



A  
REFUTATION  
OF  
ARIANISM;  
OR,  
A DEFENCE

OF THE  
PLENARY INSPIRATION OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES, THE SUPREME  
DEITY OF THE SON AND HOLY GHOST, THE ATONEMENT,  
ORIGINAL SIN, PREDESTINATION, THE PERSE-  
VERANCE OF THE SAINTS, ETC.;

IN REPLY TO  
DRS. BRUCE, MANT, MILLAR, AND GRAVES.

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“ Rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith.”—PAUL.  
“ Contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the Saints.”—JUDE.  
“ Buy the truth, and sell it not.”—SOLOMON.

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TO WHICH IS ADDED,  
A DEFENCE OF CREEDS AND CONFESSIONS.

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BY THE REV. JOHN PAUL,  
CARRICKFERGUS.

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*J. Seymour, printer, John-street.*

## PREFACE.

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WITH a deep-rooted aversion to the usual practice of apologizing, I feel it necessary to write a preface replete with apologies. My readers, I presume, are prepared to ask a variety of questions, all of which deserve to be answered. First, they will ask me, why my **REFUTATION** did not appear sooner. I answer: Much time was lost in vain expectation that some abler advocate would plead the same cause: and, after I had reluctantly engaged in the controversy, my various avocations, and a number of other circumstances, the detail of which would be altogether uninteresting, tended greatly to retard my progress. I regret indeed in common with my readers, that my **REFUTATION OF ARIANISM** did not appear sooner; but I regret still more, that a much longer period of time was not allowed me for executing a task so arduous and important—for writing a book which embraces a whole body of controversial divinity—a book which professes to defend almost all the leading doctrines of our holy religion. A question, however, of far more importance, and involving a far more serious charge, will probably be put by some of my readers. In your *Refutation of Arianism*, they will say, why do you attack the Church of England? Answer—I do not *attack* the Church of England; I *defend* the Church of England; I de-

defend the doctrines of the Thirty-nine Articles. But why, they will ask, do you attack the Lord Bishop of Down and Connor, Dr. Millar, and Dr. Graves—Answer—I do not *attack* those Dignitaries? I am not the *assailant*: I am only the *humble defendant*: I reluctantly submit to the painful necessity of defending my own principles—the doctrines of the Church of Scotland—the doctrines of the Church of England—against the attack of those venerable Divines. Was it not, however—the querist will say—was it not highly improper to class the Arminians with the Arians?—Answer—I did not class them; they classed *themselves* with the Arians. Dr. Millar made common cause with Dr. Bruce in attacking Calvinism. It is not, therefore, from *choice*, but from *necessity*, that I have attempted to defend my principles against their united attack. But was it not imprudent to make so many enemies?—Answer—I hope I have made *no enemies at all*. Surely the Lord Bishop of Down and Connor, Dr. Millar, Dr. Graves, and Dr. Bruce, are Divines of more candour and liberality than to be offended at me for an humble attempt to defend my own principles—principles which I believe to be founded in *truth, in reason and scripture*.

Still, however, it will be said, that had I taken no notice of the Dignitaries of the Church of England, the members of that church would have rallied round me; the Arminians would have patronised my publication; I would have had more friends, and larger profits—All this may be true; but it does not convince me of the impropriety of my conduct. I contend for *truth*, not for *money*. Accustomed from my *youth* to submit to privations for the sake of truth, and a good conscience, I will not temporize now when I am

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*old.* No man can finally be a loser by an uncompromising attachment to truth. I know who has said, "*Be faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.*"

But what necessity, it may be said, for mentioning the names of those Arminian divines in my Prospectus, or in my Title-page?—Answer—Because I do not choose to fight under false colours: I do not wish to practise deception; I wish my Prospectus or Title-page to be a faithful index of my book. My readers, however, will carefully observe, that whilst I contend against Arminianism, as well as against Arianism, I do not regard the two systems as equally remote from truth. I believe that the difference between Arminians and Calvinists is frequently more in *words* than in *ideas*: I believe that multitudes who are Arminians in *head*, are Calvinists in *heart*. Were the Calvinistic system fairly represented and well understood, I am confident opposition would in a great measure cease. The view I have given in the following Defence is, I flatter myself, agreeable to the standards of the Churches of England and Scotland—it is substantially the same, I presume, with that of the great body of Calvinists. This view I have never yet seen opposed. Anti-Calvinists, so far as I know, have never yet ventured to attack it, though it has been frequently exhibited by such writers as Edwards, Fuller, Newton, and Scott. When our opponents attack Calvinism, they attack a view of it which the Calvinists themselves do not *acknowledge*.—They form a kind of medley system, composed of passages taken out of their natural order—unguarded expressions extracted from the works of ancient divines—and large quotations from Antinomian writers—this *factitious*—this *monstrous* system

—a system which nobody *ever believed*, and which nobody *defends*—they heroically attack, and triumphantly demolish. They then shout victory, and are hailed by the acclamations of the unthinking multitude, the dupes of their artifice. By such sleight of men and cunning craftiness the simple are deceived, truth is laid low, and error enjoys a temporary triumph. This disgraceful mode of warfare I am reluctantly compelled to expose in the subsequent pages. Should Arian or Arminian divines think proper to follow up their attack—and I have no objections at all to see them in the field—I shall expect them to come forward as *honourable* antagonists. I shall expect them to attack, not *a shadow*, not *a man of straw*, not *a mock Calvinism*, but the *real Calvinistic system*, as exhibited in our standards, and defended in the following sheets.

Some readers may perhaps say, You have treated Dr. Bruce with too little ceremony—You are guilty *yourself* of the very same things which you censure in *him*—You blame him for using abusive epithets, such as *fanatics, enthusiasts, and bigots*; and yet you employ language no less severe, as *misrepresentation, calumny, forgery, &c.*—Answer—I do not blame the Doctor merely for calling his opponents *fanatics, enthusiasts, and bigots*; but I blame him for using those epithets in a *licentious and wanton manner, without proof*.—If I arraign a man for theft, and bring forward evidence to substantiate my charge, I may call him a *thief*; but if *without proof* I apply such epithets, I expose myself to an action for defamation of character. Dr. B. employs opprobrious epithets without proof or shadow of evidence: it is for this I blame him—it is for this I censure him. On the contrary, I



hope my readers will find, that such terms as *misrepresentation, calumny, forgery, &c.* are used by me, only when the charges implied in those epithets are fully substantiated,—But why use such epithets *at all*? —Answer—Because I wish to call things by their proper names. I do not wish to call evil good, and good evil. I do not wish by soft names to reconcile men's minds to errors or to vices—a practice quite *fashionable* indeed, but fraught with consequences the most *baneful and pernicious*. Towards those learned, and highly respectable Divines, on whose writings I animadvert, I am conscious of no feelings but those of kindness and benevolence. Should any of my expressions appear too strong, or be regarded as personal, I shall feel much mortified; for, I can assure my readers, that, if I know any thing of my own heart, it was *errors, not men, I meant to attack.*

My “*Refutation*” is a work entirely argumentative. Against such books I know there is a prejudice—a prejudice, as I conceive, *highly unreasonable*. *Reasoning* and *argument* characterised the first propagation of Christianity. The founder of our religion *reasoned and argued*: when only twelve years of age, he disputed with the Doctors. During the whole period of his public ministry we find him addressing the understandings of men—reasoning with the Pharisees and Sadducees, the Scribes and the Lawyers—detecting their impostures, and exposing their corruptions, refuting their errors and putting them to silence. Imitating their Divine Master, the Apostles and Evangelists *reasoned and argued*. In the synagogues of the Jews, the Apostle Paul reasoned every Sabbath. In the school of Tyrannus he disputed daily. The Epicurean and Stoic Philosophers, the Jewish Rabbin,

and the learned counsellors of Mars-hill, he encountered by reasoning and confounded by argument. The proto-martyr Stephen *reasoned down* the “Libertines, the Cyrenians, and Alexandrians—they were not able to resist the wisdom and spirit by which he spake.” Luther, Calvin, Zuinglius, and all the fathers of the Reformation, *reasoned and argued*. By reasoning and by argument the strong holds of the “*man of sin*” were stormed, and a spiritual emancipation gloriously effected. Nor need we anticipate a victory over the *many-headed monster* ERROR, if we refuse to wield those spiritual weapons. Impressed with this conviction, I have humbly attempted to defend by argument what I regard as the great fundamental truths of Christianity. I have addressed myself, not to the *feelings*, the *passions*, or the *prejudices*, but to the *understandings* of my readers.

In replying to the polemical sermons of the Rev. Dr. Bruce, I have endeavoured to meet every argument which I considered *material*. The only subject which I have not discussed, is the eternity of punishment. The Doctor’s idea, that the wicked will be punished in hell for a certain period of time, and then annihilated, being a completely gratuitous assumption, and having no countenance from either Scripture or reason, I considered *unworthy* of a refutation. What reason to believe, that the happiness of the righteous will be *everlasting*, and the misery of the wicked only *temporary*, when, in the very same passage,\* *the very same word in the original* is employed to designate the duration of *both*? With regard to the wicked, our Saviour assures us, that “*their worm dies not, and the*

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\* Matt. xxv. 45.

„*fire is not quenched.*” Now, if the Doctor’s idea be *correct*, the Redeemer’s declaration is not *true*: for surely the worm of conscience will *die*, when the subject is *annihilated*—surely the fire of misery will be *quenched*, when the unhappy victims are all *reduced to nothing*! Those who wish to see a triumphant defence of the eternity of future punishment, may consult “*Edwards against Chauncey*,” and President Edwards’ “*Remarks.*”

Doctor B., in his preface, boasts of the progress of Arian principles, particularly in the Synod of Ulster. I am happy, however, to find, that the Synod has denied the truth of the charge, and very properly repelled it by a counter-declaration. The truth is, that in the Synod of Ulster, Arianism seems to be in the *last stage of a consumption*. When an Arian minister dies, he is almost uniformly succeeded by one of orthodox principles. Of the Synod of Munster there is no room for boasting: that body appears to be reduced to a skeleton, and Arianism to be dying a natural death. That Arian principles have obtained the ascendancy in Geneva, I believe is true; but the tide is turned, and the Arians are endeavouring to stem it by persecution. The attempt however is vain: those who have drank the new wine of Arianism are turning from it with disgust, exclaiming, as they embrace their ancient principles, “*The old is better!*”

The reader of the following treatise will not suppose, that I mean to condemn *every thing* contained in the Doctor’s sermons; nor that I approve of all those sentiments which I have *not opposed*. The sermons reviewed contain many things which I not only *approve but admire*; particularly on the intercession of Christ and the doctrine of repentance. They also



contain many things which I *disapprove*, but on which my limits would not allow me to animadvert. Should the Doctor himself, or any of his friends, think proper to stand forward in defence of his principles, I may then have an opportunity of extending my animadversions. In the mean while, it is my heart's desire and prayer to God that he would render my humble exertions instrumental in arresting the progress of error, and extending the triumphs of truth. "Arise, O God, plead thine own cause."

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## INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER.

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*Objections to Dr. Bruce's mode of managing the controversy.—Objection 1st—Abusive epithets applied to his opponents,—Fanatics—Enthusiasts—Bigots.*

IN the controversial Sermons of the Rev. Dr. Bruce, we would naturally expect fair, candid, and manly discussion. His reputation as a Divine, and celebrity as a scholar, would lead us to conclude, that he would never condescend to excite vulgar prejudice by any of those low, mean arts, which too frequently characterise inferior controversialists. In these reasonable expectations we feel ourselves not a little disappointed. The Doctor's mode of managing the controversy appears to me, in many respects, highly exceptional. I shall state my objections in order.

### OBJECTION I.

*I object to those abusive epithets with which he constantly loads his opponents.* Fanatics, enthusiasts, and bigots, with him are quite common appellations—appellations which, it must be confessed, are but too well calculated to foment in the minds of his hearers Pharisaic pride; to rivet upon them the chains of their prejudice; and to inspire them with hatred, animosity, and contempt.

Whilst the Doctor charges his opponents with fanaticism, enthusiasm, &c. he probably flatters himself, that *he* is quite free from those odious vices. It is possible, however, that he may be mistaken. Let us examine a few of his sentiments.

In his first Sermon, (p. 6,) he assures us, that “The humblest rustic, who is in the habit of assiduously and seriously perusing his Bible, knows all that is known by the wisest man upon earth of the divine nature.—The existence, attributes, and providence of God are his daily study,” &c.

Now, if all this be so, for what purpose have thousands of sermons been preached? For what purpose have thousands of treatises been written on those subjects?—What becomes of Dr. Clarke's famous demonstration of the Being and Attributes of God? What becomes of Abernethy's Sermons? And, above all, what becomes of Dr. Bruce's own treatise?—that treatise on the Being and Attributes for which he expected the Aberdeen prize? Why publish volumes upon volumes on the Being and Attributes of God, when the humblest rustic knows as much of the divine nature, as the wisest man upon earth?—What egregious trifling!

With regard to the same illiterate rustic, the Doctor assures us, that “the scenes of nature are exhibited to his mental eye—that he is taught the benevolent uses for which they were designed; and how they demonstrate the wisdom, power, and goodness of their Creator—and what more,” he asks, “does the wisest philosopher know than this? Make out an account of all his surplus knowledge, and what does it amount to?”

Of course, Ray, Derham, Paley\* and others, who wrote volumes on the wise ends and benevolent uses of the works of God, were all laborious triflers! They knew nothing more on those subjects, than the humblest rustic! Why then should the world be pestered any longer with such useless lumber? All such treatises, according to Dr. B., are quite superfluous?

But this is not all—The Doctor's rustic is a character still more extraordinary. “He is conversant with all the authentic information which any man possesses, of the conduct of Providence in the government of nations.”

Indeed! And does Dr. B. mean to assert, that there is no authentic history in the world, but Scripture history? Does he mean to assert, that the histories of Rollin, Robertson, Gibbon, Mosheim, and a thousand others, give the man of letters no advantage over the rustic, in contemplating the wisdom of God in the conduct of Divine Providence? A strange and novel assertion indeed!

Finally—The Doctor's rustic is not only on a *level* with the philosopher; he is far *above* him!—“He can look

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\* Ray's *Wisdom of God in the Works of Creation*. Derham's *Astro-theology*, and *Physico-theology*, and Paley's *Natural Theology*, are the works referred to.



“forward to his end and destination with *as much substantial knowledge, and MORE confirmed assurance*, than the “man of letters.”

If this doctrine be true, then—Wo to learning! Down with all Academies, Collèges and Universities! Learning is no longer a *blessing* but a *curse*! What pious parent would send his son to a College or an Academy, if convinced that, in these seminaries, no substantial knowledge can be acquired—and that a liberal education, so far from being the handmaid of religion, would shake his son’s assurance with regard to his prospects of endless glory?\*

I acknowledge, indeed, that learning, when not imbued with piety, is a dangerous thing. It has been the bane of the religious world; and the source of almost all the errors and heresies, with which the church of God has been hitherto infested. Those “men who have crept into the church unawares, bringing in damnable heresies, denying the Lord that bought them,” &c. have been, generally, men of learning; but destitute of piety—“ever learning, but never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.”

All this, however, amounts to no proof, that ignorance is better than learning—and that a man “should study to become a fool, a perfect simpleton in worldly matters,” as the Doctor has taught us in his second sermon.—On the contrary, Solomon’s proverbs still remain true, “For the soul to be without knowledge is not good.—Wisdom excels folly as far as light excels darkness.”

The preference which Dr. B. gives to the illiterate rustic is not more extraordinary, than his ideas respecting the acquisition of knowledge. In page 68 he assures us, that “we are furnished by our Creator with an instinctive knowledge of certain necessary truths, both natural and moral”—And in page 74 he asserts, “Such knowledge of the qualities and uses of things about us, as is necessary to subsistence, is easily acquired by instinct, or a simple application of our corporeal senses; such religious truths, also, as are essential to godliness and eternal life, are readily discovered or apprehended by conscience, or learn-

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\* In the subsequent paragraph, the Doctor speaks of “a view of creation, &c.”—a view *dispersed*—a view *accumulated*—a view *delivered*. In order to prove his favourite point—that the bible-reading peasant is superior to the man of letters—did he really conceive it necessary to abandon his own accuracy by making such a massacre of language?

“ed from scripture by the exercise of our reason, and our  
“moral faculties.”

*Instinctive knowledge* of truths both natural and moral !  
Acquiring knowledge by *instinct* !—Discovering truth by  
*conscience* !—Learning truths, not only by reason, but by  
our *moral faculties* !—These are new things under the  
sun.\*

In his epistle dedicatory the Doctor writes thus : “ For  
“ my own part, I am more afraid of singularity, than ambi-  
“ tious of originality. I have always felt a dread of deal-  
“ ing out my own crude conceptions for your spiritual  
“ nourishment; and have preferred food, that had been  
“ well concocted by more skilful hands,” &c.

Without waiting to inquire whether food previously con-  
cocted by other hands be most nutritive—or whether hands  
be the proper organs of concoction—I may venture to  
affirm, that the passages on which I have been animadvert-  
ing were never concocted by any hands but the Doctor’s.  
Though, in the sermons under review, there is little origi-  
nality, yet the sentiments quoted above must be acknow-  
ledged to be completely original. Nobody, I presume, will  
be so uncharitable as to suspect, that any of “ *those emi-  
“ nent ministers, Haliday and his (Dr. B.’s) grandfather,  
“ Drennan and Brown, Mackay and Crombie,*”—or that  
any other member of the Antrim Presbytery, ever taught  
doctrines so *unphilosophical*, so *hostile to learning*.

Without any proof, our learned author politely stigma-  
tises his opponents, as fanatics and enthusiasts. With great

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\* From a divine, who assumes the right to look down with contempt  
on so learned, and so respectable a body, as the Synod of Ulster—(as  
the Doctor does in his late speech before the proprietors of the Belfast  
Academical Institution)—from a divine, who superciliously charac-  
terises the Ulster Synod, as having no claims either to science or lite-  
rature, we would naturally expect a more favourable specimen of  
literary and scientific talent, than we find exhibited in the sermons  
under review; and particularly in the preceding quotations. What  
minister—what probationer—what student of the Synod of Ulster, does  
not know that the doctrine of innate ideas, or instinctive knowledge, is  
long since exploded? The veriest smatterer in metaphysics knows  
that the idea of acquiring knowledge by instinct is absurd. He knows  
that progressive improvement is utterly incompatible with instinct. He  
knows that conscience is a witness: he knows that conscience is a  
judge: and he knows also, that whatever metaphysical account may  
be given of it, no metaphysician was ever so foolish as to imagine that  
its office is—THE DISCOVERY OF TRUTH. Finally, he knows that  
truths can be learned by *no moral faculty* distinct from reason.

respect, I would entreat him to lay aside "that inordinate self-love which we indulge for ourselves;"\* and to read with candour the preceding remarks; he will then probably be convinced, that his *own* doctrines are not quite so free from fanaticism and enthusiasm, as he at first imagined. He will probably see reason for being more sparing in the use of such opprobrious epithets in future. He will perceive the propriety of "casting first the beam out of his own eye, " that he may see more clearly to pull the mote out of his " brother's eye."

On the epithet bigot, so liberally bestowed by the Doctor, I shall now offer a few remarks. "Bigot," says an eloquent American writer, "is a brand of infamy, not less " than infidel or heretic; and quite as freely applied. Se- " rious as the subject is, one can hardly forbear smiling at " the mistakes we are apt to commit in estimating our own " characters. There are no more decided bigots on earth, " than those who are bigoted to liberality."

That these observations are perfectly appropriate, the following paragraph (p. 52, 53) will clearly evince. "If then, " any candid and inquisitive person be desirous of knowing " what light may be obtained from the researches of learn- " ed and pious men, I do not advise him to resort to coun- " cils, nor any other assemblies of divines; because they " all differ from each other, and have generally been con- " vened for the purpose of fomenting discord, and sup- " pressing free inquiry, or to promote some political view. " Neither do I recommend commentators and controver- " sial writers; for these are generally warped by their " attachment to some human system of doctrine, which " has been engrafted on the word of God; and are, in " general, the most strenuous advocates for some favourite " system, for which they wish to be distinguished as cham- " pions. For the same reason, you should not consult any " authors, who are deeply involved in controversy, or " bound to any human profession of faith. But there are " some paraphrases, which express the sense of scripture " in plainer, more intelligible or more modern language " than our translation, without enlarging on particular " topics. These may be applied to with profit, if their " authors be men of liberal sentiments, and not servilely

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\* The Doctor's own language,—Being and Attributes. (p. 108.)



“ devoted to any particular sect or denomination. Of this  
 “ class are some of the most distinguished authors in our  
 “ language, and most eminent philosophers of modern  
 “ times, neither influenced by sectarian prejudices, nor fet-  
 “ tered by professional trammels. There are some men of  
 “ this character in almost every church ; men who, from  
 “ principle, prejudice, or interest, adhere to its forms and  
 “ doctrines in general, but keep themselves at liberty to  
 “ exercise the right of private judgment on particular ques-  
 “ tions. These authors, though justly chargeable with  
 “ some degree of insincerity by their respective churches,  
 “ and of timidity by more resolute Christians, are, upon  
 “ the whole, among the safest guides.”

Such is the liberality and candour of our learned author.

Solomon thought, that “ in the multitude of counsellors  
 “ there is safety ;” but Dr. B. is of a different opinion.  
 He does not allow his hearers to consult councils, or as-  
 semblies of divines. By this means he contrives to keep  
 out of their hands such books as the Westminster Confes-  
 sion of Faith, Catechisms, larger and shorter, the Articles  
 and Homilies of the Church of England, &c.

Again ; he prohibits the perusal of authors bound to any  
 human confession of faith. By this measure he proscribes,  
 at once, all books written by the divines of the Church of  
 England, the Church of Scotland, or any other church  
 requiring subscription.\*

Once more ; he proscribes another large class of books  
 —ALL COMMENTARIES WHATEVER ! None of his hearers  
 must look into commentaries. All such works are entirely  
 prohibited.

Still farther he proscribes, 1st, “ Controversial writers,”  
 and, 2ndly, “ Authors deeply involved in controversy.”  
 By the proscription of those two classes—two, I mean,  
 according to the Doctor’s arrangement—he prudently  
 keeps out of the hands of his hearers the works of the

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\* I have subscribed a confession of faith ; my writings are therefore  
 useless. Dr. B. has proscribed them. He has prohibited his hearers  
 from reading any such books. Before this sentence of proscription is  
 executed, I would say, “ Strike, but hear.” Hear my defence of creeds  
 and confessions before you condemn them. My defence is before the  
 public. It has silenced *one* Antitrinitarian opponent. If Dr. B. choose  
 to renew the attack, the field is open. If he decline entering the lists,  
 I shall consider my reasoning in favour of confessions equal, at least,  
 to his *ipse dixit* against them.

most eminent independent divines. Dr. Owen, President Edwards, Fuller, Wardlaw, and many such lights, must all be extinguished. Dr. B. has condemned them to be "put under a bushel." Why?—they are either "controversial writers," or "authors deeply involved in controversy." Let us not, however, imagine that our author meant to prohibit the controversial writings of Arians. By no means. That he did not mean to prohibit their controversial writings, is evident from two decisive facts. 1st. If he had intended to proscribe *their* writings, he would not have countenanced the republication of the controversial sermons of Price and Channing. 2ndly. He would not have published, and put into the hands of his hearers, *his own controversial sermons*.

Magowan, in his letters to Priestly, happily blending humour with good sense, says: "I heartily concur with you in believing the Bible to be the only rule; and, to adopt your own words, sincerely wish that all persons, of all sects and parties, would study their Bibles more, and books of controversy less; yet, I shall have no objection to all people, of all sects, reading what may pass between you and me. I am ready to think, indeed, that it is usual for polemic writers to suppose that all books of controversy are hurtful, except those of which they themselves happen to be the authors."

Agreeably to these judicious remarks, it is quite evident that Dr. B. regards as hurtful, and therefore proscribes, all books of controversy, *except his own and those of his Arian brethren!*—An admirable plan indeed! and well calculated to promote the Arian system!

Such are the books prohibited by our learned author:—  
 1. All books published by councils and general assemblies.  
 —2. All books published by the Ministers of the Church of England, the Church of Scotland, or any other church that requires subscription to a confession of faith.—3. All commentaries.—4. All controversial books, except those published by himself and his brethren. Such is the *Index Expurgatorius\** of Dr. Bruce!—yes, of that Dr. Bruce who interlard his sermons with the opprobrious epithets of enthusiasts, fanatics, and *bigots!*

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\* The Index Expurgatorius was a catalogue of those books prohibited by the Church of Rome.

It must be granted, indeed, that whilst our author prohibits commentaries, he does not prohibit all books. With certain qualifications and restrictions, he tolerates the use of paraphrases. Why he should prohibit the one class and tolerate the other, is not so clear. That commentators are more warped by attachment to human systems than paraphrasts, is by no means self-evident. Besides, Dr. Campbell, (a divine no less eminent than Dr. B.) in his *Philosophy of Rhetoric*, condemns paraphrases, as calculated to *weaken* and *dilute* the meaning of the sacred oracles; and, on that account, gives to commentaries a decided preference. But, waiving these things, it must be acknowledged that our author has not prohibited *all* books; that, under certain restrictions, he has tolerated paraphrases—and paraphrases too, written by the members of different churches: but what sort of members? Not those who conscientiously believe the principles they profess; but men who, tampering with their own conscience, burst the trammels of their profession—men who cowardly and hypocritically subscribe orthodox creeds, whilst they teach a different kind of doctrine! Is not this the plain meaning of the Doctor? If not, I should be glad to know what he means. According to Dr. B.,—if I do not mistake his meaning, and I presume I do not,—a cowardly hypocrite, subscribing one class of doctrines, and teaching another, is “upon the whole among the safest guides”—a safer guide than the orthodox minister, who conscientiously believes, and sincerely teaches, the doctrines he has subscribed! Such is the liberality of that divine who so liberally bestows on his neighbours the epithet—BIGOTS!

Dr. B. censures those, who “neither read nor listen to any thing that is inconsistent with their distinguishing tenets, and who esteem it an abomination to read a book written by one of an opposite persuasion”—observing, “that implicit faith is no longer the peculiar characteristic of the Romish communion. It is equally prevalent among Protestants of this description, and renders them equally invulnerable to (by) reason and inaccessible to argument.” May not such characters turn round, and, with a sarcastic sneer, reply, “Physician, heal thyself?” What Protestant divine of any denomination—what priest—what Pope—ever made so bold an attempt to stop up the avenues of knowledge—to render men invulnerable by reason, and inaccessible to argument—to wrap them up in the impene-



trable veil of an implicit faith—and, in a word, to constitute them fanatics, enthusiasts, and bigots?

## OBJECTION II.

Dr. B. meanly attempts to raise a prejudice against his opponents, by raking together the most foolish and absurd things found in their writings, during a period of three hundred years. He quotes, for instance, from the *Monthly Repository*, the following absurd expressions of Luther: “Christ became the greatest transgressor, murderer, thief, rebel, and blasphemer, that ever was, or could be, in the whole world; for he, being made a sacrifice for the sins of the whole world, is not now an innocent person, and without sin.”\*

In an unguarded moment did such absurd, I had almost said blasphemous, expressions drop from the pen of Luther the reformer. What then? Are they believed? are they adopted? By no means. They are, so far as I know, universally condemned. Why do our opponents ransack the archives of antiquity; select detached sentences from musty volumes which few possess; and attack rash and unguarded sentiments, which none believe? Why do they expend all their strength in attacking those weak or foolish sayings, which have been a thousand times attacked, and which nobody will defend? If they think they are able to oppose the orthodox faith, why do they not come forward, and attack it as men? Why do they not attack the doctrines of the Church of England, as contained in her articles and homilies? Why do they not attack the doctrines of the Church of Scotland, as contained in the Westminster confession of faith, and catechisms larger and shorter? Why are they so shy, so cautious, and so timid in attacking those subordinate standards? Why do they attack them so seldom, and so slightly? They know, that they contain the *real* sentiments of the great body of the orthodox—sentiments, which thousands are willing and able and ready to defend.

Again: Why do not our opponents attack our standard

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\* All that Luther meant was, that our blessed Redeemer stood in the room of the murderer, the thief, &c. so as to bear the penalty of their sins. The Apostle says, “he was made sin for us!” Luther says, “he became a sinner for us.” The meaning of both is, that he became a substitutionary sin-offering. I do not, however, defend Luther’s *phraseology*.

works, both of the last and the present century? Why do they not attack an Edwards, a Fuller, and a Wardlaw, a Scott, and a Magee? Dr. B. never looks such champions in the face; but with great magnanimity he attacks a few antiquated sentiments—sentiments a thousand times attacked, and long since abandoned.

“Thrice he routed all his foes—  
“And thrice he slew the slain!”

I will not imitate Dr. B. I will not pollute my pages by recording the absurd and blasphemous expressions of Arius and his followers. I will not attack the *dead*; but the *living*. I will show to the world, that our venerable reformers were not the only men, in whose voluminous writings a few unguarded or foolish expressions may be found. I will make it appear that even Arian Doctors, now in the nineteenth century, are not altogether exempted from this common frailty of our nature, and that the learned Dr. B. himself is not quite infallible. A few quotations from his works will show, that, in writing silly and absurd things, he is not behind “the very *chiefest*” of our reformers.

In his Treatise on the Being and Attributes, (p. 88, 89,) the Doctor denominates creation, “*that superlative act of power.*” When we read a few sentences farther, we find him declaring, that other “*acts may require MORE power than creation itself.*” Having thus compared these different acts of power; and having shown us that other acts may be greater than the superlative act; he gravely informs us, that it is “idle to pretend to compare things that are unknown, and to institute a comparison between degrees of power, when they are all equally incomprehensible!”

He compares acts of power, and then tells us that it is idle to compare them! He pronounces one to be the superlative act, and then tells us, that other acts may be *greater!* And all this confusion of ideas is exhibited in that very specimen, inserted in the Belfast News-Letter, for the purpose of showing off, and recommending the Doctor’s Treatise.

Passing over the two next sentences, we find him writing thus:

“The power that could produce a single plant, is a subject of wonder. Its structure and growth, the expansion of the leaves, the penciling of the flowers, the ripening of the fruit, and, above all, the mysterious configuration

“ of the seed, are alike inimitable and inexplicable by the  
 “ most ingenious naturalist.”

In this paragraph the Doctor declares, that all the circumstances mentioned are *alike* inimitable and inexplicable; and yet, in the very same paragraph, he affirms that they are *not* alike inimitable: The configuration of the seed is *above all!*

Dr. B. commences his abstract proof of the Being and Attributes of God thus: (p. 27.) “ In order to lay a firm  
 “ foundation for proving the existence of God, we must  
 “ carry back our thoughts beyond the period of creation,  
 “ into that vast vacuity, that dark abyss without matter or  
 “ motion, where time itself stood still. The mind is swal-  
 “ lowed up in its own idea. It feels a similar vacuum  
 “ within itself, the same darkness, the same inanity, the  
 “ same inactivity: yet here we must lay the corner-stone  
 “ of the universe; here must we seek for the cause of all  
 “ things. In this unsubstantial void of metaphysical ab-  
 “ straction, let us look out for some fixed point, on which  
 “ we may rest, till we bring the world into being, and put  
 “ the mighty machine in motion. This point is our own  
 “ existence.”

In this beautiful paragraph, the Doctor directs us to carry back our thoughts beyond the period of creation, into that vast vacuity, that dark abyss without matter or motion, where time itself stood still. In this vast vacuity we must look out for some fixed point, on which we may rest, till we bring the world into being, and put the mighty machine in motion; and this point is our own existence. So then, the vast vacuity was *no* vacuity; for our own existence was a fixed point in it!—So then, we existed before we existed!—we existed before the creation!—before there was any matter, or any motion!—where time itself stood still!—and upon our own existence we take our stand!

Our author assures us, that in reflecting upon this “ *vast vacuity*,” the mind feels a similar vacuum within itself—the same darkness—the same inanity—the same inactivity. That the Doctor’s mind felt all this, no person who reads the preceding paragraph can reasonably doubt.

It is impossible to dismiss the passage under review without remarking, that it is the commencement of the Doctor’s abstract proof of the Being and Attributes of God—the most important part of that proof, for which he modestly expected the Aberdeen prize!



From our author's *Treatise on the Being and Attributes*, let us now turn our attention to his polemical sermons, that volume, on which I design more particularly to animadvert.

In page 19th, he assures us that the Almighty, through the medium of the Jews, "communicated to the whole world a full declaration of his will, a free dispensation of grace, and a glorious immortality, reserved for all his faithful servants by the Lord Jesus Christ."

What! did the Almighty ever communicate through the Jews, a full declaration of his will to the whole world? NEVER! One quarter of the world has never yet enjoyed this privilege.

Did the Almighty ever communicate through the Jews, a free dispensation of grace to the whole world? NEVER! One quarter of the globe has never yet enjoyed this privilege.

Did the Almighty ever communicate through the Jews, a glorious immortality to the whole world? NEVER! Had he communicated a "glorious immortality" to the whole world, the whole world was consequently saved! A comfortable doctrine indeed, and sufficiently liberal! But how does it accord with the doctrine which the same Dr. B. teaches? (p. 49.) It is stated thus: "But it is a strange imagination, that our Saviour should leave this world as he found *it*, ignorant of those essential principles, without which *they* could not be saved."

