

A
R E P L Y
T O A
NARRATIVE

O F
MR. ADAM RANKIN'S
T R I A L &c.

L A T E L Y P U B L I S H E D B Y
O R D E R O F T H E T R A N -
S Y L V A N I A P R E S -
B Y T E R Y .

BY A D A M R A N K I N, PASTOR,
At LEXINGTON, KENTUCKY.

Nec ulla in re territi ab iis qui se opponunt.

Phi. I. 27.

In Deo laudabo Verbum, in Jehovah lauda-
bo verbum,

In Deo confido, non timebo: quid faciat homo
mihi?

Psal. LVI. 11, 12.

LEXINGTON: Printed by J. BRADFORD,
M, DCC, XCIV.

A R E P L Y, &c.

IN Justice to my own feelings, I must inform my reader, that it is with the utmost reluctance I enter into Religious disputation. Nothing but a Supreme love to truth, an exoneration of my conscience, and an awful regard to the Divine injunction "*To contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the Saints,*" could engage me in a business which has a tendency in some instances to disturb the equable flow of the milk of human kindness. Motives of this kind, with an honest desire to prevent the public from committing an act of injustice, by condemning me unheard, and upon the unwarrantable foundation of vague and indeterminate report, prompted me to publish a narrative of the process that was carried on against me in the Transylvania Presbytery, with the defence I first exhibited at the bar of that tribunal, against the charges for which I was summoned before them. Finding that the tide of popular opinion was setting rather against them, the Transylvania Presbytery saw it necessary to make some bold and strenuous effort, to check its progress, and to vindicate their conduct from the odium it had excited in the breast of every one, who was not under the untoward influence of the most preposterous prejudice. Had the Presbytery in their late production paid that sacred and hallowed regard to truth, with which their character as men and Christians would have induced one to believe they might have been inspired,

spired, it would have entirely precluded the necessity of this publication. But as they have not hesitated wofully to misrepresent facts, and to impeach my historical veracity, in order to preserve themselves from that indignant reprobation to which they had exposed themselves for their conduct during the process, I am urged, however reluctant, to make some reply, and to undeceive the public upon which their late publication is calculated to impose. In my reply I intend the utmost possible brevity, and wish to be guided by the spirit of meekness.

As a copy of the charges alledged against me, and the depositions taken with a view to support them, was, on repeated solicitations at last given me by the Rev. James Crawford, standing Clerk of the Presbytery, and attested to be a full and true one, no variation could by him be expected between our narratives, so far as respected the charges and depositions.

THE first part of their narrative therefore, to which I would call the attention of the reader, is the 7th page, where they say, that “instead of manifesting his sorrow for his ungenerous censures of his brethren, which censures included almost all the Ministers and Christians on earth, of whatever denomination, he endeavored to enter into a debate about the propriety of singing Watt’s Psalms and Hymns, which he knew were generally approved and practised by the higher judicatures of our Church, and of which, therefore, the Presbytery of Transylvania had no business to judge.”

On this paragraph I cannot help remarking, that the Presbytery either bewray a gross and shameful

shameful ignorance of the state of the Church in the age in which we live, and of its practice in different parts with respect to the article of Psalmody, or they designed to gull those of their readers, who did not possess equal opportunity with themselves of acquiring such information; otherwise they never would have represented my opposition to the introduction of Watt's psalms and hymns into the public worship of God, as levelled against, and loading with censure "almost all the Ministers and Christians on earth of whatever denomination." Great as the present declension of this age confessedly is, it appears astonishing that the Presbytery could apprehend, that their assertion on this particular could be credited by any, whose knowledge of the Church of Christ was not confined chiefly within the narrow limits of the surrounding wilderness. Will they undertake to prove, or even assert, that the Davidic or Scripture Psalmody, is rejected, or grown into disuse, and that Watt's psalms and hymns are adopted in its stead, in the extensive Church of Scotland, from which they themselves are descended? The Church of the Secession in Scotland and Ireland contains nearly double the number of Clergy, and consequently we conclude, according to the rule of proportion, much more people, than appeared in the last enumeration I have seen of the Clergy belonging to the General Assembly of Presbyterians in the United States. And can they assert or prove, that that branch of the Presbyterian Church looks with a benign aspect on the introduction of Watt's Psalms and Hymns, or any humanly devised form of Psalmody, into the worship of God? If it were necessary, we might mention here the numerous communion of the Church of England in Great Britain, which

which although it is esteemed by Presbyterians not to be, in some respects, the purest Church in the world, comprehends notwithstanding in its large embrace, a goodly number of eminently learned, orthodox, and pious Divines. And will they pretend to assert that that Church, convinced of the necessity, or even the propriety of having a new system of Psalmody, has rejected the divinely inspired Psalms of Scripture? No: All these are assertions which they cannot make; and their incapacity to do this, if they have any remaining ingenuity, as I still charitably hope that they have, ought, I am persuaded, to cover them with shame and confusion of face for the egregious misrepresentation stated in the first part of the paragraph now under consideration.

THE next part of the paragraph which we have quoted, is somewhat astonishing. They take it in very high dudgeon, that I should ever enter into any debate about the propriety of Singing Watts's Psalms and Hymns after I knew they were generally approved and practised by the higher Judicatures of their church and of the propriety or impropriety of singing which psalms, they roundly assert the Transylvania Presbytery had no business to judge. This is novel doctrine indeed to come from a body professing themselves to be Presbyterian divines. Where they learned it, it is more than I am able to divine, unless they have got it from the Pope and Cardinals in the dark conclave of the Thundering Vatican, or have obtained it by a kind of pious stealth from some of the high church divines of England, who taught the necessity of passive obedience and non resistance, under the oppressive usurpation of the royal tyrants

wants in the last century. Such language is a disgrace to the Presbyterian name, and has a tendency to make the breasts of those who have no other channels of information but their publication, to swell with indignant prejudice against the spirit and genius of our church government and discipline. Does the genius of true Presbyterian church government rise up, and declare with a tone of papal authority, that the deeds even of its highest judicature are incapable of mistake, revision and alteration, and that no individual member of the body, nor inferior judicature shall dare to debate on the propriety or impropriety of superior judicial proceedings, or petition, remonstrate, and in the event of their irreclaimability even protest against them?

It is true, they say in the next sentences to that which I have been just now considering, that "I might have protested against the use of this innovated Psalmody, and left the church which generally approved of, and practised it."

HERE I am obliged to remark, that their concession that I might have protested against the use of their psalmody, and have left their church, appears to be a mere finesse; and to have been thrown out with a design to cover their intolerant and unpresbyterial proceedings, from the eyes of those who content themselves with slight and superficial examination. For, tho' they assert here and in the 16th and 17th pages of their publication, that *I ought* to have protested against them, and to have withdrawn from all connexion with them, just as if I had not done so,
yet

yet it can be proved, that this very step which I took, was the cause of my suspension. Mr. Crawford wishes to have proof, it can be substantiated by evidence, that he has since told I should not have been suspended, if I had not protested.

How their assertions with respect to the propriety and admissibility of my protesting against and declining their body, comport, or rather flatly contradict Mr. Crawford's above mentioned declaration concerning the cause of my suspension, the most shallow human intellect may be able to discern: But this declaration of Mr. Crawford's, not only opposes his own and the Presbytery's doctrine on the subject, of protesting, but likewise contradicts what they assert in the 15th page, where they say, that I was censured for unchristian and uncharitable reflections on my brethren, for their use of Watts's psalms and hymns &c.

When the Presbytery declare, "that while I continued a member of their church, I could not consistently expect, that the Presbytery would condemn a practice which had the public and avowed approbation of the main body to which they belong." I am at a loss to know what construction to put upon it, unless they are of opinion, that by some new and unbroached rule in ecclesiastical government, the Presbytery might condemn the practice, which was the cause of grievance, when I had withdrawn from their communion, though they were neither at liberty, nor had, it in their power, to do it, while I continued a member.

It is asserted by the Presbytery, in the 8th page

page of their publication, upon which I have already made some animadversions, that they could not have justified me, without condemning the main body as guilty of making the Scriptures contradict themselves, and of Deism and blasphemy.

I would beg leave to ask, what documents the Presbytery had, upon which they could conclude, that I condemned the main body with the charge which they have here stated? Was it Mr. Blair's private letter to Mr. Rice, officiously enclosed in a wrapper by another person, indorsed and sent forward to Mr. Rice, under the character of Moderator? which letter Mr. Blair declared in Presbytery never designed should be made public, and the contents of which not the smallest shadow of evidence could be produced to support.

I grant indeed, I said, as my congregation can witness, and as the Presbytery, if they attend to my defence, can likewise witness, that Dr. Watts maintained there was a contrast between the precepts of the old and new Testaments, which I deem to be blasphemous, and that he denied the eternal sonship of Jesus Christ, the latter of which was acknowledged even by the Doctor's greatest admirers to the northward. This is the idea I wished to communicate in my public address, and did communicate, and my reasons for saying so I shall briefly state.

In the year 1789, I attended a convention composed of members delegated from the General Assembly, the associate-reformed Synod, and the Dutch Church, which met at
B
Brunswick

Brunswick, in the State of New-Jersey. In a conversation, the Doctor's sentiments were publicly canvassed. The Rev. Mr. Annan of Philadelphia, with several others, some of whom were the fond admirers of the Doctor, unanimously agreed, that he had denied the eternal Sonship of Jesus Christ in one of his publications, which I have since found is contained in the sixth and last volume of his works printed in quarto. As the sentiment shocked me, I expressed my abhorrence of it. Some of his admirers observed, in the way of reply, that great and good men had denied it, as well as he.

Now all I meant to say, was that the Doctor denied the eternal Sonship of Jesus Christ, and gave his friends for my authors, as I had not then seen the publication in which that detestable and heterodox sentiment is advanced.

Since, then, this is the whole narrative of the affair, by what mode of reasoning known in the Schools, can this learned Presbytery make it appear, that they could not justify me, without condemning the body to which they belonged with Deism and blasphemy? Did I ever say that in adopting Watts' imitation, the Synod recognized and avouched all the errors that author had published to the world, such as (besides those I have mentioned and several others) his holding that the souls of all those infants who die before they come to the years in which they have some competent exercise of their rational powers, which are not saved, will be annihilated. Although this is an idea that never struck my mind, and that never can be made appear I advanced, I find that their fourth observation

observation page 27th is founded on this groundless supposition. Some have expressed astonishment at the impudence and want of candour which these OBSERVERS have displayed in this particular in their 27th and 28th pages. But I have been, for some time, convinced, that from some unaccountable principle in human nature, which operates with a force analagous to an Highland-man's second sight, there are not a few persons in our day, who can make *gigantic observations* where *nothing is to be seen*.

