

DR. WATTS,

AN

ANTI-TRINITARIAN;

DEMONSTRATED

IN

A REVIEW

OF

DR. MILLER'S LETTER

TO THE EDITOR OF

THE UNITARIAN MISCELLANY.

[James Renwick Willson]

PHILADELPHIA:

PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR; AND SOLD BY D. HOGAN, LITTELL
AND HENRY, AND OTHER BOOKSELLERS.

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PREFATORY REMARKS.

THE progress of Arian and Socinian heresies, in the Reformed churches, both in Europe and America, has given just ground of alarm to the friends of truth,—to all who feel an interest in “the glory of the Lord God of Israel,”—to all who believe that Jesus Christ is “*Emmanuel, God with us.*” Turretin maintains,* that no anti-trinitarian can be saved, while continuing in the belief of anti-trinitarianism. One text, on which he relies for the support of this position, is 1 John v. 20. “And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding that we may know him that is true; and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life.” Jesus Christ is the true God, as well as the Son of God; and, by the knowledge of him as Jehovah Jesus,—God’s eternal Son by necessary generation, and exhibited in humanity as the Father’s righteous servant,†—justification unto life eternal is procured. Hence Turretin reasons, that those who are ignorant of the one only living and true God, subsisting in three persons, co-equal, co-essential, and co-eternal, cannot have life eternal. The opinion of this very eminent divine, has been the current opinion of orthodox men. Arianism, Sabellianism, Socinianism, all of them denying the doctrine of a true and proper trinity of persons in the Godhead, have been considered damnable heresies.

Dr. Miller, a professor in the Princeton Divinity School, takes the same ground, in the Letter reviewed in the following pages. The writer of the Review of

* See his chapter on the Trinity.

† Isaiah liii. 11.

Miller's Letter, hoped that Dr. Miller's brethren in the General Assembly, accorded his views; especially that Dr. Neill, Dr. Janeway, &c. the publishing committee of the Presbyterian Magazine, would accord Miller's doctrine, that anti-trinitarianism is a damnable heresy.

He wrote the Review, and sent it to the publishers of the Presbyterian Magazine, signing his name in full, according to their own terms. This Review has been refused a place in the Magazine. Why? Do those reverend doctors think Dr. Miller has gone too far? Are they unwilling to compliment him as highly as the writer of the Review has done? Are they sensible that they have Arians in their congregations, in Philadelphia? These are questions which the committee will understand. May there not have been another cause? They sing the Psalms and Hymns of Dr. Isaac Watts, in Arch-street, and in the Spruce-street churches. They perceive that Dr. Miller's reviewer has proved, to the satisfaction of every one who will read him, that Watts was, and his writings now are, as decidedly opposed to the doctrine of the Trinity, as Socinus, Arius, Channing, or any other anti-trinitarian. Were they afraid to let their people know that they are singing psalms and hymns composed by a gross heretic?

It is pretty evident, the committee had still another reason. Dr. Miller has enumerated among the articles which form the *very essence* of Christianity, "*total depravity*," and "the vicarious sufferings of Christ." There are hundreds and thousands of Hopkinsians, in connexion with the General Assembly. If we take Dr. Griffin's late work on the Atonement as the index of the doctrines of Hopkinsians generally, then Dr. M. pronounces all Hopkinsians guilty of holding damnable heresies: for Dr. Griffin denies that man is totally depraved; that so far from this, his intellectual powers are as good as Adam's were, and that his active powers only are depraved. Again; Dr. Griffin denies that sin was imputed to Christ, as our representative head. He denies, of course, the substitutionary, or, to use Dr.

Miller's word, the vicarious nature of the sufferings of Christ. According to Dr. Miller, he who denies either the doctrine of man's total depravity by nature, or the substitutionary nature of Christ's obedience, rejects what enters into the very essence of Christianity, and is as far from the way of salvation as the infidel *Hume*. Were the committee of publication unwilling to let their people know, that the amiable and learned professor has denounced Hopkinsians as damnable heretics? The professor ought not to be so treated by his brethren in Philadelphia. When he pronounces an opinion, from the professoral chair, why should they not let his doctrine be heard?