What sentence was ever written by Luther, by Calvin, or by any of our reformers, half so absurd or uncharitable as this?—A sentence as inconsistent with liberality as with grammar. What! Did Jesus Christ find the world ignorant of those essential principles without which they could not be saved? If so—tremendous idea!—so long as they had previously remained in that state, the whole human family were damned!

When Dr. B. finished his volume of sermons, he pronounced it consistent both with itself and the gospel. (See preface, p. 2.)—How far it is entitled to so high an encomium, let the reader of the preceding pages judge.

The quotations I have given—and I have given only a few—are sufficient to show, that were I to rake together all the foolish and absurd things written by Dr. B.; and were I to imitate the example he has set me, by ransacking the writings of Arians for centuries past; it would be an easy thing to exhibit a picture a thousand times more dark

and gloomy, than that exhibited in the Doctor's sermons. For every foolish or absurd expression found in the writings of Luther, Calvin, or any other eminent reformer, I will engage to point out ten in the same number of pages written by the learned Doctor. Are *we* accountable for all the foolish or absurd things written by any of our venerable reformers? No more accountable than modern Arians are accountable—than the Antrim Presbytery is accountable, for all the foolish and absurd things written by the Ex-principal of the Belfast Academy.

I come now to

### OBJECTION III.

In opposing the orthodox, our author resorts to another stratagem, still more despicable. He not only rakes together—or rather *retails*—the most foolish and absurd expressions, found in their writings for centuries past; but he misrepresents, misstates, and puts in their mouths, sentiments which they never entertained, never uttered, never wrote. He forms a man of straw, knocks him down, and shouts victory. He forges sentiments, and triumphantly exposes them. Whilst flourishing away in this manner, his superficial reader thinks he sees orthodoxy bending under his manly blows, and crumbling under his victorious feet.

These severe and heavy charges, the following quotations will fully substantiate.

In page 86, he declaims thus: “How can men bear to  
“hear this glorious and holy Being blasphemed, and to  
“have their own sacred feelings insulted, by being told,  
“that mankind were created, only to be plunged into the  
“abyss of hell, to wallow in lakes of inextinguishable fire,  
“and writhe in ever-during torments?”

But in the name of candour and common sense, where did Dr. B. ever hear such blasphemy? No **WHERE!**—Who preaches such blasphemy? **NOBODY!**—If the members of the first Presbyterian congregation in Belfast believe such rhapsodies, they must be extremely credulous indeed—they must regard their fellow Christians, not as men, but as monsters.

In the same licentious strain of invective, he proceeds thus: (Appendix, p. 313.)

“All these feelings may be indulged with enthusiasm, in  
“the good sense of that word, without being shocked by cruel



“and unrelenting decrees, an unjust and tyrannical sacrifice, the ruin of human nature, and the eternal torments of mankind, without regard to principle or conduct.”

To say nothing of the blasphemous epithets, *cruel, unrelenting, unjust, and tyrannical*, applied to the decrees of God, and the atonement of his Son; who ever believed in “*the eternal torments of mankind, without regard to principle or conduct?*” Who ever taught that monstrous doctrine? **NOBODY.**—No Jew, no Heathen, no Mahometan, no Christian, of any denomination, ever taught it, or ever believed it! It is an insult on Christianity, and an outrage on common sense.

Another extraordinary specimen of invective against error which no where exists, is exhibited in the Doctor’s second sermon on the atonement, (page 244.)

“Beside the controverted doctrines which have already passed under review, there is one detestable opinion, which has been hitherto overlooked as unworthy of discussion. There are, at this day, and in these countries, a multitude of wretched and ignorant enthusiasts, whose pernicious fanaticism engages them to delight in the prevalence of vice. Considering the conversion of every individual sinner as a miraculous and instantaneous operation of the holy spirit, they glory in their rapid progress towards the extremes of desperate wickedness, imagining that every step brings them nearer to the period of their conversion, and makes them fitter objects for the grace of God. The profligate votary of fanaticism rejoices in the indulgence of his most criminal passions, and in the increasing depravity of his heart, looking forward to his involuntary, and indeed imaginary conversion. The fanatic, who has already undergone this wonderful operation, expresses his satisfaction at the depravity of his neighbour, as the surest presage of an approaching restoration, while, with respect to himself, he indulges his basest and most pernicious propensities, under a persuasion that he can never fall from his state of grace; and throws up the reins to his licentious passions, lest any attempt at moral virtue should seem to question the efficacy, or control the progress of that heavenly guide, who has condescended to undertake the government of his soul. He supplicates the pardon of God for every instance of reliance on the practice of virtue for divine mercy or favour, of which he

“ may have been guilty, and continues to sin that grace  
“ may abound.”

But, in the name of wonder—Who entertains that “ *de-  
testable opinion*,” which the Doctor here describes? Who  
is infected with that “ *dire superstition*,” which he here  
exposes? Where is that multitude of wretched and igno-  
rant enthusiasts, which he here denounces?—He assures  
us, that these enthusiasts exist at *this day*, and in *these  
countries*. With great respect, I call upon him to point  
them out. Till this be done, I shall feel myself justified in  
regarding the whole as a *fiction—burlesque on religion—  
satire on the age and country in which I live*.

From these vague defamatory invectives, let us now turn  
our attention to more particular misrepresentations and  
calumnies.

A principal object of attack is Calvin.\* That great re-  
former, he assures us, was a Supralapsarian. But this is  
not true. That Calvin was a Sublapsarian, all his works  
prove. Those who doubt may consult his book on Predes-  
tination, page 978; his Institutes, book iii. chap. 23. sec.  
3; and his commentary on Rom. ix. 21. “ Hath not the  
“ potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make  
“ one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour.”  
Supralapsarians say, that the lump mentioned in this text  
means the lump of *created existence*; but Sublapsarians  
maintain that it means the lump of *fallen nature*. This  
is Calvin’s opinion; and it proves that the Doctor’s charge  
of Supralapsarianism is groundless.

Equally groundless is the assertion, that Calvin said, “ I  
confess that this is a horrible decree.” The word “ *hor-  
rible*,” is a mistranslation. The Latin word “ *horribile*,”  
has various significations. One of them is—*awful*. In  
*this* acceptation it was used by Calvin. Is it not uncandid  
—is it not absurd—to suppose, that Calvin used the word  
in a sense, contrary to his own acknowledged principles?  
But Calvin must be made “ *an offender for a word*.”  
Every word, in which there is the slightest ambiguity, must

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\* “ Calumny,” says Diderot, “ vanishes at the death of an obscure  
man; but at the urn of the illustrious she is eternally busy; raking his  
ashes with a poniard, even ages after death.” Never was this obser-  
vation more strikingly verified than in the case of Calvin.

be put to the rack, and a meaning extorted from it, which the venerable reformer never contemplated.\*

Another gross misrepresentation of Calvin, we find in the Appendix, p. 307. It stands thus—"Calvin denies "that there is any difference between preterition and reprobation. Quos Deus præterit reprobat." Now, Calvin denies no such thing; and the English reader will be astonished to hear, that the Latin quotation proves no such thing. The literal meaning of it is this: Whom God passes by he reprobates.

Now, if Calvin's assertion, "*Whom God passes by he reprobates,*" prove that there is no difference between preterition and reprobation; then the Apostle's assertion, "*Whom the Lord loves he chastens,*" equally proves, that there is no difference between love and chastisement. The cases are exactly parallel. The absurdity in both is the same. The person who would draw either the one inference or the other, must either betray his ignorance or dishonesty. With equal truth and justice, Dr. B. might charge the Apostle Paul with denying, that there is any difference between foreknowledge, predestination, calling, justification and glorification. "Whom he did foreknow, (Rom. "viii. 29.) he also did predestinate." Therefore, there is no difference between foreknowledge and predestination—"Whom he did predestinate them he also called." Therefore there is no difference between predestination and calling, &c. Such is Dr. B.'s logic!

If in the preceding quotation the Dr. has deceived the English reader, the deception is still more flagrant in his statement of the articles of the Synod of Dort. The pretended articles given by Dr. B. (Appendix, p. 305,) occupy only half a page; the real articles would fill a dozen of pages. The real articles will be found in Scott's Remarks on the Refutation of Calvinism. They are a most interesting document, written with great caution and judgment, but too long for insertion. The articles given by Dr. B. are a most shameful misrepresentation of the Synod's doctrines.

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\* Calvin's "*horribile decretum,*" has met with no mercy.—It has been attacked a thousand times. Bishop Tomline, Bishop Mant, Dr. Millar, Dr. Graves, and almost every writer against Calvinism, assail it. How weak must their cause be, when, in defence of it, they are obliged to wield such weapons.



The first of them is no less than eighteen condensed into one. In reference to it, I shall here quote the following appropriate observations of Scott.

“These eighteen articles concerning predestination, are abbreviated by Dan. Tilenus, reported by Heylyn, and deliberately adopted by his Lordship, (Bishop Tomline,) in the following single article.”

#### OF PREDESTINATION.

“That God, by an absolute decree, hath elected to salvation, a very small number of men, without any regard to their faith and obedience whatsoever; and secluded from saving grace all the rest of mankind, and appointed them by the same decree to eternal damnation, without any regard to their infidelity and impenitency.”

“I have long been aware,” says Scott, “that there is ‘no new thing under the sun;’ and that ‘speaking all manner of evil falsely,’ of the disciples of Christ, is no exception to this rule; and that misrepresenting and slandering men called Calvinists, has been very general, ever since the term was invented: but I confess, I never before met with so gross, so barefaced, and inexcusable a misrepresentation as this, in all my studies of modern controversy. It can only be equalled by the false testimony borne against Jesus and his apostles, as recorded in holy writ. But, is that cause likely to be in itself good, and of God, which needs to be supported by so unhallowed weapons?”

That Scott’s remarks are by no means too severe, the following observations will clearly show. In the forged article, on which Scott animadverts, and which is the same with that given by Dr. B. we are told, “That God, by an absolute decree, hath elected to salvation *a very small number of men.*” In the genuine article it is, a *certain number of men.* In the forged article we are told, that the rest are appointed to eternal damnation, without any regard to their *infidelity* and *impenitency.* In the genuine article the Divines declare, “that the non-elect God hath passed by and decreed to leave in the common misery, into which they had, by *their own fault,* cast themselves, and at length, not only on account of their *unbelief,* but also of *all their other sins,* to condemn and eternally punish, to the manifestation of his own *justice.*”

The forgery says, "without any regard to their *infidelity and impenitency*;" the true article says, "on account of *their unbelief and all their other sins!*"

The second of the spurious articles given by Dr. B. omits the following important statement of the true article. "This death of the Son of God is a single and most perfect sacrifice and satisfaction for sins, of infinite value and price, abundantly sufficient to expiate the sins of the whole world."

The third spurious article given by Dr. B. is one tissue of forgery and falsehood.

It asserts, first, that "by Adam's fall his posterity lost their free will;" the genuine article asserts no such thing. The spurious article asserts, "that Adam's posterity are put to an unavoidable necessity to do or not to do, whatsoever they do or do not, whether it be good or evil;" the genuine article asserts no such thing. The spurious article adds: "being thereunto predestinated by the eternal and effectual secret decree of God." The genuine article asserts no such thing. No Calvinistic article asserts, that men are predestinated to sin by an *effectual* decree.

I might thus go over all the spurious articles; but the remarks made are sufficient to prove, that they are an *infamous fabrication*.

Shameful as this forgery is, it appears, that others still more injurious were published by the enemies of Calvinism. For the truth of this charge I appeal to themselves—I appeal to a late celebrated Anti-Calvinistic writer, the Lord Bishop of Lincoln. His words are these: "This is the shortest, and withal the most favourable summary, which I have hitherto met with, of the conclusions of this Synod; that which was drawn up by the Remonstrants in their antidotum being much more large, and comprehending many things by way of inference, which are not positively expressed in the words themselves."

From this declaration of his Lordship it appears, that the summary, or rather forgery, on which we have been animadverting, is not the *worst*—that the antidotum was *still more injurious*.

I would ask in the words of Scott. "Would not the very articles published by the Synod itself, being produced or commented on, have been far more like a fair and equitable conduct toward it, than any *abbreviation* or *antidotum*, drawn up by its avowed opponents? I trust

“ such would have been the conduct of most Calvinists, in  
 “ recording the proceedings of an Anti-Calvinistic Synod :  
 “ but it seems, Calvinists are exceptions to all rules, and  
 “ have no right to expect fair and equitable treatment from  
 “ other men.”

If Tilenus, Heylyn, and the Bishop of Lincoln deserve such censure—and no candid reader will deny that they do—how much more reprehensible is the conduct of Dr. B. ? The articles recorded by the Doctor were acknowledged by Tilenus, Heylyn, and the Bishop, to be only an *abbreviation* ; but Dr. B. makes no such acknowledgment. He inserts them as *the real and genuine articles of the Synod of Dort!* Scott exposed the fraud : Scott detected the forgery : and, after all, Dr. B. comes forward, and endeavours to palm it on the world, as *the genuine doctrine of that celebrated Synod!*

Having witnessed the Doctor's treatment of the Synod of Dort, let us now see how he treats the Westminster Assembly. To misrepresent *their* confession, being a book in general circulation, one would suppose somewhat hazardous. The Doctor, however, has made the experiment on the third, fourth, and fifth sections of the third chapter.

In P. 172, he exhibits the following mutilated, transposed, and scandalously garbled account of them.

“ By the decree of God, for the manifestation of his glory,  
 “ some men and angels are foreordained to everlasting  
 “ death, and others to everlasting life, without any foresight  
 “ of faith or good works, or perseverance in either ; or any  
 “ other thing in the creature, as conditions, or causes,  
 “ moving him thereunto.”

By thus garbling and transposing, the Doctor succeeds in creating an ambiguity. He then avails himself of the ambiguity which himself has produced, and palms upon the Westminster Divines a sentiment which they never entertained nor published. Page 174, he writes thus : “ He  
 “ (Christ) proclaims, that whoever believeth on him shall  
 “ not perish, but have everlasting life—but here we learn,  
 “ that the smallest number have been ordained to life, and  
 “ the greater part to endless perdition, without any fore-  
 “ sight of their faith or perseverance.” And again (P. 181)—“ The majority of Christians are foreordained to  
 “ everlasting death, without any foresight of faith and good  
 “ works.”

In these quotations, he makes the Divines assert, what



they have no where asserted—"that some men and angels are foreordained to everlasting death, without any foresight of faith or good works." The Divines were incapable of such an assertion—they were incapable of writing such nonsense—nonsense, which the Doctor again and again palms upon them. They speak of the foreseen faith and good works of those who are *saved*.—This is intelligible—but they never speak, nor *seem* to speak, of the foreseen faith and good works of those who *perish*; of those who never believe nor do good works.—This would be—**SHEER NONSENSE.**

To prefer so absurd a charge against the Westminster Divines—a charge, to justify which, there is not in all their works *one single syllable*—is certainly a bold experiment on the credulity of the present age.

But again: The Westminster Divines no where assert, that the greater part of men are ordained to perdition. They no where assert, that the majority of Christians are foreordained to everlasting death. These are not the doctrines of the Confession of Faith; but the calumnies of Dr. Bruce.\*

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\* Some years ago, an anonymous writer, subscribing himself "A REVEREND PRESBYTERIAN," attacked the Westminster Confession of Faith by misrepresentation. I endeavoured to defend, and to administer such chastisement, as I hoped would deter others from such a mode of attack. In this hope I soon found myself most sadly disappointed. Mr. M'Affee, then schoolmaster at White Abbey, with a hardihood seldom equalled, set to work, and wrote a pamphlet fraught with misrepresentations, misstatements, and forgeries. Of these I shall here exhibit a specimen. At the bottom of the 23d Page, we find the following bold and presumptuous appeal to the Westminster Confession.—"If," says Mr. M'Affee, "the doctrine contained in the third chapter of the Westminster Confession of Faith be true, God has not only chosen a certain number to everlasting life; but he has also predestined the remaining party to everlasting condemnation, *to the praise and glory of his grace.*" What! Predestinate men to condemnation "*to the praise and glory of his grace!*" Yes, indeed! This doctrine—this most absurd and blasphemous doctrine—is forged by Mr. M'Affee, palmed on the Westminster Divines, recorded in different parts of his pamphlet, and the forgery stamped current by Mr. Drew, editor of the Imperial Magazine!!!

Again (Page 25th), he writes thus—"Take in plain terms the Calvinistic answer: God, from all eternity, doomed all those who will perish at the last, without any foresight of faith or works to that end." This ridiculous calumny, being exactly the same with that of Dr. B., requires no additional exposure. I would only say in palliation, that I fondly hope these writers are not the *intentionors*, but only the *retailers* of the calumny.

After misrepresenting the Westminster Divines and Synod of Dort—after laying to the charge of those venerable assemblies “things which they knew not,” and imputing to them doctrines, the very reverse of those which they taught—after treating fellow Christians so unjustly and injuriously, we will feel less surprise to find the learned Doctor misrepresenting Jews, Heathens, and Mahometans—preferring against them groundless accusations. “We know, too,” says the Doctor (P. 280), “that men were growing more and more depraved, and that, except through the medium of the Christian religion, *not even the faintest effort has ever yet been made to reclaim the world.*”

What! Were not efforts made under the patriarchal age? Were no efforts made under the legal dispensation? Did even the *Heathens* make no efforts? Does not every smatterer in history know, that *thousands* of efforts were

In reply to the question, Will all mankind be saved in the day of judgment? Mr. M<sup>’</sup>Afee makes the Calvinist absurdly reply, “No; because Christ did not die for all: he died only for the elect.” How different is this *forged answer* from the following *genuine Calvinistic reply*—“*All mankind will not be saved at the day of judgment; for many of them live and die unbelievers, impenitent, and wicked.*”

Mr. M<sup>’</sup>Afee charges me with granting, “that there is no such text in the bible, as proves that God entered into covenant with Adam, as the representative of his posterity”—I have granted **NO SUCH THING.**

He charges me with saying, “that omniscience signifies the actual knowledge of all things, that *possibly can be known*”—I have said **NO SUCH THING.**

He says, I “seem to triumph in asserting, that Dr. Clarke denies the foreknowledge of God”—I have asserted **NO SUCH THING.**

He again affirms, that I “assert, without any qualification, that the Doctor denies the foreknowledge of the deity”—I again affirm, that I have asserted **NO SUCH THING**, either *with* qualification, or *without* qualification.

When did I say these things? **NEVER.**—Where have I made such assertions? **NO WHERE.**

These and similar misrepresentations, misstatements and forgeries, are doubtless believed by the opponents of Calvinism. The editor of the Imperial Magazine has stamped them current. Were this not the case—and were it not that I am anxious to detect fraud, and prevent deception, I would have suffered them to pass without notice, leaving them to sink into merited oblivion.

Mr. M<sup>’</sup>Afee gives his pamphlet the modest title of—“**A RATIONAL AND SCRIPTURAL INVESTIGATION**”—and, with characteristic humility, he declares, that “reason, founded on revelation, always makes a *noble attack.*”—He seems, however, unfortunately, to have forgotten, that misrepresentations, misstatements, and forgeries, always make a **DISGRACEFUL ATTACK.**



made to reclaim the world? Yes, efforts were made by patriarchs, priests and prophets; by poets and politicians; by orators and philosophers. Equally groundless and unjust is the accusation, which the Doctor prefers against the man who has not read his bible, (P. 6.)—"As to the conduct of providence, and the history of mankind, he has not a notion of them beyond the period of his own existence.—So far is this accusation from being true, that many of those, who never read the bible, have nevertheless been the authors of histories—histories of providence—histories of mankind—histories extending backward centuries before their existence.

In describing the man who has not read his bible, our author adds—"and if he be so completely enveloped in darkness concerning this life, he must be totally destitute of any conception of a life to come." What! All who have not read the bible completely enveloped in darkness concerning this life! How contrary to fact is such an assertion!—Again; are such characters "*totally destitute of any conception of a life to come*?" Let Socrates and Plato—Let Heathens in general—let Mahometans—let blind or uneducated Christians answer the question. All these will contradict *the Doctor*. With one voice they will answer—No.

These misrepresentations, I firmly believe, are not voluntary. They arise rather from confusion of ideas, than from any worse principle. That this is the most correct, as well as the most charitable conclusion, the following quotations clearly prove:

In Page 6th, he says, "The mind of the first"—the man who has not read his bible—"is a perfect vacuum as to spiritual qualities and endowments; or, if not a vacuum, it is a chaos. Except some vague instinctive principle, or rather feeling of moral obligation, and some hearsay notion of God, he is a stranger to morals and piety." How inconsistent is all this with what he asserts, P. 64. "The moral maxims which he (Christ) sanctioned with his authority, were no new discoveries. The leading principles of Christian morality are to be found—in the writings of *Heathen Philosophers*."

Again, Pages 81 and 82, the Doctor writes thus:

"As soon as man was capable of reflecting on his own nature and situation, he must have perceived, that there is a God, some Being superior to himself and his fellow

"mortals. When he looked abroad into the world, he  
 "must have been satisfied, that the magnificence, order,  
 "and beauty of the universe were the effects of consum-  
 "mate wisdom and power. When he surveyed the living  
 "creatures around him, and contemplated the provision  
 "made for their subsistence and comfort, he must have  
 "been sensible that this superior Being is bountiful and  
 "kind. As his experience and reflecting powers increased,  
 "his conviction of these truths would be strengthened;  
 "till he acquired the idea of an invisible power, supremely  
 "mighty, benevolent and wise. A more comprehensive  
 "view of the the creation might naturally lead to a belief,  
 "that the whole was the production of one Being, assisted,  
 "perhaps, by subordinate agents. This last idea unhap-  
 "pily took such strong possession of the minds of men, as  
 "to give rise to the various systems of idolatry, which pre-  
 "vailed throughout the Heathen world, and still maintains  
 "its ground over a large portion of the globe. From  
 "these errors, the Jewish nation alone was exempted;\*  
 "and that only by a divine revelation. By such observa-  
 "tions and reflections, the mind of man might have at-  
 "tained a conception of the Divine Being, and of our  
 "relation and duties to Him, sufficiently sublime and edi-  
 "fying; and there are not wanting instances of men, who  
 "so far availed themselves of the light of nature, as, in a  
 "great degree, to fulfil these expectations."

Who sees not the inconsistency of such sentiments? The  
 man who has never read the bible, "except some vague  
 "instinctive principle, or rather feeling of moral obligation,  
 "is a stranger to morals;" and yet he may read "the  
 "leading principles of Christian morality in the writings of  
 "the Heathen Philosophers!—He has only "hearsay no-  
 "tions of God;" and yet, by reflecting on himself, and  
 contemplating other creatures, he might "attain a concep-  
 "tion of the Divine Being, and of our relation and duties  
 "to Him, sufficiently sublime and edifying!"

Such inconsistent and contradictory statements induce  
 me to believe that the Doctor's misrepresentations fre-  
 quently arise from an inadvertent and incoherent mode of

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\* So far were the Jews from being exempted from the errors of idol-  
 atry—as Dr. B. erroneously states—that "God gave them up to wor-  
 ship the host of Heaven!"

thinking. This circumstance, however, does not render them harmless, and, of course, it neither supersedes my duty to point them out, nor the reader's duty to beware of them.

I shall say no more at present on this painful subject. I would only caution my readers—Beware of *quotations*; beware of *misrepresentations*; beware of *forgeries*. “*Be not deceived!*”

#### OBJECTION IV.

I have another objection against the Doctor's mode of managing the controversy. He blends the sentiments of Antinomians, and other enthusiasts, with those of Calvinists. This is a piece of generalship unworthy of a learned Christian divine. The Antinomian sentiments of Crisp, Brierly, Hawker, &c.—and the raptures and rhapsodies of other enthusiasts, are held in as great abhorrence by Calvinists, as by any Socinians or Arians in the world. Were I to blend the sentiments of Socinians and Arians, and confound all distinctions between them, it is probable Dr. B. would conceive himself injured. As he would that Calvinists should do unto him, the learned Doctor should do also the same.

#### OBJECTION V.

Dr. Bruce's attack on Calvinism is liable to another strong objection. He has not studied the system he opposes. To show that this objection is well founded, and the censure it conveys just, I shall only quote two passages, one from his sermons, and the other from his *Being and Attributes*. In his sermons (p. 202) he writes thus:

“I ask, then, in the first place, did this decree originate before or after the fall? This is a subject of controversy with Predestinarians themselves, who are accordingly divided between Sublapsarians and Supralapsarians.”

In this passage the Doctor has betrayed his ignorance of the Calvinistic system. “Did *this* decree originate before or after the fall?” What decree? No decree is mentioned in the preceding context. Without any previous notice, without any visible connexion, he leaps from original sin to the decrees of God.\* From the subsequent context, how-

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\* The instance noticed above, is not the only one calculated to show that Dr. B. is a writer extremely confused and incoherent; and that,



ever, it appears that by "*this decree*," the Doctor intended the decree of God that man should fall.

When the Doctor, therefore, asks the question,—Did this decree originate before, or after the fall? what does he mean? He means—NOTHING. The question is absurd. The import of it is this: Did the decree, that man should fall, originate before or after he fell? On the absurdity of this question I need make no comment. Surely no Calvinist was ever so foolish as to maintain that the decree, that man should fall, originated after he had actually fallen!

But waiving this gross absurdity, I ask, was it ever a subject of controversy with Predestinarians, whether the decree of the fall, or *any other decree*, "originated before, or after the fall?" NEVER. Were Sublapsarians and Supralapsarians divided on this subject? THEY WERE NOT. Did any Calvinist ever maintain, that any decree of God originated after the fall? No Calvinist ever maintained so gross an absurdity. Were the Deity to form any purpose in time,

of course, it is exceedingly difficult to follow or refute him. Relatives, without antecedents, occur in almost every page. I shall here exhibit a few out of many.—Page 83. "No portion of mankind has, at any time, been wholly ignorant of *this truth*." What truth?—Page 62. "*These subjects* must comprise an infinity of facts and *speculations*." What subjects?—"The knowledge of *such truths* is peculiar to the Supreme Being." What truths?—Page 69. "Yet the existence of *these qualities* in the divine nature, is of essential importance." What qualities?—"Those who cannot." Those what?—Page 79. "What do all *these pretensions* avail?" &c. What pretensions?—Page 108. "*The word* has often *this signification*," &c. What word? what signification?—Page 113. "From the poverty of language, in *this respect*," &c. In what respect?—Page 127. "Now, if the word *create* is necessarily understood in *this sense*." What sense?—"But *this* I do not conceive to be the apostle's meaning," &c. What is not his meaning?—Page 152. "*This sympathy* with human feelings," &c. What sympathy?—Page 169. "Now, if we can suppose it possible, *that any good end* may be answered by *such injunctions*," &c. What injunctions?—Page 179. "Who are little inclined to *those foolish questions, strifes of words, and perverse disputings*." What foolish questions? what strifes of words? what perverse disputings?—Page 180. "That body of people—whom he *thus foreknew*," &c. How foreknew?—"For *the doctrine* is founded on foreknowledge." What doctrine?—Page 195. "*The word* is explained in the next clause," &c. What word?—"In Hebrew the *simple word* means to be a sinner." What simple word?—"In another form of the *verb*," &c. What verb?—These instances, out of many, show that the Doctor thinks, and of course writes, incoherently. They show, that it is easy to mistake his meaning, but difficult, if not impossible, to refute all his detached, disjointed, and erroneous sentiments.



which he had not formed from eternity, he would be *mutable*, liable to change, and "shadow of turning!"

All Calvinists universally maintain, and have *always* maintained, that *all* the decrees of God are *eternal*. Their children, as soon as they are capable of lisping their catechism, know that the decrees of God are his "*eternal purpose*." The eternity of the divine decrees was never controverted, either by Sublapsarians or Supralapsarians. The subject of their controversy was not the *date*, but the *object* of God's decree of predestination. The Supralapsarians maintained, that the object of this decree was men considered merely as creatures; but the Sublapsarians contended that the decree of predestination contemplated men, not merely as creatures, but as *fallen* creatures.

Would not Dr. B. have displayed more wisdom by *studying* the disputes between Sublapsarians and Supralapsarians, before he pretended to *explain* them? What! Explain what he did not understand! teach what he had never learned! oppose opinions which he had never studied!

That our author, in attacking Calvinism, is opposing a system which he has not studied, and which he does not understand, the following extracts from his "Being and Attributes" farther evince. In page 52, speaking of the free agency of the Deity, he writes thus:

"This freedom must extend to what has been called the liberty of indifference. It is thought by some, that no being can act, except there be a motive for acting in one manner rather than another; and that when all modes of acting are indifferent, there can be no action. If this were the case, the universe could never have been created: for it is impossible to imagine, that there could be any reason for creating it in one part of vacant space, or at one period in eternity, rather than another. A sufficient motive for acting may therefore exist, though there be none for preferring one particular mode to every other. It is so far from being foolish, in this case, to act without a motive, that it would be unspeakable folly to suppose that the Deity would refrain from acting on such a notion. The two equal bundles of hay are a slander even on the stupidity of the ass. These, and many other notions, originate in our confounding spirit with matter, thought with motion, and motives with impulse."

After the Doctor has written about two pages more, he completely forgets all this, and writes as follows:

“If we imagine that the existence of two perfect beings  
 is even conceivable, a little consideration will convince  
 us, that, in fact, we are only thinking twice of the same  
 thing. Their omnipotence is exercised in the same place,  
 at the same time; and is directed by infallible wisdom,  
 and consummate goodness. It must, therefore, be always  
 performing the same acts: for the perfection of wisdom  
 will not admit of their thinking or acting differently; the  
 wisest determination must be preferred by both. Even  
 two men, who are perfect in any demonstrative science,  
 cannot possibly differ. Their conclusions on that subject  
 must infallibly correspond. This results from the perfec-  
 tion of their knowledge in that science; and, therefore,  
 if two perfect beings existed, their knowledge and  
 thoughts on every subject must be the same. For the  
 same reason, their wills, intentions and actions will co-  
 incide.”

In the former of these extracts, our learned author  
 strongly asserts the doctrine of *free will*; in the latter, he  
 as firmly maintains the doctrine of *necessity*. In the for-  
 mer, a *liberty of indifference* is taught; in the latter, the  
 doctrine of *moral necessity* is asserted. In the former, *Ar-  
 minianism* is taught; in the latter, the *highest Calvinism*.  
 If the two Supreme Beings, supposed by the Doctor, are  
 both possessed of a liberty of indifference—why must their  
 omnipotence be exercised in the same place, and at the  
 same time? Might not the one exert his omnipotence in  
*one* part of space, and at *one* period in eternity, and the  
 other in a *different* department, and at a *different* period?  
 If they be possessed of a liberty of indifference, why must  
 they always think alike, and act alike? Why may they not  
 think differently, and act differently? If they cannot *think*  
*differently, will* differently, and *act* differently, they cannot  
 be possessed of a liberty of indifference—they must be Ne-  
 cessarians. If their wills, intentions and actions *must* co-  
 incide, then they are no longer *Libertarians*; they must be  
 the subjects of moral necessity. Excellent divinity!—Sound  
 doctrine!—not only Calvinism, but the *highest Calvinism*!\*

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\* From the heights of Calvinism the Doctor descends to the depths of  
 Socinianism. Page 24, he writes thus: “While others waste their  
 time in disputing about the nature, person, and office of Christ, it is  
 enough for the humble disciple to be assured that he was invested  
 with divine authority, and that he made known the nature and the

—So high, that some very judicious Calvinists have opposed it. It is one of those points on which the celebrated Witherspoon opposed his illustrious predecessor, President Edwards. I am happy, however, in this instance, to find Jonathan Edwards, the Calvinist, and Dr. B., the Arian, going hand in hand in the support of truth. Dr. B. has proved clearly, that the Deity himself is not possessed of a liberty of indifference. But if the Deity be not possessed of such a liberty, how can man be possessed of it? To say that God is not possessed of a liberty of indifference, but that man is possessed of it, would be blasphemy; it would be to say that man has more liberty than his Maker!—the creature than the Creator! Such is the blasphemous conclusion, to which every man must be reduced, who maintains the doctrine of a liberty of indifference. Should any continue to defend that doctrine, I would refer them to the preceding reasoning of Dr. B., which, in my opinion, is altogether unanswerable. I would say to them, read Dr. B., and become *Calvinists*.

Not only the reasoning, but even the *testimony* of Dr. B. in favour of Calvinism, ought to have great weight and influence. It is the testimony of an enemy. It is the testimony of common sense, bursting the barriers of an hereditary creed, and forcing its way through the deep-rooted prejudices of an early education. That both God and man are possessed of a liberty of indifference, is a tenet, which the Doctor had received by tradition from his fathers. It constitutes an important part of that hereditary creed, handed down by his boasted predecessors, “Halliday and his grandfather, Drennan and Brown, Mackay and Crombie.” But that the Deity possesses no such liberty, and, of course, that man possesses no such liberty, is the dictate of the Doctor’s own common sense: it is the dictate of truth; and a corner-stone of the Calvinistic system.

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“will of God; that he pointed out the way to life eternal, and evinced the truth of that doctrine by his resurrection from the dead, and ascension into heaven, where he ever liveth to make intercession for us, and whence he shall come to judge both the living and the dead.” This is a Socinian creed, and Dr. B. pronounces it quite sufficient!—At one time a professed Arian—now a high Calvinist—again a Socinian—and all this in that same volume of sermons, which he modestly pronounces “consistent with itself and the gospel!”