As the assertion of my charging the whole body to which they belong, with Deism, blasphemy &c. is, as we have seen, wholly without foundation, the Presbytery's incapacity to justify me, which they allege, must be mere pretence, as shallow as it is bubbling and noisy. The gaudy simile therefore, which they pompously adduce in the rear, drawn from the courts of civil jurisprudence, in order to illustrate the absurdity of their attempting to justify me, I shall pass over as lame, futile and impertinent.

The Presbytery proceeds and asserts, "This kind of defence therefore Presbytery could not admit. When Mr. Rankin was checked in this, or things foreign to his proper defence, or in attempts to lead the Presbytery wrong, he complained he could not get a hearing in his own defence: to which it was answered, that if he would speak to the point in hand he should have full privilege to defend himself."

This defence which the Presbytery says they could not admit, and for which *alone*,
as

as far as I can recollect, they attempted to check me, was on the *heterodox* subject of controverting the propriety of adopting the *canonical* imitations of Watts. Now in the examination of the statement which they exhibit it appears necessary to enquire

1. Whether my sentiments concerning Psalmody formed any part of the charges exhibited against me ?

2. Whether there was any danger of leading the Presbytery wrong ?

The first thing, then, which we have to enquire, is, whether my sentiments concerning Psalmody formed any part of the charges exhibited against me ?

Let any one who is possessed of the smallest portion of candour, take up their publication or my vindication, and read the charges there stated, and say if he can, that my sentiments respecting Watts' Psalmody, did not lie at the very bottom of the whole process. Is not the same thing to be discovered, in the few of the certain *questions* "written by Mr. Rankin's own hand," which the Presbytery has seen proper to retail, and which were signed by Mr. Samuel Blair, and exhibited at the bar of the Presbytery as charges, in the name of the *whole* ?*

Besides

* The Presbytery has committed an egregious blunder here. It is astonishing to me, that in the several meetings, in which their publication was examined and corrected, til it came forth with that glittering polish, which attracts and captivates the eyes of the admiring

Besides, the Presbytery themselves, in page 13, where they sum up the things for which they deemed me censurable, expressly acknowledge in so many words, that my sentiments and expressions relative to Watts' immitation, were not only a part of the charges exhibited against me, but formed the greatest bulk of the ground upon which they founded their rash and unwarrantable censure.

“ He calls ” say they, “ Dr. Watts’ psalms the rivals of the word of God, and says himself he does not join with some of the members of this Presbytery in communion, so long as they countenance Dr. Watts’ errors,

admiring reader, some sagacious member did not rise, and inform his brethren, that however some vulgar people might call *answers*, questions, it might be deemed shameful for a Presbytery to be found convicted of such gross inaccuracy of phrase. The plain state of the matter was this: A few discontented persons, who styled themselves at the bar of the Presbytery the *whole*, convened at col. Patterson’s, and consulting what means was most likely to gain their ends, they sent forward two colonels with a copy of some questions, having left sufficient room between each for the insertion of my answers, with the laudable design, as afterwards appeared, to intrap me, and have me condemned from under my own hand. Altho’ I discovered the rotten, underhand design, and could easily have evaded them, yet conscious of the integrity of my cause, immediately upon their presenting their paper, I wrote those answers which the Presbytery with a *peculiar propriety* of speech calls QUESTIONS.

rors, with other declarations, and things proved, of the like nature."

We shall produce here, in confirmation of the same point, the testimony of some unexceptionable habile witnesses, taken by a committee of Presbytery appointed by order of the associate—reformed Synod, which sat in the neighbourhood of Bourbon on the 14th of October 1793.

James Scott, David Logan, Thomas Meek, elders; John Robinson, Ephraim January, Hugh Garret, and John Boyd, being duly sworn, depose, that in the Transylvania Presbytery April 1792, Mr. Crawford moved, and the Presbytery agreed, that all the charges exhibited against Mr. Rankin should be comprehended in two, of which what he had said against Dr. Watts' psalmody was one.

After what has been educed on this subject, can any candid mind apprehend, that an exposure, of Dr. Watts' errors, and an exhibition of not only the impropriety, but of the unwarrantableness and danger of adopting any humanly devised form of psalmody, was foreign to my proper defence? "Credat Judæus Appella—non ego."

I hope after what appears above, in their draft of the pretended grounds of censure, and in the depositions taken at the Bourbon committee of Presbytery, very little credit will be paid to what, alas! has too many of the features of falsehood, in the 15th page of their publication. "It is not" say they "because he thought differently from his brethren on this subject, that he was tried and

and censured. It is hereby declared that his particular sentiments merely in the use of Psalmody, were never considered as any ground of censure, or sufficient cause of alienation of affection : Those who spread contrary reports, cannot produce a single evidence for it, and those who believe it, do it upon the most unwarrantable foundation.

We were in the second place to enquire whether there was any danger of leading the Presbytery wrong ?

Indeed, since the discussion of the question respecting the propriety or lawfulness of adopting an humanly devised system of psalmody, was so far from being foreign to a proper defence, that it was absolutely necessary to it, as it lay at the bottom of the whole process, no just or warrantable reason could be assigned, why I should be checked in this part of my defence, which was the only one on which they refused me a hearing. The Presbytery, it is true, assigns in this paragraph of their publication which I am now examining, a most ingenious reason for their conduct in this particular. I was checked on this subject, it seems, lest I should lead the Presbytery wrong. Were the Presbytery apprehensive that their heads were so weak, and their hearts so soft, that they would not be able to resist the impetuous torrent of ingenious tho' sophistic eloquence which I might have thrown out on that occasion ? Doubtful of the uprightness of the cause in which they had so strenuously embarked, were they afraid that their warm devotion to their upstart psalmody might have been cooled, and that a close examination into the character

character and legitimacy of the child which they had fostered with so much parental indulgence, might make them blush at the disgraceful deed of adopting it, and produce an estrangement of affection? If such doubt existed, why refuse to hear me on the subject? "A wise man will hear," says Solomon "and will increase learning. The heart of him that hath understanding seeketh knowledge" but "he that refuseth instruction despiseth his own soul." But the truth of the matter appeared to be this: They were not so much afraid of a revolution being produced in their own minds by a discussion of the subject, as that the numerous assembly of people, who attended on that occasion, might be convinced, in such a way as they could not conveniently prevent, that the Presbytery with whom they stood connected, "refusing the waters of Shiloah that go softly, were rejoicing" in the muddy and bubbling streams of the imitations of Watts, and the crude effusions of other scribbling poetasters; and that the congregations under their inspection might look for nothing else, in point of psalmody, but to be fed with the brain of human invention, instead of the inspired Psalmody of scripture, that wholesome and nutritive manna that was prepared for us in Heaven, and sent down from above to refresh, strengthen and support us while we are journeying through the wilderness of human life.

It is painful to an ingenious mind to be obliged to combat falacious absurdity, to strip her meretricious dress, and expose her to the hooting of ridicule, which are so properly her due. But the cry of certain cases may be

loud as to rouse the most

Syrene and waken the most

[17]

nevolent and humane, to undertake the unwelcome and disagreeable task.

Thus constrained although reluctant, I must discuss the reiterated cant. It would still afford some comfort, had I reason to conclude, this will suffice.

But alas! "*The horseleech hath two daughters crying give, give.*" I verily thought I had satisfied every unprejudiced mind, in my first defence. Presbytery was surely convinced of this. But because this was not the object: Mr. Crawford renews the suit, with additional charge, deposition, and denunciation.

I had no alternate, but to publish the process, in which I evaded censure, in the eyes of a judicious court, where I was gratefully received as a brother and companion, in tribulation, for the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ.

But as in a certain case, the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood: so, in the interim, a certain member of Presbytery, writes a long defamatory epistle to his Rev. correspondent in Philadelphia, that he might, if possible, prejudice some of the members of the associate reformed Synod against receiving me, and lest this should not be adequate for his benign purpose, he records a long testimony against me, filling up the eleventh page of their publication, but I trust the good shepherd, who has hitherto delivered me, from wicked and unreasonable men, will aid me to wipe off this stain also.

You will find it anticipated in the 8th page of their publication, "With respect to his pretensions to Divine Revelation which was proved against him; he acknowledged he told a certain dream or dreams, but attempting to explain them away, as signifying no more, than certain inward exercises of the children of God; and expressed sorrow for divulging them, as a thing highly improper. But according to part of Mr. Rice's testimony since taken, which says, that Mr. Rankin informed him, that it was made known to him in a dream, that he must inform Mr. Rice, that he was directed by his dreams. There could be no great sincerity, or consistency in his confession; unless he meant to confess, that his dream had deluded him. He frequently denied that he made any pretensions to Divine Revelation and said, such freedom of expression I have not been acquainted with, that future things were revealed to me.

Now I deny that a pretension to Divine Revelation was proved against me.

You will please to examine the depositions in the process, page 41, the deponent faith upon oath, that he did not remember that the accused should have used the word revealed, notwithstanding the clerk insisted upon setting it down, knowing that unless he had the word, he would fail to prove the charge.

Now examine the 22d page of their publication, charging me with falsehood, in the above, and compare it with the testimony of a number of unexceptionable habile witnesses, taken at the aforesaid committee of Presbytery.

David

David Logan, Thomas Meeck, Ephraim January, John Kirkpatrick, John Robinson, Alexander Kirkpatrick and James Atchison; being duly sworn depose; that the clerk did set down the word revealed, after the deponent had repeatedly said he could not recollect that Mr. Rankin had used it.

As to the other deposition sworn by Robert Steel and James Trotter, it is plain they must have been under a misapprehension in suspecting I delivered the word from the pulpit by the counter depositions. See the 42d page of the process.

When Presbytery found the charge could not be supported, and that, I denied the use of the phrase revealed upon these occasions: saying such freedom of expression I have not been acquainted with, that future things were revealed to me &c.

Mr. Crawford spake with great venom, and said he could prove me guilty of an absolute falsehood, and that he never could enjoy communion with me, until I should acknowledge myself guilty of lying.

Upon which, (after I had repeated a few things in my defence, which run parallel with what I had in confidence communicated to Mr. Crawford :) I moved Mr. Crawford should be sworn to tell all he knew of me. But I must prove as we proceed. For the Presbytery, after acknowledging a part in the one, part of their publication, as flatly deny it in another.