That they were alarmed on this point, is evident from the fact, that they have crossed the part of the *Review* referring to this subject, as the reader will find explained in a note.

In truth, the committee dare not trust what they must know to be true, among their people. Dr. Ely said it was thought it would not be prudent to trust the *Review* among their people, or words to that effect.

He was requested to assign the reasons for the refusal by a note, of which the following is a copy:

" Saturday.

" DEAR DOCTOR,

" I have called several times for the manuscript *Review* of Miller's Letter, and have not had the pleasure of finding you in. As you have signified to me that it cannot have a place in the *Presbyterian Magazine*, will you have the goodness to leave it for me, with the reasons for its non-insertion, that on my next call it may be obtained?—Yours,

" J. R. WILLSON.

" Rev. Dr. ELY."

The manuscript was returned, without any written reasons for the non-insertion. In justice, however, to Dr. Ely, it may be worth notice, that he declared his willingness for its insertion, and said he was not afraid

to let the whole truth be known. Such a declaration is certainly agreeable to the honest frankness of his Contrast, Theological Quarterly Review, his works on the Science of Mind, &c.

What the reasons were that influenced the two other doctors, to refuse the Review a place in the Magazine, intelligent professors, of all parties, will easily decide. How much has the cause of truth,—how much has the church of the living God, to expect from a Magazine conducted on such dastardly principles?

As to the style and temper of the Review, let men of learning and candour judge. To the decision of such men, who love the Lord Jesus Christ, his church, his truth, his children, the Reviewer commits, fearlessly, the following pages.

J. R. W.

Philadelphia, 1821, May 22.

REVIEW.



A Letter to the Editor of the Unitarian Miscellany, in reply to an attack, by an anonymous writer in that work, on a late Ordination Sermon, delivered in Baltimore; by SAMUEL MILLER, D. D. Author of the Sermon. Baltimore: published by E. J. Coale. R. J. Matchet, printer. 1821.

WE naturally look with interest into any thing from the pen of a writer so well known, and so respectable, as the author of this Letter. His Review of the Eighteenth Century, and his Letters on Church Government, together with the important station which he occupies in the church, and which he fills with so much reputation to himself, give peculiar weight to the opinions which he expresses on any of the great questions in theology, that divide public sentiment, in our country. His well known amiableness and liberality are a sure pledge, that when he utters any thing that appears severe, it must proceed from a full conviction of its truth, and not from any angry passions. In the sermon alluded to in the title page, the author of the Letter maintains, that the doctrines of Socinians, or Unitarians,—such as the rejection of the Trinity, of the Divinity of Christ, and of the atonement which he made for sin,—are *another Gospel* than that taught by Christ and his apostles; and

that the Unitarian is not entitled to the name Christian. This position he illustrates, and enforces with such emphasis, as to make it impossible that he should be misunderstood. The author, in taking this ground, assails the enemy on a quarter the most alarming; for the chief reliance of the modern Socinians and Arians, for the diffusion of their opinions, has been placed on the liberality of sentiment which they profess, and seem to expect of those who differ from them. They wish to be considered as attached to the Congregational Church,—as really one with the great body of Congregationalists in the northern states. Their new chapel, in New York, they style the “First Congregational Church.” Dr. M. unmasks their battery, and charges them openly with “bringing in damnable heresies.” He had reason to expect, that the enemy would not be disposed to abandon the citadel, without resistance; he had reason to expect, that Unitarians would reply to him; but, if reliance may be placed on their professions of liberality, charity and politeness, he had not reason to expect that the reply would be so bitter, so virulent, as it proved to be in fact.