“——— nil fuit unquam  
Sic impar sibi! ———”



The extract given above proves two things : first, it proves the truth of Calvinism ; and secondly it proves, that Dr. B. does not understand the system he has undertaken to oppose. If he really understood it, there is reason to believe, that he would not oppose it. As his opposition arises from ignorance, I would fervently pray for him and all such, " Father, forgive them ; for they know not what they do."

### OBJECTION VI.

Anti-trinitarians, in their attempts to subvert what I regard as the fundamental doctrines of Christianity, first waged war with creeds and confessions, and loudly vociferated Chillingworth's maxim, " The Bible, the Bible is the religion of Protestants." But now, finding that their principles cannot be defended on the broad basis of divine revelation, they retreat to the citadel of the four gospels. Nor are they willing to appeal to these as the standard of doctrine, but only to a few verses, which are found written in them all. The testimony of three evangelists, according to Dr. Bruce, is not sufficient to establish any important truth !\*—Could any thing but conscious weakness account for such timidity and tergiversation ?

Our learned author betrays the same weakness and timidity, by deprecating argument and verbal criticism. He criticises, and then condemns an appeal to criticism. He argues, and then condemns an appeal to argument. Is not this to sound a retreat ? Is it not to abandon that field, to which he had rashly challenged his opponents ? The honest Quaker, when pressed with an argument which he could not answer, very piously exclaimed, " The Lord rebuke thee, O Argument ! the Lord rebuke thee !"

### OBJECTION VII.

Finally : I object to Dr. Bruce's sermons on the study of the Bible, because they have a chilling and benumbing tendency. By sinking the greater part of the sacred volume into comparative insignificance, they have a tendency to lessen men's attachment to it, and, of course, to draw them off from the reading and perusal of it. By sinking divine truth in our esteem, they are calculated to repress a spirit

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\* The truth of those charges will appear in the subsequent chapter.



of inquiry, and to arrest the progress of religious knowledge. But, on this objection I shall not insist, as the force of it will appear in the ensuing chapter, to which I now proceed.

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## CHAPTER II.

### *Dr. Bruce's attack on the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures repelled.*

HAVING in the preceding chapter stated my objections to the Doctor's mode of managing the controversy, I come now to the defence of those doctrines, which, in his sermons on the study of the Bible, he has so boldly assailed. In "contending for the faith once delivered to the saints," it is sometimes necessary to defend one particular truth, and sometimes another. At present the attack is general. Our learned author, with an intrepidity altogether unparalleled, at least in this country, has attempted to raze the very foundations of the Christian system. He has attacked, not merely the doctrines of the Bible, but the BIBLE ITSELF. That this charge, though awful in the extreme, is not unjust, the following quotations too clearly prove.

Page 60—"Respectfully and gratefully receive that variety of religious knowledge, which is communicated in the Acts of the Apostles, and their Epistles; but fix upon the words of Jesus as the standard of your faith, &c."

Page 49—"It is evident, that we should collect the whole of the Christian doctrine from the words of Jesus, as recorded in the four Gospels.—For the knowledge of God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, the terms of acceptance, and other doctrinal points, we should depend solely on the gospels."

Page 87—"We should interpret their (the Apostles) reasoning in conformity with his precepts, not his precepts by their reasoning."

P. 50—"But you are never to set up the authority of the disciples against that of their master; nor consider their writings as the primary source of knowledge on doctrinal questions, as is too often done. On the contrary, you should form your opinions from the discourses of

“ Christ, on every branch of his religion, and consider the  
 “ writings of the Apostles as comments upon them,” &c.

P. 180—“ If I can explain these (the 8th and 9th chap-  
 “ ters of the Romans), it will not be necessary to occupy  
 “ your time with any others. If we cannot interpret them  
 “ conformably to our Saviour’s doctrine, we should rather  
 “ abandon them as unintelligible, than prefer the lower au-  
 “ thority to the higher, and what we cannot understand to  
 “ what we do.”

P. 91.—“ For the general purport of their writings (the  
 “ sacred penmen’s writings) coincides with the declarations  
 “ of our Lord.”

P. 123—“ Is it not clear, that the authority of our Lord  
 “ is paramount to every other ; and that if any of his Apos-  
 “ tles differ from him, their authority must be set aside ? Is  
 “ it not absurd to suppose that they should ; and most of  
 “ all, that any of them should contradict their master and  
 “ one another, and even themselves.”

P. 26—“ Being now well grounded and settled in the  
 “ genuine doctrine of Christ, as delivered by himself in the  
 “ Gospels, his faithful followers must take it for granted  
 “ that the chosen disciples of our Lord taught nothing in-  
 “ consistent with it,\* and that any obscurity in their wri-  
 “ tings must be cleared up by referring to his own words.  
 “ He will therefore expound those texts which are hard to  
 “ be understood by the plain doctrine of their master—the  
 “ sincere and singleminded reader of the Bible will look to  
 “ his Saviour as his polar star, and, in perusing the Epistles  
 “ will dwell and rely on those points of edification in which  
 “ the Apostles and their master coincide.”

P. 19—“ He will, however, distinguish the history from  
 “ the divine communication. He will see, that it has been  
 “ composed by fallible men, but under such direction and  
 “ superintendence, that though left to themselves, as to pe-  
 “ culiarities of style, the narration of ordinary facts, and the

\* If we must take it for granted that “ the chosen disciples of our  
 “ Lord taught nothing inconsistent with his doctrine”—what does our  
 author mean by telling us that the *general purport* of their writings  
 coincide with the declarations of our Lord ;—that if any of his apostles  
 differ from him, *their authority must be set aside*—and that we should  
 dwell and rely on those points of edification, in which the apostles and  
 their master coincide ?—I say, what does the Doctor mean ? The most  
 charitable answer is, he means—**NOTHING AT ALL.**

“insertion of occasional reflections, they hand down the revelation itself, as it was actually made.”

In confirmation of these sentiments, he quotes with approbation (P. 297) the following sentence from Grotius—  
 “It was not necessary that the histories (in scripture) should be dictated by the Holy Spirit; it was enough that the writers had a good memory.”

Such is the humble rank, to which the inspired Apostles are degraded!—We must not depend upon them for *any doctrine!* The whole of Christian doctrine we must receive from our Saviour, and not from the apostles. On him we must depend SOLELY for our knowledge of doctrines. The writings of the Apostles are only to be regarded—so far as doctrine is concerned—as “*comments*” on the discourses of our Lord. Nay, the Apostles are to be regarded, if our author’s doctrine be true, not only in the humble capacity of commentators, but—shall I utter the impiety?—as **BAD COMMENTATORS!** Our learned author constantly represents the Redeemer’s doctrines as *plain*, but those of the Apostles as *obscure*. Of course, the Apostles must be *bad commentators*; for their commentary is *more obscure than the text!* Instead of their commentary explaining our Saviour’s text, his text must explain their commentary! “We should interpret,” says the Doctor, “their reasoning in conformity with his precepts, and not his precepts by their reasoning!” Now, if the reasonings of the Apostles do not assist us in the interpretation of our Saviour’s precepts, they must be *useless commentaries* indeed; and the Apostles themselves *silly commentators!* Such is the impious, but *inevitable* conclusion.

Dr. Bruce maintains, that the authority of the Apostles is *inferior* to that of the Redeemer—that *his* authority is *paramount*—that they were *fallible* men, &c.—As *men*, the Apostles were fallible, I grant; but as *writers of the sacred volume*, they were *infallible*. The authority by which the whole Bible was written is the same—**THE AUTHORITY OF GOD.** “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable.”—“Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.” These declarations, I know, refer to the Old Testament Scriptures; but they are equally applicable to the New. Jesus Christ is the author of all the scriptures; both Old and New Testaments. It is on this account, that his name is called “**THE WORD OF GOD.**” It was the spirit of Christ, which dictated the Old Testa-



ment Scriptures: (1 Pet. i. 10, 11.) "Of which salvation  
 " the prophets have inquired, and searched diligently, who  
 " prophesied of the grace that should come unto you :  
 " Searching what, or what manner of time, the SPIRIT OF  
 " CHRIST which was in them did signify, when it testified  
 " beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that  
 " should follow."—The same spirit of Jesus that inspired  
 the Old Testament prophets, inspired also the New Testa-  
 ment writers. The Redeemer, in the days of his flesh, had  
 " many things to say and to write," which the disciples, at  
 that period, could not bear. He, therefore, promised his  
 Holy Spirit, to "teach them ALL THINGS; and to lead  
 " them into ALL TRUTH." Dr. B. asserts, that the author-  
 ity of the Apostles is *inferior* to that of the Redeemer ;  
 but the Apostle Paul asserts the contrary. He asserts that  
 they are the same. (Gal. ii. 11, 12.) "But I certify you,  
 " brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not  
 " after man." For I neither received it of man, neither was  
 " I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." And  
 to the Corinthians, he says, "For I have received of the  
 " Lord that which also I delivered unto you." The Reve-  
 lation of John the Divine claims the same high original.  
 It is expressly styled the "*Revelation of Jesus Christ.*"—  
 The writer of it "was in the Spirit on the Lord's day;" by  
 the inspiration of that spirit he wrote seven letters to the  
 seven churches in Asia ; and assures us, that the prophecies  
 of Divine revelation are the "testimony of Jesus." (Rev.  
 xix. 10.) "For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of pro-  
 " phecy."

Thus it appears, that the Redeemer is the author of the  
 whole sacred volume. To say, therefore, with Dr. B. that  
 the authority of one part of scripture is inferior to that of  
 another, is grossly absurd ; for they were all penned by the  
 same authority. If the authority of the other parts of the  
 sacred volume be inferior to that of the gospels, I ask,  
 What is the difference ? There can be no difference but this,  
 that the authority of the latter is *divine*, and that of the for-  
 mer *human*—or, in other words—That the gospels are *the*  
*word of God* ; but the rest of the scriptures *the word of*  
*man* !—If this is not Deism, it is something very like it.—  
 The Deist, indeed, rejects the *whole* of the Bible, whilst  
 Dr. B. retains, perhaps, one hundredth part of it !

I am quite sensible, that our author sometimes speaks,  
 not only of the gospels, but of the other scriptures, as if



they were divinely inspired. His language, however, is so vague, ambiguous, and contradictory, that it is impossible to ascertain his real sentiments. With great respect I call upon him to speak out. Either the other scriptures, as well as the gospels, *are* divinely inspired, or they are *not*. If he say that they *are*; then he contradicts his favourite sentiment—*That they are of inferior authority*. If he say that they are *not* divinely inspired; *then he rejects ninety-nine hundredths of the sacred volume, and wants only one hundredth part of being a Deist!*

The truth is, that the Doctor's principles appear to me quite subversive of the scriptures of truth. If his views be correct, I do not see that we can place any confidence whatever, in any part of the sacred oracles, not even in *the four gospels*. If I believed that the sacred penmen were left to themselves, even with regard to style and language, this very circumstance would shake my confidence.\* In prophecies, such as those of Ezekiel, Daniel, and John the Divine; and in other communications, which were above the comprehension of the writers, it is self-evident that not only the matter, but the *language* must have been inspired. And, even in the recording of those facts or doctrines, which were quite level to the understandings of the penmen, I do not think it at all reasonable to suppose, that they were left to the use of their own language without any divine superintendence. I do not think it *reasonable*; because I do not conceive that it would have been *safe*. Is it reasonable to suppose that illiterate fishermen, mechanics, &c. could *accurately* record either facts or doctrines? Would they be in no danger of blundering?—of exhibiting to the world erroneous views? Even men of learning frequently fail in giving a true picture of their own ideas. Even Doctor B. whose whole life has been principally employed in the study of languages—even the learned Doctor himself sometimes fails. He fails so far, as to publish doctrines which he does not believe, and to exhibit ideas which he never entertained—nay, he sometimes fails so far, that his language conveys no meaning at all. Does the Doctor believe, that the whole world are saved? Does he believe that the whole world, prior to the coming of Christ, were damned? Does he believe either of these contradictory doctrines? Surely

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\* I mean, without divine superintendence.

not; and yet both are taught by our author, as we have seen in the preceding chapter.

In p. 82, he speaks of the attributes of God resulting from the works of creation. Here he has undoubtedly failed in communicating his ideas. He surely knows, that the works of God result from his attributes, and not his attributes from his works.

That he sometimes writes, without any meaning at all, is evident from his second sermon, p. 36. The principle, that the kingdom of God is within us, admits, he assures<sup>us</sup>, of a rational interpretation. "*In its true sense,*" says he, "*it is the medium between a mystic and a polemic.*" Such is the Doctor's '*rational interpretation!*' Now, if so celebrated a linguist as the quondam principal of the Belfast Academy, through the improper use of language, teaches doctrines which he does not believe; communicates ideas which he does not entertain; and sometimes writes without any meaning at all; how much more liable to blunder would illiterate fishermen and mechanics be? To expect from such writers, if not divinely directed in their language, a correct statement either of facts or doctrines, would be weak and foolish in the extreme. On the principles of our author, where is the security, that even the *four gospels* contain the true doctrines of Jesus Christ? Where is the security that they contain a true narration of facts? We are told, that all that was necessary was a good memory. But what reason have we to believe, that even good memories might not fail? What security that they have not actually failed, and that the scripture history is not really erroneous?

Once more: If the penmen of scripture have interlarded the Bible with occasional observations, how shall such observations be distinguished from the genuine dictates of the Holy Spirit? Any controversialist, when pressed with a text of scripture, might say, "*this is only an occasional, uninspired observation. It will not, therefore, prove your point.*" Thus a wide door would be opened for error; and scepticism might reign to the end of the world.

In a word; if the plenary inspiration of the scriptures be denied, their perfection, as a rule of faith and manners, must be given up. If not entirely inspired by infallible wisdom, how can they be an infallible rule? Surely that which is partly divine and partly human, partly fallible and

partly infallible, can never be an unerring rule of faith and practice.

“The Bible, the Bible, is the religion of Protestants,” was once a celebrated maxim, the truth of which no Protestant disputed. At present, however, the case is quite different. The maxim is opposed, not only by the church of Rome, but by many Socinian and Arian divines, particularly by Dr. B. The cry now is not, *The Bible, The Bible*, but *The Gospel, The Gospel*, is our religion. According to our author, the *whole* Bible is not the standard of faith; scarcely one hundredth part of it is entitled to that honour. We should collect, he assures us, the *whole* of the Christian doctrine from the words of Jesus. We should depend, for our knowledge of doctrinal points, *solely* on the gospels. Nay, in the Doctor’s bold and daring enterprise of cutting down the standard of our faith, he proceeds still farther. “Hence we may deduce,” says he, “not only the sufficiency of scripture in general, but also the sufficiency of every evangelist separately, as to fundamentals.”

He argues, that the gospels, either jointly or separately, are the standard of faith, because they contain “all those essential principles, without which we could not be saved.” But this reasoning is evidently absurd. It proves too much, and, therefore, proves nothing at all. The five books of Moses contain all that is essential to salvation; and therefore the *Pentateuch* is the standard of our faith. Peter’s sermon contains all that is essential to salvation; and therefore *Peter’s sermon* is the standard of our faith. Who sees not the extreme weakness and futility of such a mode of reasoning; upon this absurd principle we might set up, not one, but an *hundred* standards of faith.

In curtailing the standard of our faith, the Doctor proceeds to a still more daring length. “From this,” says he, (p. 45) “another undeniable inference follows; that no principle which cannot be clearly proved from every one of the evangelists, can be an essential article of faith; for, otherwise, we must suppose, that some one of them has omitted an essential truth. If then, you be in doubt, whether any doctrine be necessary to salvation, try it by this test: look for it in the gospels; and if you do not find it plainly declared in them all, you may safely conclude, that it is not essential to the plan of redemption. If any person attempt to impose a spurious tenet upon



“you, require him to prove it in this manner. If he fail, you may be assured, that the point in question is not even an important truth. This I recommend as a sure guide to conduct you through the intricacies of controversy, and prevent you from being entangled in the nets of sophistry.”

Let us try the Doctor’s “sure guide.” I ask, then, is the doctrine of forgiving injuries an essential article of faith? Certainly it is; our author himself will not deny it. He assures us, (p. 89,) that God is “forgiving to the merciful, and *inexorable* to those who withhold pardon and compassion from others.” And again, (p. 229,) “He requires nothing to make him merciful, but to be merciful ourselves; nothing to make him placable but to be meek, lowly, and *forgiving*.” According to Doctor B. therefore, forgiveness of injuries is a most essential article of faith, and yet, according to the same Dr. B. it is *no* “essential article of faith.” It is not even “*an important truth*.” Try it by the Doctor’s sure guide. Is it taught in every one of the evangelists? *it is not*. It is taught indeed by *three* of the evangelists, and we would naturally suppose, that at the mouth of three such witnesses every doctrine would be established. These witnesses assure us that if we forgive not men their trespasses, neither will our heavenly father forgive us our trespasses. But all this is nothing. John omits it; and therefore “*it is not even an important truth!*” The same may be said of the doctrine of repentance.

Thus it appears, that the Doctor’s sure guide is a *false guide*. It goes upon the false principle which our author assumes, that all the essential articles of faith are contained in every one of the gospels. He particularly assures us (p. 45,) that the Apostle John “committed to writing every fundamental doctrine, every thing necessary towards obtaining life eternal.” Now, he admits, that forgiving injuries is a fundamental doctrine, and necessary towards obtaining eternal life; and yet John has *not* committed it to writing. It is not “*plainly declared*” in his gospel. Repentance is a fundamental doctrine, and yet not plainly declared in all the gospels.

I ask, now, does the Doctor’s book deserve the encomiums he has passed upon it? Is it “*consistent with itself and the gospels?*” Is not “his sure guide” at variance with both?



His sure guide is not only a *false* guide, founded on *false* principles : and an *inconsistent* guide ; inconsistent with his own acknowledged creed : it is a *dangerous and destructive guide*—an *ignis fatuus*, calculated to mislead the Heaven-bound traveller, and to plunge him into the gulf of perdition.

Following this guide, men might live and die implacable, and impenitent, and yet *presumptuously hope to be saved!* They might say, “ According to Dr. B.’s sure guide, neither forgiveness of injuries nor repentance is an essential doctrine : it is not even an important truth—we will neither repent nor forgive :” and thus they might go “ down by the sides of the pit “ *with a lie in their right hand!!!*”

Finally ; the Doctor’s sure guide is an **IMPIOUS GUIDE**. It impiously degrades *almost the whole* of the sacred volume. According to it, no truth is important that is not plainly declared in all the gospels. Now, the sermon on the mount is not contained in all the gospels. The Lord’s prayer is not contained in all the gospels. His intercessory prayer is not contained in all the gospels. His parables are not contained in all the gospels. His long and affecting valedictory address, recorded in the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth chapters of John, is not contained in all the gospels. The institution of the Lord’s supper is not contained in all the gospels.—Exclude from any one of the gospels whatever is not found in all the rest—exclude, also, the writer’s own “ occasional observations ”—exclude, again, the uninspired “ *narration of ordinary facts* ”—exclude all these, and then tell me how much will remain. I might venture to assert, that the whole Bible would thus be compressed into *a tract of less than ten pages!*

Addison, in his Spectator, observes, “ That if all the “ books in the world were reduced to their quintessence, “ many a bulky volume would make its appearance in a “ penny paper.” Dr. B. has tried the experiment. He has subjected the word of God to this reducing process.—Yes, to a *penny paper* he has reduced the quintessence of the *whole sacred volume!* Having advanced so far, the transition to Deism is both short and easy. Nor would the bold and daring attack of infidelity be half so dangerous.

Dr. B. not only *excludes* the scriptures in general from the standard of our faith, but he actually *pours contempt* upon them. As the standard of our faith, he not only represents them as *useless*, but as positively *injurious*. “ If

“ Christians,” says he (p. 58,) “ had drawn all their creeds  
 “ from the words of Jesus Christ, their religion would have  
 “ retained its primeval simplicity. If the simplicity of the  
 “ gospel had been thus preserved, uniformity would have  
 “ also very generally prevailed, and Christians would have  
 “ kept the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. This  
 “ simplicity and uniformity would have preserved it from  
 “ cavil. The pure doctrine of Christ is a subject of praise,  
 “ even among sceptics ; and their ridicule and invective are  
 “ generally directed against mysterious and metaphysical  
 “ innovations, even when their object is, to bring Chris-  
 “ tianity itself into disrepute. It may be reasonably sup-  
 “ posed, that, if the creeds of Christians had remained  
 “ simple and pure, there would have been fewer occasions  
 “ for scandal and offence. Their controversies would have  
 “ been milder and fewer in number, and their conduct, it  
 “ may be presumed, more peaceable and pure. They  
 “ would have spoken the truth in love. That great scourge  
 “ of human nature and disgrace of the Christian church,  
 “ Persecution, could scarcely have found any pretext for  
 “ cruelty in the words of Christ. The Christian religion  
 “ would have so charmed and edified mankind, that it  
 “ would, by this time, have covered the whole face of the  
 “ earth. Men would have hailed it as the messenger of  
 “ glad tidings. The prophecies of Christ would have re-  
 “ ceived already, that completion which awaits them at  
 “ last. All mankind would have become one family, duti-  
 “ fully performing the will of their common father, practis-  
 “ ing the instructions of their great preceptor, and behav-  
 “ ing to each other as brethren. Their swords would have  
 “ been transformed into plough-shares, and their spears  
 “ forged into pruning hooks. Men would learn war no  
 “ more, and would every day become more and more fit  
 “ for translation into heaven. The Spirit of God would  
 “ descend (the Doctor concludes poetically) and rest upon  
 “ their hearts, like the dove, the emblem of peace, gentle-  
 “ ness, and love.”

So then, from a creed drawn from the gospels, all bless-  
 ings and happiness would flow ; but from creeds drawn  
 from the *whole word of God*, all evils, natural and moral,  
 have ensued ! Is not this to represent the scriptures of  
 truth (the gospels alone excepted) as the pestilential source  
 of every evil ? In this representation, is it not more than  
 insinuated, is it not plainly implied—that these sacred

oracles have been the means of destroying the primeval simplicity of religion, of fomenting divisions, and of banishing from Christians the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace?—that they have exposed Christianity to the cavil, the ridicule, and invective of sceptics; destroyed the simplicity and purity of creeds; furnished occasions for scandal and offence; increased and exasperated controversies; and ultimately destroyed purity and peace?—That to *them* may be imputed persecution, cruelty and war?—that to *them* may be ascribed all the Heathenism, Mahometanism, and infidelity, which at present deform the face of this globe?—that but for *their* baneful influence (I shudder as I write) the Christian religion would, by this time, have covered the whole earth?—that by their baneful influence, the completion of the prophecies is retarded, the union of mankind into one family counteracted, men prevented from doing the will of their Heavenly Father, from practising the instructions of their great Preceptor, from behaving to each other as brethren, and, finally, from enjoying the pacific and beneficent influences of the blessed Spirit of God?—If all these insinuations and implicit charges be just, the blasphemous conclusion would follow—*that the greater part of the Bible is not a BLESSING but a CURSE!*

The insinuations, however, are unjust, and the charges groundless. The true state of this matter is the very reverse of the Doctor's representation. The Doctor recommends a partial creed—a creed drawn from a part of Revelation, from the Gospels alone.—The want of such a creed, he represents, as the baneful source of all our woes. Now, the very reverse, I am convinced, is the fact. The evils complained of originate, not from creeds founded on the whole of revelation, but from *partial creeds*, creeds drawn from particular parts of the sacred volume—creeds like that which we find recommended, praised, and adopted by the learned Doctor.\*

The foundation of creeds, in my humble opinion, should be no narrower than that of the Church of the living God. Like that sacred edifice, they should rest on the broad basis

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\* After all his invectives against them, it appears that the Doctor, at heart, is no enemy to creeds. No man ever extolled creeds more, than he has eulogized those *partial ones*, which he would wish to be drawn from a *part* of revelation—from the gospels alone.



of the scriptures. To narrow the foundation of the Christian faith, as our author has done—to circumscribe Christian doctrine—to abridge the sacred volume—to exclude the Old Testament, and the greater part of the New, from the creed of the Christian, is to subvert the Christian faith, and overturn the Christian system—it is an attempt to tear away the greater part of that imperishable foundation, on which the church of God is built. Vain and fruitless attempt!—When the Doctor has first inverted the highest pyramid of Egypt—when he has succeeded in placing that stupendous pile of building on its apex instead of its base—then, and not till then, let him attempt to invert the church of God, by endeavouring to poise that glorious fabric on the narrow pivot of a few pages, instead of rearing it on the broad basis of “*the Prophets and Apostles, Jesus Christ being the chief corner stone.*”\*

Whilst degrading the other Scriptures, our author exalts the Gospels too high. This, to a superficial thinker, may appear impossible; but it is not. We exalt them too high, when we raise them on the ruins of the other Scriptures. We exalt the Gospels too high, when, with Dr. B., we vainly imagine, that creeds drawn from them must be necessarily

\* The Antrim Presbytery, in their petition to the House of Commons, make the following declarations:—“that your petitioners are so far from entertaining any sentiments derogatory to the Holy Scriptures, that they do believe, that there, and there only, can be found the true unpolluted doctrine of Christ crucified—that they invariably appeal to the sacred volume for the truth of what they teach, and are at all times ready to reject any opinion that can be shown to be at variance with the word of God.”

According to this declaration, the members of the Antrim Presbytery hold no sentiments derogatory to the Holy Scriptures.—With what truth Dr. B. could sign such a declaration, let the reader of the preceding pages judge! That the sentiments, on which I have been animadverting, are not only derogatory, but **HIGHLY** derogatory to the Holy Scriptures, no unprejudiced person can deny.

The declarations of the Antrim Presbytery, I regret to say, are ambiguous and equivocal. They declare, that the doctrine of Christ crucified may be found in the Holy Scriptures. How found?—as a few grains of wheat in a bushel of chaff? This, as we have already seen, appears to be Dr. Bruce’s view of the subject!

They declare again, that they appeal invariably to the sacred volume for the truth of what they teach. But how do they appeal to the sacred volume? Do they appeal to the *whole* of it, or only to the *one hundredth part* of it? Do they make the *whole* of it the standard of their faith, or only a few pages? What a pity that the Presbytery were not more explicit?



pure, calculated to eradicate all evil, and to introduce all good. What, I ask, is in the words of Jesus Christ, which prevents *them* from being perverted, as well as the other Scriptures? **NOTHING.**—Notwithstanding all the Doctor's high encomiums on the Gospels—and they are worthy of encomium—have they not been *actually* perverted? **THEY HAVE.**

What words have been more perverted than these, “Thou art Peter, and upon this rock will I build my church?” Has not the supremacy of the Pope been founded upon them?

What words have been more perverted than these, “This is my body. Except ye eat the flesh, and drink the blood of the son of man, ye have no life in you?” Has not the monstrous doctrine of transubstantiation been founded upon them?

What words have been more perverted than these, “Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish?” Has not the doctrine of penance been founded upon them?

What words have been more perverted than these, “Whosoever sins ye forgive, they are forgiven?” Has not the blasphemous doctrine of indulgences been founded upon them?—Thus it appears, that the Doctor's fine theory is contradicted by facts. Facts prove, that the most monstrous and abominable creeds have actually been drawn from the *very words of our blessed Redeemer!*

After extolling the Gospels too high, by raising them on the ruins of the other Scriptures, he finally degrades them, by admitting that “*they have produced unhappy effects on our perverse and crooked generation.*” Neither the Gospels, nor any other part of the Scriptures, ever “*produce unhappy effects.*” They may be the innocent *occasions*, but can never be the *causes* of evil.\*

Having examined the Doctor's “**SURE GUIDE,**” let us now attend to his “**SAFE RULE.**”

Page 39, he writes thus: “But, the question, to which I mean chiefly to confine myself, at present, relates to

\* I do not impute this to the Doctor as a designed charge upon the Gospels. It is only one of those numerous instances in which he has failed in expressing what he meant. In the present case, he has unintentionally degraded the Gospels, by confounding the distinction between an occasion and a cause.

“ **disputed doctrines.** Here, if you were asked, Understand  
 “ **ye what ye read?** you might well reply, How can we,  
 “ **except some man guide us?**—And then the question re-  
 “ **curs, Who shall guide us?** What direction shall we look  
 “ **to in controversy?** To whom shall we apply, when  
 “ **learned men and whole churches differ?** How shall the  
 “ **people decide, when their teachers, and other learned di-**  
 “ **vines, disagree?** This is an interesting question, at all  
 “ **times; and never more so, than at present, when reli-**  
 “ **gious controversy is so much the vogue.**

“ **Perhaps, the shortest answer that can be given is, Let**  
 “ **them alone. Let them differ, and do you adhere only to**  
 “ **those points in which they all agree. Christians must**  
 “ **necessarily coincide in opinion, upon many important**  
 “ **truths. We may, I believe, safely say, that they concur**  
 “ **on every doctrine, which can justly be called fundamen-**  
 “ **tal. Their agreement on these, while they differ on other**  
 “ **points, is a strong reason for embracing them: their dif-**  
 “ **ference upon subordinate doctrines, must excite a suspi-**  
 “ **cion that they may not be true; and a belief, that they**  
 “ **are not essential. So that, if there be any tenet, upon**  
 “ **which you have not the means of attaining to a rational**  
 “ **belief, you had better leave it among polemics and con-**  
 “ **troversionalists, till they agree among themselves; and,**  
 “ **in the mean time, addict yourselves to those practical,**  
 “ **edifying, and well established principles, in which they**  
 “ **concur. This is the safest general rule that I can give to**  
 “ **you.”**

So then, with regard to all those doctrines which have been disputed, the safest rule Dr. B. can give, is, “**LET THEM ALONE.**” Now, really, if our learned author had no better rule to give than this, with great submission, I conceive, it would have been infinitely better to have given *no rule at all.* I shall assign my reasons.

Taking the Doctor’s safe rule in their hands, the plain, illiterate part of his congregation might reason thus:—  
 “ **Whether any day be holier than another, is a point dis-**  
 “ **puted by learned divines; we will therefore let the observ-**  
 “ **ance of the Christian Sabbath alone.** It cannot be a mat-  
 “ **ter of any great importance, whether we spend it in reli-**  
 “ **gious services, or in business and amusement.**

“ **Baptism is a disputed point: we will ‘let it alone.’**  
 “ **We will not have our children baptized; for it is of no**  
 “ **importance whether they are baptized or not.**

“ *The Lord’s Supper* is a disputed point : we will ‘ *let it alone.*’ Whether we commemorate the dying love of Jesus or not, is a matter of no importance.

“ Secret prayer, family worship, social worship, public worship, in a word, all divine ordinances, public and private, are disputed points : according to the safe rule of our good minister, Dr. B., we will *let them alone.* We will neither worship God in public nor in private. Attendance on such ordinances can be of no importance. Particularly, we will ‘ *let the Bible alone ;*’ for whether the laity should read it at all, has been matter of dispute ; and at present it is disputed whether we should read it without note or comment. We will leave the Bible among polemics and controversionalists, till they agree among themselves about the reading of it.

“ *We will let the moral law alone :* for whether we are obliged to keep it or not, is a matter of dispute among learned divines. It is therefore a matter of no consequence, whether we study to keep the commandments of God, or live in the open violation of them ; whether we study purity in heart, speech and behaviour—or live in rioting and drunkenness, chambering and wantonness—giving ourselves up to work all uncleanness with greediness. The difference cannot be great : for some sects have maintained that good works are so far from being necessary, that they are obstacles to our salvation. According to the safe rule of our good minister, we will *let the moral law alone !*”

But I must now stop. I cannot go farther into detail. To point out all the absurdities of this “ SAFE RULE,” would fill volumes. If this safe rule of the Doctor’s be a good one, where are all our peculiar principles as Dissenters ? All these principles were disputed principles. They were, therefore, of little importance ; and yet our forefathers shed their blood in defence of them. According to the Doctor’s safe rule, they “ *died as a fool dies !*”

Again : If the Doctor’s “ *safe rule*” be a good one, what becomes of all our peculiar principles as Protestants ? What becomes of all the peculiar doctrines of the Reformation—those doctrines, which the martyrs sealed with their blood ? They were all disputed doctrines, and, therefore, unimportant. The blood of the martyrs was shed in vain !

In one sense, indeed, the Doctor’s rule must be acknowledged to be a safe one.



*No rule could be safer for the Church of Rome.* It would have put an extinguisher on the Reformation. With regard to the disputed doctrines, our author would have said, "*Let them alone. Leave them among the polemics and controversialists, till they agree among themselves.*" Now, as they have not yet agreed among themselves, the Reformation would not have yet commenced; Dr. B. and his hearers would have been, at this very moment, stanch Catholics, in the warm embraces of the old mother church!—My readers will forgive me, if, impelled by the force of truth, I proceed still farther, and say:

**NO RULE COULD BE SAFER FOR THE KINGDOM OF SATAN.** If universally adopted, it would have effectually secured the perpetuity of his reign, and the integrity of his empire. With great deference, I call upon Dr. B.—I call upon all the Arians in the world—to mention, if they can, *one single truth*, which Satan and his emissaries have not disputed. Under the Old Testament dispensation, Satan's emissaries, his false prophets, opposed and disputed those truths delivered by the prophets of the Lord. Would Dr. B. have said on this occasion, "*Let those disputed truths alone, till the prophets agree among themselves?*" A safe rule, indeed, for Satan's kingdom! The Old Serpent himself could have invented none better.

