in respect to Religion.*"

Mr. Maccalla read to the Session some passages from the book above alluded to, as containing (in his opinion) sentiments at variance with the Holy Scriptures and the most approved standards of the Presbyterian Church.

Mr. Maccalla being asked by the Session, if he had taken the previous steps with Dr. Fishback, required in the xviiiith Chapter of the gospel by Matthew. He answered in the affirmative; but observed, if it were thought advisable, he would again converse with him, in the presence of the Session.

Doctor Fishback was accordingly invited in, and held with Mr. Maccalla, a pretty free and lengthy conversation on some of the doctrines in question.

The Doctor, in his remarks and explanations of certain passages contained in his book, and referred to by Mr. Maccalla, appeared to explain them in such a way, as to render his views of supernatural operations less exceptionable.

During this interview, the Doctor asserted his entire belief in the supernatural and divine influences of the Holy Spirit, accompanying the word of God, as the appropriate

mean of salvation; and referred to some passages in his book, where this doctrine (he thought) was distinctly expressed—see page 159, near the top—page 180, near the bottom.

After this conversation had closed, Mr. Maccalla handed to the Moderator of the Session, the following Charges—and the parties retired.

“[*To the Moderator of the Session of the first Presbyterian Congregation in Lexington.*]

In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and for the good of his people, William Latta Maccalla charges Doctor James Fishback, a man whom he loves, with the following crimes:

FIRST.

Heresy: or maintaining and publishing false doctrine, tending to dissolve the unity and disturb the peace of the Church.

In a work of his, printed in this place about April, 1813, by Mr. Thomas T. Skillman, and entitled, “*The Philosophy of the Human Mind in respect to Religion*,” &c. he denies and holds at naught, the special and internal renewing and quickening influences of the Holy Spirit in the elect to the end of time: a doctrine which is taught in our Confession of Faith, Chapters x. and xiii. and in the Larger Catechism, Questions 67, 68, 75, and in the Scriptures, John iii. Rom. viii. 9, Eph. i. and ii. and elsewhere.

SECONDLY.

Slander, Railing, &c. exercised against the true people of God who hold the doctrine which he opposes.

For instances in which these occur, see his whole book: but especially the second chapter. One or two examples are afforded in page 194: 23 line—to—page 195: 9, and in 226: 17—227: 5.

W. L. MACCALLA.”

May 2, 1814.

The charges having been read and duly considered, the question was then put, shall these Charges now be received? It was answered in the negative, by an unanimous vote.

Nevertheless, the Session are of opinion, that Doctor Fishback, believing as he professed, in his free conversation with Mr. Maccalla, has been unfortunate in stating with clearness and precision, his views of the agency of the divine spirit, since the period of miracles; consequently the character of his real sentiments on that important doctrine, is not yet precisely known.

JOHN MAXWELL,	} <i>Elders.</i>
JOHN M'DOWELL,	
SAMUEL BLAIR,	
R. M. CUNNINGHAM, <i>Moderator</i>	
<i>of the Session.</i>	

May 2, 1814.

Remarks on the decision of the Session.

SOME years ago Mr. Craighead, a minister of the Gospel in our church, was tried for the Palagian Heresy. Many passages of his sermons evidently denied the supernatural operations of the Divine Spirit in regeneration, since the Apostolick day: but when before the officers of the church he "appeared to explain them in such a way as to render his views of supernatural operations less exceptionable," in the opinion of some of his judges. During their interviews with him, he often asserted his entire belief in the supernatural or divine influences of the Holy Spirit, accompanying the word of God, as the appropriate mean of salvation, as distinctly as Dr. Fishback does in page 159, near the top; where he says nothing more than that man's recovery from natural corruption, "is effected by the Spirit of God, through those means working faith in us, and thereby uni-

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ing us to Christ, who is the Mediator between God and man." The court, however, having sufficient evidence that he denied the doctrine in fact, and that this mode of expression, and his professions of attachment to the Confession of Faith, were only designed as a shield from the censure of the church, and to give currency to his errors, looked upon him as adding prevarication to heresy, and condemned him accordingly.

The Lexington Session then accused Dr. Fishback of the same errors, before he wrote the book now under consideration. During that prosecution the Dr. professed the same doctrine contained in page 159, and made use of expressions exactly tantamount to the one quoted above.—But they then knew how to understand him, and very justly condemned him.

In both these cases, however, the sentence was passed after the court had received and considered written charges. To have condemned them previously to this, would have been as illegal as to acquit Dr. Fishback in the present case, without giving the prosecutor an opportunity of establishing his charges—thus denying him a privilege to which every member is entitled by the constitution of the church.

When such weighty accusations are produced it is impossible that the court can do their duty without censuring one of the parties. If the allegations be true, then the accused is guilty of heresy, &c. if false, then the prosecutor is guilty of malignity and rashness, and should be punished accordingly. See Forms of Process, C. ii. § 7.

The Session have privately acknowledged that Dr. Fishback's book denies the operations of the Divine Spirit, since the days of miracles, and that it thus contains the errors for which Mr. Craighead was deposed. How then, can they say that "the character of his real sentiments on that important doctrine is not yet precisely known?"

The Session, whom we would expect to *think* for themselves, justify their decision by saying that the accused referred to some passages in his book, where this doctrine [of divine influence] (*he thought*) was distinctly expressed. Page 180, at the bottom, is mentioned as an instance.

In that place Dr. Fishback does not pretend to give his own sentiments. He quotes Mr. Parkhurst's profession of this doctrine, accompanied with an erroneous opinion of that author concerning the word *grace*. We give the words of the Dr. containing a very considerable perversion of Mr. P.'s expressions.

"It may not be amiss here to introduce the judgment of the great Biblical Critic, and Lexicographer, Parkhurst; relative to the use of the term "*Charis*, or *grace*," in the operations of the Spirit, in the writings of the Apostles. The judgment of this great man is, in opposition to a pre-conceived opinion, which he had formed; and which is a predominant one in the systems of many modern divines; it seems to have been produced by a *particular* examination of the use of the term. "*Charis* or *grace*, (he observes) denotes the gracious and unmerited assistance of the Holy Spirit in his *miraculous gifts*. But though I firmly believe his blessed operations or influences on the hearts of ordinary believers in general;" (by *immediate* operations, and agencies, I suppose,) "*yet that charis or grace is ever in the New Testament used particularly for these, is more than I dare, after attentive examination, assert.*" These miraculous operations have ceased, because the necessity of them has ceased; but the ideas, and knowledge which the revelations, and miracles of the Spirit recorded, impart to the mind; and the religious exercises to which they lead, and the dispositions of heart which they produce by their proper use, are not less divine, supernatural, and gracious, than if they were the consequence of the immediate revelations, and physical operations of the Holy Spirit. This decision of Mr. Parkhurst, after a careful examination, is agreeable to what I formerly remarked upon the distinction which divines make between the operations of the Spirit, his revelations, &c. as record; and those which they contend exist in our day, which they call *special*. That observation was, that "faith in Jesus Christ never has been produced, nor will it ever be, by any other than the miraculous operations, and supernatural revelations of the Spirit, which are recorded."

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Remarks on Dr. James
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