Page 9th, *mr. Crawford* rose and spoke to this effect : " I find myself now, in very peculiar circumstances, and am bound in duty and conscience, as a member of Presbytery, and minister of the gospel, to say, that *mr. Rankin* is declaring a positive falsehood, which I know to be such, and of which he himself must be conscious." &c.

Page 21, they say again, *mr. Crawford* did not speak with the appearance of anger or malice, did not say he could prove *mr. Rankin* guilty of falsehood, and that he would not enjoy communion with him until he would acknowledge himself guilty of lying.

That you may further know, the ability of these ecclesiastic judges, you will please to examine the unexceptionable testimony, of sixteen habile witnesses, taken at the aforesaid committee of Presbytery. David Mitchel, James Scott, David Logan, Thomas Meek, John M'Kenny, William Steel, William M'-Clintock elders: John Robinson, Joseph Steel, Ephraim January, Thomas Crawford, Alexander Kirkpatrick, Hugh Garret, William Martin, James Atchison and John Kirkpatrick; being duly sworn, depose, that in the Transylvania Presbytery, April 1792, *mr. Crawford* rose and said, that *mr. Rankin* was then speaking an absolute falsehood; and that he never could enjoy communion with him, until he would make acknowledgement: at which time, and also at other times, during *mr. Rankin's* trial, *mr. Crawford* evidently discovered symptoms of great anger. But again, they deny, that I moved *mr. Crawford* should be sworn, Page 21st, This is so far from being a true representation, that *mr. Rankin*

Rankin utterly refused, *mr. Crawford* should be sworn, and debated with Presbytery upon it for a considerable time. Let us examine the unexceptionable testimony, of fifteen habile witnesses, taken in the aforesaid committee of Presbytery. James Scott, Thomas Meek, William Steel, David Logan, James Parks, John M'Kinney, elders, Alexander & George Kirkpatrick, William Hillis, Joseph Steel, Thomas Crawford, Joseph M'Clintic, Henry Thompson, John Galloway and John Kirkpatrick, being duly sworn depose, That *mr. Rankin* rose in the Transylvania Presbytery, April 1792. and was the first that motioned, *mr. Crawford* should be sworn, to report all he knew concerning him. Accordingly *mr. Crawford* is sworn to prove me false, in denying that I used the phrase revealed; examine his long deposition, and you do not find the phrase in the whole, tho' you find words nearly to that amount, which I can solemnly declare I never used with him.

But if he could begin his deposition with rage, with known and acknowledged falsehoods in the face of the Presbytery and a numerous respectable assembly, judge ye what liberty he would take, when he knew no person on earth could be conscious of his duplicity, but the person who was the butt of his indignant spleen, whom he was treacherously attempting to ruin. For the justification of this suggestion, which is no severer, than bears the prominent features of truth. You will please to examine a few sentiments and authentic testimonies.

My process page 45th upon which *mr. Crawford* said he was *exceeding sorry* to divulge

a secret I had entrusted him with, and he acknowledged, I had enjoined him to secrecy, and likewise said he had kept it a secret from the day I had told him, which was seven years past, until the present time, but after some minutes had elapsed, and he had time to cast his eyes around, and observe that there was some present there, who could testify to the contrary, and were perfectly acquainted with the duplicity of his conduct; he swallowed down his former sentence, and said I kept it from the the time I received it, until I heard it was known to others.

Page 22, Presbytery's publication "mr. *Crawford* affirms: he knew of no person who could charge him with duplicity or falsehood, was conscious of no such thing himself, nor ever was told it by any person except mr. Rankin's publication, and he has produced no evidence." If mr. *Crawford* thirsts for evidence, I shall produce it; in the aforesaid committee, mr. Josias Richards being duly sworn deposeth: that, being at the Transylvania Presbytery April 1792, and hearing mr. *Crawford* say upon oath, that, he had kept the matter secret that mr. Rankin had entrusted him with, until that day; I then stared him in the face, he having told me above three years before, what he was then informing the Presbytery of; and he immediately afterwards recalled his words. Now when an evidence has so wickedly, and profanely, invalidated his own deposition, in attempting to contradict another, and even fails to effect his design, for he forgot to swear (his deposition was so long, or his mind so confounded with indignant displeasure, or divine providence restrained his wrath)

wrath) that I had ever used the word *revealed* with him ; I hope little credit will be given to any thing he did say, that had the resemblance of that much, viz. " That in all matters of consequence he was under extraordinary divine direction ;" which are words I never communicated to him nor any other.

Now, can any person who is not inebriated with the most untoward prejudice, believe Presbytery did not wofully exaggerate the form of judgment, compiled upon the former testimony ; page 13, whereas it has been proved before this Presbytery that mr. Rankin has said, and declared, that he is the subject of extraordinary divine revelation &c.

I hope my reader after taking so extensive tho' painful a view, of so many glaring contradictions, will in charity believe I am not the deranged enthusiast, the Presbytery essayed to paint me.

But we proceed to a following paragraph, in the above quotation, where you find the Presbytery holding a convivium, or dainty repast, on my confession, reduced to an absurdity, by the late testimony. Had I told mr. Rice the above, I must have blasphemously lied ; but as God is my judge, at whose tribunal I shall shortly be accountable, I can most solemnly swear, by Almighty God the searcher of hearts, (when duly called) that to the best of my knowledge I never dreamed, and I am perfectly assured I never thought, or ever communicated, such an idea, to mr. Rice or any other man, that I had received the least item in dreams, that I should communicate them to any creature.

As

As to other things in said testimony (which I hope he never swore) I say the truth, I lie not, my conscience bear me witness, I never informed him, I prayed to be directed by my dreams : This would have been an absurdity, to limit the holy one, to any particular mode of communication ; all I sought was to know my duty, determining to execute it if known, and when ever my mind was led, either sleeping or waking to a clear conception, I rejoiced in the truth.

We ought to make a warning as welcome, sent by the contemned medium of dreams, as the prophet Elijah did the bread and flesh, sent by the unclean ravens. I was so far from boasting, of any superiority above my brethren, I acknowledged it a condescension, in kind Providence, to the least of his servants, that my mind should be led, to a field of evidences, never thought of in my waking hours, to convince me of the evil of departing from the standard of eternal truth ; although it was by no means the primary barriers I had, but had they led me to novels, at the expence of divine institutions, I should have evinced to the world, that my schemes were all but a whimsical dream.

One thing I am sure of, I do not believe in the propriety of obedience to a divine institution, because of my dreams ; nor do I believe it the less, nor did I ever offer it as an argument, to urge others ; but simply to palliate the edge of my professed friend's displeasure ; for dissenting from him in this point, I let him know how my mind was affected. If mr. R——s treachery, was not as mean, as malignant, I might have in charity suspected

pected, that a treacherous memory might have received him.—

Oh how hast thou with jealousy infected the sweetness of alliance. What could move thee thus? has it the appearance of noble birth? Or the grave and learned mr. — vested with Sacerdotal office? Or is it the religion of Jesus, thus to conceal a moral evil (if such it was believed) for many years, and then publish and record it against another, when many hundred miles from him? Is this a noble mode to eternize thy name, to register this thy conduct and publish it to all the world?

Removed from anger, passion and vain strife, to some celestial region all divine, adorned, and graced, with modest courtesy, disdaining fickle fashions, and capricious men, ripe in purged judgment, bolted fast by truth: thus highly recommended didst thou appear, or I should never divulged secrets to the

Do fir before it is too late, en-	on-
duct, among the sins you ack	e in
your penitential hours. And	y the
expece of your sorrow, an	ame of
disgrace, truth, and fidelit	endship:
and marvel not, if you shor	arrive to
the dignity of a casuist, o'	time plea-
sure of a confident, an	ay esteem it
so small part of your fr	you can never
be put under a tempta	ll a secret.

With regard to	Mytery's remarks,
which they comm	the 27th page, I
have shewn, in a	ng part of this pub-
lication, the cor	nttradiction which ex-
	id

ists between what is contained in the two first paragraphs, and what they themselves exhibit as grounds of censure in the 13th page, as well as the pointed depositions taken at a committee of Presbytery, which sat in the neighbourhood of Bourbon.

In these remarks they likewise labour hard, and at great length, to induce their readers to believe, that I was guilty of the most gross inconsistency in applying for licence to that body to which they belong, and in continuing so long in their communion. It is true, I said, and I still say, that I have not, to my knowledge, made a single change in any point of principle. Can the presbytery convict me of it? No; this they have never attempted to do. But although I am the same, can they prove that they are? This indeed they would wish to make us believe; but it will not believe for us. At the time I was licenced, whatever use some might make, in their closets, or in their families, of human compositions in the praises of God, they very rarely, and only in some certain places, ventured to use them in public. And besides the church had not then, nor for many years afterwards contaminated herself by countenancing, approving and adopting in their judicial capacity, such compositions as the matter of their praise. At the time of my licensure, was it known that their church had advanced to such a degree of corruption, as to permit with tame acquiescence, and without the least judicial cognizance, ministers belonging to their community, to publish from the pulpit and press, that Jesus Christ is not the eternal Son of God, and that Christ might have sinned, and consequently have failed in accomplish-

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ing our redemption "the work which his father gave him to do?"—Doctrines flatly repugnant to our standards, to which these very persons must have vowed in the presence of God, Angels and men, inviolably to adhere, and, with all the pathos of Divine eloquence, to preach and inculcate on the people committed to their charge. When the hedge of discipline about the church is thus neglected, and suffered to fall into ruin, through the sluggish unfaithfulness of the keepers, the vineyard and heritage of God must be at the mercy of every wild beast of the forest. Was it known at that time, that Presbyteries, in contempt and defiance of their rules and laws against such practices expressly made and provided, would licence and ordain men to the office of the holy ministry, who had no preparatory literary education. and who, from any thing that could be discovered, had not more knowledge in divinity, than would barely qualify them, in some churches, to hold the office of an Elder? That which the Presbytery therefore, offers in these remarks to make us believe, that their church is the same, in point of principle and practice, that it was when I was licensed, is what the keenest appetite of credulity is not able to digest. On this subject, they are laboring hard in the fire, and wearying themselves with very vanity; and all their pompous parade of words, and pointed antithesis, has neither more sense nor meaning than the rumbling noise of an old drum.