Again: In the commencement of the Christian era, Satan's false apostles opposed and disputed the doctrines taught by the true apostles of Jesus Christ. (2 Cor. xi. 13, 14, 15.) "*For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore, it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed, as the ministers of righteousness, whose end shall be according to their works.*" When the apostles of Jesus and those of Satan were thus disputing the great doctrines of the Gospel, would our author have said, "*Let those doctrines alone. Leave them among the polemics and controversialists, till they have agreed among themselves?*" No rule in the world would have contributed more effectually to the safety and prosperity of Satan's kingdom! On the principle of this rule, the Christian religion could have never been propagated.

As Satan had his false prophets under the legal dispensation, and his false apostles at the commencement of the Christian era, so in every subsequent period of the church,



“ *The Lord’s Supper* is a disputed point : we will ‘ *let it alone.*’ Whether we commemorate the dying love of Jesus or not, is a matter of no importance.

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*No rule could be safer for the Church of Rome.* It would have put an extinguisher on the Reformation. With regard to the disputed doctrines, our author would have said, “*Let them alone. Leave them among the polemics and controversialists, till they agree among themselves.*” Now, as they have not yet agreed among themselves, the Reformation would not have yet commenced; Dr. B. and his hearers would have been, at this very moment, stanch Catholics, in the warm embraces of the old mother church!—My readers will forgive me, if, impelled by the force of truth, I proceed still farther, and say:

**NO RULE COULD BE SAFER FOR THE KINGDOM OF SATAN.** If universally adopted, it would have effectually secured the perpetuity of his reign, and the integrity of his empire. With great deference, I call upon Dr. B.—I call upon all the Arians in the world—to mention, if they can, *one single truth*, which Satan and his emissaries have not disputed. Under the Old Testament dispensation, Satan’s emissaries, his false prophets, opposed and disputed those truths delivered by the prophets of the Lord. Would Dr. B. have said on this occasion, “*Let those disputed truths alone, till the prophets agree among themselves?*” A safe rule, indeed, for Satan’s kingdom! The Old Serpent himself could have invented none better.

Again: In the commencement of the Christian era, Satan’s false apostles opposed and disputed the doctrines taught by the true apostles of Jesus Christ. (2 Cor. xi. 13, 14, 15.) “*For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore, it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed, as the ministers of righteousness, whose end shall be according to their works.*” When the apostles of Jesus and those of Satan were thus disputing the great doctrines of the Gospel, would our author have said, “*Let those doctrines alone. Leave them among the polemics and controversialists, till they have agreed among themselves?*” No rule in the world would have contributed more effectually to the safety and prosperity of Satan’s kingdom! On the principle of this rule, the Christian religion could have never been propagated.

As Satan had his false prophets under the legal dispensation, and his false apostles at the commencement of the Christian era, so in every subsequent period of the church,

at least till the time of the millennium, he has had, or will have, his false teachers. Our Saviour warned us against such seducers. (Matthew, viii. 5.) "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheeps' clothing; but inwardly they are ravening wolves." The apostle Peter sounds the alarm, and puts the church on her guard against the intrusion of men, who would "come in unawares, and privily introduce damnable heresies, denying the Lord that bought them, and bringing upon themselves and their followers swift destruction." The apostles Paul, Jude, and John, all blow the trumpet and sound the alarm. Their injunctions to us are, "Beware! Beware! Be not deceived. Let no man beguile you. Stand fast in the faith. Contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. Stand fast in one spirit and one mind, striving together for the faith of the Gospel." With these *apostolic* injunctions, the advice of Solomon is completely in unison; "*Buy the truth, and sell it not.*"

From these observations, it is abundantly evident that "the Devil, our adversary, is still going about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour;" that he is still opposing the truths of the Gospel. The adoption of the Doctor's safe rule would be a base desertion of truth, and dereliction of duty. Instead of "*resisting the Devil, that he may flee from us,*" it would be a surrendering to Satan at discretion. It would be leaving his emissaries in undisturbed possession of the field. No, Doctor Bruce! The friends of the Redeemer are not so cowardly. Rallying round the standard of truth, in the name of their God they will display their banners: nor will they leave the field till they "*see Satan falling like lightning from heaven to earth;*" till they see truth bursting through the clouds of error, and "the knowledge and glory of the Lord covering the earth, as the waters cover the sea."

If the Doctor's safe rule be adopted, what becomes of all his own principles?—his principles as a Protestant?—as a Dissenter?—as a Presbyterian?—as a member of the Antrim Presbytery? What becomes of the doctrines taught in his volume of sermons—the same doctrines which were taught previously by "*those eminent ministers, Halliday and his grandfather, Drennan and Brown, Mackay and Crombie*"—the same doctrines which were taught for a century past, by the Presbytery of Antrim? These are all disputed doctrines; and this very circumstance, according



to the Doctor's own acknowledgment, "*must excite a suspicion that they may not be true.*" Why, then, should he preach those suspicious doctrines? Why did his boasted predecessors, for a century past, preach those suspicious doctrines? Why do all the other members of the Antrim Presbytery, as well as himself and his son, continue to preach those suspicious doctrines? What! the Presbytery of Antrim preaching, for a century, doctrines confessedly suspicious? Tell it not in Gath! publish it not in Askelon! lest Deists should rejoice, and Infidels triumph.

I have dwelt the longer on the Doctor's safe rule, as I believe it to be a rule too generally adopted; and a rule fraught with incalculable mischief. Why are so many dissenters returning to the bosom of the church of England? Why are so many Protestants returning to the bosom of the church of Rome? I answer, our author's safe rule, and other kindred maxims, have a powerful influence in producing these effects. "No matter what we believe, if we are sincere." "Those doctrines, about which good men differ, cannot be important."

"For modes of faith let graceless zealots fight:  
His can't be wrong, whose life is in the right."

These have been the prevailing, fashionable maxims of the past century—maxims, as unphilosophical, as they are unscriptural—maxims, which separate theory and practice—maxims, which confound truth and error; absurdly representing both as equally favourable to virtue! Upon the principle of such maxims, it is natural to ask, Why did those graceless zealots, Luther, Calvin, Zuinglius, and the rest of our reformers, fight with the church of Rome about modes of faith? Why did they throw all Europe into flames for no purpose? "*These graceless zealots*"—may the patrons of such maxims say—"acted as fools by destroying the peace of Christendom; but we are men of *pacific dispositions, and will show our superior wisdom, by returning to the bosom of our mother church,*" "A *part of all will be saved.*" "When we go to Heaven, it *will never be asked, Are you Catholics, Churchmen, or Dissenters?*"—I ask any man of candour—any man capable of the slightest reflection—Have not such "*safe rules*" and *liberal maxims* a direct tendency to stop the



march of mind—to arrest the progress of Reformation—and to lead us back into darkness and Popery?

How different the sentiments of our blessed Redeemer and his Apostles! “Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth.” “God hath chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the spirit, and belief of the truth. Because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved, God gave them over to strong delusions to believe a lie, that all might be damned who believe not the truth.” “Come out from among them, my people,” &c.

Nearly allied to the Doctor’s sure guide, and safe rule, is the following maxim laid down in his treatise on the Being and Attributes, (P. 12): “It is also a law of our nature, that we cannot discredit testimony, when sufficiently strong.” Though this maxim, at first sight, appears quite plausible; yet, if duly examined, I humbly conceive, it will be found to subvert the foundation of the Christian system, and to lead directly to Deism, to Atheism, and to blasphemy,—These assertions are strong, I acknowledge. That they are not *too* strong will appear, I am convinced, by the following syllogisms:

“It is a law of our nature, that we cannot discredit testimony, when sufficiently strong.”

But the testimony in favour of the truth of Christianity, has been discredited;

Therefore, the testimony in favour of the truth of Christianity, was not sufficiently strong.

Does not this syllogism, founded on the Doctor’s maxim, level to the dust the whole fabric of Christianity? Does it not lead directly to DEISM?

Again: “It is a law of our nature, that we cannot discredit testimony, when sufficiently strong.”

But the testimony, which God has given in favour of the truth of his own being and attributes, has been discredited;

Therefore, the testimony, which God has given in favour of the truth of his own being and attributes, is not sufficiently strong!

I ask again: Does not this syllogism, founded on the Doctor’s maxim, lead directly to ATHEISM?

Once more: “It is a law of our nature, that we cannot discredit testimony, when sufficiently strong.”

But the testimony God has given of his Son, the testimony which the Son has given of the Father, and the testi-

mony which the Holy Spirit has given of both, have been discredited ;

Therefore, the testimonies of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, are not sufficiently strong!

Whether or not this syllogism, founded on the Doctor's maxim, leads to *blasphemy*, let the reader judge.

If testimony, when sufficiently strong, cannot be discredited ; neither faith is a duty nor unbelief a sin. Necessity of nature is quite incompatible with virtue and vice, praise and blame. Hence it is, I humbly presume, that the unphilosophical, and unscriptural ideas of the innocence of error,\* and the trivial importance of truth, have gained such currency in the present age. When testimonies or doctrines are discredited, the fault must either be in the evidence, or in the mind that perceives it. Now, with regard to the doctrines of the Bible, or the testimony in favour of the truth of Christianity, what Christian would say, that the fault is in the evidence ? God never requires of his rational creatures any thing unreasonable—any thing naturally impossible. If he requires men to believe in the truth of Christianity, he has given sufficient evidence of that truth. If he requires men to believe in the doctrines of the Gospel, he has given sufficient evidence of the truth of those doctrines. It is on this principle alone, that faith is a duty, and unbelief and error, sins. The understanding is the judge, bound to give a verdict according to evidence ; but the judge may be bribed.—The will, the affections, the appetites and passions, blind the understanding, pervert the judgment, and influence the belief. It is almost proverbial, that what we wish we easily believe ; and that—

“ A man convinced against his will  
“ Is of the same opinion still.”

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\* Dr. B. maintains that error may not only be innocent, but *righteous* and *holy*! The well-instructed Christian, he assures us (P. 157), will see—“ that while he adhered to the gospel he was at least safe : “ that the sincere profession of a holy and righteous faith, though it “ were erroneous, must be pleasing to a holy and righteous God.” What! Holy and righteous erroneous faith ! What a combination of words ! “ *Pious frauds*” are not more monstrous, than *holy and righteous errors*. It is not more blasphemous to affirm, that the God of holiness may delight in sin, than to assert, that the God of truth must be pleased with error !—Need we be at all astonished that Infidels exclaim, Priestcraft ! and Imposture ! when we hear an *erroneous* faith not only pronounced *innocent*, but *righteous and holy*, by a learned Divine, a Doctor of Divinity ?

If error, unbelief, Deism, and even Atheism, arose purely from the exercises of the understanding, without any concern of the will, the affections, the heart; they would not be criminal. But the case is quite otherwise. Each of these is highly criminal; because the decision of the judgment is perverted by the influence of the will, the affections, and dispositions of the heart. It is "with the *heart* man believes"—there is "an evil *heart* of unbelief"—"the fool says in his *heart*, There is no God." This is a subject of great delicacy and importance. Confounding the pure acts of the understanding, with those which are influenced by the will and inclination, has induced men of the greatest talents, to consider error, unbelief, Deism, and even Atheism, as innocent. A remarkable instance of this we have in Brougham's inaugural address, in Glasgow University; and in his speech in the House of Commons. In the former he represents man, as having no control over his belief, and as no more accountable for it, than for the "hue of his skin, or height of his stature." In the latter, he declares, "that if a man were an Atheist, or an Infidel, it was his misfortune, not his fault; and that he should be viewed with pity, not with blame." All this proceeds upon the erroneous hypothesis, that our wills, inclinations, appetites, passions and prejudices, have no influence on our belief. Were the premises true, the conclusion would be unavoidable; but the premises are false, and therefore the conclusion is erroneous. It is equally opposed to the philosophy of the human mind, and the infallible dictates of divine Revelation. "*He that believes not shall be damned.* And "this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men *love* darkness rather than light; because their deeds are evil. (2 Thes. ii. 10, 11, 12.) "Because they received not the *love* of the truth, that they might be saved. God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie, that they all might be damned, who believe not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."

By confounding what is natural with what is moral, some orthodox divines have fallen into the same error.

MacGowan in his letters to Priestly, speaking of those who are grossly erroneous, says: "They are certainly more properly objects of my pity, than of my resentment. With as much propriety might I be offended with a poor man, who was born blind, and continues so, because he



“ is not a judge of colours ; or with a deaf man, because he understands not the harmony of sounds.” Thus the acute and penetrating MacGowan stumbles on the same ground with our great Parliamentary Orator. He stumbles by confounding natural with moral blindness. The cases, however, are completely distinct, and altogether different. The man born blind says, “ Lord that I might receive my sight.” On the contrary, those who are morally blind, *hate* the light ; they *love darkness rather than light*. This is their condemnation. This is the ground of their criminality and guilt.\*

By what I have written in the preceding pages, I do not mean to deny, that some parts of the sacred volume, and that some doctrines of divine revelation, are more important than others ; but I maintain that they are *all* important. They are all necessary—necessary to complete the glorious fabric of divine truth. We hear much of essential truths, fundamental truths, &c. It is true, indeed, that the removal of foundation stones is the speediest mode of destroying a building ; but it is no less true, that a greater number of houses are ruined by the deficiency of their slates, pinnings, mortar, &c. than by the razing of their foundations. What wise man would say, when robbers are attacking his house, “ Let them alone. If the foundation stones are safe, the other parts of the house are of inferior importance ?”

All the parts of the human body are not equally important, but they are all necessary to complete the frame. “ The eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee ; nor, again, the head to the feet, I have no need of you. Nay, much more those members of the body that seem more feeble are necessary.” The same is the case with regard to the different parts of the Bible. They are not all *equally* important ; but they are all necessary—necessary to complete one glorious body of divinity. The

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\* I had intended to proceed farther in the discussion of this subject ; but, with much surprise and pleasure, I find myself anticipated by an able defender of the faith of the Gospel—the Rev. Dr. Wardlaw, Glasgow. This pious and learned divine has published two sermons in refutation of those very sentiments, which I had previously marked out as the subject of animadversion.—These sermons I would recommend as useful and important—giving at once a scriptural and philosophical view of this difficult subject.



amputation of a leg, an arm, or even a finger or a toe, destroys the uniformity, and mars the beauty of the human body. Who would not contend for his feeblest members, as well as for his head or his heart? On similar principles, what true Christian would wilfully suffer the body of Revelation to be maimed or mutilated? That man is not worthy of the name of a Christian, who would wilfully surrender "one hair or hoof" of truth. She was not the true mother of the child, who unfeelingly exclaimed, "Let it be neither mine nor thine, but divide it."

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## CHAPTER III.

### *The Supreme Deity of Jesus Christ defended.*

#### SECTION I.

His names—particularly the names **JEHOVAH** and **GOD**.

It is, I conceive, no contemptible proof of the doctrine I advocate, that the opponents of our Lord's Divinity, feel it necessary to depreciate the sacred oracles. No man can degrade the *Son* of God, till he first degrade the *Word* of God. Having, in the preceding pages, endeavoured to repel our author's attack on the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures, we shall now proceed to defend the Supreme Deity of our blessed Redeemer.

The reader of these pages may be anxious to know, why the defenders of the Divinity and Atonement of Jesus Christ appeal more frequently to the Epistles than the Gospels. The reason is this: In the Epistles those doctrines are *more clearly taught*. Were the question put, Why more clearly taught by the Apostles than their Master? I answer, first, "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." This is a sufficient answer to all those who do not suppose their own wisdom superior to the wisdom of God. In the second place, I answer the question by asking another. Why were more souls converted by one sermon of the Apostle Peter, than by all the sermons which his

Master preached during his life? Thirdly, I answer, Had the Master taught the doctrines of his Divinity and Atonement, as clearly as those doctrines were afterwards taught by his Apostles, he would have counteracted the end of his mission. Had so much light been shed upon his character, the princes of this world would have known him; and “had they known him, *they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory.*” Does Dr. B., by wishing to confine us to the Gospels, mean to reject that flood of light poured on the character of our Redeemer after his ascension? Does he wish to reduce us to that partial light under which our blessed Lord was crucified? Could he succeed in this unhallowed attempt, I have no doubt in saying, as human nature is the same in every age, multitudes would homologate the crime of the Jews, they would cry out, “Away with him, away with him.” “Crucify him, crucify him.” “They would crucify afresh the Son of God, and put him to an open shame,” by degrading his person and vilifying his blood; by denying his Divinity and rejecting his Atonement.

In defending the Supreme Deity of the Son of God, I shall follow neither the Doctor’s “sure guide” nor “safe rule;” but the direction of our blessed Lord himself, “Search the Scriptures; for they are they which testify of me.”

Our author’s attack on the Deity of our Redeemer is not very formidable. Out of his own mouth he stands condemned. To enable me to prove, that the Lord Jesus is “Over all, God blessed for ever,” I need ask nothing more than what the Doctor himself admits. In his *Being and Attributes*, (p. 161) he says, “The self-existence of the Deity is expressed by his name JEHOVAH.” And, in his sermon on the pre-existence and example of Christ, he observes, (p. 133) “We have every reason to believe, that the Patriarchal and Mosaical dispensations were conducted, under God, by the agency of one Super-eminent Being, denominated the Angel of the Covenant, the Angel of the Lord, and JEHOVAH.” In one volume the Doctor grants, that the name JEHOVAH denotes self-existence; and in the other he admits, that Jesus is JEHOVAH. Jesus, therefore, must be self-existent, and thus the self-existence of the Redeemer, and, of course, his Supreme Deity, are proved by Dr. Bruce himself. Jesus Christ is

proved to be, what our author, elsewhere, strenuously denies—"the underrived and self-existent cause of all."

The name JEHOVAH is the distinguishing, appropriate, and peculiar name of the Supreme Being. This is granted by some of the most sensible Antitrinitarians. Yates, in his reply to Wardlaw, says, "JEHOVAH, it is well known, is used in the Old Testament, as the peculiar and appropriate name of the Supreme God." And Dr. Bruce himself grants, that this peculiar and appropriate name of the Supreme God, is also the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. After this, "What need of further witness? Have we not heard from his own mouth?" Is not the conclusion inevitable—that *Jesus Christ is the Supreme God*? Should any person think, that the Doctor has betrayed his own cause; or, should any person deny, that the name JEHOVAH is the appropriate, peculiar, and incommunicable name of the Supreme God, I would refer him to the following texts. I shall quote them as they stand in the original, substituting the word JEHOVAH for LORD; for the English reader will observe, that when the word LORD is printed in capitals, the original is JEHOVAH. When God proclaimed his name to Moses, (Ex. xxxiv. 5, 6,) he passed by and proclaimed "JEHOVAH, JEHOVAH." (Amos, v. 8,) "JEHOVAH is his name." (Amos, ix. 16,) "JEHOVAH is his name." (Hosea, xii. 5,) "JEHOVAH is his memorial." (Neh. ix. 6,) "Thou, even thou, art JEHOVAH alone." (2 Sam. xxii. 32,) "Who is God save JEHOVAH?" (Psalms, lxxxiii. 18,) "Whose name *alone* is JEHOVAH." (Isaiah, xlii. 8,) "I am JEHOVAH, that is my name; and my glory I will not give to another, neither my praise to graven images." From these, and a multitude of other texts, it is abundantly evident, that JEHOVAH is that name which exclusively belongs to the Supreme Being. It is a name which he possesses in common with no other being. The glory of it he will not give to another.

In the Old Testament our blessed Redeemer is not only denominated JEHOVAH, but JEHOVAH OF HOSTS, "HOLY, HOLY, HOLY JEHOVAH OF HOSTS: THE WHOLE EARTH IS FULL OF HIS GLORY." By an inspired commentator this sublime description is applied to our Lord Jesus Christ (John, xii. 41,) "*These things said Esias, when he saw his glory and spake of him.*"

Now, if the name JEHOVAH, that glorious and peculiar name of Deity, and not only the name JEHOVAH, but JEHO-

YAH OF HOSTS, be given to our Lord Jesus Christ ; will Socinians and Arians venture to say, that our blessed Redeemer is not the Supreme God ?—that he is only a *creature*, an *angel*, or a *man*?—Such was the veneration with which the name JEHOVAH was regarded among the Jews, that they conceived it a kind of impiety to utter it : they treated it as ineffable, and substituted another in its stead.—Now this great and dreadful name of the Deity, this name which the Supreme God claims as his exclusive prerogative, and which he declares belongs to none but himself, is also the name of JESUS CHRIST. This is granted by Dr. B., and is evident—as we shall afterwards see—from a multitude of portions of Old Testament scripture. Doctor Bruce, therefore, and all Socinians and Arians universally, are necessarily reduced to this dilemma—*they must either deny that the Supreme God has any peculiar name by which he may be distinguished from his creatures*—they must deny this in the face of all those texts, quoted above—or then they must grant, *that Jesus Christ is THE SUPREME GOD.\**

Our author asserts, that “ the instances in which the title God is applied to Christ, are very rare ; and attended with no greater difficulty, than those in which he is styled a man.” To find Arians balancing such difficulties, is not strange. In either of the cases mentioned by the Doctor, the difficulties—on the Arian hypothesis—are great indeed—*insuperably great*. We feel none of them : they are peculiar to the Arian system.—In the sacred volume, Jesus Christ is declared to be a *man*, and we believe him to be *really* a man. Jesus Christ is declared to be God, and we believe him to be *really* God. Arians believe *neither*.—The Bible affirms that the Redeemer is *God* ; but Dr. B. affirms that he is a *creature*. The Bible asserts that the Redeemer is a *man* ; but Dr. B. asserts that he is an *angel*. These contradictory assertions, notwithstanding the boasted simplicity of the Arian scheme, present to the mind great and insuperable difficulties. On the absurdity of Arian ideas, with regard to the humanity of Jesus Christ, I cannot deny myself the pleasure of laying before my readers

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\* To evade the force of the preceding dilemma, should any allege that the Supreme God has some *other* peculiar name, and not the name JEHOVAH, I challenge them to the proof. Let them produce it if they can.



the following observations—observations which characterise the Logician, the Philosopher, and the Divine. They are extracted from the introduction prefixed to Stuart's answer to Channing :

“ Those who ascribe to him (the Redeemer) true Divinity and Humanity, do so from conviction, that no other view does justice to the varied exhibitions of his character in the Scriptures: They think that even the Arian hypothesis, which has been often recommended, particularly in a late publication, (Dr. B.'s sermons) as avoiding all the difficulties of other schemes, and ‘having none of its own, except such as must attach to any supernatural interposition,’ is essentially defective in two respects: not only as falling short of the majesty ascribed to him—but is opposed to the most obvious accounts of his humanity. The latter circumstance deserves particular attention. Many do not seem to be aware, that, on such a hypothesis, the humanity of the Saviour is as completely rejected as his Divinity. According to this fashionable view of his person, he was not man. He had merely a human body, but not a human soul. The only intelligent principle connected with the body was a pre-existent spirit, of a distinct and superior order, who descended to adopt it as a frame or residence; and who thus possessed only the outward form, the shell of humanity.” Now, it may be asked, What constitutes a human being? Dr. B. says, by man “we mean only a human body, inhabited by a rational soul. The origin, or peculiar properties of that soul, excepting reason, do not come within our consideration.” “But were a person of plain common sense asked, whether an Angel connected with a body like ours was really a Man, would he not feel that there was a trifling with common and obvious language in the very question? Does not the term Man, primarily refer to the intelligent principle connected with the body; and to some peculiar properties of that principle, by which it is distinguishable from other orders of intellectual existences? It is surely not any rational principle connected with a human body, that constitutes humanity. The general principle of reason may exist, while the laws to which it is subjected in different beings, may vary so much as to form distinct orders of intelligences. To constitute a human being, therefore, requires a rational principle, having all the faculties and capaci-

“ ties, and all the laws of thought that are common to the  
 “ species, and form their distinguishing characteristics.—  
 “ Such is the accuracy of Doctor Bruce’s definition of  
 “ Man ; to which, he says, ‘ Jesus conformed in every  
 “ thing.’ According to such a definition, could it be said  
 “ of him, that ‘ he was in all things made like unto his  
 “ brethren ?’ Even if this supposition were made, it would  
 “ still be a question, whether it is consistent with possibi-  
 “ lity ? Have we any reason to believe, that the organiza-  
 “ tion of the human body could be adapted to an intelli-  
 “ gence of a different nature from the human mind ; or  
 “ could be the means of awakening in it sensations, ideas,  
 “ and emotions ? Every thing about our constitution shows,  
 “ that there is the nicest and most delicate adaptation of the  
 “ corporeal frame, to the peculiarities of the rational princi-  
 “ ple which we possess ; whilst we have reason to think that  
 “ a change in either would disturb the whole economy, and  
 “ derange all the laws of thought. It should thus be seri-  
 “ ously considered, whether the Arian hypothesis does not  
 “ involve difficulties and mysteries, as great as those which  
 “ it proposes to avoid ; and whether it is more consistent  
 “ with the known laws of human thought, than with the  
 “ plainest declarations of Scripture.”

In that same page (111) on which the previous animad-  
 versions are made, we find the following assertions :—“ A  
 “ spirit, therefore, of superior excellence may, if it be the  
 “ will of God, occupy a human body ; as we are assured  
 “ that angels have done.”\* Now, where are we assured  
 that angels have occupied human bodies ? No WHERE.  
 We are assured, indeed, that angels appeared in human  
 form ; but we are no where assured that they occupied real  
 human bodies.

The philosophical observations quoted above, prove the  
 Doctor’s opinion to be in the highest degree improbable, if  
 not absolutely absurd. Besides, if angels occupied real  
 human bodies, our Saviour himself occupied one before his  
 incarnation in the womb of the virgin.—Three angels ap-  
 peared to Abraham in the form of men ; one of them was  
 the Redeemer ; for the patriarch styles him **JEHOVAH**, and

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\* I take it for granted, that the case of demoniacs was not contem-  
 plated by the Doctor. In that case it was not mere bodies that were  
 possessed ; but bodies previously occupied by souls.

intercedes with him in behalf of Sodom. Now, if the other two angels had real human bodies, so also had the Angel of the Covenant. The evidence in both cases is the same. If, then, our Saviour had a real human body in the patriarchal age, the absurd conclusion follows—that *he has had two bodies, and has been twice incarnate!* If the ideas of Arians respecting the *human nature* of Jesus be antiscritural and unphilosophical, still more untenable are their opinions respecting his *Divine nature*; they are directly opposed by almost every page of the sacred volume.

Dr. B. asserts, “that the instances in which the title “God is applied to Christ are very rare.” With all due deference, I assert, that they are *very numerous*—almost *innumerable*. The principles laid down by our author himself will clearly evince the truth of this assertion. He lays it down as a principle—a principle in which I fully acquiesce—that when God is represented as appearing, conversing, &c. the Lord Jesus Christ is intended. For no man hath seen God (the Father) at any time. No man hath seen him, nor can see him. He is the King eternal, immortal, *invisible*.—It is only Jesus Christ, but not God the Father, that has ever become the object of our senses. Now, if it was the Son of God that appeared to the patriarchs and Old Testament saints—if it was he that conversed with them and conducted the patriarchal and legal economies—if it was he that chose the Israelites, brought them out of Egypt, led them through the wilderness, drove out the Canaanites from before them, and put them in possession of the promised land—if it was he that was called the Angel of the Lord, the Angel of his Presence, the Angel of the Covenant—if it was he that was denominated Jehovah, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the God of Israel, the God of Bethel, &c.—if Dr. B. grant all this—and all this he fully grants—with what consistency can he maintain, that “the instances in which the Redeemer is called “God are few?” Are not God and Jehovah the *common appellations* by which that glorious personage is designated? The attentive reader of his Bible will find that it is not in a few, but in hundreds of instances, that those epithets are applied to our blessed Redeemer.

In the very commencement of the Bible—in the third chapter of Genesis, our blessed Saviour is represented as conversing with our first parents, and is styled the **LORD GOD, OR JEHOVAH GOD**, at least eight times.—In the thir-



teenth chapter of Judges, the Lord Jesus Christ is ten times styled the Angel of the Lord—or the ANGEL JEHOVAH, according to the original—and in the 22d verse he is expressly called God. “And Manoah said unto his wife, We shall surely die, because we have seen God.” That the glorious personage who appeared to Manoah and his wife was the Redeemer, admits of no rational doubt. In conjunction with the circumstance of his appearing, the names ascribed to him sufficiently prove it. He is not only styled God and JEHOVAH, but *Wonderful* (verse 18), “Why ask—est thou after my name, seeing it is secret.” The epithet translated *secret*, should have been rendered WONDERFUL. It is so rendered by the Septuagint in this place, and by our translators themselves in Isaiah, ix. 6, “His name shall be called *Wonderful*, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, and Prince of Peace.” To point out all the instances in which our Redeemer is styled God and JEHOVAH, would fill a volume. The reader may consult at his leisure those passages where he is represented as appearing to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to Moses, Joshua, the seventy elders, and other patriarchs. He will then be fully convinced, that the glorious personage, who appeared to them, and conversed with them, is, in multitudes of instances, called God and Jehovah—and Dr. B. himself will tell us, that the person who thus appeared was not God the Father—for he never appeared—but God the Son, our blessed Redeemer.

Should not our author have paused?—Should he not have read his Bible with a little more care, before he risked the bold and groundless assertion—that the instances in which the title God is applied to Christ are “*very rare?*”

The Doctor proceeds to make other assertions equally groundless. P. 112 and 113, he writes thus: “In the Hebrew tongue there are several terms denoting, some, the Supreme God, and others, subordinate spirits, invested with authority and power. From the poverty of our language, in this respect, we are obliged to translate them all by the word *God*. The same deficiency exists in Greek, the original language of the New Testament. Hence arises the use of the word, God, in different senses, and the common opinion, that this term always signifies the Supreme Being.”

What, I ask, are those Hebrew terms, some of them denoting the Supreme God, and others subordinate spirits,



which, from the poverty of our language, we are obliged to translate by the same word *God*? Let our author produce them if he can. He will find the task difficult. Why? There are *no such terms*. There is *no such poverty*, either in our own or in the Greek language. The Doctor's assertion is groundless, and calculated to mislead the English reader.

His next assertion is still more palpably erroneous. It is as inconsistent with fact as with grammar. "Hence" "arises the use of the word, God, in different senses, and" "the common opinion that this term always signifies the" "Supreme Being."—What! Common opinion! There is no such common opinion. When the Deity tells Moses, that he made him a God unto Pharaoh; is it the common opinion that Moses was the Supreme Being? When angels and magistrates are called gods, is it the common opinion that angels and magistrates are the Supreme Being? When the Devil is styled the god of this world, is it the common opinion that Satan is the Supreme Being? With all due deference to Dr. B. I would take the liberty of asserting, that on this subject, common opinion is as correct as his own.

That our blessed Redeemer is in Scripture called God, Dr. B. and other Anti-trinitarians readily admit. They cannot deny it. But they maintain that the word is used in an inferior sense, and that our Saviour is only a *delegated God*.—They tell us, that angels are called gods—that magistrates are called gods—that idols are called gods—and that even the Devil is called a god.—I know, indeed, that angels are called gods, but I know, also, that they are all commanded *to worship the Redeemer*. (Psal. xcvi. 7,) "*Worship him, all ye gods*."—(Heb. i. 6,) "*When he bringeth in the first-begotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him*."—Let Dr. B., if he be able, quote one single portion of Scripture, where any person is commanded to worship angels. He will find, on the contrary, the worshipping of angels condemned in that same word of God, which enjoins those spirits to worship the Redeemer. (Col. ii. 18.)

I know, again, that magistrates are called gods; but I know, also, that there is no temptation held out in the sacred volume to make them the objects of religious worship, or to confound them with the living and true God. I know, that in the very same portion of Scripture where they

are denominated gods, they are represented as weak and dying creatures. (Psal. 82. 6.) "I have said ye are gods; and all of you are children of the Most High; but ye shall die like men, and fall like one of the princes." In speaking of the Redeemer as God, the language of Scripture is very different. (Heb. i. 8.) "*But unto the Son he saith, thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever.*" "Thou art the same and thy years shall not fail."

Once more: I know well that idols are called gods, and that Satan is styled the god of this world—but I know also, that in the very same Scripture, (Psal. xcvi. 7.) where all the gods are commanded to worship the Redeemer, it is likewise written, "Confounded be all they that serve graven images, that boast themselves of idols." I know the Redeemer has bruised the serpent's head, that he will bind Satan, thrust him down into the bottomless pit, and set a seal upon him.—"*I know that the idols he shall utterly abolish.*"

That Jesus Christ is an inferior God—a subordinate God—a delegated God—is a doctrine which our author may have received by tradition from his fathers, but it is not taught in the sacred oracles. The Scriptures teach the very opposite doctrine: they teach us, that Jesus Christ is not an inferior God, but the MIGHTY GOD. (Is. ix. 6.) "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulders; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace."