The strictures of the Unitarian on the Ordination Sermon, were published in the Unitarian Miscellany, a magazine devoted to the cause of what Dr. M. calls “damnable heresy,” under the signature of “A Baltimore Unitarian.”—The author of the Sermon is called upon, in the most pointed manner, to explain and defend himself; and, ready “to render a reason of the faith” that he holds, he writes to the editor of the Unitarian Miscellany, a Letter in reply to the attack of “A Baltimore Unitarian.” Though a solemn

pledge had been given, in the first number of the Miscellany, that pieces from all parties, when written with moderation and candour, should be inserted, yet the reply to the Unitarian of Baltimore, was refused a place. The reason of the refusal will be ascribed, by every unprejudiced mind, to the proper cause,—the antagonist was too powerful to be admitted into the Unitarian arena, where he boldly offered himself for the combat. They were alarmed; the editors shrunk from the discussion, dreading the result. It is impossible to ascribe the refusal to any other cause; for the Letter is written in all that spirit of meekness and urbanity, so characteristic of its author. He does not, indeed, shrink from the open avowal and plain declaration of his views; and an honourable adversary could not have expected that he should. But the insertion of the Letter was refused, because they apprehended danger. Dr. M. “availed himself of the only other method of coming before a Christian public”—the publication of his Letter in a pamphlet.

The first charge brought against him by the Unitarian of Baltimore, is, That an Ordination Sermon was an improper occasion for introducing what Unitarians deem offensive. This charge he repels, on the ground that his remarks did properly belong to his subject;—that the discussion would have been defective without them;—“that fidelity to his Master in heaven required him to bear the testimony, and give the warning, which have proved to some so unacceptable;”—and that Unitarian ministers have brought forward their peculiar opinions in Ordination Sermons. The second charge is, That “Dr. M. will not allow Unitarians to be Christians.” To which he re-

plies: "This charge I do not deny; and my only answer to it will be an attempt, not to explain or apologize, but to *justify*."

He says: "If I were to define Christianity, as it appears to me exhibited in the word of God, I should say, it is a religion which provides salvation for totally depraved and guilty sinners; and which, for this purpose, sets before them pardon and acceptance with God, through the atonement and righteousness of a divine Mediator, and sanctification by the power of the Holy Spirit. In fewer words,—it is a religion which secures to those who embrace it, a title to heaven, and a preparation for heaven, through the atoning blood and sanctifying Spirit of an Almighty Surety. This, in my view, forms the *essence* of Christianity, the very life and glory of the system, which being taken away, it is destroyed; it is no longer the same religion, but another Gospel." Of course, he who does not receive the doctrine of man's guilt and depravity by nature, and the doctrine of the divinity and atonement of the Son of God, and of the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit, does not receive the Gospel, and is, consequently, "no Christian." This is to speak out nobly, and approaches to the magnanimous firmness of the reformers of the sixteenth century. Thus spoke Luther, Calvin, and Knox, of the heresies of the Church of Rome.

[Short as this abstract of Christianity is, we find "the guilt of man by nature"—that is, the imputation of Adam's sin—the "depravity of man by nature," from infancy—among the doctrines which form the *essence* of Christianity.

He goes on to say, "that the true and proper divinity of Christ, and of his vicarious sacrifice

and atonement, *are* essential doctrines of the Gospel;—That he who rejects those fundamental truths, however respectable, virtuous, and apparently devout he may be, **REJECTS CHRISTIANITY**, as *really*, though not under precisely the same circumstances, yet, as *really* as any Deist ever did; that he cannot with propriety be called a Christian *in any sense*; and that, persisting in this rejection, he is on just as dangerous ground as *Herbert* or *Hume*, and must be considered as equally far from the way of salvation.”*]

The Unitarian of Baltimore is most provoked by the declaration of the author of the Sermon, that “the gay, the fashionable, the worldly, and even the licentious,” are the classes of society to whom the Unitarian preachers are the most acceptable. Dr. M. establishes this position most satisfactorily. Indeed, it needs no proof to any one acquainted with either the past history, or present state of the church.