I continued a member of their church it is true while those defections were carrying on, and remembering the awful woe that awaits the *dumb dogs that will not bark*, I boldly testified against the

the accumulating defections of the day. Those who have any acquaintance of the exercise of the conscience relative to the affairs of God's house, know, that it is not a light and trivial matter to break off connexion with the church of which they are members. In obedience, therefore, to the Divine injunction, "Plead with thy mother, plead," and with still some dawning hope of success, I continued to plead and remonstrate, till at last almost every thing I did, became matter of offence. Discovering that the current of backsliding was become too strong for me to entertain any hopes of stemming it, and still more thoroughly convinced of this unchristian and inhuman treatment I received from the Transylvania Presbytery, who utterly refused during my trial before them, to convince; or *endeavour to convince* me what precepts of God's word, or rule of the church I had transgressed, for which they could in conscience censure me, I found it *then* to be my indispensable duty to withdraw from their communion, to enter my protest and declinature. Those who murmur at my not withdrawing sooner, betray an unbecoming ignorance of the peculiar tender delicacy that exists in the case of a minister's breaking off his ecclesiastical connexions, who ought to be convinced in his own mind of the *probable* irreclaimability of the church to which he belongs. And of this, besides other documents, I had full and compleat evidence, in the unchristian, tyrannical and inhuman conduct of the Presbytery, during their unprecedented trial. The Presbytery, in their remarks, page 18. censure with a spleen peculiar to themselves, the conduct of those who joined with me, on my protesting and declining any farther connexion with their body.

In the height of their acrimonious zeal, they stigmatize them with a banditti of ecclesiastical independents, lawlessly intruding on business to which they were by no means competent. But those who have taken the pains attentively to peruse my former publication, especially the *third part*, will discover, that the blackening aspersions which they so wantonly lavin on those who separated from them on that occasion, indicate only the accumulated acrimonious bile which loads and sickens their own stomachs, and that these groundless aspersions can never tarnish, in the smallest degree, the characters of those who are the objects of their intemperate spleen. About an hundred of those who joined me, were spectators of *the fiery trial* which I underwent, were acquainted with the whole process, and upon the spot, immediately after my declinature, gave me the right hand of fellowship. These, with vast numbers of others, had for a considerable time been observing with a mournful eye, and bleeding heart, the increasing corruption of the church to which they belonged, and when they saw that this corruption was grown to such an height, and had so thoroughly leavened their judicatures, that they gave no check to the propagation of error, but calmly overlooked it, and encouraged the headstrong introduction of unprecedented innovations, and that they treated with unrelenting cruelty those who faithfully opposed these errors and innovations, and would not *run into the same excesses* with themselves, they were convinced to their sorrow, that they must either *then* withdraw or become chargeable of the awful guilt of partaking of other's sins. But the presbytery branded these men as independents, for exercising

ercising the right of private judgment in a case as clear as day, and of which they had sufficient knowledge. This right of private judgment however, and of acting agreeably to its dictates the Presbytery it would seem virtually at least if not explicitly denies. Hence after exhorting very properly, the people under their inspection to live the lives of Christians in the 38th page of their publication, they authoritatively enjoin it upon them never to judge of their conduct, let them do as they will. Now although they profess a kind of amenability to Synod, and to permit their people to apply to it for a redress of their grievances, yet if we may judge of the proceedings of their judicatures in time to come from the prominent features which have distinguished them for some time past, it is easy to see what kind of redress they would obtain. Penetrated with the anguish of disappointment, the only balm administered to comfort them in their distress, would be that they should find, as in a late instance, that they were turned over the hedge, and excommunicated as *troublers of Israel*.

The censure, which the Presbytery levels with such malignant fury against the people who joined me upon my protest and declination, "as placing a man at their head as their teacher, who had no right to preach the gospel. or administer its ordinances," is as senseless and unmeaning, as it is calculated to terrify the injudicious from declining them hereafter.

No unprejudiced person who reads the trial and defence, can in conscience say that any thing appeared on evidence, of sufficient

sufficient weight to warrant my suspension. Could then their suspending me after I had declined them, denude me of my office? According to the declaration of Mr. Crawford who appeared during the process, to be the great hero of the business; I should not have been suspended, if I had not protested. Now, can any person who is not insane, apprehend that such a suspension can be held valid either in foro Ecclesiastico, or foro Divino, i.e. in the court of the Church, or of God? Indeed, the great design they appear to have had in view, in proceeding to that rash and unwarrantable step they took; was to hold up their nugatory suspension, as a bug-bear to affright the people from joining me; and then as the terrified people had no quarter to which they could look for assistance, they might have it in their power to lord it over them with despotic sway, and to cram down their reluctant throats the nauseous pills of innovations. Let the ransomed sing his praise in the 72^d Psalm. And let them remember, if we believe not Moses and the Prophets; we will not believe the words of Christ, for they wrote of him; and if we are not persuaded by the comely order and holy laws of his house; we will not be persuaded by the hellish innovation of one arising from the dead. "He that striveth for mastery, is not crowned, except he strive lawfully."

It was truly wise, in the learned sages of our Presbytery, to favor us with a specimen of their shrewd abilities, in the 20th page of their works. Should we not for the sake of the present and future ages encourage them to publish an entire comment of the holy Scriptures?

Quoting

Quoting the 7th page of my vindication, which is relative to the charge of slandering Mr. Shannon. "The committee is censurable for receiving an accusation at the mouth of one witness, referring to 1. Tim. 5. 19. Presbytery says, not to receive an accusation at the mouth of one witness, *must mean, not to believe it*, upon the testimony of a single witness: so as to judge and condemn the elder while he pleads innocent: this passage of Scripture is *therefore*, by no means applicable to the case of the committee, &c."

The text implies, as Mr. Henery in his comments inform us, that the accusation is not to be received as any ground of censure, unless there are two or more evidences to support it; and that it must be tabled in the presence of the accused.

"Burket says, Paul advises Timothy never to admit an accusation against an elder, without the attestation of two or three witnesses; because it is the interest of the church of Christ, that the reputation of its ministers be supported; because prejudiced persons will be ready to accuse without reason. Conscientious ministers shall never want accusers; if false accusers can find judges, that are willing to believe them." But this accusation with all the rest, were received by the committee, and recorded in the minutes of Presbytery, and read publicly, and all in my absence.

According to their mode of interpreting, a Presbytery may receive any charge against an elder; if they do not believe it: They may publish it to the world; if they do not judge him guilty; and they may call him to their
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bar to be accountable ; when they have no evidence to support the charge.

Page 20th and 21st. As to the truth of the letter, which mr. Rice denies he received, mentioned in the 40th page of my vindication, I appeal to the Rev. mr. Annan in Philadelphia, and mrs. Duncan in water street : If the plan was not published there before I left Philadelphia in the year 1789 ; and to mr. Barr in Lexington, if he did not bring a letter in a few weeks after me directed to mr. Rice, and I am very confident I often heard it reported, it was a letter concerning myself.

P. S. My reader will observe I never suggested it was an official letter (for by this they wish to equivocate.)

Page 22nd mr. Crawford did come unsent for, and join me in communion, tho' with his usual politeness he says it is a false representation ; for previous to any invitation, I found him in the church on saturday, and whether welcome or not ; common decency and good policy, would oblige me to invite him to preach ; which he did three days in succession. You know it is customary for the governor of a feast, to invite an interloper to eat, but does this say he was sent for with the bidden guests ?

As to mr. Blair's contradiction in the same page, I feel my character in little danger. That he was yawning for office, we have the following public symptoms. When he was elected Deacon, which was as contrary to my expectation, as contradictory to my wish ; he gave public thanks to the congregation, and promised fidelity to the utmost of his power.

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In a little after he humbly importuned some members of session, and myself in particular, for liberty to distribute the elements at the supper.

Again, at the very juncture I informed him we were about to augment our session, he proposed to relinquish his office, and so convinced me that he wished to be elected an elder, that I informed the session, I alleged he expected it; and to avoid him and one other, we purposely postponed the appointment. They took the affront so high, that every strenuous effort was exerted, to rend the congregation, and construct a society in Lexington, which they somewhat effected, and Samuel Blair, Robert Patterson and Robert Steele were appointed their first elders.

But lastly to immortalize his dignity, he is advanced to the honorable signature the
ACCUSER.

It is recorded in the process page 61st, But again one of themselves in a publication known to the principal part of them, maintains that Christ is not the eternal son of God: And to this the Transylvania Presbytery accorded *nemine contradicente*.

Presbytery affirms, in the 23d page of their publication, they never made *Christ's sonship*, a subject of conversation, pvious to mr. Rankin's publication.

That Presbytery are as capable of dissimulation here as elsewhere, I shall favor my reader with the following testimony, taken at the committee of presbytery aforesaid.
David

David Mitchel, David Logan, James Scott, elders, John Robinson, Joseph Steele, E-praim January, and Thomas Crawford, being duly sworn depose: That in the Transylvania Presbytery, April 1792, *mr. Crawford* spoke concerning the eternal sonship of Jesus Christ, in which he espoused *mr. Rice's* cause, in denying his eternal sonship: To which the Presbytery offered no objections. I expect *mr. Crawford's* design in this speech, was to ward off the ignominy, he saw impending, when he observed I had two witnesses stepping forward to swear, and confirm my assertion, that *mr. Rice* denied the eternal sonship of Jesus Christ: And if possible obviate the pleasure of defending myself, in any point; And he so far effected his end, that when I found he maintained, that sonship and equality, were incompatible, and that Presbytery was silent, I thought it was in vain to have my evidence sworn.

When Presbytery speaks upon this subject page 29th, they introduce a ridiculous whining subterfuge, equivocally intruding a point foreign to the subject of debate; saying "Mr. Rankin has charged Dr. Waits, and those who use his Psalmody,* with denying the eternal sonship of Jesus Christ. We believe the doctrine of the Trinity, as it relates to the manner of the divine subsistence, to be a profound mystery, absolutely incomprehensible by any finite mind; and therefore a subject of which common modesty, would teach both *mr. Rankin* and us, never to attempt an explanation." Was it the *manner* of this divine subsistence which was the subject of debate? No, it was whether

* did say all that use his Psalmody?

whether the Scriptures authorized to believe there was an eternal Father, and an eternal Son. Or whether the relationship of Father and Son, had only a reference to Christ's incarnation, which excludes the idea of its being eternal.

But why did Presbytery introduce this equivocation? The reason is plain, they durst not acknowledge his eternal Sonship; for they were conscious that they, and many others of their denomination, had absolutely denied it. They knew if they did deny it openly, it would justify my charge against them (which they acknowledge was an heavy one) and expose them to the censure of the Godly, which they alledged, would avail them as little, as the exercise of church discipline,* page 35, "it is not an interesting object to us, we gain nothing by it."† So like the Rabbies in another case they said we cannot say.