The Scriptures teach us that Jesus Christ is not only the Mighty God, but the ALMIGHTY GOD. (Gen. xvii. 1.) "The LORD (JEHOVAH) appeared to Abraham, and said unto him, I am the ALMIGHTY GOD." (Exod. vi. 2, 3,) "And God spake unto Moses, and said unto him, I am JEHOVAH, and I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, by the name of GOD ALMIGHTY"—(Gen. xlviii. 3,) "And Jacob said unto Joseph, GOD ALMIGHTY appeared unto me at Luz, in the land of Canaan, and blessed me." (Gen. xxxv. 9, 11,) "And God appeared unto Jacob again, when he came out of Padan-aram, and blessed him.— And God said unto him, I am GOD ALMIGHTY."—Now, who was that Great Being who appeared to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob by the name of GOD ALMIGHTY? Doctor Bruce will answer the question. He will tell us, that it was our blessed Redeemer; for God the Father, he candidly

grants, never appeared—never became the object of human senses. Jesus Christ, therefore, Dr. B. himself being witness, is **GOD ALMIGHTY**.—He is so represented, not only in the Old Testament, but also in the New. (Rev. i. 8,) “I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, **THE ALMIGHTY**.”

From pages 95, 97, 103, 104, 107, 110, 117, 134, 139, 144, 148, &c. it appears that **ALMIGHTY** is that very epithet, which our author has selected to mark the distinction between our Lord Jesus Christ and the Supreme Being; and yet it does not mark that distinction; for, as we have seen above, not only God the Father, but Jesus Christ his Son, is in Scripture denominated **GOD ALMIGHTY**. It is also remarkable, that, in page 95, the Doctor asserts, that the **ALMIGHTY cannot** become an object of human senses; and yet we have seen that the **ALMIGHTY has** become an object of human senses—his Arianism betrays our learned author into all these errors. In opposition to the plain declarations of Scripture and his own concessions, he takes it for granted that Jesus Christ is not **THE ALMIGHTY**.

The Scriptures teach us, that Jesus Christ is not a little God, an inferior deity, but the **GREAT GOD**, (Tit. ii. 13,) “Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the **GREAT GOD** and our Saviour, Jesus Christ.” Dr. Bruce cannot deny that our Saviour, in this text, is **THE GREAT GOD**. He cannot deny it on two accounts—1st, He cannot deny it without a violation of Greek grammar. According to Grenville Sharpe’s rule, had Great God and Saviour referred to different persons, the Greek article would have been repeated before the latter noun—2dly, He cannot deny it without denying what he formerly granted—that God the Father never appears, nor can appear. The glorious appearing of the **GREAT GOD**, must therefore mean, not the appearing of the Father—for he never appears—but the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ. It follows, of course, even upon the Doctor’s own principles, that **JESUS CHRIST IS THE GREAT GOD**. Now if Jesus Christ is the Great God, as the Scriptures declare him to be, why should Doctor Bruce—why should Socinians and Arians, persevere in their vain attempts to degrade him to the character of a creature—to the character of a man—or to that of an angel?



The Scriptures teach us, that Jesus Christ is not only the great God, but the **TRUE GOD**, (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 it is true; and we are in him that is true; even in his Son, Jesus Christ. This is the *true God* and eternal life.”

The Scriptures teach us, that our Lord Jesus Christ is not only the Mighty God, the Almighty God, the Great God, and the true God, but **THE ONLY WISE GOD**. (Jude, xxiv. 25,) “Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.” Who will present believers before the throne of his glory? *The Redeemer*. (Ephes. v. 27,) *He presents his church to himself*, “a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing.” (Col. i. 22,) He presents her “holy, unblameable, unproveable.” It is not God the Father, but Jesus Christ, that presents the church before the presence of his glory. Jesus Christ, therefore, “*is the only wise God our Saviour*,” to whom belong “glory and honour, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.”

Finally: The Scriptures teach us that Jesus Christ “**Is GOD OVER ALL**.” (Rom. ix. 5,) “Whose are the Fathers, and of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who *is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen.*”

Angels and magistrates, in a very few instances, are called gods; but what magistrate—what angel, except the Angel of the Covenant, is styled the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob?—the God of Israel—the God of Bethel—**JEHOVAH GOD—JEHOVAH GOD OF HOSTS\*—THE MIGHTY GOD—THE ALMIGHTY GOD—THE GREAT GOD—THE MOST HIGH GOD†—THE TRUE GOD—THE ONLY WISE GOD—God**

\* In Hosea, xii. 3, 4, 5, we learn that “the Redeemer—the Man—the Angel who wrestled with Jacob, was God—Jehovah God of Hosts; and that Jehovah is his memorial.”

† That the epithet **MOST HIGH** is applied to our Redeemer, is admitted by Dr. B. himself. That beautiful passage (says he, p. 96,) in Deuteronomy, is also understood to relate to the Angel of the Lord (that is, Jesus Christ, according to his own acknowledgment,) “When the **MOST HIGH** divided the nations, their inheritance; &c.” In the Old Testament, (Psalm. 78, 56) the Israelites are said to have tempted



over all, blessed for ever? Where are such epithets—such names and titles applied to magistrates, to idols, or to angels? No WHERE. *No creature in heaven or in earth was ever honoured with such glorious appellations.*

Dr. B. (p. 103) censures Trinitarians and Socinians for appealing to verbal criticisms, various readings, and philological disquisitions. He pronounces the Arian scheme so consistent and rational, that it requires no such support. He declares that Arians are content to take the Scriptures as they find them in our translation; and, finally, he ridicules the criticisms on Rom. ix. 5, and 1 Tim. iii. 16. Now really, in the name of all the Trinitarians in the world, I plead innocent. I solemnly declare, that we are perfectly content to take those texts as they stand in our translation. The latter text asserts, that *God was manifest in the flesh*, and the former assures us, that “Jesus Christ is *over all, God blessed for ever.*” Let those texts be taken as they are, and the controversy is ended. The Supreme Deity of Jesus Christ, even by the acknowledgment of Antitrinitarians themselves, is fully established. “If there were any evidence”—says Mr. Yates, speaking of the last cited text—“that this (the common) translation is correct, here would be a case in point: the words of the Apostle would present a clear and valid argument for the Supreme Divinity of Jesus Christ.”—p. 180.

I leave our learned author to his choice. He must either retract his vain boasting, and confess that his scheme cannot be supported without the aid of verbal criticism; or then he must abandon the Arian system, and acknowledge, *that the Supreme Deity of the Redeemer is clearly established.*

Dr. B. ridicules the idea of contending, whether there should be in certain parts of a sentence, commas or full stops. But who sees not, that if a man were at liberty to substitute full stops for commas, the Bible might soon be metamorphosed into the most erroneous or the most nonsensical book in the world! In a parenthesis, he says “(for there are no stops, or division of words in the ancient MSS. and neither party can produce the autograph of Paul’s

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the MOST HIGH GOD. This, in the New Testament, is applied to our Lord Jesus Christ. (1 Cor. x. 9.) “Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them tempted.”

amanuensis.)”\* This parenthesis has either *no* meaning, or it absurdly supposes, that though the ancient MSS. wanted stops and divisions, yet the most ancient of them all—the autograph of Paul’s amanuensis, had them!

## SECTION II.

### *Attributes of the Deity ascribed to the Redeemer.*

In the preceding section, I have endeavoured to prove, that Socinians and Arians must either maintain, in opposition to the plainest dictates of Scripture and reason, that the Supreme God has no peculiar name by which he may be distinguished from his creatures, or then they must abandon their system, and grant, **THAT JESUS CHRIST IS THE SUPREME GOD.**

In this Section I shall attempt to show, that Socinians and Arians must either give up their favourite schemes, and admit the doctrine of the Redeemer’s Divinity, or be obliged to maintain the monstrous position—*that the Supreme Being has no incommunicable Attribute.*

I ask, then—Is *omnipotence* an incommunicable attribute of Deity? Jesus Christ is omnipotent. He is the Almighty, as we have abundantly proved in the preceding section. I ask again—Is *omniscience* an incommunicable attribute of Deity? Jesus Christ is *omniscient*. (John, xvi. 30,) “Now we are sure that thou knowest all things.” (John xxi. 17,) “Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee.”

To know the thoughts and the hearts of men, is represented in Scripture, as a peculiar and incommunicable attribute of Deity. (1 Kings, viii. 39), “For thou, *even thou only*, knowest the hearts of all the children of men”—but Jesus Christ claims this attribute (Rev. ii. 23,) “And all the churches shall know, that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts, and will give unto every one of you according to your works.” Is *eternity* an attribute of the Supreme Being?—Jesus Christ is “The **EVERLASTING**

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\* The Doctor’s parenthesis appears, at first sight, vastly learned—MSS. ! autograph ! amanuensis ! How the illiterate will stare ! When a writer makes such a display of his learning, surely a little good sense, and good grammar, would be a very useful accompaniment.

**“FATHER,”** (Isaiah, ix. 6,) or the father of eternity. He is the great I AM, “*whose goings forth were of old, even from everlasting,*” (Micah, v. 2)—“*without beginning of days or end of life,*” (Heb. vii. 3)—the “Alpha and Omega ; the beginning and the ending ; the first and the last ; which is, and which was, and which is to come,” (Rev. i. 8, 17)—“He is the same and his years fail not,” (Heb. i. 12.) Is *omnipresence* an attribute of Deity? Jesus Christ is omnipresent. (Matt. xxviii. 20,) “Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.” (Matt. xviii. 23,) “For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.” (John iii. 13), “And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of Man which is in heaven.” He was in heaven at the very same time he was here on earth: for he fills heaven and earth with his presence. Though the heavens now contain his human nature ; yet he is always present with his church on earth. (Ex. xx. 24,) “In all places where I record my name, I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee.” Is *immutability* an incommunicable attribute of Deity? Jesus is immutable. (Psal. cii. 25, &c.—Heb. i. 10, &c.—Heb. xiii. 8.) He is “the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.” According to the doctrine of Scripture, Jesus Christ is *unchangeable* ; but according to the doctrine of Arians, he is the most changeable being in the universe ! According to their hypothesis, he is an Angel or Superangelic Being, who, in the revolution of ages, having gone through a state of progressive improvement and perfectibility, had gradually advanced to the highest dignity—a state of dignity next to that of the Supreme Being—a state of dignity so high, that he was honoured with the name God, the name Jehovah, &c.—a state of dignity so high, that he was employed in performing one of the greatest of all God’s works, the creation of the world. This Superangelic Being divests himself of his dignity and glory, dwindles down to the ignorance and weakness of infancy—from infancy, again, passes through a state of progressive change, till he arrive at manhood—performs miracles—preaches the gospel—then dies—rises again—advances to such a state of superlative dignity and glory, that he has obtained a name above every name—that angels, principalities and powers are made subject to him—that he is the delegated governor and judge of men and angels ! With great respect, but with equal con-



fidence, I challenge Doctor B.—I challenge all the Arians in the world, to point out one single being in the universe so *mutable, so changeable*, as they have exhibited the blessed Redeemer—a being, not like the sun, as beautifully represented in Scripture, but like the moon, in a state of continual mutation and change! Such is the Arian scheme, which Dr. B. tells us, appears to him to avoid all the difficulties of the other systems; and to have “none of its own; except such as must attach to any supernatural interposition.”

Finally, I call upon Socinians or Arians to mention any one incommunicable attribute of Deity, and I will engage to prove, that that same attribute belongs to the Redeemer. They must, therefore, either deny, that the Deity has *any* incommunicable attribute—any attribute by which he may be distinguished from his creatures—or they must acknowledge, *that Jesus Christ is the Supreme God*. Socinians and Arians tell us that angels, magistrates, and idols, are styled gods; but I ask them, What created angel, magistrates, or idol, is represented in Scripture as the *omnipotent* God, the *omniscient* God, the *omnipresent* God, the *heart-searching* God, the *eternal* God, the *unchangeable* God? NONE.—These are the incommunicable attributes of Deity, and being applied to the Redeemer, they prove him to be—*the Supreme God*.

### SECTION III.

#### *The peculiar works of God ascribed to our Redeemer.*

The Supreme Being has made himself known by his works, and particularly by the work of creation. (Rom. i. 20), “For the invisible things of him, from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead.” In the Old Testament Scriptures, as well as the New, he frequently appeals to his works, in proof of his Deity.—He challenges the gods of the nations to produce similar proofs of *their* Divinity. He upbraids them, because they can neither do good nor do evil; and assures us (Jer. x. 11), that “the gods who have not made the heavens and the earth, shall perish from the earth, and from under these heavens.”—The work of creation, we are assured, is the **WORK OF JEHOVAH ALONE**. (Neh. ix. 6), “Thou, even



" thou, art JEHOVAH ALONE: thou hast made heaven, the  
 " heaven of heavens with all their host, the earth and all  
 " things that are therein, the seas and all that is therein,  
 " and thou preservest them all; and the host of heaven  
 " worshippeth thee." In this great work the Deity admits  
 of no competitor, no partner, no instrument or subordinate  
 agent, as Arians dream. (Isaiah, xliv. 24), " Thus saith  
 " JEHOVAH, thy Redeemer, and he that formed thee from  
 " the womb: I am JEHOVAH that maketh all things, that  
 " stretcheth out the heavens ALONE, that spreadeth abroad  
 " the earth by MYSELF."—On the Arian hypothesis, how  
 is this text to be reconciled with other Scriptures, which  
 assures us, that all things were created by Jesus Christ?  
 These texts, on *Trinitarian* principles, are easily recon-  
 ciled—the Deity spread abroad the earth by himself, when  
 he spread it abroad by Jesus Christ; for he and the Father  
 are one; but on the *Arian* scheme, the above-cited texts  
 are utterly irreconcilable. According to Arian principles,  
 the Deity created the world, not by *himself*, as asserted in  
 Scripture, but by one perfectly *distinct* from himself—by  
 one infinitely *inferior* to himself—by one who is himself a  
*creature!* If Arian principles be true, Jesus Christ is not  
 only a creature, but a creature that created himself! (John,  
 i. 1, &c.), " In the beginning was the Word, and the  
 " Word was with God, and the Word was God. The  
 " same was in the beginning with God. All things were  
 " made by him, and without him was not any thing made  
 " that was made." Now, if Jesus Christ is a creature, a  
 made being, as Arians affirm; and if without him was not  
 any thing made that was made; the monstrous absurdity fol-  
 lows, *that he made himself!* I know, that to avoid this  
 gross absurdity, some of the Arians maintain—that Jesus  
 Christ only created this earth—but in this they flatly contra-  
 dict inspired Apostles. The Apostle John asserts, (John,  
 i. 3), " That without him was *not any thing* made that  
 " was made." The Arian, in direct contradiction to this,  
 boldly asserts, that without him *thousands and millions*  
 of things were made. The Apostle asserts, that *not one*  
*thing* was made without him; but the Arian asserts, that  
 immensely more things were made *without* him than were  
 made *by* him! For what is this world, compared to the  
 universe? By the acknowledgment of Arians themselves,  
 it is as nothing. The following beautiful description of the  
 grandeur and extent of the universe, flows from the pen of

**Dr. Price, one of the ablest Arian writers : (Price's Sermons, p. 78.)**

“ We are too apt to look upon ourselves as unconnected  
 “ with any superior world of beings, and the sun and stars  
 “ as made only for us. This is all miserable narrowness  
 “ and shortsightedness. That earth, which appears to us  
 “ so great, is, comparatively speaking, nothing to the solar  
 “ system—the solar system, nothing to the system of the  
 “ fixed stars—and the system of the fixed stars nothing to  
 “ that system of systems of which it is a part. I refer, now,  
 “ to some discoveries in the heavens which have been lately  
 “ made. The planets are so many inhabited worlds ; and  
 “ all the stars which twinkle in the sky, so many suns en-  
 “ lightening other worlds. This no one now doubts. But  
 “ late observations have carried our views much farther, by  
 “ discovering that this whole vast collection of worlds and  
 “ systems, bears a relation to other collections of worlds  
 “ and systems ; that our system moves towards other sys-  
 “ tems ; that all the visible frame of sun, planets, stars,  
 “ and milky way, forms one cluster of systems ; and that,  
 “ in the immense expanse of the heavens, there are myriads  
 “ of these clusters, which to common glasses appear like  
 “ small white clouds, but to better glasses appear to be as-  
 “ semblages of stars, mixing their light. This sets before  
 “ us a prospect which turns us giddy ; but, however  
 “ astonishing, we have reason to believe, that all that it  
 “ presents to us, is nothing to the real extent and grandeur  
 “ of the universe ; for all these myriads of worlds, of sys-  
 “ tems of worlds, and of assemblages of systems, being form-  
 “ ed so much on one plan, as all to require light, it is  
 “ more than probable, that somewhere, in the immensity  
 “ of space, other plans of nature take place ; and that, far  
 “ beyond all that it is possible for us to descry, numberless  
 “ scenes of existence are exhibited, different in this respect,  
 “ and of which we can no more form a notion, than a child  
 “ in the womb can form a notion of the solar system, or a  
 “ man born blind, of light and colours.”

In this eloquent description Dr. Price admits, that, comparatively speaking, this earth is nothing to the solar system, the solar system nothing to the fixed stars, and the system of fixed stars nothing to that system of systems of which it is a part. This world, therefore, compared with the other works of God, sinks into insignificance. It is nothing, less than nothing, and vanity. And yet this world—this insig-

nificant world—is all that the Redeemer created, according to the view of Dr. Price, and other Arians. The Divine Spirit, foreseeing that violent attempts would be made to rob the Son of God of the honour of creation, and ultimately to despoil him of the glory of his Divinity, has been graciously pleased to give us “precept upon precept, and line upon line.” Though the testimony of the Apostle John already quoted, is completely decisive; the Apostle Paul comes in to his assistance; and, in language, if possible, still more conclusive, assures us, (Col. i. 16.) that “by Jesus Christ were all things created that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones or dominions, or principalities or powers, all things were created by him and for him—and that he is before all things, and that by him all things consist.”

Paul assures us, that *all things* were made by the Redeemer; and John assures us, that *no one thing* was made without him; but Dr. Price, in opposition to both, modestly asserts, that the things made by him are as nothing, compared with those that were made *without him*! Now, what are those things which were made without him? Are they things *visible*? No: for all things *visible* were made by him. Are they things *invisible*? No: for all things *invisible* were made by him. Those things, therefore, which Arian Doctors dream were made without the Redeemer, must be things neither *visible* nor *invisible*! All things *universally* were created by the Son of God—not only *by him* as a subordinate agent, according to Arian doctrine, but *for him* as their last end, according to the doctrine of the Apostle Paul, “All things were created *by him and for him*.”

In a confused paragraph (p. 127), Dr. B. observes, “that there is probably no word in any language, that signifies exclusively production out of nothing—that the Hebrew verb translated to create, often implies ‘to fashion or form matter already in being’—and that “the creation of the world by Jesus Christ may signify no more than arranging and ordering it according to the will of God.” Now, if there is no word in any language that signifies exclusively production out of nothing, I would be glad to know, upon what scriptural evidence the Doctor rests his faith, “That God created the heavens and the earth out of nothing”—whilst Jesus Christ only “arranged and ordered this earth according to the will of God.” I call



upon him to produce his evidence. I am convinced he cannot produce it. The assumption is completely gratuitous—it is a mere *ipse dixit*—a dream. Whatever language is adduced to prove, that the Supreme Being created all things out of nothing, will equally prove, that all things were produced out of nothing by Jesus Christ. The language and the evidence are in both cases the same.

Again: our learned author asserts, that “we have no ground for deciding whether creative power be an incommunicable attribute of the Almighty or not.”

In this opinion he is quite mistaken. To convince him of his error, I would request him to read those numerous texts, which appeal to creation as a decisive proof of the Almighty’s eternal power and Godhead.—Admit, for a moment, that creative power may be communicated, and all those texts are rendered insignificant—their force is destroyed—they can no longer prove what they were intended to prove—the *eternal power and Godhead of the Deity*. If creative power be communicable, I call upon Dr. B. to show that the Deity possesses any *one* incommunicable attribute. If a creature may possess creative power, how can we distinguish the creature from the Creator? How can the living and true God be distinguished from idols? How can he be distinguished from the workmanship of his own hands? That the Deity is known by his works, is admitted by all. It is by his works that he is proved to be the only living and true God. Without an appeal to the works of God, we could never prove his existence. But what is the use of such an appeal, if the Arian system be true? There is no work of God to which we can possibly appeal—no work that is not performed by Jesus Christ, one of his creatures. Is *Creation* a distinguishing work of God? Jesus Christ has created all things.—Is *Providence* a distinguishing work of God? Jesus Christ upholds all things. “By him all things consist.” He manages all the wheels of Providence, as we see in the first chapter of Ezekiel. He directs those wheels in all their revolutions—brings order out of confusion, light out of darkness, and good out of evil. Is *Redemption—the new creation—the illumination of the world—the pardon of sin—the resurrection of the dead, or eternal judgment*, a work of the Supreme God? All these works are performed by our Redeemer.

Is there any one work peculiar to the Supreme Being which Jesus Christ does not perform? **NOT ONE.** Do the



works of God, particularly the work of creation, prove the Almighty's power and Godhead? *They do.* Do not the same works prove the eternal power and Godhead of the Redeemer? *Most certainly.* If Jesus Christ is only a mere creature, as Arians contend—and if Jesus Christ performs all the works of the Supreme God, have we any proof that there *is a God at all?* NONE WHATEVER. The Arian system destroys the proof of the being of a God, and leads to Atheism. Such monstrous absurdities induced Dr. Priestly, and other divines of research and penetration, to explode and reprobate the Arian system. These divines saw clearly, that if it be granted that Jesus Christ created the world, it is impossible, without the greatest absurdity, to deny his Divinity.

Dr. B. alleges, that the Socinian objections relative to creation are directed against the sacred writers, not against the Arian system. I grant, indeed, that in order to make out their own scheme, the Socinians are obliged to explain away the plainest portions of the word of God. But I nevertheless believe, that the Socinian objections are not only *directed against* the Arian system, but I am fully convinced *they have levelled it to the dust.* Arian principles, with regard to creation, are utterly indefensible. Dr. B.'s dream, that Jesus Christ did not create the world out of nothing, but only formed, fashioned, arranged and ordered it, will not do.—It is not only a gratuitous assumption, but even were it proved true, it would afford its author no relief. He admits that the being of a God is proved by his works, and particularly by the work of creation.—No matter, according to his doctrine, whether by creation we understand the production of the world out of nothing, or only its organization and arrangement. In his treatise on the Being and Attributes (p. 89), he writes thus: “When we have reconciled ourselves to this, we must recur to the interference of the Eternal Spirit to organize the brute mass and put it in motion; acts, as far as we can tell, that may require *more power, as well as skill, than creation itself.*” Now, supposing—though not granting—that God the Father created the world out of nothing; and that Jesus Christ organized the brute mass and put it in motion, what has the Doctor gained? *Nothing at all.*—For Jesus Christ, by organizing the brute mass and putting it in motion, has displayed greater power (for any thing Dr. Bruce knows) than God the Father has displayed by producing it out of nothing!

It follows, therefore, from the Doctor's principles, that **God the Father** has displayed his eternal power and Godhead by creating the world out of nothing; **Jesus Christ** has given as great, if not a greater, display of his eternal power and Godhead, by organizing the brute mass and putting it in motion. Thus it appears, that Dr. B. has fully established what he meant to subvert—*the Supreme Deity of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Our author may now tell us, that angels, magistrates and idols are called gods—but I ask him, Of what one of these created angels, magistrates, or idols, is it said, “That he **made all things**”—that “without him was not any thing **made that was made**”—that “by him were all things **created, visible and invisible,**” &c. ? Of what one of them is it said, that he either created the world out of nothing, or organized the brute mass and put it in motion? Of what one of them is it said, that he is either the creator—preserver—saviour—or judge of the world? *No creature in heaven or in earth is so represented.*

What weakness, therefore, do Dr. B. and Anti-trinitarians in general display, when they endeavour to run down the Supreme Deity of our blessed Redeemer, by telling us, that angels, magistrates, and idols are called gods!

#### SECTION IV.

##### *Our Redeemer the object of all religious worship.*

Intimately connected with all peculiar works of Deity performed by our blessed and glorious Redeemer, is that religious worship due to him by all intelligent beings. Creation itself is a sufficient foundation for religious worship. (Rev. xiv. 7,) “Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him, for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.”—(Psal. xcv. 6,) “O come, let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before **JEHOVAH our Maker.**” If Jesus Christ is JEHOVAH, as Dr. B. admits—if he is our Maker, as I have endeavoured to prove—or if, according to the Doctor's own principles, he has displayed power as great as creative power, if not greater—why does our author—why do Socinians and Arians refuse to worship him? If the Redeemer be God—**THE MIGHTY GOD—THE ALMIGHTY GOD—THE GREAT GOD**

—THE TRUE GOD—THE ONLY WISE GOD—THE MOST HIGH GOD—OVER ALL, GOD BLESSED FOR EVER—If he be OMNIPOTENT, OMNISCIENT, OMNIPRESENT, ETERNAL and IMMUTABLE—If he be our CREATOR, PRESERVER, SAVIOUR, and JUDGE—why should we hesitate for a moment to acknowledge him as the supreme object of our prayers, praises, and adorations? But, though for the worship of our blessed and glorious Redeemer we have sufficient reasons *a priori*—reasons the most powerful and convincing—yet these are not our *only* reasons. On a subject of such great and paramount importance, the Scriptures afford us “precept upon precept, and line upon line.” Patriarchs and prophets, apostles and martyrs, Abraham and Jacob, Stephen and Paul, with the whole apostolic church—nay, the whole general assembly of saints and of angels, unite in the worship of our glorious Redeemer. “Let all the angels of God worship him,” is the divine mandate. With this injunction they cordially comply: they cheerfully unite with the innumerable multitudes of redeemed above, in celebrating the praises of God and the Lamb. (Rev. v. 11—14,) “And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the beasts, and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; Saying with a loud voice, *Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.* And every creature which is in heaven and on earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, *Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever.* And the four beasts said, *Amen.* And the four *and* twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever.” That our blessed Redeemer is the proper object of religious worship, is a doctrine so clearly revealed in the sacred volume, as to extort the belief of ancient Anti-trinitarians. Even Socinus himself believed the doctrine; and some of the Arians still believe it. At present, however, it is denied by *all* Socinians, and, so far as I know, by Arians in general. These modern Anti-trinitarians are certainly more consistent than their predecessors. To maintain that Jesus Christ is a creature, and at the same time to worship him as a god, is gross idolatry. It is painful, however, to think, that whilst modern Anti-trinitarians are more consis-



tent with themselves, they are less consistent with the sacred oracles. The sacred oracles require, that all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. The Almighty himself says, "Let all the angels of God worship *him*," but Dr. B. tells us, that he would say, "See thou do it not; he is thy fellow servant, worship God." In thus flatly contradicting his Maker, the Doctor endeavours to justify himself, by attempting to distinguish between civil and religious worship. He maintains that the worship enjoined in Scripture, and actually addressed to our blessed Redeemer, is not religious worship; but only a kind of civil homage. This is the best defence Socinians or Arians can make; but it will not do. Out of our author's own mouth he will stand condemned. (Gen. xii. 7, 8,) "And Jehovah appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land: and there builded he an altar unto the Lord, who appeared unto him. And he removed from thence unto a mountain on the east of Beth-el, and pitched his tent, *having* Beth-el on the west, and Hai on the east; and there he builded an altar unto the Lord, and called upon the name of the Lord."—(Gen. xxvi. 24, 25,) "And the Lord appeared unto him the same night, and said, I *am* the God of Abraham thy father: fear not, for I *am* with thee, and will bless thee, and multiply thy seed, for my servant Abraham's sake. And he builded an altar there."—(Gen. xxxv. 1—7,) "And God said unto Jacob, Arise, go up to Beth-el, and dwell there; and make there an altar unto God, that appeared unto thee when thou fledest from the face of Esau thy brother. Then Jacob said unto his household, and to all that *were* with him, Put away the strange gods that *are* among you, and be clean, and change your garments: And let us arise, and go up to Beth-el; and I will make there an altar unto God, who answered me in the day of my distress, and was with me in the way which I went. And they gave unto Jacob all the strange gods which *were* in their hand, and *all their* ear-rings which *were* in their ears; and Jacob hid them under the oak which *was* by Shechem. And they journeyed: and the terror of God was upon the cities that *were* round about them, and they did not pursue after the sons of Jacob. So Jacob came to Luz, which *is* in the land of Canaan, (that *is*, Beth-el,) he, and all the people that *were* with him. And he built there an altar, and called the place El-beth-el; because there God



“appeared unto him, when he fled from the face of his brother.”—In these Scriptures we find the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, building altars to that God who appeared to them. But who was that God that appeared to them? Dr. B. will answer the question. He will tell us that it was not God the Father, who cannot become an object of our senses. He will acknowledge (for he cannot deny it without contradicting himself,) that it was the Lord Jesus Christ, the Angel of the Covenant, by whom the patriarchal and legal dispensations were conducted. Now, why were these altars built to our Lord Jesus Christ? Was it not for the purpose of religious worship? Undoubtedly it was. The Doctor will not surely pretend, that these altars were built for the purpose of civil homage. The absurdity would be too gross and palpable. Out of his own mouth he stands condemned; for altars were built, and, of course, religious worship performed, to that God who appeared to the patriarchs—to that God, who, according to his own acknowledgment, was the Lord Jesus Christ.—“God said unto Jacob, Arise, go up to Beth-el and dwell there; and make there an altar unto God that appeared unto thee.” Had Dr. Bruce been present, he would have said, “See thou do it not; he is thy fellow servant, worship God.” God commands religious service to be addressed to Jesus Christ; but Doctor Bruce forbids it!!—To all my readers I would say, whether it be right in the sight of God, to obey the learned Doctor rather than God, judge ye. On this important subject let me ask a few questions. Was it proper to address religious worship to Jesus Christ before his incarnation; but not after it? Was Jesus Christ the proper object of religious worship in the days of the patriarchs, but not under the Christian dispensation? Was it proper for Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, to worship the Redeemer with religious veneration? and would it be improper for Dr. Bruce to address to him the same species of worship? Is Dr. B. wiser than the patriarchs? Were *they* idolaters? but *he* a worshipper of the true God?—Is he wiser than God himself, who instituted and enjoined the worship of his Son?

Prayers, as well as sacrifices, were offered to our Saviour in the age of the patriarchs. Jacob prayed to him in behalf of the two sons of Joseph. (Gen. xlvii. 16.) “The Angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads.” Who was this angel? Dr. B. will tell us, that it was the Angel

of the Covenant, the Lord Jesus Christ. When the good old patriarch was blessing the two sons of Joseph, and worshipping his Redeemer, leaning on the top of his staff, had Dr. Bruce been present, he would have whispered in his ear, "See thou do it not: he is thy fellow-servant; worship God!"

Not only in the patriarchal age, but under the Jewish economy, it was the practice of the church to address religious worship to our blessed Redeemer. He was the Shechinah.\* It was his glory that filled both the tabernacle and the temple. Enthroned above the mercy-seat, and between the cherubim, he received the religious worship of the Old Testament church. (Lev. xvi. 2.) "And the Lord said unto Moses, Speak unto Aaron thy brother, that he come not at all times into the holy *place* within the vail before the mercy-seat, which *is* upon the ark, that he die not: for I will appear in the cloud upon the mercy-seat." The same visible glory that filled the tabernacle, afterwards filled Solomon's temple. That the Redeemer appeared in a visible form above the mercy-seat, in the temple as well as in the tabernacle, we have no reason to doubt. It was on this account that the Israelites, when praying, directed their faces towards the temple. To the Redeemer, as appearing in the cloud above the mercy-seat, as we see in the sixteenth chapter of Leviticus, the most solemn worship was performed, sacrifices were offered, and incense was burned. To him, as visibly enthroned between the cherubim, were the prayers of the ancient church directed. Of these prayers, the eightieth Psalm is a beautiful specimen; it commences thus: "Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, thou that leadest Joseph like a flock; thou that dwellest *between* the cherubims, shine forth. Before Ephraim, and Benjamin, and Manasseh, stir up

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\* Dr. B. (p. 298) fully admits the premises from which I reason. "Compare (says he) Isaiah, vi. throughout, with John, xii. 39, 40, 41. Here John says, that the vision which Isaiah saw in the temple, was the glory of Christ; and that he spoke of him in that chapter. On this correspondence, H. Taylor, author of *Ben. Mordecai*, observes: "St. John has decided this question beyond all dispute, by declaring the glory which Isaiah saw, and which was undeniably the glory of the visible Jehovah, to be the glory of Christ himself. The whole account is descriptive of the Shechinah, or the mercy-seat between the two cherubim, where the angel Jehovah used to appear."—*Ben. Mordecai*, p. 292."

“ thy strength, and come *and* save us. Turn us again, O  
 “ God, and cause thy face to shine ; and we shall be saved.  
 “ O Lord God of Hosts, how long wilt thou be angry  
 “ against the prayer of thy people ?” From this Psalm,  
 compared with the ninety-first, and other portions of the  
 Old Testament, it appears that it was **JEHOVAH GOD OF  
 Hosts** who was enthroned between the Cherubim ; who  
 there met with his people, appeared to them, conversed  
 with them, and received their religious homage and adora-  
 tion. Now, that **JEHOVAH GOD OF Hosts**, who thus ap-  
 peared to the Israelites, and was worshipped by them, Dr.  
 B. himself being witness, could be no other than **OUR  
 BLESSED REDEEMER**. Whilst the church was thus worship-  
 ping her Saviour, would Dr. B. have said, “ See thou do  
 “ it not : he is thy fellow-servant ; worship God ?”