“My Baltimore accuser,” says Dr. M. “dwells much, and pathetically, on what he considers a gross violation of Christian charity, in speaking as I have done of Unitarians. From what he says on this subject, I conclude that he understands the word *charity* in a sense which, though current enough in common society, among a thousand other popular crudities, is certainly not found in Scripture, and ought to receive no countenance from any accurate thinker. According to him, Christian charity consists in entertaining a favourable opinion of others, however widely

* The sections enclosed in brackets are crossed in the manuscript, by (it is presumed) some one of the committee of publication. Why?

they may differ from us on the most essential points; in supposing that they have inquired after truth as cordially as we have done; and in taking for granted, that there is as much reason to hope that they will be finally accepted of God, as that we ourselves shall be accepted. I assert, with confidence, that the word charity is never used in this sense in Scripture; and that it ought not to be so used by any one, especially when speaking of charity as a Christian duty. The word charity as used in Scripture, is equivalent to the word *love*. To exercise charity toward another, in the language of the Bible, is to love him.

If the writer's ideas of the nature of Christian charity be correct, then our blessed Saviour most grievously offended against this duty, when he said to the Scribes and Pharisees, "Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?" If he be correct, the apostle John no less palpably violated this duty, when he said in his second epistle, "He that abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God: he that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed; for he that biddeth him God speed, is partaker of his evil deeds." The apostle Paul, too, if this be true, lays himself open to a similar charge, when, in writing to the Galatians, he declares, "As we said before, so say I now again, if any man preach any other Gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed." But will any dare to say, that there was a want of charity in these cases."

The cry of charity is raised by all errorists, all

heretics, all who are declining from the truth, or relaxing the tone of truth, or of church order. The unwary are caught in the snare. Men are made to believe, that to say any thing against heresy, held by any one, is a gross violation of charity, and inconsistent with Christian liberality. He who will "strive for the faith of the Gospel," who will "contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints," is denounced as uncharitable, as illiberal, as bigoted: so the heretic of Baltimore denounced Dr. M. The enlightened and scriptural view given of this subject, in the preceding quotation, cannot fail to do good. We are not to be deterred from preaching the truth, and defending it against the errors and heresies of the times, because heretics and errorists cry out bigotry.

The last topic of the Baltimore Unitarian, which Dr. M. notices, "is the list of distinguished Unitarians with which he decorates his pages." The author of the letter confesses his impression, that "Locke and Newton are treated with great injustice, when their names are inserted in the catalogues of Unitarians." Bishop Clayton, he admits, was not a sound Triunitarian. Hoadly, "very much of a latitudinarian." Chillingworth, of very unsteady character—a Protestant and Papist by turns: at length he died a Socinian, soon after having solemnly denied that he was one. "But," says Dr. M. "granting this;" granting that not only Hoadly and Chillingworth, but Law and Blackbourne, and multitudes more, of equal literary fame, belonged to the same class; what is the consequence? Why, that a number of regular clergymen of the Church of England, who had subscribed the Articles, and were in the habit of

solemnly reciting the prayers of that church, did not believe a word of either, but continued, from time to time, deliberately to violate their vows, and insult their God." It is gratifying to hear Dr. M. thus prostrate the claims of the adversary to respect from the names which he musters; and thus strongly reprobate the practice of swearing to support creeds and confessions; while they who so swear, do not believe them. While Dr. M. gives to the Unitarian some of the distinguished men that they claim, he remarks: "I am particularly anxious to separate at least *one name* from the company in which it is placed"—"against placing the pious, the heavenly-minded Watts in such company, I feel constrained to enter my solemn protest." The grounds on which he supports this protest are, that Watts, in his work entitled 'Orthodoxy and Charity United,' comes to a formal and solemn conclusion, that *Socinians are not Christians*;—that his hope of finding Locke in heaven, was founded on the confident persuasion that he was not a Socinian. Dr. M. thinks that Watts never changed his mind, otherwise he would have called in his "Psalms and Hymns, especially his *Doxologies*, in all which the Trinity is so strongly acknowledged."