As to the good deed done, to the impotent man, I shall say but little. Page 23 they say they did not licence mr. Camper to preach, but only permitted him. I say licence and permit are synonymous terms. They say I saw him examined on divinity, this was some years before he studied it, or made any motion to Presbytery for licence to preach. But simply an acquiescence with mr. Rice's request, that we should examine him on his abilities to catechise the youth in his congregation. At

* This is shrewd sagacity indeed, Church discipline is essential to the existence of a Church, and the existence of a Church is essential to a Clergyman's living by the Altar, † page 12.

At which time Mr. Rice motioned, and Presbytery agreed, we should not examine him as a candidate for the ministry, or as one who had made divinity his study; I remember I asked him but one question, viz. How was original sin communicated from our ancestors unto their posterity: He made me the insulting reply, he did not think it worth enquiry: Saying if a man's house is a fire, it is more his business to extinguish; than to enquire how it was kindled.

Mr. Camper was taken upon trial, after I went to Philadelphia in the spring 1789, and was licenced in the first week in October following, when the votes were passed; I asked Presbytery if Mr. Camper was examined on divinity? they said yes. I asked them if they had it upon their minutes? for I scrupled it, they said (when they found they were detected) he had been examined when he offered as a candidate for a Catechist,

Now I say, I saw him licenced to preach without examination on divinity, as a candidate for the ministry. Q, E. D.

In the 24th and 25th pages, Presbytery attempts to display their penetration in Theology, drawing a comparison between Dr. Watt's opinion between the old and new Testaments, and that of the Apostle Paul, in particular upon the subject of Psalmody. They say the Apostle to the Col. 2. 14. hold the same contrariety between the old and new Testament as is intended by the Doctor.

I know what the Apostle says, but, what the Doctor intended is somewhat more ambiguous

was to me, if he did not mean what he said.

But let us compare their sentiments.

Paul says, blotting out the hand-writing of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross.

The word *cheirographen* rendered hand-writing, signifies a sort of a note under a man's hand, whereby he obliges himself to the payment of any debt. The patriarchal Jews, bound themselves, to God, by this seal of their profession, viz. circumcision, not to worship any other deity, nor neglect any divine institution. But this hand-writing which bound them to their several ordinances was against them, and contrary to them. And so it would certainly appear to any of us: no doubt but the Shechemites felt it sensibly, Gen. 34. 25. And this opinion Zipporah had, Exo. 4. 25, 26. But that this was the spirit of the text, see Acts 15. 10. Now, therefore, why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?

But, you will observe, that altho this operation was against nature, and contrary to our feelings, it did not, nor had it any tendency, to sap the spirit of vital piety. No it rather *yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness, unto them who are exercised thereby.* Now compare these sentiments, with Dr. Watt's as I understand him, in the 10th page and downwards, in my vindication. And do you imagine, that the very matter, and words, of David's psalms, are as painful to the daughters of music;

; as the circumcisors knife, to the flesh of the foreskin ?

Does the very action, of singing the sweet Psalms of David, awaken our regret, and touch all the springs of uneasiness within us ; as much as Joshua's sharp knife, did the Israelites, on the bank of Jordon at Gilgal ?

But, I maintain it is blasphemous, to assert that either one or the other, was designed, or had a natural tendency to flatten our devotion, or effect a dull indifferent or thoughtless, negligent air, in our acts of worship, so as to prevent our ascent to Heaven, by any precepts contradictory to each other.

Page 25. Presbytery, proposes to find a contradiction in my publication, to be pretext for Dr. Watts maintaining, a contrast between the moral precepts.

A verse in the 119th Psalm, Watts' imitation, which they say is most evidently in the spirit of the New Testament, I have asserted stands opposed to the whole psalm. If so, then, say they, the New Testament stands opposed to the old.

This is a logical syllogism with a witness, one of the premises is, that said verse is most evidently in the spirit of the New Testament ; I say it is most evidently neither in the spirit of the New nor Old, to pray for Judas, whose life and perdition, with those who joined in his final apostacy, is so copiously predicted in this psalm, and confirmed to be him, in the Acts of the Apostles i. 15, 17, 18, 19, 20.

Presbytery,

Presbytery proceeds to make a long harangue of ill-founded assertions, as if we were bound to believe, because it is the joint testimony of a body of Divines, or as if they expected, no person of sense or common observation, would read half way to the present paragraph: Boasting forth lofty panegyrics, upon the extolled Dr. Watts: particularly that he had effectually confuted all the cavils of his opponents: But they say at the same time, "he omitted certain parts of David's psalms, not because he thought them of no use; but because he could not so well accomodate them to the present dispensation of divine grace." And thus by a compound of falacious absurdities they have screened the Doctor.

But, what have they done with Mr. Barlow, of whom the Synod has asserted, put in the psalms left out by Dr. Watts, in near the same spirit and style? how did he get them accommodated? has he converted them all into Jews, and conformed to the abrogated ceremonies? O pitiful! O disgraceful! O the profanity of this wicked and adulterous generation! were not all the psalms accommodated to the covenant of grace, and the very psalms he omitted were no more ceremonious than those he mangled and abused. See 28, 43, 52, 54, 59, &c.

Presbytery says, page 26, "It is true Mr. Rankin has said, page 13, David wrote a system of divinity, having all the articles contained in the word of God, from Genesis to Revelations. And again he avers there is not one Article of Faith, contained in the whole word of God, but is perspicuously in David's epistle to the
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time of the Bible strong and bold expressions, but what proof has he produced? the proof is *laver*. And this is all we expect he will ever produce. Here an intemperate zeal for one part of sacred writ, seems to lead to affirmations not very honorable to the remainder.*

Reply. The reasons I advanced no more proof, than you find in the context of the alluded passage, was simply because I thought it selfevident, to all the unprejudiced who seriously searched the Scriptures.

But, seeing it is denied, and the faith of it deemed intemperate zeal, dishonorable to the remainder of Sacred writ, which cannot be substantiated,

* The concise mention of a doctrine in the Psalms does not supersede the necessity of that full explication of it, and of those various lights in which it is placed in the other sacred books. It is possible to have the idea of a poem on the late war so complete, as that not one of the scenes or operations which are described in the histories of Dr. Gordon and Dr. Ramsay would be omitted, but would be dwelt on more or less, as the purposes of poetry might require; yet it would be very ridiculous to say, that such a poem would render the information of these valuable histories useless or unnecessary. On the contrary, as such a poem well written would recommend the study of those histories; so the more concise representation of a doctrine or duty in the psalms, is a mean of exciting us to seek the further instruction concerning it to be found in the other parts of scripture.

Vindictæ Cantus Dominici, p. 125.

substantiated, because to me it is precious, and much to our purpose in the present debate. I shall favor my reader with arguments from the Ancient and Modern,* whose testimony, certainly merit our candid perusal, the first I shall educe is the joint testimony of the Dutch Synod of Dort, in their annotations of the Old and New Testament; and published by their authority in 1637.

The argument of the Book of Psalms.

“The Church of God doth worthily make esteem of this Book among the rest of the Canonical Scriptures of the old Testament, as of a singular Jewel, the value and usefullness whereof can never sufficiently be comprehended, much less uttered by the the tongue, or described by the pen. Some do call it a garden of pleasures, a shop furnished with Remedies for all diseases, the storehouse and treasury of a christian; others, an anatomy or dissection, and ripping up of the believing soul; a mirrour and looking-glass of the manifold and unsearchable mercy and goodness of God; again, the complete summary or compendious rehearsal of the whole Bible, Law and Gospel; or of all the true knowledge and worship of God. For it containeth partly, very solid and wholesome doctrinals and instructions concerning the nature and being of God, and the sacred trinity; concerning the divine attributes, the eternal counsel and decree, the holy

* Note, tho' the Presbytery might have cut the matter short, had they educed some point of theology which could not be deduced from the Book of Psalms. But this I expect they will never be able to do.

holy word and works of God ; especially the mercies and benefits bestowed on his church on the one side, and his justice and judgments upon all the ungodly on the other ; moreover, touching the person and saving office of the *Messia*, our LORD and Saviour *Jesus Christ* : about this eternal Godhead, incarnation, suffering, dying, rising again from the dead, ascending into heaven, sitting at the right hand of his Father ; yea, about the enlarging and spreading of his kingdom among the Gentiles by the preaching of the Holy Gospel ; about the sinful estate and condition of man, the quality and property of regeneration, of true repentance, of the love and fear of God ; again, of the nature of true faith, of relying and glorying in God, of the assurance of salvation, of the combat between the spirit and the flesh. Further, concerning the Catholick or Universal church of Jews and Gentiles, the church her government and discipline, the communion of Saints, forgiving of sins, the resurrection of the flesh, and life everlasting. *Partly* also, and on the other side (for matters of morality) you have here in this book set down all manner of body and spiritual duties and practices of godliness, as sundry forms and patterns of blessing and praising God, of giving thanks for mercies received, of vows of thankfulness, with a number of devout and fervent prayers unto God, for whatsoever may tend and conduce to his glory, and the welfare both general and particular of all and every true believer, especially in all kinds of affliction, temptation, trouble and distemper. Besides the holy meditations, the exceeding sweet comforts and consolations and strengthenings in faith, in patience, and in all godliness. Inasmuch, that there can be

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no condition of any christian found or thought of, but he may be served and supplied out of this book according to his hearts desire, as well for the calmness of his conscience, as for the furthering of his salvation. For which cause also, it behoveth every christian, whether he be of high or low degree, to read, peruse and study this book, with extraordinary care and singular attention; thereby to inure and accustom himself to the peculiar style and manner of speaking of the holy ghost, therein expressed; there being no doubt at all, but if so be one get once a right taste of the genuine sap, or juice, and some experience of the virtue and efficacy thereof, it will rest upon his soul, like a most sweet and wholesome dew of Heaven, and one shall never be weary to carry the same continually about him, in his heart, and tongue, and hands; which also is the ground and end, for which it is so frequently pressed and recommended unto us by the holy Ghost, in the old Testament, and in the new. by Jesus Christ himself and his Apostles. And it hath been delivered unto the Church of God, by his wisdom and goodness in musical or singing metre, to make it relish the better, and the fitter for memory and daily practice."

In the 2d. place I shall educe the sublime sentiments of the Rev. George Horne, Lord Bishop of Norwich. They are part of his preface to his eminent commentary on the Book of Psalms.