By the New Testament church, from its very commence-  
 ment, our blessed Redeemer has been uniformly worship-  
 ped. As soon as he was born, the Eastern Magi fell down  
 and worshipped him. When he calmed the sea, and caused  
 Peter to walk on the water, those who were in the ship  
 worshipped him. A leper worshipped him—a ruler wor-  
 shipped him—the Syrophenician woman worshipped him—  
 Mary Magdalene and the other Mary worshipped him—the  
 disciples worshipped him—Stephen prayed, “ Lord Jesus  
 receive my spirit. Lord, lay not this sin to their charge.”  
 The Apostle Paul prayed to him three different times, that  
 the messenger of Satan might depart from him. Praying to  
 Jesus was the distinguishing characteristic of the primitive  
 Christians. Their denomination was, “ *Those that call on  
 the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.*” (Acts, ix. 14–21 :  
 1 Cor. i. 2 ; 2 Tim. ii. 22 ; Rom. x. 12.) Pliny, a hea-  
 then, in his letter to Trajan, (Anno Dom. 103,) describes  
 the Christians as meeting on a certain day before daylight,  
 and “ addressing themselves in a form of prayer to Christ,  
 as to some God.” No less than twenty times we find the  
 inspired writers imploring grace, mercy, and peace from  
 our Lord Jesus Christ, as well as from God the Father.  
 The Apostle Paul prays to the Redeemer, not only for the  
 removal of the thorn in the flesh, but also for various bless-  
 ings. Thus (1 Thess. iii. 11, 12) : “ Now God himself  
 “ and our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, direct our  
 “ way unto you. And the Lord make you to increase and  
 “ abound in love one toward another, and toward all *men*,  
 “ even as we *do* toward you.” That such prayers as these



were only *civil worship*, Doctor Bruce, I presume, will scarcely venture to affirm. If all the prayers and praises addressed to our Redeemer amount to nothing more than *civil homage*, how are we to know when *religious worship* is performed? There is no stronger language expressive of the worship of God the Father, than that which expresses the worship addressed to the Son. The fact is, stronger language could not possibly be employed. (See Rev. i. 5, and v. 12.) How, then, did Dr. B. come to know that *religious worship* is due to God the Father, and only *civil homage*, or subordinate worship, to our blessed Redeemer? He tells us, that corporations and magistrates are called worshipful, and accosted by the title of their worships; but what corporation or magistrate was ever worshipped as our blessed Saviour? Did God ever command to build an altar to a magistrate or corporation? Did he ever command all the angels of God to worship a magistrate or corporation? Samuel was one of the best magistrates that ever ruled; but would it not be blasphemy to say, "Make an altar unto Samuel?"—"Let Samuel that redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads?"—"Let all men honour Samuel as they honour the Father?"—"Let all the angels of God worship Samuel?"

The reader will now be able to judge, with what justice, truth, or candour, Dr. B. has made the following observations (p. 126): "There are, no doubt, several other texts, on which very learned divines have relied with much confidence, and which have furnished matter for cumbrous volumes, abounding with criticisms, which I should be ashamed to expose to intelligent and unprejudiced men; for you could not refrain from smiling, when you heard the nature of the Supreme Being, and the faith and salvation of Christendom, suspended on the transposition of a letter, or the construction of a particle, the insertion of a dot, or the omission of some grammatical or rhetorical mark."

Now, I grant, that the first Presbyterian congregation in Belfast might smile at all this. How could they avoid it? The description partakes largely of the ridiculous. But if they really imagine that there is any thing in nature to which the picture is like, they are much deceived; and whilst they are smiling at the supposed folly and stupidity of Trinitarians, the latter are probably prepared to smile at their credulity. What! The nature of the Supreme Being



suspended on the insertion of a dot!—the nature of the Supreme Being suspended on the transposition of a letter!—the nature of the Supreme Being suspended on the omission of some grammatical or rhetorical mark!—And is it by exhibiting such a picture as this, that the grave and dignified Doctor Bruce hopes to raise the laugh against Trinitarians? Be it known to Dr. B.—be it known to the first Presbyterian congregation in Belfast—that, not upon *dots*, nor on *letters*, nor on the *whole volume of revelation*, nor on the *heavens*, nor on the *earth*, nor on *any thing exterior to himself*, do Trinitarians suspend the nature of God! Trinitarians maintain, that the Supreme Being is *self-existent and independent*. Whilst raising the laugh against our neighbours, we should beware of rendering ourselves ridiculous.

Again; I would ask our learned author, what divine ever suspended the *salvation* of Christendom on the insertion of a dot? How ludicrous the fiction! What divine ever suspended the *faith* of Christendom on the insertion of a dot? With the ninth commandment before his eyes, how could our author write such a paragraph? By a careful perusal of the preceding pages, the reader, I trust, will be fully convinced that Trinitarians build the faith of Christendom, not on the insertion of dots, nor the transposition of letters, as Dr. B. ridiculously insinuates, but on the broad basis of divine revelation. They will not, however, look on as indifferent spectators, whilst Socinians or Arians disfigure, mangle, or pervert the word of God, by an arbitrary insertion of dots, or transposition of letters. By such licentious treatment, unrestrained, the sacred oracles might be so manufactured as to patronise the most abominable errors, heresies, and blasphemies.

Trinitarians are so far from being reduced to the necessity of suspending the faith of Christendom on the insertion of dots, &c. that if a hundred of those texts, which prove the Divinity of Christ, were blotted out of the Bible, the remaining hundreds would be abundantly sufficient to establish the doctrine.

## SECTION V.

*Antitrinitarian principles lead to consequences the most absurd and blasphemous.*

1. If Jesus Christ be not the Supreme God, the blasphemous consequence follows, *that he is not the true Messiah.*

One distinguishing characteristic of the true Messiah is, *That he should abolish idolatry.* (Isaiah ii, 18.) “And “the idols he shall utterly abolish.” Now, if Jesus Christ be only a creature, he has *not* destroyed idolatry. On the contrary, Christians have been almost universally idolaters—they have almost universally worshipped the Redeemer, whom Antitrinitarians maintain to be only a creature. If Antitrinitarian doctrines be *true*, Christianity is *false*.—Instead of being a system from which idolatry is abolished, it is *a most idolatrous system!* Our blessed Redeemer, who was to abolish idols—I tremble as I write—is *himself the greatest and most dangerous of all idols.*—Nay,

2. From Antitrinitarian principles, the still more blasphemous consequence follows—*that God himself has led his creatures into temptation—temptation to that very sin, which above all others he hates and abhors—temptation to idolatry!* The Deity declares that he is “a jealous God;” that his “glory he will not give to another, nor his praise “to graven images.” He most pathetically expostulates upon this subject, (Jer. xlv. 4.) “Oh, do not this abominable thing, that I hate.” With what care does the Supreme Being guard against all temptations to idolatry? Lest the Israelites should worship the relicts of Moses, the Deity himself privately interred him, and “no man knoweth “of his sepulchre unto this day.” The brazen serpent also was destroyed, lest it should lead the Israelites into idolatry, Now, if the Deity used such precaution to prevent men from worshipping the body of Moses and the brazen serpent, is it reasonable to suppose that he would use no precaution, where the temptation was infinitely greater? Is it reasonable to suppose that he would use no precaution, to prevent men from worshipping his Son, if only a creature? *Reasonable*, did I say? Is not such a supposition in the highest degree *absurd and unreasonable?* Not only

is there no precaution to prevent men ; but there is every temptation to *induce* them to worship the Redeemer. The *most glorious names of the Deity* are given to him ; *the most glorious perfections of Deity* are ascribed to him ; the *most glorious works of Deity* are performed by him—those very works by which the being and attributes of God are proved—by which his eternal power and Godhead are manifested—and by which he is distinguished from all false gods.—And, finally, he is every where represented as *the object of the prayers of men, and of the united praises and adorations of all intelligent beings*.—What temptations to idolatry, if Jesus Christ be only a creature ! All the temptations to idolatry that ever existed, compared with these, were nothing and less than nothing. If the healing of the stung Israelites was a temptation to worship the brazen serpent, how much greater the temptation to worship him who has removed the sting of death which is sin ? If the Jews were tempted to worship the inanimate brass, or the dead body of Moses, surely the inducements to worship the *living Saviour* are infinitely greater.

If the veneration attached to the memory of statesmen, patriots, and benefactors, proved a principal source of idolatry, how much greater the temptation to worship him, to whom we owe all the inestimable blessings of Creation, Providence, and Redemption ? Jehovah is jealous of his glory. When, in praise of Herod's oration the people exclaimed, " It is the voice of a god and not of a man," he was eaten with worms, and gave up the ghost—why ? " Because he gave not God the glory." When Moses sanctified not the Lord before the people—when he arrogated a part of the glory of a temporal and typical salvation, saying, " Hear now, ye rebels, must *we* bring water out of " this rock ?"—he was ignominiously excluded from the promised land—his carcass fell with the rebels in the wilderness. With such instances of divine jealousy before his eyes, can any man believe that Jesus Christ, if only a creature, would be permitted to arrogate, *with impunity*, the glory of being not only the *instrument*, but the *author*, not of a *temporal* and *typical*, but of *eternal salvation* ? The man who is able to believe all this, is surely more credulous than he who believes, according to the Scriptures, that his Redeemer is " *Over all God blessed for ever*." For—in a word : if Jesus Christ be only a creature, patriarchs, prophets, and apostles ; Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, (shall I

utter the blasphemy ?) have all combined to lead men into idolatry !

3. If the Socinian or Arian system be true, it follows—*That Mahomet was more successful than Jesus Christ in communicating correct ideas of the divine nature !—That Mahomet has been incomparably more successful than the Redeemer, in abolishing idolatry !—That Mahometanism is superior to Christianity !—and, That the Coran is superior to the Bible !\**

If the Socinian or Arian doctrine be true, it follows, *That God has no peculiar name*, by which he may be distinguished from his creatures !—*That God has no peculiar attribute*, by which he may be distinguished from his creatures !—*That God has performed no peculiar work*, by which he may be distinguished from his creatures !—*That God claims, or is honoured with, no peculiar worship*, by which he may be distinguished from his creatures !

If the Arian doctrine be true, we have *no proof of the being of a God*, nothing to prevent us from plunging into—**ATHEISM !**

5. If Socinian or Arian principles be true, our blessed Redeemer, who made all things, may himself be annihilated ! If he be a creature, he that made him can surely *unmake* him—he that brought him out of a state of nonentity, can, with equal ease, reduce him to nothing !

6. Finally, if Socinian or Arian principles be true, may not the Redeemer fall ?—may he not be condemned like Satan ?—may he not be for ever miserable ! My reader will pardon me for putting such blasphemous questions. They are naturally suggested by the errors I oppose.

## SECTION VI.

### *Objections answered.*

To prove the inferiority of Jesus Christ to his heavenly Father, Dr. B. produces such texts as the following :—  
 “ The Father is greater than I.—Of myself I can do no—  
 “ thing—As the Father gave me commandment, so I do.  
 “ My doctrine is not mine own, but his who sent me.—I

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\* See my tract in defence of the Divinity and Atonement of Jesus Christ in reply to Dr. Channing.



“speak not of myself; but, the Father who sent me gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak.”—To bring forward such texts as these in this controversy—as Dr. B. and Antitrinitarians in general do—is completely sophistical. It is that species of sophism which logicians style “*ignorantia elenchi*,” or a mistake of the question. When Dr. B. and his coadjutors crowd their pages with such quotations, labouring to prove the inferiority of Jesus Christ to his heavenly Father, they are guilty of the most egregious trifling. They are labouring in vain, labouring to prove what nobody denies. Nobody denies that Jesus Christ is inferior to the Father—inferior as he is man—inferior in his official character as mediator. Socinians and Arians may, in future, save themselves the trouble of such quotations. In this controversy they prove just nothing at all—nothing but what we all acknowledge, and, therefore, nothing to the purpose.

Of those texts brought forward to invalidate the doctrine of the Redeemer’s Divinity, that which presents the greatest difficulty is, Mark xiii. 32, “But of that day and that hour, knoweth no man; no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father only.” A more careful perusal of the passage would, I presume, convince Doctor Bruce that this text does not refer to the day of judgment, as he imagines, but to the destruction of Jerusalem. After rectifying this mistake, he will please to observe, that no Trinitarian ever believed that our Saviour, *as man*, was omniscient. His knowledge, *as man*, was progressive. He advanced in wisdom, as well as in stature. To say, therefore, that, *as man*, he was ignorant of the time of Jerusalem’s destruction, is no way inconsistent with his omniscience as God. Besides: As the communication of the knowledge of that time formed no part of our Saviour’s commission—as he had no instructions to make it known—in this official sense, he might be said not to know it. Nor does the Doctor’s polite note (p. 301) convince me of the absurdity of this view. “Some account,” says he, “for our Saviour’s language, by charging him with duplicity, similar to that which Calvinists impute to his Father.—They allege that he denied, in his human capacity, or as mediator, what he knew in his divine; and disclaimed in one character, what he could perform in another. What should we think of a witness, who should first deny his knowledge of a fact, and then confess that he knew it in

“ his public character, but not in his private capacity ?” That Calvinists impute duplicity to the Father is not true ; nor does their interpretation of the above-cited text impute duplicity to the Son. We do not say, that the Redeemer knew the day and hour alluded to in his *public* capacity, but not in his *private*, as Dr. B. absurdly insinuates. We say the *very reverse*. Nor did our Saviour make the declaration in the capacity of a *witness*, as the learned Doctor still *more absurdly* insinuates, but in the capacity of a *prophet*, commissioned to reveal *some* events, but not *all*. As a *witness*, he told the whole truth ; but not as a *prophet*. As a prophet, he revealed only those truths which he was *commissioned* to reveal. To say, that we do not know in a public capacity what we know in a private, argues *no* duplicity—involves *no* contradiction. A member of the Synod of Ulster, in reference to a threat of Lord Castlereagh, exclaimed in open court, “ *Who is this Lord Castlereagh ?* ” “ *We do not know Lord Castlereagh ?* ” Did such a declaration involve the Synod in the guilt of duplicity ? Surely not.

In opposing the divinity of Jesus Christ, the Doctor quotes Mat. xx. 23, “ But to sit on my right hand and on my left, “ is not mine to give ; but *it shall be given to them* for “ whom it is prepared of my Father.” The English reader will perceive, that the words, “ *it shall be given to them,*” are printed in Italics ; which shews that there are no such words in the original ; that they are only a supplement inserted by our translators. Though our translators have done justice to the English reader by printing all their supplements in Italics ; and though their supplements are, in general, judicious ; there are some exceptions, and this is one. It completely destroys the sense of the passage. It represents our Saviour as having no power to reward his followers by assigning them places of honour and happiness in his kingdom. But this is quite contrary to the express declaration of Scripture. At the judgment of the great day, he will say to them on his right hand, “ Come ye blessed of “ my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you before “ the foundation of the world.”—(Rev. iii. 21), “ To him “ that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne.” Leaving out the supplement, except the words “ *to them,*” the passage will read thus : “ To sit on my right hand, and “ on my left is not mine to give, except to them for whom “ it is prepared of my Father.” That our Redeemer has

power to give seats in his kingdom, no person who reads the preceding quotations can doubt; but to whom? only to the elect—to those for whom the kingdom was prepared before the foundation of the world. This gloss may not exactly please our author, who greatly abhors the doctrine of election. It appears, however, to be the only plain, natural, and consistent meaning of the passage.

In reference to the commencement of John's Gospel, the Doctor makes the following remarks: (p. 114), "We, therefore, feel no difficulty in applying the introduction of John's Gospel to our Lord. The Word was a celestial being, and was with God in the beginning. This is intelligible; but there is no sense in saying, 'God was God, and was with God.'"—I grant, indeed, there is no sense in this; but who is guilty of the nonsense? Not the Evangelists: he says no such thing—Not the Trinitarian: he says no such thing. The nonsense recoils on the Doctor himself.—To substitute *God* for *Word*, and then, instead of "The Word was God," read *God was God*, is certainly very ingenious—it is an admirable specimen of that "sleight of men and cunning craftiness," whereby the simple are deceived. It is well calculated to confound and deceive the man of plain understanding, unaccustomed to the arts of sophistry. To point out and expose the fallacy and absurdity of such management, let us take a similar proposition; for instance, "Elias was a man." This proposition is, in all respects, similar to that on which the Doctor shows his skill. "Elias was a man," and "The Word was God," are parallel propositions. If for *Word*, in the *last* proposition, the Doctor substitutes *God*—upon the very same principle, for *Elias*, in the *first*, I will substitute *man*: and then the two propositions will stand thus: *God was God*, and *man was man*. Now I agree with Dr B., that there is no sense in such propositions. But, if by such reasoning—I should rather say quibbling—he can prove, that Jesus Christ is not the *Supreme God*, by the very same logic I can prove—that *Elias was not a man*—that *Dr. B. is not a man*—and that *there never was a man on the face of this globe!!!* Nor is it any contradiction to say—that Jesus Christ was *with* the Father. The Deity is in one sense *one*, in another sense *three*. In that sense in which the Supreme Being is *three*, there is no absurdity in representing the one person as dwelling with the other.

The Doctor sees no difficulty, upon his scheme, in apply-



ing the introduction of John's Gospel to our Lord. Is there no difficulty in the idea of a creature creating himself?—and yet, this most absurd of all ideas, as we have already seen, is inseparably connected with the Arian system. On Arian principles, Jesus Christ is one of the highest of the angels—let us call him Gabriel, and then John's Gospel may be read thus:—“In the beginning was Gabriel, and “ Gabriel was with God, and Gabriel was God; all things “ were made by Gabriel, and without Gabriel was not any “ thing made that was made (of course Gabriel acted before “ he existed, and made himself); and Gabriel was made “ flesh, and dwelt among us.” The Socinian gloss is still more absurd; for what sense in saying that “*A man was made flesh?*”—How blind are men to the difficulties and absurdities of their own systems—systems to which they have been long attached—systems received by tradition from their fathers!

Dr. B. affirms, that our blessed Redeemer expressly rejected and disclaimed religious worship. He quotes our Saviour's own words: “Thou shalt worship the Lord thy “ God, and him only shalt thou serve.”—Now, if Jesus Christ be “*The Lord our God,*” how has he disclaimed religious worship? That our blessed Redeemer is “*The Lord our God,*” Dr. B. cannot consistently deny. He admits, that the personage who appeared to Moses in the bush, and gave the law from Mount Sinai, was the Redeemer. Now this glorious personage declared, (Exodus, xx. 2), “I am “ **THE LORD THY GOD**, which have brought thee out of the “ land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.”—Thomas also exclaimed, “My Lord and my God!”—When we worship our Redeemer, therefore, we are worshipping “**THE LORD OUR GOD.**” Peter refused religious worship—the angel refused religious worship—but our blessed Redeemer never rejected nor disclaimed it; on the contrary, he taught it to be the duty of all men “to honour the Son, “ even as they honour the Father.”

Dr. B. alleges (p. 103) that Jesus Christ has marked a plain distinction between himself and the Almighty, in these words, “This is life eternal, that they might know thee the “ only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.” We readily grant, that the Redeemer is here plainly distinguished from his heavenly Father: but how?—not in respect of nature or essence, but in respect of his official character as “*the sent of God.*” If by this text the Doctor



can prove, that Jesus Christ is not the *true God*, the same reasoning will prove, that God the Father is not the *wise God*.—In the Epistle of Jude, as we have already shewn, Jesus Christ is styled “*the only wise God* ;” but does any person imagine that this excludes God the Father?—So, in like manner, when the Father is styled “*the only true God*,” should any person imagine, that this excludes his only begotten Son?—by no means.—He is **THE TRUE GOD AND ETERNAL LIFE**. Jesus Christ is styled “*the only wise God*,” and God the Father “**THE ONLY TRUE GOD**,” not to the exclusion of each other, but to the exclusion of idols—“Little children, keep yourselves from *idols*. Amen.”

From John, xvi. 23, “In that day ye shall ask me nothing,” Dr. B. infers, that we should not address our prayers to the REDEEMER. Now, this text has no reference to prayer at all, but only to the questions put to our Saviour on difficult subjects. This is evident from two things: 1, From the 19th verse, “Now Jesus knew that they were desirous to ask him,” &c.—2, That our Saviour was speaking of questions on difficult subjects, and not of prayer, is evident from this—That *it is not fact* that his disciples after his ascension asked him nothing in prayer; for we have already seen that *Stephen* prayed to him—that *Paul* prayed to him—and that the *apostolic church* was in the constant habit of praying to him. The Doctor’s gloss would make our blessed Redeemer a false prophet.

In opposing the Divinity of Jesus Christ, Dr. B. seems principally to rely on those texts, in which he is styled the Son of God. In page 108, he writes thus: “The title which he commonly assumes, is that of the ‘Son of God.’ This necessarily implies priority of existence, and superiority of dignity on the part of his Father. He also styles himself ‘the only begotten Son of God.’ By this we are to understand his only Son, by way of pre-eminence; and also his dearest Son; as human parents are most tenderly attached to an only child. The word has often this signification in the original language, and is, therefore, tantamount to another appellation which our Saviour assumes, the Beloved, and the Beloved Son of God. This is the meaning of these phrases, and they imply, that he is inferior in dignity, and subsequent, in point of existence, to the Father, and peculiarly dear to him. Whatever mysterious sense may be put upon them, it will still remain unquestionable, that a father must exist before his

“ son, and the origin of the son, being a fact, must have taken place, at some particular time, however remote. The strictest asserters of the divinity of Christ, acknowledge him to be a derived being.”—Part of this paragraph is so ungrammatical and incoherent, that I have been obliged to abandon it as unintelligible. In language, however, quite distinct and perspicuous, the Doctor maintains, that the phrase *Son of God* “ necessarily implies priority of existence, and superiority of dignity, on the part of the Father.”\* In reply, I would offer the following observations :

1. Many Trinitarians do not believe in the doctrine of eternal generation. Though they believe that Jesus Christ is God equal with the Father, they do not believe that the appellation “ *Son of God*” is descriptive of any eternal necessary distinction in the divine nature, but only of a new covenant relation. According to this opinion, the Doctor’s reasoning has no force. It falls to the ground at once ; for all acknowledge, that as man and mediator, Jesus Christ is inferior to the Father. But,

2. Viewing the epithets, *father* and *son*, as descriptive of an eternal distinction in the godhead, and of a natural and necessary relation, it does not follow, that worms of the dust are able to explain the nature of that relation. Our author, in his appendix, mentions *five* Trinities.† Had he

\* Dr. B. tells us, that it is not required of a son to equal his father, nor of a scholar to vie with his master. A strange doctrine indeed, and far enough removed from that which teaches the perpetual perfectibility of man—if true, our world would soon be peopled with pigmies and Lilliputians. If the phrase *Son of God* proves, that the Redeemer was inferior to God, would not the phrase *Son of man* prove, that he was also inferior to *man*? Would not this prove too much, and by consequence—*nothing at all*?

† Dr. B. in his appendix, mentions a variety of Trinities—the Ciceronian, Platonic, Aristotelian, &c.—Now, what does all this prove? It proves, that the doctrine of the Trinity is not peculiar to Christians, but is believed also by Heathens. Through all ages, and in almost all Heathen nations, it flows down through the corrupt channels of tradition. This very circumstance is no contemptible proof of its truth. If the doctrine had not been originally revealed, on what principles of human nature could it have been propagated—by what means could it have obtained so wide a circulation? But, as our author shows us in his appendix, Christians as well as Heathens, are divided on the doctrine of the Trinity. And what then? Does this prove that there is *no truth* in the doctrine? Surely not. Men are divided in their opinions with regard to the chief good. On this subject there are up-

wished to treat his opponents with respect, he would have said "five *different views* of the Trinity." The fifth Trinity, he tells us, according to Bishop Stillingfleet, is the Trinity of the mobile, which is held by the common people, or by such lazy divines as only say, that it is an inconceivable mystery. Now, I must confess, that this fifth and last Trinity—this Trinity of the mobile or of the *mob*, as the word signifies—is the Trinity which I advocate. I confess myself one of those lazy divines, who say that the Trinity is an inconceivable mystery—a mystery which cannot be explained. I believe in the Supreme Deity of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. I believe that these are in one respect *three*, and in another respect *one*. I believe these facts; because they are revealed in the sacred volume. But how they are three, and yet but one, is a mystery. I believe nothing about it. I am *required* to believe nothing about it. Instead of attempting to ascertain the *facts*, divines have endeavoured to explain the *how*. In this I blame them. By attempting to explain what is inexplicable, both philosophers and divines expose their folly, and weaken their cause. It is one of the most important laws of matter, that all heavy bodies tend to the centre. But should a philosopher attempt to explain the cause why they so tend, he would only expose his own ignorance and folly. Why does the magnetic needle point towards the north? What are the causes of its variation and dip? "How do the bones grow in the womb of her that is with child?" These, and a thousand other questions, all the philosophers in the world cannot answer. With as much justice and propriety may such philosophers, as do not pretend to explain the mysteries of nature, be branded with the epithet *lazy*; as those divines are so nick-named, who do not attempt to explain the mystery of the Trinity. When Orthodox divines speak of the Son as *derived* from the Father, they use the term *derived* in a qualified sense, as applicable, not to his essence, but only to his personality. For my own part, however, I must confess, that I see no warrant for such a term at all. I dislike it. I reject it; and I believe, that a great major-

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wards of three hundred opinions. Is there, therefore, *no chief good*? Men are divided in their opinions respecting the nature of virtue. Is there, therefore, *no virtue*? We will not follow the Doctor's safe rule—we will not abandon the doctrine of the Trinity, because men are divided about it.



rity of Trinitarians will agree with me. However the Doctor may reason and dispute about the meaning of the phrase "*Son of God*," one thing he *cannot* dispute, that the Jews understood the phrase as implying, not *inferiority* to his heavenly Father, but *equality*. Upon this ground they stoned him, afterwards endeavoured to apprehend him, and finally crucified him. (See John, x. 31-40, compared with Matt. xxvi. 63-67.) When our Saviour, in the first of these passages, declares, "I and my Father are one," Dr. B. and Anti-trinitarians in general contend, that this was not a *oneness of nature and essence*. As a parallel text, they quote John, xvii. 21, "That they all may be one, as thou Father art in me and I in thee, that they also may be one in us." They allege that Jesus Christ is one with the Father in no other sense, than that in which *believers* are one. To a superficial thinker, this may appear plausible enough; but it will bear no examination. For, if our Saviour meant to say, that he was one with the Father only in the sense in which believers are one—if this was the natural construction of his words—why did the Jews consider him guilty of blasphemy?—why did they take up stones to stone him? It is abundantly evident, that the Jews understood him as *we* understand him—as *making himself equal with God*.

The same observations will apply to the phrase, "*Son of God*." The Jews, who surely knew its meaning better than Dr. B., understood it not as implying *inferiority* to the Father, but *equality*. They expressly declare, that this was the reason why they stoned him—*that he, being a man, made himself equal with God; because he said, I am the Son of God*. On this ground they conceived him guilty of blasphemy, and proceeded to inflict the penalty which the law of Moses attached to that crime.

Doctor Bruce, and other opponents of the Divinity of Christ allege, that our Saviour rectified this mistaken notion of the Jews, and disclaimed equality with the Father in the following terms: "Jesus answered them, Is it not written  
 " in your law, I said, Ye are gods? If he called them gods,  
 " unto whom the word of God came, and the Scripture  
 " cannot be broken; Say ye of him, whom the Father hath  
 " sanctified, and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest;  
 " because I said, I am the Son of God?" In these verses our Saviour, so far from *disclaiming*, persists in *asserting*, his own Deity. He proves it by an argument from the less to the greater. If Jewish magistrates, as types of the Re-



deemer, were denominated gods, why should the Deity of the antitype be denied? Why should he be regarded as a blasphemer for claiming equality with his heavenly Father? That the Jewish magistrates were called gods, *as they were types of our blessed Redeemer*, is evident from the following parenthetical clause, "*And the Scriptures cannot be broken.*" These words plainly show, that Jesus Christ is styled God, not in conformity with the phraseology of the Jews, by which their magistrates were denominated gods; but, on the contrary, that Jewish magistrates were so denominated, as types of him who is "Over all, God blessed for ever." The Scriptures cannot be broken. There must be an antitype answering to the types—a person who would think it no robbery or blasphemy to be equal with God. That our Saviour did not intend to disclaim his own Deity and equality with the Father, is evident from this—That, after his explanation, the Jews *again* sought to take him. This shows plainly, that the Jews understood the Saviour, as we do, not as *disclaiming*, but *asserting*, his divinity. So far was the Redeemer from *denying* his own Deity, that he *died a martyr* to that doctrine. When the high priest adjured him by the living God, to tell whether he were *the Son of God*, "Jesus said unto him, *Thou hast said.*—Then the high priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy. What further need have we of witnesses? behold, now you have heard his blasphemy. What think ye? They answered and said, he is guilty of death." The remarks of our author, when reasoning with the Socinians, are appropriate here. "Neither," says the Doctor, "would he (Jesus) have left the Jews under a misapprehension of his meaning, when they said, How is it that he saith I came down from heaven. The candour of our Lord would surely have induced him to undeceive them, if they had misunderstood his words."—Now, I ask Dr. B., when Jesus Christ said, that *he and the Father were one*, and that *he was the Son of God*; and when the Jews thought that these expressions were blasphemous, and that he, being a man, was making himself equal with God—if the Jews were mistaken in all this, as Anti-trinitarians say that they were, why did not the candour of our Lord induce him to undeceive them? Why did he give them such an ambiguous explanation, as left them still under misapprehensions—misapprehensions which induced them, first to attempt to stone him, and afterwards to crucify him?—Ac-

According to the doctrine of Socinians and Arians, our blessed Redeemer died "*as a fool dies!*" He was guilty of little less than *suicide!* The use of ambiguous language was the cause of his death! He had not so much candour as to induce him to undeceive the Jews! He had not sufficient candour to save his own life! His want of candour was the reason why he was first stoned and afterwards crucified! He was stoned for blasphemy; he was crucified for blasphemy; and, upon Socinian and Arian principles, it would be impossible to acquit him of the crime; for the language he employed conveyed the idea of his equality with God. By doctrine fraught with such absurdities, I had almost said blasphemies, do modern divines endeavour to explode—the *Supreme Deity of our blessed Redeemer!* Upon the whole, it appears, that the phrase "*Son of God,*" applied to our Saviour, is so far from proving his *inferiority* to the Father, that it is an invincible proof of his *equality*. When the Jews charged him with blasphemy for claiming this equality, he did not renounce the claim; but, by boldly asserting it, *he died a martyr to his own Supreme Deity.*

Dr. B., as we already noticed, condemns Socinians and Trinitarians, for the use they make of verbal criticism. He boasts, that the Arian scheme is so consistent and rational, that it requires no such aid. To convince him that this is only *vain boasting*, I would take the liberty of turning his attention to Phil. ii. 5, 12—that text, from which he has preached so long a sermon, in opposition to the Supreme Deity of our blessed Redeemer. "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus; who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of *things* in heaven, and *things* in earth, and *things* under the earth: And *that* every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ *is* Lord to the glory of God the Father." Now, what is the reason that Doctor Bruce did not attempt to reconcile this text to the Arian system, *without the aid of verbal criticism?* To this question only one answer can possibly be given. HE COULD NOT. Without the aid of

verbal criticism, all the Socinians and Arians in the world could not explain this single text. Without the aid of verbal criticism, this one text would completely overturn and annihilate their systems. If Jesus Christ thought it no robbery to be equal with God, then he *was* equal with God: and if he was equal with God, his SUPREME DEITY rests upon an immoveable basis, and the long existing controversy is for ever settled. Where is now the vaunted consistency and rationality of the Arian scheme—a scheme which, without the aid of verbal criticism, *one single text would scatter to the winds, and totally annihilate?* So then, Dr. B. has recourse to verbal criticism. Why?—*because he could not help it.* The case was desperate. Without the aid of verbal criticism, his whole system would crumble into dust. Nor is this all:—to preserve his scheme from utter destruction, the Doctor was obliged to have recourse not only to verbal criticism, but to *erroneous criticism.* He tells us, that “the word translated robbery, signifies any thing taken by violence, and particularly plunder taken from an enemy.” With great deference, I deny that the word has any such meaning. The word ἀρπαγμα signifies any thing taken with violence, &c.; but it is not ἀρπαγμα, which is translated robbery; it is ἀρπαγμος, a word of a different signification—a word which signifies, not plunder, but the taking of plunder; and, therefore, literally and analogically translated *robbery.* I say *analogically;* because it is principally by the *analogy* of the language, that the true meaning of the word is ascertained. The same word does not occur in any other part of the New Testament, nor in the Septuagint translation of the Old; and some maintain, that it does not occur in any of the profane authors. This, however, appears to be a mistake. It is found in Plutarch, but not used in the sense given it by Dr. B. It is there employed to signify the *action*, as our translators understand it, and as the analogy of the Greek language requires. The following, among many, are instances of this analogy: Σπαρασσω signifies to lacerate or tear; from this is formed the noun σπαραγμος, laceration or tearing, and σπαραγμα, the fragment or part torn off. From καθαίρω and καθαρίζω, to purge, are formed the verbal nouns καθαρισμος and καθαρισμος, both signifying purgation, or the act of purging; whereas καθαρισμα signifies the offscouring or filth. Under such circumstances, nouns terminating in *μος* are not to be confounded with nouns in *μα*; the former



express the *action*, but the latter refer to the *object* or *effects* of the action. Nouns terminating in *μος* are not synonymous with nouns in *μα*, but with nouns in *ις*; *καθαριμος*, *καθαρισμος*, and *καθαρισις*, are all synonymous—they all denote the *act* of purifying. Proceeding on this plain principle of analogy, our translators have very judiciously and accurately translated *ἀρπαγμον*, *robbery*.