To be able honestly to assent to this position, would be gratifying. To dissent from an opinion of this amiable and distinguished divine, on a point about which he is "*particularly anxious*;" and to be forced, by unquestionable evidence, to assent to that against which he enters his solemn protest, is painful. The known candour of the author, however, affords this relief, that he will be as ready as any one to assent to the evidence, should it prove decisive, that Watts was a Uni-

tarian ; and that if it shall appear he has formed a mistaken estimate of that writer, he will, with his accustomed candour, admit the truth, however unpleasant. His elevated standing in the church, and his praise-worthy firmness in the cause of truth, forbid the thought that he would descend from the commanding station of a champion for orthodoxy, and for the honour of our glorious Redeemer, and for the glory of the one God subsisting in three persons, to become the humble apologist of any one man, however great his fame, who by his writing had not only put in jeopardy, but had really abandoned those doctrines, which Dr. M. so clearly proves to be the very *essence* of Christianity. This discussion is important; for should it prove to be a fact, that he was really an anti-trinitarian, and that his unwise and imprudent speculations (which Dr. M. admits) were heretical, we weaken our cause by defending *him*, as “pious and heavenly-minded,” while we denounce those who hold *his very* opinions, as no more entitled to the Christian name than “Herbert or Hume.” Farther, his works are in many hands, and his influence confessedly great. Should his readers be induced, by the authority of Dr. M. or any other divine of high and deserved reputation, to view “his speculations” as harmless, and his orthodoxy as indisputable, they would be induced to embrace his opinions, and thus our defence would be worse than ineffectual. A court of inquiry on his final state, we are not authorized to hold; but his opinions, coming down to us with the sanction of his name, are fair subjects of examination, on account of the influence they may have on the cause of truth, and on the purity of the Gospel, “for the

defence of which we are set," by him to whom Watts, as a man, "standeth or falleth."

But let us examine the reasons of Dr. M.'s protest. "Socinians," says Dr. Watts, "are not Christians." Do we not all know how bitterly Dr. Priestley, the Socinian, opposed the Arians? He thought their doctrine of the pre-existence of the soul of Christ, almost as great a heresy as that of the Trinity. When he visited Massachusetts, at least one Arian minister in Salem, refused him admission to his pulpit, and said, that on Dr. Priestley's plan he would despair of salvation. So we perceive that Watts may have been an Arian, and yet have no hope of salvation for Locke, embracing Socinianism. And Dr. M. knows that the great body of those Unitarians, whom he denounces *as no Christians*, are Arians, and not Socinians.

As to "his Psalms, Hymns, and Doxologies," containing strong acknowledgments of the Trinity, he will permit us to doubt. What evidence have we of his belief in this doctrine, from his Psalms and Hymns? The declaration that Christ is "God's eternal Son," is Dwight's, and not Watts'; for it is well known that it was not in *his* imitation of the second Psalm. Sabellians, Dr. M. well knows, might, and did, speak of "God the Father, and God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, three in one," as familiarly as any Trinitarian; though they denied utterly that there are three persons in the Godhead, and maintained that the names Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, were three names of one person, called Father as devising, Son as accomplishing, and Holy Ghost as applying salvation. To drive them from this subterfuge, the term person was applied by the

orthodox and adopted in the confessions of the church, Dr. M. has read the chapter in Calvin's institutions on the Trinity, and knows that it records ample testimony to the truth of these facts. On this subject, we refer the reader to Nolan on the authenticity of the Greek Vulgate. Neither the *Orthodoxy and Charity United*, nor the psalms, hymns and doxologies of Watts, afford a shadow of evidence that their author was not a Sabellian, or an Arian. He might have written all that they both contain, and yet have denied, with the Sabellian, a trinity of persons; or with the Arian, the divinity of the Saviour. Indeed, that the erudite Dr. M., notwithstanding his particular anxiety, should be able to produce no better testimony of Dr. Watts' orthodoxy, affords a very strong presumption that it cannot be found.