"The Psalms are an epitome of the Bible, adapted to the purposes of devotion. They treat occasionally of the creation and formation of the world: the dispensations of providence

dence, and the œconomy of grace ; the transactions of the patriarchs ; the exodus of the children of Israel ; their journey through the wilderness, and settlement in Canaan : their law, priesthood, and ritual ; the exploits of their great men, wrought through faith ; their sins and captivities : their repentances and restorations ; the sufferings and victories of David ; the peaceful and happy reign of Solomon ; the advent of Messiah, with its effects and consequences ; his incarnation, birth, life, passion, death, resurrection, ascension, kingdom and priesthood ; the effusion of the Spirit ; the conversion of the nations ; the rejection of the Jews ; the establishment, increase and perpetuity of the Christian Church ; the end of the world ; the general judgment : the condemnation of the wicked, and the final triumph of the righteous with their Lord and King . These are the subjects here presented to our meditations. We are instructed how to conceive of them aright, and to express the different affections, which, when so conceived of, they must excite in our minds. They, are, for this purpose, adorned with the figures, and set off with all the graces of poetry : and poetry itself is designed yet farther to be recommended by the charms of music, thus consecrated to the service of God ; that so delight may prepare the way for improvement, and pleasure become the handmaid of wisdom, while every turbulent passion is calmed by sacred melody, and the evil spirit is still dispossessed by the Harp of the Son of Jesse. This little volume, like the paradise of Eden, affords us in perfection, tho' in miniature, every thing that groweth elsewhere, " Every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food : " and above all,

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what was there lost, but is here restored, THE TREE OF LIFE IN THE MIDST OF THE GARDEN. That which we read, as matter of speculation, in the other Scriptures, is reduced to practice, when we recite it in the Psalms ; in those, repentance and faith are described, but in these they are acted ; by a perusal of the former, we learn how others served God, but, by using the latter, we serve him ourselves. "What is there necessary for man to know," says the pious and judicious Hooker, "Which the psalms are not able to teach !" They are to beginners an easy and familiar introduction, a mighty augmentation of all virtue and knowledge in such as are entered before, a strong confirmation to the most perfect among others. Heroical magnanimity, exquisite justice, grave moderation, exact wisdom, repentance unfeigned, unwearied patience, the mysteries of God, the sufferings of Christ, the terrors of wrath, the comforts of grace, the works of providence over this world, and the promised joys of that world which is to come, all good necessarily to be either known or done, or had, this one celestial fountain yieldeth. Let there be any grief or disease incident unto the soul of man, any wound or sickness named, for which there is not, in this treasure house, a present comfortable remedy at all times ready to be found.* In the language of this divine book, therefore, the prayers and praises of the church have been offered up to the throne of grace, from age to age. And it appears to have been the Manual of the Son of God, in the days of his flesh

self; who, at the conclusion of his last supper, is generally supposed, and that upon good grounds, to have sung an hymn taken from it; * who pronounced, on the cross, the beginning of the xxii. Psalm: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" And expired, with a part of the xxxi. Psalm in his mouth: "Into thy hands I commend my spirit." Thus he, who had not the spirit by measure, in whom were hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, and who spake as never man spake, yet chose to conclude his life, to solace himself in his greatest agony, and at last to breath out his soul, in the Psalmist form of words, rather than his own. No tongue of man or angel, as Dr. Hammond justly observes, can convey an higher idea of any book, and of their felicity who use it aright."

In the last place I shall educe the conclusive arguments of the Rev. John Anderson, whose eminence as a minister of Christ and faithful steward of the mysteries of God, who by holding fast his name and not denying his faith, has been a blessing in his day, and immortalized his character. *Vindiciæ Cantus Dominici*, page 76,, The objector† insinuates, that the doctrines he enumerates are not contained in the Psalms, and if not in the psalms then not in the Old Testament, since we need
not

* St. Matthew informs us, Chap xxvi. 30. that he and his apostles "sung an hymn;" and the hymn usually sung by the Jews upon that occasion, was, what they called the "great Hallel," consisting of the Psalms from the cxliith to the cxviiiith inclusive.

† Mr. Black.

not expect to find any point of evangelical doctrine in any other part of the old testament, which is not at all in the psalms. Herein the objector contradicts a Protestant principle which used to be held by orthodox divines against Papists and Socinians, namely, *the perfection of the old testament asserted by itself. Psal. xix. 7 The law of the Lord is perfect* *Partes integrales* says a very estimable writer, in *doctrina legis et evangelii*—*non modo in universis testamenti utriusque libris, sed etiam in solo Pentateucho Moysi; item in libris prophetarum, abque novi testamenti auxilio deprehenduntur, utpote quo verbum (eggraphon) clarius, non perfectius, est redditum*; that is, “the integral or constituent parts, consisting of the doctrine of the law and of the gospel, are found not only in all the books of each of the testaments, but even in the Pentateuch or five books of Moses alone; likewise in the books of the prophets without the addition of the new testament; which addition is to be considered as rendering the scripture more clear, but not more perfect; that is, it adds no new article to the substance either of the law or of the gospel.

The objection seems to be contrary to another Protestant principle, namely, *that not only the truths which are found in the express words of any part of Scripture, but those also which are deducible therefrom by necessary consequence, are justly reckoned to be taught in that part of scripture.* So our Lord assures us that the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead was taught by the words which were spoken to Moses out of the bush, Luke xx. 37. Thus many truths, besides what are formally expressed in the word of a psalm, are deducible from them by necessary consequence. The death of Christ is a plain
consequence

consequence from these words; *Thou wilt not suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.* That Christ is the true God, follows from these words in the second psalm, *Kiss the Son.* Admitting that whatever is thus deducible from the express words of a psalm, is taught in it, he must, surely, have a consummate knowledge of the force and connexion of every word in the book of psalms, who can warrantably say, that such an article of evangelical truth is not taught in all that book. Hence it is evident, that they who complain of any penury of evangelical matter in the psalms, or who suppose there is more of it in human compositions, only betray their inattention to the scriptures and their obstinate attachment to a perverted taste.

Though the old testament church in general had not such outward means and advantages as we have; yet we are, by no means, thence to conclude, that the spiritual attainments of those particular eminent saints whose exercises are recorded in the psalms were inferior to ours. The lively exercises of faith represented in the xxiii. and many other psalms, the evangelical exercise of godly sorrow for sin as exemplified in the li. the xxxii. and cxxx. psalms, the disinterested zeal for the welfare of the church of Christ expressed in cxxxii. and cxxxvii. psalms, and the rich experience of spiritual profit by the word set forth in the cxix. psalm, will make the best christians among us ashamed to talk of the language of the psalms being inadequate to their attainments? surely there can be no matter fitter to be sung by the church in her solemn worship than the infallible examples recorded in the psalms, of solid piety and of the lively exercise of the true grace of God "

Page 27. “ A principal part of Mr Rankins’ reasoning, and censures is founded upon this supposition: that the Psalms of David &c. and they only, were designed by the sacred author, to be used in the public praises of God, in all generations. This which is the main point of debate, he has all along taken for granted and never we think pretended to prove.”

Had Presbytery candidly examined my publication, I think they would have found demonstrations, that Watts’ proposed plan, is blasphemous and Deistical, as it degrades the Divine institution, and violates the harmony of the sacred Revelation; and if this is the natural consequence, of the innovated system, I think it should teach us the exclusive use of the Divine appointment.

But in addition to the former I wish to present my reader, with a brief view of some pointed arguments.

1st, What God has ordained and never abrogated sustains the sanction of Divine authority.*

God has ordained the words of David and Asaph called the *Book of the Psalms*,† to be sung in the church || of Jesus Christ, and never abrogated the divine institution. §

Therefore to sing the praises of God, in the book of Psalms, continues an institution in the church of Jesus Christ, under the sanction of divine authority.

2nd

* Psal. 105. 8, 9, 10. 33. 11. Mal. 4. 4.

† Acts 1. 20. || 2 Chron. 29. 30. § Ps. 79 13. 89, 1. 100, 5. 102, 18.

2nd. God has forbid us to worship in any other way, than that which he has appointed in his word.*

God has never appointed us to worship him by singing psalms of human compofure.†

Therefore God has prohibited us, the use of human psalmody, in the public worship of God.

3d. To undervalue the precepts of God, must be to blaspheme them.‡

To adopt the precepts of men, instead of the precepts of God, must be to undervalue them.||

Therefore, to adopt the precepts of men instead of the precepts of God must be to blaspheme them.

4th. To deny the worship of God, performed according to divine revelation, must be Deistical.§

To adopt an innovation never appointed by God, must be to deny the worship of God, performed according to divine revelation,¶

Therefore to adopt an innovation, never appointed by God, must be Deistical.

5th. To attribute that province to men, which is the peculiar province of God: must be blasphemous idolatry.*

To

* Deut. xii, 32. † Jer. xii, 5. and xxxii, 35.

‡ Rom. ii, 24. † Tim. vi, 1. Tit. ii, 5.

|| Mark vii, 9, 13. § 2 Pet. ii, 1, 2.

¶ Isa. xxix, 13, 16.

* 1 Chron. x. 13, 14. 2. Chron. xvi. 12.

To dictate to men, what they are bound to utter in praise to God, must be a province peculiar to God.*

Therefore, to attribute that province to men, must be blasphemous idolatry.

6th. What God has never commanded in social worship; is surely forbidden.†

God has never commanded the use of human psalmody in social worship; ‡ Therefore it is surely forbidden,

7th. What God forbids, is at no time to be done; ||

God has forbid the use of human psalmody in social worship; and therefore never to be practised.

8th. A precept for perpetual devotion, should bear with, and assist the mind, in continual ascension, like Jacob's ladder reaching to heaven.

A human precept, is limited by the narrow conceptions of human sagacity.

Therefore inadequate to conduct the mind to the end of faith, or the heaven of heavens, like the tower of Babel.

9th *He that doubteth is damned,* § he that worships by human precepts must doubt the legality

* Mat. xxiii. 8, 9, 10. Larger Cate. 99 Quest.

† Mat. xv. 6. ‡ Jer. xix. 5.

|| Larger Catechism 99th Question.

§ Rom. xiv. 23.

legality of his conduct, and the matter of his praise; as human precepts are not the objects of faith.*

Therefore, he who worships by human precepts must be so far under condemnation already.