Before dismissing this disputed word, I must caution my reader not to be deceived by the bold and confident assertions of our author. In his appendix (p. 303), he confidently assumes what is not true—"that all agree in his interpretation of the word." Hammond, M. Knight, Wardlaw, and all Trinitarians that I have consulted, (except one,) defend the received version, in opposition to the Doctor. The writer which I have excepted, is Stuart of Andover, who says, "Greek syntax would place the words thus, as to their sense: *οὐκ ἠγνόησατο το εἶναι ἰσα θεῷ (κατα)* "ἀρπαγμον." With great deference, I conceive that the learned professor is, in this instance, quite mistaken. Upon the principles of Greek syntax, the ellipsis cannot be supplied by *κατα*; but requires *εἶναι*. In addition to this, I may observe, that his objection to our translation is satisfactorily answered by Dr. Wardlaw.

When it is said, that our Saviour thought it no robbery to be equal with God, the Doctor endeavours to explain away the force of the term *equal*, by telling us that the word *ἰσα*, in the original, often implies only a near resemblance. On this criticism I would make the following remarks:

1. It has never yet been satisfactorily proved, that the original word ever signifies, exclusively, likeness or resemblance. The authorities produced by Dr. Whitby are inconclusive. In every instance, as Wardlaw observes, the word implies equality.

2. Supposing the word *ἰσα* to signify, not only equality, but also likeness, upon what principle does Dr. B. presume to lay aside the *primary* meaning of the word, and to adopt the *secondary*? Upon what principle can he do this, but upon the sophistical principle of begging the question? Anti-Trinitarians, taking for granted the thing to be proved, *That Jesus Christ is not equal with the Father*, very modestly conclude, that the *primary* meaning of the word must be laid aside, and a *secondary* one, agreeable to their own preconceived opinions, adopted!



3. In the text under consideration, according to the Doctor's own showing, the word cannot signify likeness or resemblance. All that he pleads for is, that the word "often implies only *near* resemblance." Now, upon the principle that Jesus Christ was only a creature, between him and the Deity there was no *near* resemblance. The resemblance between the rudest savage and Solomon the wise was infinitely nearer. Between a creature and his Creator, there is an infinite distance, and, consequently, the resemblance must be infinitely remote. It is therefore evident, that though the word may sometimes imply only near resemblance, this cannot possibly be the meaning of it here. The Doctor alleges, that the original word, if translated *equal*, "would signify that God was equal to himself; " or else, that there are two Gods." But does he not know, that Trinitarians believe the Deity to be, in one respect *three*, and in another *one*? They do not believe that there are three persons, and yet but one person; or three Gods, and yet but one God; this would be a contradiction; but they believe that there are *three persons*, and yet but *one God*. Jesus Christ thought it no robbery to be equal with God. This proves, that he and the Father are two distinct persons; but not that they are two Gods, or that God is equal to himself.

From the phrases, "*form of God*," and "*form of a servant*," the Doctor concludes, that Jesus Christ was not *really* a servant, but only *resembled* a servant; and that he was not *really* God, but only *resembled* God. From the very same premises, I would draw the very opposite conclusion. From the phrase "*form of a servant*," and from our Saviour's own words, "I am among you as one that serveth," are we to conclude that our Saviour was not *really a servant*? By no means. The conclusion is contradicted by the following plain declarations of Scripture. Isaiah, xlii. 1: "Behold my servant whom I uphold;"—verse 19, "Who is blind but my servant?" See also Isaiah, xlix. 6—lii. 13—Zech. iii. 8—Mat. xii. 18—xx. 28. After reading these Scriptures, will any person say that Jesus Christ only *resembled* a servant? Surely not. When he took upon him the form of a servant, *he really became a servant*. In the same manner, I conclude, that his being in the form of God implies, that he was *really God*. Both his being in the form of God, and his thinking it no rob-

bery to be equal with God, establish the same great point—  
HIS SUPREME DEITY.

Dr. Bruce affirms, that the obvious meaning of our translation would make Christ an example of selfishness and ambition. This bold assertion is a mere *petitio principii*—a barefaced begging of the question. It takes for granted what remains to be proved, and what is denied by all, but Anti-trinitarians. It takes for granted, that Jesus Christ is only a creature. Now, if this hypothesis were true—if the Redeemer were only a creature.—“To think it no robbery “to be equal with God,” would make him not only an example of selfishness and ambition, but of the *most horrid impiety and blasphemy!* The Anti-trinitarian hypothesis, however, has never yet been proved, and, I presume, *never will.* This text alone, notwithstanding the violent attempts to pervert it, will for ever prove *an insuperable barrier.* Anti-trinitarian comments explain away all the beauty and force of the passage. On their principles, where is that exalted virtue displayed in the humiliation of Jesus; If Jesus was only a man—a carpenter’s son—as Socinians contend, where was his humiliation? According to the Arian scheme, Jesus Christ was only a creature—a super-angelic being—a being bound by the law of God—bound to obey his heavenly father. When his father commanded him to humble himself, had he refused, he would have been a rebel, a fallen angel, as bad as Satan, if not worse! When he obeyed, he was only an unprofitable servant!—he had only done that which it was his duty to do. His obedience was only a debt, and could lay the Deity under no obligation to confer favours, either on himself, or on any of the human family. He had nothing of his own—nothing which he had not received—his sacrifice was not his own—he had no merit—no ground of boasting. He had no liberty to save his own life, without incurring the guilt of the most horrid impiety, rebellion, and apostacy—without becoming a fallen angel! Where is then that exalted virtue, which has kindled into rapture prophets and apostles, men and angels, the whole blessed creation? The Arian hypothesis sinks into nothing.

On the other hand, according to the Trinitarian scheme, the text exhibits an astonishing, an overwhelming display of generous disinterested benevolence, humility and condescension. It exhibits an example worthy of the imitation of men and of angels—worthy of the admiration and praise

of all intelligent creatures! Oh! that he who writes, and they who read these pages, may be able to comprehend, with all saints, what is the breadth and length, and depth and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passes knowledge, that they may be filled with all the fulness of God.\*

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## CHAPTER IV.

### *Of the Supreme Deity of the Holy Ghost.*

HAVING in the preceding pages endeavoured to establish the Divinity of our blessed Redeemer, and to refute those arguments by which Dr. B. has assailed that doctrine, I proceed now to make a few observations in defence of the SUPREME DEITY OF THE HOLY GHOST. The Doctor boasts of the Arian system, as rational and consistent—as quite

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\* Intimately connected with our Saviour's taking upon him "the form of a servant," is that text in the Hebrews, "He took not on him the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham."—Dr. B. very properly remarks, that such phrases would be totally inapplicable to a mere man, who could have no power to take on himself the nature of angels—but he quite forgets, that such phrases are no less inapplicable to an angel, or the highest of angelic beings. How could an angel, or the highest of angelic beings, take upon himself the nature of angels? If he were originally possessed of their nature, how could he *assume* it? The text is equally inconsistent with the doctrines of Socinians and Arians. For what consistency, or what sense, in talking of a man taking upon himself the nature of a man, or an angel taking upon himself the nature of an angel? Dr. Price, perceiving such phraseology to be grossly absurd, is forced to recur to verbal criticism—to *false* criticism. His translation, designed to supersede the authorized version, runs thus:—"He helped not the nature of angels." This translation of the verb *επιλαμβαντο* is quite of a piece with Dr. B.'s translation of the noun *αγγελου*. Dr. Bruce affixes the meaning of *αγγελου* to *αγγελος*; and Dr. Price affixes the meaning of *επιλαμβανομαι* to *επιλαμβανομαι*; and by this simple operation of affixing the meaning of one word to another, do these learned Doctors contrive to evade the force of troublesome texts, and to preserve from destruction their favourite system. They deprecate verbal criticism, and pretend to be willing to abide by the received version.—I say *pretend*; for it is nothing but *pretence*. They are *not* willing to abide by it; they *CANNOT* abide by it, and advocate Arianism. They appeal to criticism in every case of extremity, and to such a species of criticism, too, as would enable them to bring *any meaning out of any text*.



free from the difficulties attending the systems of Trinitarians and Socinians—as clogged with no difficulties of its own, except such as must attach to any supernatural interposition. To me, I confess, that system appears in a quite different light. It appears to me *unscriptural, unreasonable, inconsistent, and clogged with difficulties altogether insuperable*. The correctness of this view will appear from the doctrine of that system, not only respecting the *Son of God*, but also respecting the *Spirit of all grace, the Holy Ghost*. Arians, in their view of the Blessed Spirit, are not only inconsistent with the Scriptures of truth, but with each other. Some of them believe, that he is neither *God*, nor *angel*, nor *man*, nor *any being at all*, but only the *power, wisdom, or influence* of the Deity. Others again (and among those Dr. B. though he speaks entirely in the language of scepticism and doubt,) believe that the Holy Ghost is a creature inferior to our Blessed Redeemer. The hypothesis of those who deny the distinct personality of the Holy Ghost, is full of absurdity. And yet, to maintain his personality, but deny his Supreme Deity, appears to involve much contradiction, perplexity, and confusion. The works peculiar to God are ascribed, in Scripture, to the Blessed Spirit. In the work of creation he is represented as a principal agent. He “moved upon the waters,” Gen. i. 2. He “garnished the heavens,” Job, xxvi. 13. He “made man,” Job, xxxiii. 4. In the new creation, also, he is a principal agent. He regenerates the *natural world*, Psal. civ. 6, “Thou sendest forth thy Spirit, they are created; and thou renewest the face of the earth.” He regenerates the *moral world*, Tit. iii. v. “According to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost.” In the resurrection of the dead he will be a principal agent, Rom. viii. 11. “But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead, shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.” These, and many other works of God are ascribed to the Blessed Spirit. According to the Scriptures, God stretched forth the heavens *alone*, and spread abroad the earth by *himself*; but according to the system of Doctor B., he did *not* create the heavens and the earth *alone*, or by himself, but by a *created instrument, Jesus Christ*. This is not all: From the preceding Scriptures, it appears, that God did not create by the subordinate instrument *alone*, but

by *another* instrument still lower—by the Holy Ghost. Arians maintain, that Jesus Christ is inferior to the Father, and the Holy Ghost inferior to Jesus Christ. From these premises it follows, that, in the work of creation, Jesus Christ was an instrument in the hand of God ; and the Holy Ghost a subordinate instrument in the hand of Jesus Christ—so that the work of creation was performed by the *instrument of an instrument—the servant of a servant!* The work of creation was performed by a *creature*, the Holy Ghost! This creature was created by *another creature, Jesus Christ!!*—which last creature **CREATED HIMSELF!!!** Such appears to me the legitimate and native consequences of the Arian system—of that system which is extolled for its reasonableness and simplicity! Should Arians attempt to evade those absurd consequences, by denying that the preceding texts refer to the Holy Spirit taken personally—should they even succeed in making their escape by such an evasion—still I would ask the following questions:—How is the Redeemer's superiority to the Holy Ghost consistent with his being conceived in the womb of the virgin by the *power of the Holy Ghost?* What! conceived by the power of a creature inferior to himself, conceived by the power of *his own creature!* The Redeemer was honoured by the descent of the Holy Ghost at his baptism. The Holy Ghost anointed him, and qualified him for his mediatorial offices and work. He wrought his miracles by the *power* of the Holy Ghost. How are these things consistent with the inferiority of that Blessed Spirit? The Holy Spirit raised our Saviour from the dead—he was "*quickened by the Spirit.*" How is this consistent with the Holy Spirit's inferiority? Finally; how is the inferiority of the Holy Ghost consistent with the unpardonable sin? Mat. xii. 31, 32, "Wherefore, I say unto you, all manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And, whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come."

The force of this text, as it strikes against the Arian system, Doctor B. endeavours to evade, by asserting—that the Holy Ghost was not then given; or rather by insinuating—that *he did not at that time exist!* He writes thus:—  
 "The blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, so awfully de-

“nounced by our Lord, was an obstinate and wilful incredulity in his miracles; and particularly, the imputation of them to the agency of evil spirits. It cannot signify denying the personality of the Holy Spirit; for St. John tells us, that the Holy Ghost was not given (given is added by the translators) till Christ was glorified; and, long after that event, the disciples at Ephesus had not so much as heard, whether there were any Holy Ghost.”

This evasion will not do. The futility and weakness of it will appear from the following observations: 1, In this passage, as in many other parts of his book, the Doctor is careful to refute what nobody maintains. He says, that the text quoted above “cannot signify denying the personality of the Holy Spirit.” Who imagines that it signifies this? *Nobody* I presume. Doctor B. would save himself *immense* trouble, if he would not make so many men of straw. God forbid that the sin against the Holy Ghost should signify the “denying of his personality!”—if it did—wo, wo, would be to the great majority of Antitrinitarians—*they would be all guilty of the unpardonable sin!* Doctor B. asserts, that the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost was an obstinate and wilful incredulity in the Redeemer’s miracles. Passing over the innate absurdity of the phrase “incredulity in miracles,” would our author examine the passage more minutely,\* I presume he would find that he is quite mistaken. The blasphemy against our Saviour—the imputation of his miracles to the influence of evil spirits—*was* forgiven. “Whosoever,” says the Redeemer himself, “shall speak a word against the Son of Man, it *shall be forgiven him.*” For those Jews who thus blasphemed him, and afterwards crucified him, he fervently prayed, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.” The prayer was heard. When charged with the murder of the Lord of Glory, they were pricked in their hearts—they looked on him whom they had pierced and mourned—they

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\* *Faith* in miracles is intelligible, but *credulity* in miracles is absurd. The philologist will perceive the reason: he will see, that *faith*, being an *act* of the mind, is transitive, and admits an object; whereas *credulity*, being not an *act*, but a *disposition* of the mind, is *intransitive*, and does not admit an object. If, therefore, *credulity in miracles* is not sense, *equally* absurd, if not *more* so, is the phrase “*incredulity in miracles.*”



exclaimed, "What shall we do to be saved?"—they were directed to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ—they embraced the glad tidings, believed, and were enrolled among his disciples. It appears, therefore, that the imputation of our Saviour's miracles to the influence of evil spirits was *not* the unpardonable sin. "He hath an unclean spirit"—"He casteth out devils by Beelzebub the prince of devils," were words spoken against the Son of Man. Such words, our Saviour himself declares, *should be forgiven*; and, we have reason to believe, that they were *actually forgiven*. But he assures us, that if any one should speak against the Holy Ghost, *it should never be forgiven him*. The Doctor observes, that the Holy Ghost was not then given. Very true; nor did the sin mentioned respect *present*, but *future* communications of the Holy Ghost. It respected the miraculous gifts of the Holy Ghost after the Redeemer's resurrection. An important question may be here put. Why was the blasphemy against our Saviour forgiven, but that against the Holy Ghost *unpardonable*? I answer, Because the miracles wrought by the Holy Ghost, after the ascension of Jesus Christ, *were the last and most powerful attestation of the truth of Christianity*. The opposition given to our Lord and his miracles proceeded principally from ignorance. To this cause we may trace even his crucifixion. "Brethren," says Peter, "I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers." "Had they known him, they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory"—and, I may add—that they would not have blasphemed him, nor imputed his miracles to diabolic influence. The miracles wrought by the power of the Holy Ghost, after our Saviour's ascension, were far more glorious and convincing than those wrought by our Saviour himself. This our Redeemer had (John, xiv. 12,) predicted, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father." In opposing the Supreme Deity of the Holy Ghost, one of the Doctor's arguments is, that the Redeemer appeals only to *two* witnesses, himself and his Father—"that the Holy Spirit was none of his witnesses, for in this case he would have been supported by three; and the third would have been more unexceptionable than himself." Now, the fact is, that he actually *did* appeal to this third, and most unexceptionable witness. (John, xv. 26) "But when the Comforter is come, whom I

“will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me.” He appealed to this witness, but did not actually bring him forward till after his own ascension. Why? A very satisfactory reason can be given. Had the third and most unexceptionable witness been produced *before* his crucifixion, he would not have been crucified at all. By the influence of this witness, the Jews would have been convinced that Jesus was the true Messiah; and “had they known him, they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory.” Dr. B. would have doubtless produced the third witness—and what then? By this circumstance he would have completely counteracted the design of our Saviour’s mission, and disconcerted the whole plan of Redemption. But the foolishness of God was wiser than Doctor B. As our Saviour came in the fulness of time, so also did the Holy Spirit. He gave in his testimony when it was calculated to produce the best effect—he gave it on the day of Pentecost—he appeared in the form of cloven tongues as of fire—he wrought a miracle more glorious and convincing than had ever been wrought before. He appeared a more unexceptionable witness than either the Father or Son, who were appealed to before our Saviour’s crucifixion. When *his* testimony was rejected, there was no *fourth* witness. To the obstinate and wilful despisers of Christianity, there remained nothing but a certain fearful looking for judgment; and this, I humbly conceive, is the reason why the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost could not be forgiven, neither in this world, nor that which is to come. The *first* witness was the *Father*, the *second* witness was the *Son*, the *third, last*, and, as Dr. B. admits, *the most unexceptionable witness*, was the *Holy Ghost*. When the testimony of the *Father* was rejected, then additional evidence was afforded in the testimony of the *Son*; and when the testimony of the *Son* was rejected, additional evidence was afforded in the testimony of the *Holy Ghost*; but, when the testimony of the *Holy Ghost* was rejected, there was *no additional evidence*. Those who rejected *his* testimony, blaspheming his person and miracles, sinned against the *clearest light*, wilfully resisted *the most powerful evidence*, and so cut themselves off from *all hopes of forgiveness*.

The reader will now judge of the truth of the following assertion made by Dr. B. (p. 121,) “By this he (the Redeemer) declares—that the Holy Spirit was not one of

“his witnesses.” The Redeemer declares *no such thing*. The Redeemer declares the *very reverse*. (John, xv. 26,) “But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me.” *The Apostles declare the very reverse*. (Acts, v. 32,) “And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him.”

When the declarations of Dr. B. thus flatly contradict those of our Saviour and his Apostles, the reader will know how to treat them. He will perceive with what weapons the Divinity of the Holy Ghost is assailed. He will see how little reason the Doctor has to boast, that his book “is consistent with itself and the Gospels.”

Another argument brought forward by our author against the Divinity of the Holy Ghost, is—that “he is very often omitted when the Father and Son are mentioned.” In reply, I would observe: 1, That this is only, at best, an argument (*ad ignorantiam*) addressed to our ignorance. Were we intimately acquainted with the Scriptures, we would see—as we have already seen in the preceding instance—that there are wise reasons for all such omissions.

2. Sometimes the Father is omitted, when the Son and Holy Ghost are mentioned. According to the Doctor’s logic, these cases would prove—**THAT THE FATHER HIMSELF IS NOT A DIVINE PERSON!**

As an additional argument against the Divinity of the Holy Ghost, Dr. B. asserts, that he is never styled God in the New Testament. I answer: 1. If he be so styled in the *Old Testament*, it is quite the same. “**THE BIBLE, THE BIBLE, IS THE RELIGION OF TRINITARIANS.**” We will not suffer Dr. B. nor any Anti-trinitarian in the world, to confine us to the New Testament, much less to the Gospels.

2. We do not admit the fact, that the Holy Ghost is never, in the New Testament, styled God. In Acts, v. 3, 4, lying to the Holy Ghost is styled lying to God. The Corinthians were denominated “*the temple of God* ;” because they were temples of the Holy Ghost. (1 Cor. iii. 17, and vi. 19.)—All Scripture was given by inspiration of God; because “*holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.*” (2 Tim. iii. 16; 2 Pet. i. 21.)



3. Should Anti-trinitarians succeed in evading these and similar Scriptures—should they succeed (which they will never do) in proving, that the Holy Ghost is never styled God, neither in the New Testament nor in the Old—still, I would ask, Why should all this be regarded as a valid argument against his Divinity? Were the Holy Ghost styled God, as I believe he is; either the Doctor would consider this a proof of his Divinity, or he would not. If he *would*—Why does he not admit the Divinity of JESUS CHRIST, who is confessedly styled God? If he would *not*—Why should he consider the want of this epithet an argument *against* his Divinity? Why should he require us to produce a proof, which, if we were to produce, he would immediately turn round and say, “*This is no proof at all; for even angels and magistrates are styled gods.*” I have already called upon Dr. Channing in a similar case—I now call upon Dr. B.—I call upon all the Anti-trinitarians in the world to show the consistency of such demands with *common candour, common honesty, or common sense*. If the Holy Ghost is *not* styled God; this is an argument *against* his Divinity—if he *is* styled God; this is no proof *in favour* of it! . What species of proof would satisfy such reasoners?

The Doctor again argues, “that the Holy Ghost is not dignified with any of those titles usually ascribed to the “Almighty.” In this, also, he is completely mistaken. Is not the Holy Ghost styled (Heb. ix. 14,) THE ETERNAL SPIRIT? Is he not dignified with the title of the HIGHEST? (Luke, i. 35.) In a word: Are not the *names, attributes, works, and worship*, that are proper to God only, ascribed to the HOLY GHOST? The same arguments which prove the Divinity of the Son, prove also the *Supreme Deity* of the Blessed Spirit. Hence the reason, why divines, in general, do not insist so much on the *latter*, as the *former*. If our author imagine, as he seems to insinuate, that the brevity with which the doctrine of the Divinity of the Holy Ghost is sometimes treated, is to be attributed to the want of evidence, he is much mistaken. His attack is brief; hence the brevity of the present defence. Should he take the field again, and enter more largely into the controversy, he will then see whether there be not, in the sacred volume, accumulated evidence of the truth of the doctrine.

Against the Supreme Deity of the Blessed Spirit, our author, still farther argues thus: (p. 121,) “It appears from

“ a remarkable declaration of our Lord, that the Holy Spi-  
 rit knew neither the Father nor the Son : No man know-  
 eth the Son but the Father, neither knoweth any man the  
 Father, save the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal  
 him : for *no man* is, evidently taken in an indefinite sense  
 for no one, being applied to the Father and the Son.” Now,  
 if by this reasoning the Doctor has proved, that the Holy  
 Ghost knows neither the Father nor the Son, by the very  
 same logic can I prove—shall I utter the blasphemy?—*That  
 the Father does not know himself!* In our translation of 1  
 Cor. ii. 11, it is asserted, that no man—in the original  
*οὐδεις, no one*—knows the things of God, but the SPIRIT OF  
 GOD. Now, if the Doctor’s reasoning be correct, the blas-  
 phemous conclusion follows, that the things of God are not  
 known by GOD HIMSELF, but only by the HOLY GHOST !  
 How weak must that system be, which requires such rea-  
 soning to support it ! Had the Doctor compared Scripture  
 with Scripture, he might have plainly perceived, that the  
 Holy Ghost is so far from being *ignorant* of the Father  
 and Son, that the sacred oracles represent him, not only  
 as *omnipresent*, (Psal. cxxxix,) but as *omniscient*, (1 Cor.  
 ii. 10,) “ *Searching all things, yea, the deep things of  
 God.*”

I would conclude this article by the following question :  
 How can the *form of baptism, or the apostolic benediction,*  
 be reconciled with the Arian system ? What ! baptize in  
 the name of God and two creatures ! in the name of God  
 and two servants, the one inferior to the other ! I baptize  
 thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, *his servant,*  
 and of the Holy Ghost, *an inferior servant!*—*the servant  
 of a servant!*—*the creature of a creature!* Such, when  
 analyzed, is the *Arian baptism.* On the same principles of  
 analysis, the *Arian benediction* will run thus : The grace of  
 the Lord Jesus Christ, a creature of God, a servant of the  
 Deity, and the love of God—and the communion of the  
 Holy Ghost, a servant of Jesus Christ—a servant of a ser-  
 vant ! be with you all. Amen ?—Dr. B. is fully convinced,  
 that the Holy Ghost is not one with the Almighty. He  
 assures us, he has no doubt on this subject. One should  
 suppose that such strong conviction must be founded on  
 strong arguments. Whether this be the case, let the reader  
 now judge. Let him judge whether the arguments, by  
 which the Arian system is supported, be not extremely  
 weak, and the difficulties with which it is clogged, alto-  
 gether insurmountable.

## CHAPTER V.

*The Atonement defended.*

## SECTION I.

*The necessity of it proved.*

INTIMATELY connected with the doctrine of the Supreme Deity of the Son and Holy Ghost, is that of the Atonement. Those, therefore, who deny the one, generally reject the other. Indeed, the Atonement cannot be consistently maintained, if the doctrine of the Trinity is rejected. These twin doctrines refuse to be separated; they must stand or fall together. A denial of the doctrine of the Trinity spreads darkness over all the other doctrines of the Gospel. Accordingly, Dr. B. regards the connexion which the death of Christ bears to the work of redemption, as a subject full of darkness and difficulty. He seems greatly puzzled to know, whether the death of the Redeemer were *necessary*; and, after much hesitation, determines in the negative—that *it was not indispensably necessary, and that our redemption might have been effected without it.* I confess, that *I* am of a quite different opinion. I firmly believe, that sin could not *possibly* be pardoned, and that men could not *possibly* be saved, without a satisfaction—without the penalty of the law operating on a substitute. My reasons are the following:—

I. All the perfections of Deity are opposed to the pardon of sin without a satisfaction. (See Dr. B. page 50, 51.)

1. *The truth of God forbids it.* In the threatening attached to the violation of the Covenant of *Works*, God pledged his *truth* and *veracity*. “In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.” Satan arraigned the truth of the Deity. *God* said, “*Thou shalt surely die;*” but *Satan* said, “*Thou shalt not surely die.*” Were God to pardon sin without inflicting the penalty, *Satan* would be *true*, and the *God of truth a liar!* Because men do not *claim* the fulfilment of threatenings, as they claim the fulfilment of promises, Archbishop Tillotson and others conclude, that God is not *obliged* to fulfil his threatenings.



This is ingenious, but completely sophistical, and extremely dangerous. Is not God obliged to tell the *truth*? *Undoubtedly.* *Truth* therefore *demand*s, that the threatening of the law should be fulfilled, and the penalty inflicted.

2. *The knowledge of God* is opposed to the pardon of sin without a satisfaction. The language of sin is, "How doth God know, and is there knowledge in the Most High?" God hath forgotten, he hideth his face; he will never see it. The Lord shall not see, neither shall the God of Jacob regard it. Shall sin be permitted thus to insult with impunity the knowledge of God? Surely not.

3. *The Holiness of God* opposes the pardon of sin without a satisfaction. Holiness is that attribute, by which the Deity hates sin. Fire and water are not more opposite than sin and holiness. The language of sinners is, that God is not a holy being—that he is "altogether such an one as themselves"—that he is "a God that hath pleasure in wickedness"—that "evil shall dwell with him"—and that "the foolish shall stand in his sight." Now, if sin thus insult and blaspheme the holiness of God, does not the divine holiness call aloud for the punishment of sin? Surely it does.

4. *The justice of God* opposes the pardon of sin without a satisfaction. Justice is that attribute, by which God renders to every one according to his works. Sin insults this divine attribute, (Psal. x. 13,) "Wherefore doth the wicked contemn God? He hath said in his heart, Thou wilt not require it." Were sin, therefore, to pass with impunity, how could the honour of this attribute be vindicated? How could it be said, that God will by no means clear the guilty?

5. *Even the GOODNESS AND MERCY of God* are opposed to the pardon of sin without a satisfaction. "If it be argued" (says Dr. B., p. 231,) "If it be argued from the divine holiness and justice, that God must punish the innocent for the guilty; it may be argued from his goodness and mercy, that he must forgive the guilty, and cannot punish at all." Answer—We do not argue, that God *must* punish the innocent for the guilty—we all deny, that God was under any *natural necessity* to do so—We all maintain, that God might have punished the guilty race of men, as well as fallen angels, *without providing any remedy.* But we argue, *that God cannot pardon sin without a satisfaction.* We maintain, that all the perfections of God forbid it. We deny the

assertion of Dr. B.—that “it may be argued from the goodness and mercy of God that he must forgive the guilty, and cannot punish at all.” We assert, that the *goodness and mercy* of God, as well as his justice and holiness, call aloud for the punishment of sin. Were the supreme magistrate in a civil state to suffer crimes to pass unpunished—were he, through a mistaken notion of goodness and mercy, to permit robbers, murderers, &c. to pass with impunity—what would be the result? Would not his *clemency* to the *few*, be *cruelty* to the *many*? Would not crimes abound? Would not misery abound? Would not that state very shortly become “the field of Golgotha, and dead men’s skulls?” Now, in proportion as the moral government of the universe is more important than that of any civil state; in the same proportion would the pardon of sin without a satisfaction be more *mischievous, destructive, and cruel*. It is not, therefore, the doctrine of the atonement, but the doctrine of Socinians and Arians, that is inconsistent with the goodness and mercy of God.

II. To maintain with Dr B., that the death of Christ was not necessary to the pardon of sin, or the salvation of sinners, is to teach a doctrine, not only *insulting to the glory of all the divine perfections*, but *degrading to the divine law, and subversive of the divine government*. The law of God is a rule to the rational creature. Now a rule must be some thing *fixed, inflexible, and permanent*. A rule must not bend or conform to the obliquities of the object measured; but the object measured must conform to the rule. A rule that bends, is no rule at all. To pardon sin without a satisfaction, would completely destroy the law as a rule. The will of the creature would not be obliged to bend to the law of God; but the law of God to the will of the creature! Thus, Socinianism and Arianism tend to destroy the law of God, by making the law yield to the creature, and not the creature to the law. Socinians and Arians are warm advocates for the steadiness and uniformity of those laws which govern the material system. But, is it not altogether absurd to imagine, that those laws which govern the *natural world* should be *steady*; whilst those which govern the *moral world* should *fluctuate*!—that the laws of *inanimate nature* should be *permanent*; but those of the *intellectual and moral creation, variable*!—Reason and revelation unite in teaching a very different doctrine. Our Saviour himself assures us, that he came not to destroy the law,

but to fulfil it—and that “*heaven and earth shall pass away ; but a jot or tittle shall in no wise pass from the law till all be fulfilled.*” Human laws are imperfect, and therefore they are frequently abrogated, or their penalties relaxed ; but the moral law being perfect—being founded on the immutable nature of God—being a transcript of the holiness of the divine nature—can never be abolished, without the abolition of the divine image. The law is *holy* ; and therefore the holiness of the law requires its execution—the law is *just* ; and therefore the justice of the law requires its execution—the law is *good*, and therefore the goodness of the law requires its execution. To pardon sin without a satisfaction, would be a virtual acknowledgment, that the law is neither holy, nor just, nor good. To pardon sin without a satisfaction, would degrade the divine law, counteract its object, and open a floodgate for every species of wickedness. How would men be encouraged in sin from the consideration, that they might sin with impunity ! The sufferings of Jesus were therefore necessary, not only to glorify the perfections of God, but to “*magnify the law and make it honourable.*” “*Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.*”

III. That the sufferings and death of the Son of God were indispensably necessary in the work of our redemption, is evident from many portions of the sacred volume. (Luke, xxiv. 26). “*Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory ?*”—(Heb. ii, 10), “*For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings;*”—(John, xii. 24), “*Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone ; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.*” Dr. B. alleges, that the Redeemer’s death might have been dispensed with, without defeating the object for which he came into the world ; but our Saviour asserts the very reverse. (John, xii. 27), “*Father, save me from this hour : but for this cause came I unto this hour.*”—(Mat. xx. 28), “*Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.*”—Nay, the very text which the Doctor adduces, to prove, that the death of Christ might have been dispensed with, proves his death to be *indispensable*, “*O, my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me ; nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou*



“ wilt.” Aversion to suffering is essential to humanity. This aversion our Saviour felt and expressed in this pathetic prayer.—His holy human soul shuddered and recoiled at the thought of those agonies he was about to endure. He prayed, “ If it be possible, let this cup pass from me.”—Had it been possible it *would* have passed from him ; for the Father hears him always ; but it *did not* pass from him, therefore it was *not possible*. It is true, our Saviour says, “ Abba, “ Father, all things are possible unto thee.” By this assertion, however, our Saviour could not mean, that all things *universally* are possible unto God ; but only all things that do not imply a contradiction, or are not inconsistent with the divine perfections. It is impossible for God to lie. He cannot deny himself, nor can he act inconsistently with his own divine attributes.—The cup could not pass from the Redeemer. The glory of the divine perfections, the honour of the divine law, the stability of the divine government, rendered it impossible. Had the cup passed from the Redeemer, how could the Scriptures have been fulfilled ? What would have become of all the types, the sacrifices, the prophecies, the promises, the counsels of God relative to the death and sufferings of his Son ?—The fulfilment of all these rendered it impossible that the bitter cup should pass from the Redeemer—that sin should be pardoned without a satisfaction. “ *Without shedding of blood there is no remission.*”

In opposing the necessity of the sufferings of Christ, our author appears completely bewildered. Witness the following extraordinary paragraph (p. 212), “ One text which favours the opinion, that the crucifixion of Christ made an original part of the plan of redemption, is in the thanksgiving of Peter and John : (Acts, xv. 27), Of a truth, against thy holy child, Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together for to do whatsoever thy hand and counsel determined before to be done.—The words *determined to be done*, may, however, only import, that these events were foreseen as the natural consequence of his mission.”