After all, we should not prefer so great a charge as that of heresy, against so celebrated a man, on presumption; let us hear him speak for himself. He says,* "I think it also proper to acknowledge, that I was at that time inclined to suppose these personal representations in Scripture, especially so far as relates to the blessed Spirit, were really to be understood in a more proper and literal sense, than I now find necessary; and on that account I did then express the doctrine of three persons, or three distinct intelligent agents, in terms a little stronger and more unlimited than my judgment now approves. For since that time I have more carefully considered the Jewish idioms of speech, wherein powers, virtues, and properties are frequently personalized, or represented in a

* Preface to the Arian invited to the Orthodox Faith.—*Watts' Works*, vol. 6. p. 274. London, 1813.

personal manner.” Again,* “Some may wonder that I have omitted the eternal generation of his divine nature in this place. But I know no text that plainly calls Christ the Son, considered as pure God; and if revelation does not dictate the doctrine of a begotten God, reason does not at all require it.” Again,† “But when the Word and Spirit are called persons, which are supposed to be really but divine powers of the Father, whose inward distinction we know not, the term person is then used in a figurative or metaphorical sense, and not in so proper and literal a sense as when the Father is called a person. Yet that there is sufficient distinction between them to lay a foundation for such a distinct personal representation of them in Scripture, will appear by the following considerations:

‡“Are not the various faculties of man often represented under personal characters, in common discourse? How frequently is a man represented as conversing with his own mind, communing with his own heart, following the dictates of his own will, or subduing his will, and subjecting it to his reason? Do we not freely say, ‘my mind denies her assent to such a doctrine; or my will resists no more, but yields itself up to the conduct of my understanding?’—And since human powers are thus represented as persons, why may not the Word and Spirit, *which are divine powers*, be thus represented also? And why may not God be represented as a person, transacting his own divine affairs with his Word and Spirit, under personal characters; since a man is represented

* Preface to the Arian invited to the Orthodox Faith.—*Watts' Works*, vol. 6. p. 299.

† *Ibid.* 365—6.

‡ *Ibid.* p. 371.

as transacting human affairs with his understanding, mind, will, reason, fancy, or conscience, in a personal manner?" Again,* "And as the divine nature, as God, has something in him transcendently superior to all our ideas of human souls, so the powers of a God, which, in condescension to our weakness, are called his Word and his Spirit, may have something in them, even in this respect, so transcendently superior to the powers of the human soul as to be more proper subjects of such personal characters and ascriptions, as the holy Scriptures has attributed to them; and yet their distinction or difference may not be so great as to make them distinct conscious minds." "And if any single term signified the power of operation, or moving the body, I would apply that to the Holy Spirit; because I think this analogy and resemblance would come something nearer to the scriptural ideas of the Word and Spirit; the one being represented as an intelligent volative power, the other as an intelligent effective power."—"Here let it be observed, that in explaining these distinctions in the divine nature itself, I choose to call the second person the Word rather than the Son; for as some late writers suppose that the Sonship of Christ rather refers to his human nature, or to his mediatorial office, than to his Godhead, so I must declare, I am much inclined to that sentiment!" Again,† "May we not therefore conceive the Word and Spirit, as two divine faculties, virtues, or powers in the essence of God?" And,‡ "But his Word and his Spirit seem to be represented in Scripture, as the

* Preface to the Arian invited to the Orthodox Faith.—*Watts' Works*, vol. 6, p. 380.

† *Ibid.* p. 382.

‡ *Ibid.* p. 383.

physical principles of knowing, willing, and efficiency, and therefore I will call them powers!" &c. In page 308, he explains what he means by his doxologies—"If the Word and Spirit are those divine powers by which God doeth every thing, may not each of them be called God? May we not say the Word is God, and the Spirit is God? May not what each of them does be appropriated to God, since they are the powers by which God operates?" Do the doxologies of this man prove his orthodoxy? In these quotations Watts cannot be misunderstood. He most distinctly denies the existence of three persons in the Trinity, and makes the Son and the Holy Ghost to be mere faculties, physical faculties, or attributes. The Son and Holy Ghost, in his view, are no more persons, than the human understanding and will are persons. To prove this is the burden of the whole essay, entitled, *The Arian invited to the Orthodox Faith*, occupying 175 octavo pages. Any one who reads it, though he must be shocked, if he is orthodox, with its monstrous heresies, will be convinced that he was in the full vigour of his mind. Even if he had not, we find it among his works, where his friends, who had a right to judge of his sanity, have left it. In fact, *The Arian invited to the Orthodox Faith* was written, as appears by the date of his preface,* May 8th 1725,—that is, 23 years before the year of his death, 1748. He was then neither a thoughtless youth, nor doting old man; for both of these have been asserted by his friends. That he wrote these heresies when he "fancied himself a tea-pot," is an apology which, though offered by some of his ad-

* *Watts' Works*, vol. 6. p. 276.

vocates, he would have disdained. We find the same sentiments in his *Questions concerning Jesus the Son of God*, in the preface to which he says,* “He also takes the freedom to say, these papers are the product of that part of life when the powers of mind and body were in full vigour.”