Finally, if a people have vowed unto God, and professes to be under the obligation of said vow, or solemn oath of fidelity, that they will worship God in no other way, than what he has prescribed in his word,† that they will not approve any religious worship, not instituted by God himself, that they will not corrupt by adding to it, or taking from it, whether invented, or taken up of ourselves, or received by tradition from others, whether under the title of antiquity, custom, devotion, good intent, or any other pretence whatsoever;‡ but that they will observe, keep pure, and entire all such religious worship and ordinances, as God hath appointed in his word; God has an additional claim upon them by their own voluntary oath of fidelity.||

To the punctual observance of all these particulars, the Presbyterian Church has bound herself, by the most solemn sacrament, or oath of fidelity, to God, the searcher of hearts, in the presence of God, angels and men.

Therefore, we are under an oath of fidelity; to worship God only, in a way which is incompatible

* Jer. xvii. 5, 6, xiii. 16.

† Conf. Art. 21.

‡ Larger Cate. Ques. 109 & 108.

|| Psalm l. 5. Matt. ii. 40. Gal. iii. 15, 17.

compatible with human inventions such as Dr. Watt's imitations.

Presbytery proceeds and observes, "Should we use a form of prayer drawn up by a pious man, we do not oppose that form to the Lord's prayer, nor set up its author in opposition to Christ. We no more oppose Watts to David, when we sing his Psalms, or Hymns, than we oppose Pool, or Henry, to the holy spirit, or their writings to the word of God, when we read their expositions."

As to the spirit of this trite analogy, it betrays as great ignorance of philosophy as divinity, and levels contempt at the counsel of Heaven.

If by using a form of prayer drawn up by a pious man Presbytery alleges that every pious man is infallible, and all his words objects of divine faith, and we may know him by the sight of our eyes, wherever we see him (for this is an essential matter in the proposition or it may be the prayer of a Devil instead of a Saint) and that the practice of repeating his form, amounts to all that is contained in the nature of true devotion; I shall beg leave to differ with them as widely about their prayers, as their praise. But if the analogy is drawn from the received mode of extemporaneous prayers (for I can hardly believe they wish to read forms of human device) it is equally absurd, who is bound to believe all he hears in social prayer, or every word he reads when he peruses Pool or Henry to inform his judgment; as what he reads, when he searches the holy scriptures, or what he sings when he attempts to utter distinctly to God matter of praise.

He

He who teaches we are bound to believe the former, equal with the latter, bewrays his gross and shameful ignorance : while, he essays, to sap the foundation of saving faith, rivaling the sacred precepts, by the spurious inventions of sacrilegious impostures ; the tantum amount with opposing Watts to David.

The difference between social praise, and prayer, is so great, that form is essential to the existence of the former ; while it is almost inconsistent with the latter, especially on many occasions.

In the former we are dependant on the spirit, to guide into matter contained in the form : in the latter we are dependant on him who knows the mind of the spirit (for we know not what we should pray for as we ought) to make intercession for us according to the will of God, for both matter and form, to suit our present momentary exigences and still leaving the mind equally dependant in all future events. Therefore it is that God in his wisdom, favored his Church with a complete system or form of Psalmody, suitable to all persons, on all occasions, in all generations, till the end of time : But in great condescension, left his children at liberty, to lisp or chatter, like a Crane or Swallow, their several wants in prayer, according to their several abilities, in language of their own composition. If he is a leader in devotion, his associates are at perfect liberty, to believe, or disbelieve, to be affected, neutral, or disaffected : just in proportion to the proprieties, or improprieties.

Now who art thou O great mountain, before

fore Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain, who art thou upstart Psalmist who stands at his right hand to resist him; who art thou that repliest against God; shall the thing formed say of him that formed it he had no understanding; will a man rob God; wilt thou O potsherd of the earth disannul his judgment, and condemn him, that thou mayest be righteous; wo unto him that striveth with his maker. Be ashamed, and hide thy face in desparity, O pitiful blank! and remember you are not a little indebted to the friend who in the name of authority rebukes thee sharply.

Page 28, Presbtery observes with usual sagacity, "If we read Watt's Psalms and Hymns, we will find the way to Heaven pointed out in clear scriptural and beautiful language."

As to either matter, or style, I am obliged to be of a different opinion: He appears to me to dwell upon a few common plain subjects interpolated with many egregious blunders in divinity, and perpetual repetitions as thick laid with inflated, or bombast epithets, as vermilion on a harlots cheek. But that this is not the effect of a distempered mind, I shall favour my reader with a few of these excellent lines.*

Psalm iv. } 'Tis sweet conversing on my bed,
verse 2d. } With my own heart and thee.

The

*Tho' my worthy friend Mr. Anderson, has wrote a number such observations. I cannot have access to them at the present time, but as far as my memory serves me, I have made no repetitions.

sentiments on universal Restoration, made this observation : If he was wrong he hoped forgiveness, for he had only made the divine being better than he was.

Pf. xxii. } God heard him in that dreadful day,
2. part 2 } *And chac'd away his fears.*

Servile or slavish fear, which must be the fear alluded to, is the consequence of guilt, and this could not be imputed guilt, for neither the punishment nor the fear of it (if there was any) was chased away ; but endured to the end.

Psalms xxii. verse 2d part 1st. "In pastures where *salvation grows.*" This is the first and last place I have heard, or read of a growing salvation. David says * Yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure, for this is all my salvation, and all my desire, *although he make it not to grow.*

He that hath hands from mischief clean,
Whose heart is right with God.

This is the man *may rise and* TAKE
The blessings of his grace †

How vastly inferior to the words of the Psalmist.

He from the eternal shall receive
The blessing him upon,
And righteousness ev'n from the God
Of his salvation.

Psalms xxxii. in a foot note he says, in this version I have *enlarged the sense.*

If I communicate the sense of a text I do
well ;

* 2 Sam. xxiii. 5. † Watts' ps. xxiv. 2. part 1st.

well ; but if I add to the sense of a text, I certainly add that to it, which was not contained in it, and make it speak sense it never had ; is not this adding to the word of God ?

Thus saith the Lord your work is vain
Give your burnt offerings o'er,
In dying goats and bullocks slain,
My soul delights no more.†

Can the most credulous imagine the Doctor does any justice to this text ? Instead of the son addressing the father ; he has the father addressing the church.

And instead of saying (as we find the citation paraphrased in the new testament, for which he pretends peculiar veneration, and the language of which is his principal object to imitate.) *Thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure therein ; † he says my soul delights no more.* As if the soul of God was delighted in that, of which it is said *thou hadst no pleasure therein.*

Behold I come the favour cries
With love and duty in his eyes.‡
Are the natural eyes the seat of love and duty ?

Should'st thou condemn my soul to hell,
And crush my flesh to dust,
Heaven would approve thy vengeance well,
And earth must own it just.*

If earth would approve the condemnation of a justified and pardoned David, interested in an everlasting covenant, sure and well ordered (as they stand prejudiced according to an

† Watts psal. xl. 1. part 2d. ‡ Heb. x. 8.

§ Idem. * psal. li. 2. part first.

an old prediction.*) I am sure heaven would not approve the vengeance well.

Note on psalm 69, † I have omitted the dreadful imprecations on his enemies, except what is inserted in this last stanza.

How horridly *they wrest the scriptures unto their own destruction* ‡ who allege that David, speaking by the Holy Ghost, was urged by malignant spleen, to pray for curses upon his personal enemies. But let that be as it would who durst make exceptions to the word of God.

Note on 73 psalm. || This psalm is a most noble composition; the design and model of it is divinely beautiful, and an admirable pattern for a poet to copy. But it being one single scheme of thought, I was obliged to contract it, that it might be sung at once; tho' the dignity and beauty of the ode suffers much by this means.

How this note may appear in the eyes of a doting admirer I cannot account, but to me it is truly aggravating.

First, the encomium upon it, as if the divine being had displayed his poetical talents much better than usual; where, he had very much to transpose the verses, to bring them into some degree of connexion. §

The design and model of it is divinely beautiful;

* 2. Sam. xii. 14.

† Large Edition.

‡ 2 Peter iii. 16.

|| Large Edition.

§ See his preface to the 119 small Edition.

tiful: and not like the dreadful imprecations he was forced to omit * But what renders it more useful is, that it is an admirable pattern for poets to copy. But excellent as it was; it was not compleat, for the design for which the spirit intended it: It must suffer a reform, by the great Doctor, tho' it should be much deformed, that his skill may be celebrated.

Psalm. xc. } Till a wise care of piety
Verse 8. } Fit us to die and dwell with thee.

I thought it was the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ, could alone fit us to die and dwell with God.

P. xcvi. } Thus shall he come to judge the earth
4. par. iv. } And Angels *guard* his throne.

A guard always signifies a state of caution, or anticipation of objection. I knew not that the Judge of all the earth durst not come to judgment, without a guard.

He says, I have collected, and disposed, the most useful verses of this psalm under eighteen different heads, and formed a DIVINE SONG upon each of them; But the verses are much transposed to attain some degree of connexion.†

Presbytery says, the Doctor did omit *some* psalms not because he thought them of no use, but he informs us implicitly, there were some of little or no use; collecting the most useful, implies that none of them were perfect, but some better than others, of which with some

* See preface to 119 psalm small Edi. † Idem

care and attention, a man of his abilities might make out something profitable. Of these selects he formed eighteen different heads, and a divine song upon each of them; but the verses are much transposed to attain some degree of connexion. Much thanks is certainly due to so eminent, and powerful efficacy, for forming divine songs, out of so indigest a chaos.

But, I think I may say of his divine songs, what he very properly says of profane writings.

Pf. cxix. } Let all the heathen writers join,
part 7. } To form one perfect book, [thine
verse 1. } Great God if once compared with
} How mean their writings look!

Pf. cxx. } Burning arrows smite thee through,
verse 6. } Strict justice would approve,
} But I had rather spare my foe,
} And melt his heart with love.

Compare those lines with prose or verse, and you will find no resemblance in either matter or style, or an evidence for their orthodoxy in Scripture sense or reason.

Pf. cxxiii. } As servants watch their master's
Ver. 2. } And fear the *angry stroke*. [hand,

The servants of God, when injured look for protection from their Master: under the law of Moses a master was to demand satisfaction for hurt done to his servant; and will not the best master, speedily avenge his servants of their adversaries?

But, here the Doctor presents the faithful under the character of an eye-servant, fearing the

the angry stroke : so enrolls the righteous who have their confidence fixed on a gracious God in Christ, among the fearful and unbelieving, who have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone.