Whatever Dr. M. may think of his being “pre-eminently conscientious and disinterested,”† we see he has told us expressly, that he did change his mind. Let no one think that Dr. M. is charged with wilful misrepresentation. It is impossible that he could have known the heresies of Dr. Watts, and have written as he has. Of this he is cordially acquitted. Doddridge, Anderson, M’Master, Dr. Erskine, Dr. Ely, and others, especially President Edwards, exhibit Watts’ opinions in the same light in which they are represented in the preceding pages. Who will doubt the discrimination of President Edwards? Who will accuse that illustrious scholar and divine of a disposition to do injustice to Watts? Of his scheme of the pre-existence of the soul of Christ, he speaks in the following terms‡—“According to what seems to be Dr. Watts’ scheme, the Son of God is no distinct divine person, he is the same with the Father. So far as he is a divine person, he is the same person with the Father. So that, in the covenant of redemption, the Father covenants with himself, and he takes satisfaction of himself, &c. Unless you will say, that one nature covenanted with the other; the two natures in the same person covenanted together,

* Preface to the Arian invited to the Orthodox Faith.—*Watts’ Works*, vol. 6. p. 391.

† Letter, p. 33.

‡ Edwards’ *Obser.* vol. ii.

and one nature in the same person took satisfaction of the other nature in the same person. But how does this confound our minds, instead of helping our ideas, or making them more easy and intelligible!" Thus, we perceive that that great and good man did not believe that Dr. Watts owned the doctrine of the Trinity, though he had before him no more, evidently, than 'Watts on the Glory of Christ.' What would he have said, had he read the *Arian invited to the Orthodox Faith*, or the prayer quoted by M'Master.

It is hoped, that the friend of truth will hereafter abandon him to the Unitarians. His reasoning, in the *Arian invited*, &c. is precisely the same as Dr. Priestley has published in many works, and it is well known that Dr. Priestley always claimed Watts; and Dr. M. admits, that however heretical Priestley was, he was not uncandid. Our cause does not depend on Watts, any more than on Priestley, Belsham, or Lindsey, but on the infallible word of God. After a violent controversy, the friends of Origen had to abandon him, and no one now doubts that he was an anti-trinitarian. With him, and other heretics of his stamp, history will record the name of Watts; and posterity will wonder that any one orthodox man ever defended him, as we now do that any one did Origen. Truth can and will triumph, without the aid of the names either of Watts or Origen. Other attempts to defend him, will only provoke a more full exposure of the extent and enormity of the heresies of Watts, of which the Christian community knows yet comparatively little. This is not intended for the amiable author of the Letter; from his

candour and frankness, other such attempts are not to be expected from him. Every impartial and other orthodox man, who will study Watts with attention, must come to the *solemn conclusion* that he is incomparably more dangerous than Socinus, Cullius, Priestley or Channing. The reader is forewarned, when he enters their pages, and armed against the poison: But when he reads Watts, he enters his pages with all his prepossessions in his favour, with a full persuasion that he is a Trinitarian, that he is orthodox. Dr. M. does not indeed say so much, but the incautious reader will infer it; and, believing him "pious and heavenly-minded," "pre-eminently conscientious and disinterested," "a great and good man, to whom the interests of vital piety are much indebted," he will drink in his heresies, proposed with so much show of piety, until he is intoxicated with the draught so skilfully prepared. Dr. M. will regret, as much as any one, when he discovers the fact, that he has contributed to increase the danger.

JAS. R. WILLSON.

NEWBURGH, (N. Y.) }
 April 23d, 1821. }