Again he observes page 149, * This psalm seems to be written to encourage the Jews in their wars against the heathen princes of Canaan; who were divinely sentenced to destruction: but the four last verses of it have been too much abused in latter ages to promote sedition, and disturbance in the State; so that I chose to refer this honour, that is here given to all the saints to the day of judgment,

Here the prudent legislator, sees cause to repeal his laws of self defence, lest men should abuse their liberty: A pleasing flattery to the Quakers.

Psalm 150. The greatest part of this psalm suits not my chief design, I have therefore only imitated the two first verses, and the last, and thus the *upstart psalmist* unfolds the riddle that his design was incompatible with the design of the holy spirit.

Hymn vii. } Ho ye that pant for living streams,
Book i. } And pine away and die.

There is not any, who can thirst or pant for living streams; but those who are interested in the covenant of grace, and by virtue thereof have tasted the river of life, and they shall never pine away and die.†

Hymn

* Large Edition. † Mat. v. 6. John vi. 54.

Hymn viii. } Lift up the everlasting gates;
 Verse 3. } The doors wide open *fling*.

These are the enticing words of man's wisdom. To *fling* signifies to cast with violence; but from this charge he who opens where no man shuts is exempt. *Because he had done no violence.*

Verse } You that have known Jehovah's name
 6. } And ventur'd on his grace.

It has been thought, and with some probability, that Jah, being radically the same with Jehovah; this last name is only a duplication of the other, viz. Jah-ve-jah and, dropping the latter jod, by contraction. Admitting this, there will be a threefold repetition and consequently a very particular emphasis in Isa. xxvi. 4. for the words will be equipollent with in Jah, Jah and Jah, is everlasting strength. Now as the word Jah signifies self-existent, it must comprehend all the perfections of divine nature; for nothing can exist of itself; but what must be necessary, and if necessary, it must be eternal, omnipresent, omniscient, and omnipotent: consequently infinite in holiness. Only apply the word Jah to each person of the Trinity; and, you have a just view of the three adorable persons in the Godhead. But to know the intrinsic excellence of this name, is peculiar to the special favourites of his kingdom* and it is no venture, hazzard or danger, for such to trust his grace.

Hymn xl 5. The Lamb that fills the middle
Trisune.

* Cant. i. 3.

A middle throne, is not only a fictitious epithet, but communicates an erroneous idea, of a plurality of governments, *he that overcome* *as down with his father upon his throne. He that* *hath the father hath the son.*

Hymn xlv. } May I with those forever dwell,
Verse 6. } Who here were my delight.

How shall we sing these lines ? they are not the words of inspiration, we cannot sing them as the language of the Psalmist. Suppose we are righteous we cannot sing them in faith, or safety, for we know not but our delight was with the hypocrite, we cannot sing them as sinners, for then we were sure our delight was with the wicked.

ly. lv. } When we are raised from deep distress
Verse 1. } Our God deserves a song.

If these words are not erroneous, sure they are contemptibly flat.

H. lxxiv. } Our Lord into his garden comes,
Verse 6. } Well pleas'd to smell his poor perfumes.

If by perfumes, the Doctor means our righteousness, he cannot be pleased with it.* If the righteousness of Christ it cannot be poor.†

Hymn xcii. } Before the first of all his works,
Verse 2. } Creation was begun.

My reader will have to excuse me if I cannot understand the meaning of these lines.

Verse } Upon the empty air,
6. } The Earth was balanc'd well.

These lines are not the received objects of faith, divine or human.

Hymn

*Heb. xi, 6.

† Cori. iii, 6. Eph. iii, 8.
I

Hym. cxv. 6. My God I cry with *ev'ry breath*
This appears extravagant rant.

Book ii. Hymn xiii. 1. Let half the nation
sound his praise.

And what must the other half do ?

Hy. xxiii, } There sits our saviour crowned
Ver. 3. } with light,
Cloathed in a body like our own.

It appears the Doctor forgot the great distinction delineated between the natural and spiritual bodies, between the earthly, and heavenly, and that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God.* And that it doth not yet appear what we shall be. And that when he shall appear we shall be like him.† And that I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness‡ All which manifest there is a material difference between the likeness of his body, and ours at the present time.

Hy. xlv. } Still might he fill his starry throne,
Ver. 1. } And please his ears with Gabriel's
songs.

Here the poet, assays, in lofty style, to paint the sovereign independence of Almighty God. And has he established his independence ? Not quite. It was possible for him to have been happy without any commerce with the creature man, that is to make him songs when he deserves them. But not without a Gabriel's songs, *to please his ears* as if it was necessary to dispossess a melancholy gloom by the Angel's harp.

There on a green and flow'ry mount
Our weary souls shall sit,

And

*Cor. xv. 45—55 † i John, iii, 2. ‡ Ps. xvii. 15

And with transporting joys recount
The labours of our feet.*

If so small a consideration, as the birth of a man-child, will cause a woman to forget her anguish; how much more, will an exceeding and eternal weight of glory, cause us to desist from enumerating the labours of our feet? I expect they will drink new wine, in the father's kingdom, and forget their poverty, and remember their misery no more.

Whate'er my duty bids me give,
My cheerful hands resign,
Yet if I might make some reserve,
And duty did not call,
I love my God with zeal so great,
That I should give him all.†

Strange standards for devotion, to be received in the room of divine revelation!

Till we arrive at heaven our home,
Faith is our guide, and faith our light.‡

Christ has accorded himself the light of the world, and promised the comforter his holy spirit, to be our guide.

About the young redeemer's head.||

Christ was never a young redeemer, for as man he was not a redeemer, and as God he was never young. But in his Lyrics he has more of the same quality. My young Almighty my creator babe.§

Hy.

*Hy. liii. V. 10.

†Hy. cxvi.

‡Hy. cxxix.

||Hy. cxxxvi.

§See book ii. poem ii.

Hy. xxi. 7. Infinite pangs for you I bore.

Christ did not suffer in his divine nature, his finite nature could not suffer pain infinite in degree, and we are sure it is not infinite in duration.

Hy. xxx. 1. And new creating breath.

Hy. xxxviii. 3 Whose new creating power.

If God has received new power to create, he was not omnipotent from eternity.

I shall conclude those remarks, with a quotation taken from an author, eminent as a scholar, a philosopher, a critic and divine, who, in his criticism on Milton as a poet, has the following words:—"Milton, has displayed the truest judgment, in distinguishing between those subjects that were capable of being heightened by language; and such as were not. And, in this, he has shewn an example to all writers of sacred poetry, by which, however, scarcely any one of them appears to have profited. The works and words of the Deity have a peculiar sublimity in themselves, which cannot be heightened by language, or human ornaments.

"But far want of attending to this useful lesson, most translators of the psalms, and composers of hymns, for worship, have been guilty of using the *inflated* or *bombast* style instead of the sublime, in treating sacred subjects. They knew, in general that there was something grand and sublime about them; but not considering that this was in the thought, or the things themselves, and not in the expressions, they have
made

made themselves ridiculous, by endeavoring to compliment their maker in panegyrical language, and to lend to the holy spirit the aid of their eloquence and genius. Dr. Watts, though a learned man, and something of a poet, is by no means exempt from this censure, though in his error he has had many imitators."

Presbytery, very pungently by repeated importunities attempt to urge their people to a christian temper.* But from all we can collect it is to consist in a passive-obedience or non-resistance, of their impositions, which their pride will not suffer them to revoke, though they are convinced to their sorrow it has reduced them to contempt and neglect, and if they cannot silence the conscientious they will try their pathos upon the licentious, "In vain you contend what psalms you shall sing, while you are void of a true spirit of devotion."† And here they are as foreign from the point, as usual. Is it a matter of moonshine what means are occupied by the unregenerate, in order to bring them to a saving acquaintance with the way of salvation?

I wish them *Reformation*, and till then I bid them *Adieu Adieu*.

*Page 31.

†Page 41.

UPON THE ULTIMATE END OF CREATION.



SHALL I seek glory then, as vain men seek,
 Oft not deserved? I seek not mine, but his
 Who sent me', & thereby witness whence I am,
 To whom the Tempter murmuring thus reply'd
 Think not so slight of glory; therein least
 Resembling thy great Father: he seeks glory,
 And for his glory all things made, all things
 Orders and governs; nor content in heav'n
 By all his angels glorify'd, requires
 Glory from men, from all men good or bad,
 Wise or unwise, no difference, no exemption;
 Above all sacrifice, or hallow'd gift
 Glory' he requires, and glory he receives
 Promiscuous from all nations, Jew, or Greek,
 Or barbarous, nor exception hath declared;
 From us his foes pronounc'd glory' he exacts.

To whom our Saviour fervently reply'd.
 And reason: since his word all things pro-
 duc'd,

Though chiefly not for glory as prime end,
 But to shew forth his goodness, and impart
 His good communicable to every soul
 Freely; of whom what could he less expect
 Than glory and benediction, that is thanks,
 The slightest, easiest, readiest recompense
 From them who could return him nothing else,
 And not returning that would likeliest render
 Contempt instead, dishonor, obloquy?
 Hard recompense, unsuitable return,
 For so much good, so much beneficence.

Paradise regained, Book iii. 105—133.



UPON SCRIPTURE PSALMODY.

—————However, many books,
 Wise men have said are wearisome; who reads
 Incessantly, and his to reading brings not
 A spirit and judgment equal or superior,
 (And

(And what he brings what needs he elsewhere
seek?)

Uncertain and unsettled still remains,
Deep vers'd in books and shallow in himself;
Crude or intoxicate, collecting toys,
And trifles for choice matters, worth a sponge;
As children gathering pebbles on the shore.
Or if I would delight my private hours
With music or with poem, where so soon
As in our native language can I find
That solace? All our law and story strow'd
With hymns, our psalms with artful terms in-
scrib'd

Our Hebrew songs and harps in Babylon,
That pleas'd so well our victor's ear declare
That rather Greece from us these arts deriv'd;
Ill imitated while they loudest sing
The vices of their deities, and their own
In fable, hymn, or song, so personating
Their gods ridiculous, and themselves past
shame.

Remove their swelling epithets thick laid
As varnish on a harlot's cheek, the rest
Thin sown with ought of profit or delight,
Will far be found unworthy to compare
With Sion's songs, to all true tastes excelling,
Where God is prais'd aright, and godlike men,
The holiest of holies, and his saints;
Such are from God inspir'd, not such from thee.
Paradise regained, Book iv. 321—350.

F I N I S.



ERRATA.

Title pa. li. 7 from the bottom, for 27. re. 28.
— — — 3 — — — — — for 11, 12. r. 10, 11.
Pa. 30 li. 9 for 38, r. 35.
— 62 — 17 r. Should burning arrows &c.