The Doctor himself grants, that Acts, iv. 27, favours the opinion, that the crucifixion of Christ made an original part of the plan of redemption. Now, if the text favours that opinion, that opinion must be true ; for surely, no text of Scripture would favour an erroneous opinion. The Apostle

Peter favoured the opinion: Dr. B. favours the *opposite* opinion! Now, Christian readers, whether it be right in the sight of God, to adopt the opinions favoured by Dr. Bruce, rather than those favoured by the *Apostle Peter*, judge ye! Our author grants that the text favours the opinion, that the crucifixion of Christ made an original part of the plan of redemption; and yet, strange to tell! in the very same paragraph he *denies* that it favours such an opinion! He proves—or thinks he proves—that it does not. How? by a very simple process—by telling us, that the *Apostle* said *one* thing and meant *another*—that though he declared the Redeemer's crucifixion to be *determined before*—he only meant that it was *seen before*!—Thus, in one short paragraph, Dr. B. contradicts the *Apostle*—contradicts himself—and publishes to the whole world a wonderful discovery—that *foreordination may import nothing more than foreknowledge!*\*

Endeavouring to prove, that the Redeemer's blood was not very important in the work of our redemption, and that it might have been dispensed with, the Doctor employs an argument, if possible, still more extraordinary. In the parable of the householder, after the maltreatment of a variety of servants, God the Father is represented as sending, last of all, his Son, saying, "They will reverence my Son." "Here," says Dr. B., "an expectation of the success and safety of his Son is plainly implied." What! Is it possible? Did God foreknow, from all eternity, that his Son would be crucified, and yet expect he would *not* be crucified? In his crucifixion, did his enemies do whatsoever God's hand and counsel determined before to be done; and yet did God expect that his Son would not be crucified? Did God inspire prophets to predict the crucifixion of his Son, and yet did not expect that he would be crucified? Did God—but why expose the absurdity any farther? The Deity never expected—nor could *possibly expect*—any event inconsistent with his own *foreknowledge*, his own

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\* When Dr. B. substitutes foreknowledge for predetermination, the reader may suppose, that the original word admits of such a construction. He will be surprised, however, to learn, that it never has such a meaning. Προαρισ, the word translated *determined before*, is derived from ἄρει, to raise up—thence comes ἄρει, mountain, because mountains are elevations—thence, again, ἄρει, a boundary, because mountains are boundaries—from ἄρει, a boundary, comes ἄρει, to bound, and προαρισ, the word in the text, to bound or determine before.

*decrees*, and his own *predictions*. Nay, I will go farther and assert, without any fear of rational contradiction—that the Deity never expected any event to come to pass, which does not *actually* come to pass. To suppose, that any event may fall out otherwise than the Deity expected is to suppose that the divine expectations may be disappointed, and, of course, that the ever-blessed God may be unhappy! In vain does Dr. B. depreciate the death of our blessed Redeemer; in vain does he endeavour to represent it as an unessential part of redemption, by quoting our Saviour's words before his crucifixion, "I have finished the work thou gavest me to do." Dr. Millar's reply is judicious and satisfactory: (p. 105.) "When, however, our Saviour said in his prayer, that he had *finished* the work which his Father had given him to do, he must be understood to speak of his ministry." "I," he adds, "*have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world.*" This was the *work* to be done by our Saviour. That which remained, was to be *suffered* by him," &c.

Dr. B. admits, that "the death of Christ was a principal part of redemption; that it was essential to his resurrection, which is the most incontrovertible proof of the divinity of his religion, the corner-stone of the church, and the foundation of the faith of Christians; that without the awful catastrophe of his persecution, death, and resurrection, all other evidence would have been inadequate\* to subdue the stubborn incredulity of this sceptical age." (See p. 241-2-3.)

How such concessions are consistent with the opinion, that the death of Christ was not indispensably necessary, remains to be explained. Christ's death was the principal part of redemption; and yet *was not essential to it!*—*was not indispensably necessary!* Christ's death was the most incontrovertible proof of the divinity of his religion, and yet was not *indispensably necessary!* Christ's death was the corner-stone of the church, and yet *was not indispensably necessary!* Christ's death was the foundation of the

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\* The awful catastrophe of our Saviour's death is quite intelligible—but the awful catastrophe of his *resurrection* is absurd; it is another specimen of that confusion of ideas which is so frequently discoverable in the Deator's sermons.



Christian faith, and yet *was not indispensably necessary* ! One thing, at least, the Doctor will acknowledge to be indispensably necessary—that *while a writer is contradicting the doctrines of divine revelation, he should be careful not to contradict himself* !

## SECTION II.

*Reconciliation shown to be necessary on the part of God, as well as on the part of man.*

Our author, having laboured hard, but laboured in vain, to prove that the death of Christ was not indispensably necessary, proceeds more formally to attack the doctrine of the Atonement. And how does the Doctor advance to the charge ? By endeavouring to deprive of all definite meaning the language employed in the communication of the doctrine. The word atonement in his text (Rom. v. 11,) is translated in the margin reconciliation. What inference does the Doctor deduce from this ? A very extraordinary one indeed—that the original word has “no peculiar signification !” What ! in the nineteenth century—in the Athens of Ireland—and by Dr. B., the quondam celebrated principal of the Belfast Academy—to be told that certain Greek words have “no peculiar signification !” Every scholar, who has the least acquaintance with the philosophy of language, knows, that every word has some *peculiar*—some *radical* meaning, from which all its other meanings—if it has any other—are deduced. But (*delenda est Carthago*) the Atonement is to be exploded, and this object can never be accomplished, without a sacrifice of the first principles of language and general grammar. So long as there is any definite meaning in words, the doctrine of atonement must remain impregnable.

Involving the doctrine in obscurity, with a view to the complete subversion of it, Dr. B. writes thus : (p. 314,) “The English word atonement has a variety of significations in our Bibles.” After enumerating those various meanings, he sagely concludes ; “These instances may tend to correct the superstitious notions, so often attached to this mysterious word.” By such a simple process, the Doctor contrives to explode the most important doctrines of the Christian system—first the *Supreme Deity*, and now the *Atonement* of our Blessed Redeemer. The word *God* has various meanings, and therefore we cannot prove

by the application of this term, that the Redeemer is God in the highest and ordinary sense of that word ! The word *atonement* has various meanings : it is a *mysterious* word ; and, therefore, its common acceptation is to be rejected ! An admirable contrivance indeed !—a contrivance well calculated to explode all the doctrines of divine revelation !

If variety of meaning render words ambiguous and mysterious ; and if such ambiguity and mysteriousness render them unfit for proving any doctrine, what doctrine could be proved ? On this principle, the whole Christian system might be exploded at once ! Every person acquainted with the nature of reasoning and language, will join with me in protesting against such desolating principles of logic and of criticism.

Atonement or at-one-ment, is the “ setting at one again,” of persons previously at variance. In this original meaning of the word, as Dr. B. justly observes, it was synonymous with reconciliation. Now, if those two synonymous words are found, one in the text, and the other in the margin, how does this prove that the original word *καταλλαγή*, of which they are translations, has *no peculiar meaning* ? The solution of this problem, I am convinced, would require a philologist far superior either to Dr. B., or his humble opponent. As the original word is in every other place rendered *reconciliation*, it should, I presume, have been so translated in the text. Still more necessary is it to adopt this translation *now*, as the word *atonement* has undergone a change of signification ; and the two words remain no longer synonymous. Though Dr. B. will agree with me in translating the word *καταλλαγή*, reconciliation, in preference to atonement ; yet with regard to the application of the word so translated, whether it is to be understood as reconciliation on the part of *God* or *man* ; whether it means God’s being pacified towards *us*, or our laying aside our enmity towards *him*—*this is the point in dispute*. The advocates of the atonement maintain that reconciliation is necessary, both in reference to God and man—that God requires to be reconciled to man, as well as man to be reconciled to God. The enemies of the atonement deny this, and maintain, that there is no necessity of God being reconciled to man, but only of man being reconciled to God. This is the cardinal point, on which the whole controversy seems to turn.

The opponents of the atonement maintain, that, in the

Scriptures of truth, man is always said to be reconciled to God, but God is never said to be reconciled to man. In reply to this, I would observe, 1st—That, were the statement true, it would not prove what is intended. In Scripture phraseology the *offending* party is said to be reconciled, when the party *offended* is pacified. Thus (Mat. v. 23,24), “Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee ; leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way ; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.” Here the *offending* brother is enjoined to be reconciled ; though the meaning plainly is—that, by proper acknowledgments or restitution, he should endeavour to pacify the brother *offended*. In like manner, when men, the offending party, are said to be reconciled to God, this does not exclude, but implies, his reconciliation towards them.

2. God, in Scripture, is said to be *pacified*, which is tantamount to his being reconciled. (Ez. xvi. 63), “That thou mayest remember and be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more, because of thy shame, when I am *pacified* toward thee, for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord God.” To be reconciled, and to be pacified, are phrases of similar import—Again, (Isaiah xii. 1), “And in that day thou shalt say, O Lord, I will praise thee ; though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortedst me.” Here, God is reconciled ; his anger is turned away, and the soul comforted.

3. The text, from which Dr. B. preaches his two sermons against the atonement, proves the very doctrine he so violently opposes. (Rom. v. 11,) “And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.” That atonement, or reconciliation as the word should be rendered, is expressive of *God's being pacified*, and not of *man's being reconciled*, will be evident on a moment's reflection ; for how could we receive our *own* reconciliation. Would it not be nonsense to say, we have received *the laying aside of our own enmity*? Daniel prophecies, that Jesus Christ would make reconciliation for iniquity ; and Paul declares, that our great antitypical High Priest made reconciliation for the sins of the people—and how ? The same apostle will answer the question : “He put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.”



4. That the blood of Jesus was necessary in order to reconcile God to man, is evident from this—That all mankind were exposed to the wrath and judicial displeasure of God. (Rom. i. 18), “For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men.” By the vicarious sufferings of Jesus, this wrath is turned away, and God is reconciled. “The Lord is well pleased for his righteousness sake.”

Against this view of the subject, Dr. B. inveighs with great vehemence. (P. 231.) “Another pretence,”\* says he, “for the popular doctrine of the atonement is, that sin is so hateful to God as to excite his wrath in the highest degree; and that his vengeance cannot be appeased without the everlasting destruction of the sinners; but that he was prevailed upon by Christ, a portion of his own essence, to accept of his sufferings in their stead. This is an extraordinary accumulation of false doctrine and contradiction.”—Again. (p. 290), “You may begin to apprehend, that I am running into the common error of magnifying the Son above the Father; of ascribing all the grace to Christ and all the wrath to God.”—Who magnifies the Son above the Father? Who ascribes all the grace to Christ and all the wrath to God? The Doctor declares, that these errors are common. I call upon him to name a single individual, who either from the pulpit or the press, ever advocated such errors. Who ever maintained, that God was prevailed on by Jesus Christ, a portion of his own essence, to accept of his sufferings in the stead of sinners? It is painful to animadvert on such gross misrepresentations. The advocates of the atonement never imagined that God the Father was *less placable* or *less merciful* than Jesus Christ. They never imagined that the Redeemer rendered God *placable*. They always spurned with contempt such foul imputations. Dr. B. *knew* this; for he quotes the following words of the Archbishop of Dublin, “The sacrifice of Christ was never deemed, by any who did not wish to calumniate the doctrine of the atonement, to have made God *placable*.” One should think that this bold protest of the Archbishop against the wilful calumniators of the doctrine, would have prevented future calumnies. But no. It will not do. The preced-

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\* All is mere pretence it seems.

ing quotations show, that protests and remonstrance are of no avail. The enemies of the atonement will go on to misrepresent and calumniate the doctrine.

Dr. B. (p. 229), indulges in the following invectives :  
 “ If, therefore, the common doctrine of the atonement or  
 “ propitiation imply, that God is not naturally propitious,  
 “ placable, and merciful, it contradicts every principle of  
 “ natural and revealed religion. He requires nothing to  
 “ make him merciful, but to be merciful ourselves ; nothing  
 “ to make him placable, but that we be meek, lowly, and  
 “ forgiving : nothing to make him propitious to us, but that  
 “ we be kind and tender-hearted to one another. With re-  
 “ spect to himself, he requires only that we walk humbly  
 “ before him. Any construction, therefore, of this doc-  
 “ trine, which represents God as implacable, should be re-  
 “ jected without further inquiry, without exposing your re-  
 “ ligious feelings to be degraded by sophistical arguments  
 “ and fanatical harangues.” We grant Dr. B., that if the  
 common doctrine of the atonement implies, that God is not  
 naturally propitious, placable, and merciful, it contradicts  
 every principle of natural and revealed religion. But the  
 common doctrine of the atonement implies no such thing.  
 The advocates of the atonement abhor the idea. They re-  
 gard it with infinite contempt. It is not the friends, but  
 the enemies of the atonement, that represent God as natu-  
 rally implacable. It is Dr. B. that thus represents him.—  
 According to the Doctor, God is not *naturally* merciful,  
 propitious, or placable ; but requires to be MADE so !—And  
 who will MAKE him so ? WE OURSELVES !! He requires  
*our* mercifulness to make HIM MERCIFUL !—*our* meekness,  
 lowliness, and forgiving disposition, to make HIM PLACA-  
 BLE !—*our* kindness and tender-heartedness, to make HIM  
 PROPITIOUS !—What even the *blood of the Son of God*  
 could not accomplish, is thus modestly ascribed to *human*  
*virtue* ! Let the reader now judge whose principles are  
 most calculated to expose our religious feelings to be de-  
 graded by sophistical arguments and fanatical harangues—  
 whose doctrine it is that contradicts every principle of na-  
 tural and revealed religion.

The advocates of the atonement constantly affirm, that  
 Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, are equal in placability—in  
 mercy—in grace—in love—in all divine perfections. They  
 constantly affirm, that it was the sovereign mercy, grace,  
 and love of God, which induced him to provide a remedy,

to lay help upon one that was mighty to save—to send his Son into the world to save sinners. They constantly affirm, that “ God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” Such are the real views of those who hold the doctrine of the atonement—views very different indeed from that “ extraordinary accumulation of false doctrine” and contradiction, *falsely* charged upon them by Dr. B.

After our author has sufficiently declaimed against imaginary false doctrine, he proceeds to state, what he conceives to be the *true* doctrine. Sin, he grants, to be hateful to God, and at the same time assures us, that “ God’s hatred of sin can mean only his hatred of the sinner, and his love of righteousness can be shown only by his kindness to the righteous.” Now, if God hate sin, and if his hatred of sin can only mean his hatred of sinners, it follows of course, *that God hates all mankind*; for all are sinners! We distinguish between God’s hatred of sin and his hatred of sinners; the Doctor denies any such distinction. It follows then, that since God hates sin—and hates it with an implacable hatred, as our author will not deny—he must also *hate sinners with an implacable hatred!*—And as the whole human family who are capable of moral agency are sinners, *he must hate with implacable hatred the whole human family!*—but, if he hate the whole human family with an implacable hatred, *the whole human family must be eternally miserable!*—They must all be damned! Not one soul can possibly be saved! God *loves* mankind, according to the Doctor, yet hates them—hates them as he hates sin, that is, *with an implacable and eternal hatred!!* Such are Dr. Bruce’s ideas of God’s hatred of sin and sinners! Such is his *mild, true, and consistent* doctrine!!!

Let us attend to his views of God’s love of righteousness. “ God’s love of righteousness,” says the Doctor, “ can be shown only by his kindness to the righteous.” New and strange doctrine indeed! A doctrine as unscriptural and absurd, as it is novel. Tell me, Dr. B., can God only show his love of righteousness by his kindness to the righteous? Can he not also show it by punishing the wicked? Is God unrighteous who taketh vengeance? The sentiments of David on this subject differ widely from those of our author. (Psal. xi. 6, 7,) “ Upon the wicked he shall rain snares, fire and brimstone, and an horrible tempest :



“ this shall be the portion of their cup. For the righteous  
 “ Lord loveth righteousness ; his countenance doth behold  
 “ the upright.” Here we see, that God’s love of righteousness is testified, by raining a horrible tempest on sinners, as well as by showing kindness to the righteous.—(See Rev. xvi. 6, 6.—Rom. ii. 6, 9, inclusive.)—I submit, now, to every reader capable of the slightest reflection, whether the friends of the atonement, or Dr. B. may more justly be charged with an extraordinary accumulation of false doctrine and contradiction.

### SECTION III.

#### *The Death of Christ vicarious.*

THE way of a sinner’s salvation is so plain, that a way-faring man, though a fool, shall not err therein.—But is there any thing so plain, either in the volume of nature or divine revelation, as not to be controverted? That there is a God, has been denied—that there is a sun in the firmament, has been questioned—that there is no material world, has been asserted—that there is nothing in the universe but ideas and sensations, has been strenuously maintained.—It would seem, that the pride of man piques itself in opposing those truths which are the most plain and incontrovertible ; whilst it glories in advocating errors the most paradoxical and absurd. Were this weakness of our nature—to call it by no worse name—manifested only in abstract theories, and philosophical speculations, it might be regarded as of very little consequence—it might afford matter of ridicule or amusement : but, when it is employed in subverting the Christian system, or razing the foundations of the sinner’s hope, the pious Christian cannot avoid feeling the most acute and painful sensations. Good, however, results from evil. Not only Christianity itself, but all the doctrines of the Christian system, are calculated to bear the most rigorous examination—the most fiery trial. Whilst the wood, hay, and stubble, of erroneous opinions are burnt up, the gold, silver, and precious stones of gospel doctrines shine forth with refulgent splendour, delighting every mind with their beauty, and dazzling every eye with their glory.

The great atoning sacrifice of Jesus was predicted by prophets, typified by sacrifice, proclaimed by apostles, preached by the Redeemer, and celebrated in the rapturous

inspired anthems both of the Old and New Testament church. Hundreds of texts prove that glorious doctrine, which is the foundation stone of the Christian system—the cardinal point, on which turn all our hopes for time and eternity. The doctrine of a vicarious atonement being of great, of paramount, of *infinite* importance, is taught in the sacred volume so abundantly and so clearly, that he who runs may read.

ISAIAH assures us, that our blessed Redeemer was wounded *for our transgressions*, and bruised *for our iniquities*; that the chastisement of *our peace* was upon him, and that *by his stripes we are healed*—that it pleased the Lord to bruise him, to put him to grief, to make his soul an offering for sin, and *to lay upon him the iniquities of us all*.

DANIEL predicted, that the Messiah should be cut off, but not for himself—that he should finish transgressions, make an end of sins, make reconciliation for iniquity, and bring in everlasting righteousness.

THE APOSTLE PAUL assures us, that we are bought with a price—that Jesus Christ gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity—that we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins—that he has purchased the church with his blood—that he has redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us—that God has set him forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, and has made him, who knew no sin, to be sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. That Jesus Christ gave himself for us, as a sacrifice and offering of a sweet smelling savour; and put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.

PETER affirms, that we are redeemed, not with corruptible things, as silver or gold, but with the precious blood of the Son of God, as of a lamb without spot or blemish—that Jesus Christ suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God—that his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree.

THE APOSTLE JOHN assures us, once and again, that Jesus Christ is the propitiation for our sins—and that his blood cleanseth us from all sin.

OUR BLESSED LORD HIMSELF declares, that he came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give life a ransom for many.

These, and a multitude of other Scriptures too numerous

for quotation, prove to the humblest and most illiterate mind, the doctrine of a vicarious atonement. The obvious meaning of such texts Doctor B. endeavours to evade by a variety of stratagems. He tells us, that "the words in Greek which are translated *for*, as Christ died *for* us," and "he was a ransom *for* many," are equivocal. But I will tell the learned Doctor, that the words *αντι*, *υπερ*, and *προ*, in Greek, are no more equivocal than the word *for* in English. When the mere English scholar reads, that an orange was given for a lemon, or an apple for a pear, does he feel any difficulty in the application of the word *for*? *None at all*. He knows quite well, that it signifies substitution or exchange. Were Doctor B. to tell him, that he is quite mistaken—that the word *for* has various acceptations—that, therefore, he should not conclude that there was any barter, substitution or exchange in the case—would not the most illiterate peasant laugh at such criticism? With equal contempt will the plain unlettered Christian treat that criticism, which denies that there is any substitution implied in such texts as these: "*Christ died for the ungodly*"—He "*gave his life a ransom for many*"—"*Who gave himself a ransom for all.*" And with still greater contempt will such criticism be treated by the man who understands the force of the original. The radical meaning of the preposition *υπερ*, is *above*. The first quoted text might therefore be more literally rendered, "*Christ died above the ungodly.*" The idea is strikingly significant. The sinner is represented as lying prostrate at the feet of his offended sovereign, and the arm of divine vengeance lifted up, ready to strike the fatal blow; the blessed Redeemer throwing himself, *υπερ*, upon or above the sinner, is pierced by the sword of divine justice, whilst the sinner escapes. The ordinary signification of the preposition *αντι*, is also substitution. (Ex. xxi. 23, 24,) "And if any mischief follow, then thou shalt give life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot." In all these instances of substitution, the preposition *for*, is *αντι* in the Septuagint. Multitudes of similar instances might be adduced. When we are assured that Jesus Christ gave his life a ransom for many (*λυτρον αντι πολλων*), can we doubt that substitution is intended? The appropriate meaning of *λυτρον*, is a ransom, and of *αντι*, substitution. 1 Tim. ii. 6, is, if possible, still stronger. Who gave himself



(αντιληθρον) *a vicarious ransom* (ὑπερ παντων) *instead of all*. The vicarious nature of the ransom is pointed out, first by the preposition *αντι*, and, if this were not sufficient, it is again pointed out by the preposition *ὑπερ*. On some of the senses of these prepositions, Doctor B. tells his hearers, the doctrines of imputed righteousness and vicarious punishment have been chiefly erected. Whether prepositions, or nouns, or verbs, or some of the other parts of speech, contribute most to the support of those doctrines, I have never yet inquired, nor do I conceive it important to determine. One thing I know, that if those doctrines, or any other doctrines, be erected at all, they must be erected on *some* of the senses of prepositions and other parts of speech! I know, also, that the prepositions, in their most usual acceptations, are entirely in favour of those doctrines; and still farther, I know, that if our author be able to overturn those doctrines, it will not be by the ordinary senses of either prepositions or any other class of words. Let not Doctor B. think to explode those doctrines, by telling his hearers that the words by which they are supported have various meanings. We all know this. The words which support *all* doctrines have various meanings. Let him come forward like a true philologist, in a manner worthy of his high literary attainments—let him show that the words *for*, *bear*, &c. must be taken in senses different from those which we ascribe to them—let him do this, or confess that he has done nothing, or, what is worse than nothing—*darkened counsel by words without knowledge*. In the same manner, the Doctor involves in darkness the whole work of redemption, by representing such terms as *ransomed*, *redeemed*, *purchased*, *bought*, &c. as metaphorical expressions—forms of speech adopted by the Apostles from habit, or from a wish to accommodate themselves to the usage of their correspondents and disciples. He conceives also that the death of Christ is styled a sacrifice only in allusion to the sacrifices of the legal dispensation. He confounds types with antitypes, shadows with substances, and envelops the whole in darkness and confusion. “The law was a shadow of good things to come.” Jesus Christ, his offices and benefits, were the substance. Doctor B. inverts this order. He represents redemption by Christ, the ransom he paid, and the sacrifice he offered, as mere *shadows, embellishments of speech, and figurative allusions*

—allusions to redemption from Egypt—to legal sacrifices, &c.\*

“ Other expressions,” says our author, (p. 219,) “ are borrowed from the Jewish sacrifices, on account of an *apparent* resemblance between the crucifixion and the death of a victim ; but this is only *apparent*, and there is no more reason for taking these literally than the former.” So then, it seems, that between the legal sacrifices and the death of Christ, there was not so much as a *resemblance*. The resemblance was only *apparent*, but not *real* ! Christ’s death, according to Doctor B., was not a *real*, but only a *metaphorical* sacrifice. Neither is the metaphor itself real, but only *apparent*—a metaphor, without any real resemblance !—a false metaphor ! the shadow of a shadow !—Such an attack upon an inspired Apostle, requires no comment.

Dr. B. asserts, that the paschal lamb was no sacrifice. P. 222, he writes thus : “ But the paschal lamb was not sacrificed : no sacrifice could be performed except in the temple ; but the paschal lamb, to which our Saviour is compared, was killed in a private house, and dressed and eaten at a domestic entertainment, without any sacrificial ceremonies. If, therefore, Christ was literally sacrificed, he could not be likened to the paschal lamb.”—In this quotation, Dr. B. asserts, that the paschal lamb was *not* a sacrifice, but the Spirit of God asserts that it *was*. (Ex. xii. 27), “ Ye shall say, It is the sacrifice of the Lord’s passover,” (Ex. xxxiv. 25), “ Thou shalt not offer the blood of my sacrifice with leaven ; neither shall the sacrifice of the feast of the passover be left unto the morning.”—Hearers of Dr. B., and readers of this REFUTATION ! whether it be right in the sight of God, to believe the Doctor rather than God, judge ye ! It is true, indeed, that the Jews originally killed and eat the passover in private houses : their circumstances forbade them to do otherwise :

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\* Dr. B. brings forward the arguments of Socinians and Arians—arguments, the sophistry of which Archbishop Magee has completely detected and exposed. Though he has read Magee on Atonement and Sacrifice, without paying the least attention to the reasonings of that justly celebrated author, he proceeds with the utmost confidence to exhibit once more the exploded doctrines of Taylor and Priestly. For such unaccountable conduct, he falls under the merited censure of Doctor Millar, of Armagh, who repeats some of the Archbishop’s arguments.

but it is no less true, that when they came into the land of Canaan, the practice was changed : they were strictly enjoined to sacrifice the passover, only in the place which the Lord their God should choose. It was one of the great anniversary feasts celebrated at Jerusalem. After the temple was built, the paschal lamb was sacrificed only in the temple. Was Dr. B. ignorant of this fact ? Did he never read Deut. xvi. 2, 6 ? The Apostle Paul asserts, that Christ our passover is sacrificed for us. In this assertion, he likens the sacrifice of Christ to that of the paschal lamb ; but how could the sacrifice of Christ, whether literal or metaphorical, be like that of the paschal lamb, if the paschal lamb was not sacrificed at all ? To deny, therefore, that the paschal lamb was sacrificed, is an outrage upon language and common sense.—It is to charge an inspired Apostle with likening one thing to another, when between the two objects there is no resemblance ! Speaking of the death of Christ, the Doctor says (p. 236), “ if it be a sacrifice, it is not a passover ; and if a passover, no sacrifice.” —The preceding observations will show, that this bold dogmatic assertion *is not true*. The death of Christ is *both a passover and a sacrifice*.

In opposing the vicarious sacrifice of Jesus Christ, Dr. B. gravely tells us, what every one knows, that the scape-goat was not sacrificed, nor put to death in any way. He declares, that the ceremony “ was an elegant emblem of “ free pardon—a gratuitous pardon, without sacrifice, ransom, imputation of sin, or vicarious punishment.” The Doctor, however, forgets to tell us—that it required *two* goats to complete the ceremony—that the first was sacrificed before the other was sent away as a scape goat into the wilderness. The sacrificed goat represented the atonement of Jesus ; and the scape goat, the efficacy of that atonement in removing guilt. Accordingly, all the sins of all the congregation were confessed over the head of the goat.—That the sins of the children of Israel were typically transferred to the goat, is evident from this—that he is said to carry them away ; and the priest who confessed those sins over his head, and the person who conducted the goat to the wilderness, were both regarded as unclean, and were both obliged to submit to a course of legal purification. The ceremony, therefore, plainly exhibited those great and important doctrines of imputed guilt, and vicarious punishment. To hide these..



doctrines from the eyes of his hearers, Dr. B. is obliged to conceal one half of the ceremony. He exhibits to view the scape goat ; but carefully conceals the goat which was slain. He puts asunder what God has joined, and thus contrives to lay aside the most important doctrine of the Gospel. The Doctor asserts, that if Jesus Christ was a sin offering, he could not be a peace offering ; and if he was a peace offering, he could not be a sin offering—and that he was *neither*. This is one of those bold dogmatic assertions with which his sermons every where abound—assertions founded neither in Scripture nor in reason. That the Redeemer was both a sin offering and a peace offering, the Scriptures plainly teach. He was a sin offering ; for he “ put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.” He was also a peace offering ; for he “ made peace by the blood “ of his cross.” With the same groundless confidence the Doctor asserts, that sin offerings were never vicarious.—It is evident, however, that all these offerings *were* vicarious. For what other purpose, than to point out their vicarious nature, and to denote a transfer of ceremonial guilt, did the offerer lay his hand on the head of the victim ?—If the sacrifices of the patriarchal and legal dispensations were not vicarious—if they were not typical of the vicarious sacrifice of Jesus Christ, what were they ?—for what purpose were they instituted ?—Why were so many thousands and millions of victims slain ; and so many oceans of blood shed ; if not to typify the atoning blood of Jesus Christ ? For such an immense waste of blood, no rational account can be given by the enemies of the atonement. They have invented, it is true, a great variety of hypotheses ; but they are all completely futile and unsatisfactory.\* The hypothesis of Dr. B. is quite as absurd and unreasonable as those of his predecessors. “ Sacrifices,” says the Doctor, “ were “ a symbolical address to God, expressing the devotion, repentance, and other pious affections of the sufferer.”—Devotion ! What kind of devotion could be expressed by the daily embruing of hands in blood ?—Pious affections ! What pious affections could possibly be expressed, by the dying agonies, and expiring groans of suffering animals ?—Unconnected with the atonement, such scenes of suffering

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\* See those hypotheses refuted and exposed by Magee on the Atonement and Sacrifice.

and blood were calculated to eradicate and destroy, rather than to promote and excite pious and devout affection. Such scenes were calculated, not to improve, but to blunt the moral feelings—not to render the worshippers merciful and humane, but cruel and ferocious!!—Socinians and Arians are constantly ringing changes on the mercy of God. Mercy! What mercy?—to butcher millions of animals, and shed oceans of blood, and even *the blood of God's own Son*, without any necessity!—Not *clemency* and *mercy*, but *cruelty* and *blood*, characterise the Antitrinitarian Deity.

The millions of sacrifices that were offered, were so many millions of proofs of the doctrine of the atonement. The language of every victim whose blood stained the altar, was, “WITHOUT SHEDDING OF BLOOD THERE IS NO REMISSION,” “BEHOLD THE LAMB OF GOD WHO TAKETH AWAY THE SIN OF THE WORLD!”

Almost all things were by the law purged with blood. *The mercy-seat or the throne of God was sprinkled with blood*—plainly showing, that before mercy is dispensed, justice must be satisfied—that justice and judgment are the habitation or the basis of the throne of God; whilst mercy and truth move in glorious procession before him—Moses also *sprinkled the book; and all the people. He sprinkled the book*; thereby signifying, that it is by the peace-speaking blood of Jesus, that all the curses written in that book are cancelled; and that it is through the same atoning blood, that the people of God are entitled to all the blessings written in that book. *He sprinkled the people*.—As only those Israelites, on the upper lintels and door posts of whose houses the blood of the paschal lamb was sprinkled, escaped the destroying angel; so none but those whose souls are sprinkled with the atoning blood of Jesus Christ, can possibly escape the wrath to come.

*Moses made atonement for the holy place*; thus signifying, that it is through the blood of Jesus that we obtain, not only remission of sins, but an inheritance among all them that are sanctified. By this atoning blood we are not only freed from the wrath to come; but have access to the enjoyment of God in heaven. Jesus is entered into the holiest of all, not with the blood of bulls nor of goats, but with his own blood, having obtained eternal redemption for us. As the whole of the way by which the high priest passed into the most holy place was sprinkled with blood; so we have

now a new and living way to the holiest of all—to the mansions of eternal glory and bliss—consecrated by the blood of Jesus Christ!—Under the law, not only the tabernacle, but all the vessels of service were sprinkled with blood. Atonement was also made for the altar; because of the uncleanness of the Children of Israel. Sin cleaves to our most solemn services, and requires the atoning blood of Jesus.

In misrepresenting the doctrine of a vicarious atonement, Dr. B. proceeds as follows:—(p. 235)—“ But this unaccountable proceeding is explained by another yet more unaccountable; by imputed sin and imputed righteousness; a doctrine to which the Apostles were entire strangers. It implies, that man was rendered pure and innocent by laying his sins upon Christ; and by this accumulation of imputed sin, Christ became hateful to his heavenly Father, that is, to himself, for they are said to be one; and was exposed to his wrath, and to all the pains and penalties incurred by the sins of the whole world. I have heard of a tyrannical master, who, when his son committed a fault, would whip a slave in his stead, to show his displeasure, and to make his son good; and a partial parent will sometimes deter his favourite from misbehaviour, by a similar experiment on another of his children; but these are universally condemned as instances of the grossest folly and injustice. In short, the whole scheme is full of injustice and inconsistency. If the guilt of our sins were literally laid on Christ, he could not be a lamb without spot and blameless:—If not, he could not be justly punished for them.” In asserting that the Apostles were entire strangers to the doctrine of imputed sin and imputed righteousness, Dr. Bruce is entirely mistaken.—He will find it taught in the very chapter whence his text is taken. (Romans, v. 18, 19,) “ Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.” He will find the Apostles teaching the blessedness of the man to whom the Lord doth not impute sin—but imputeth righteousness without works. He will find them teaching, That Jesus Christ, who knew no sin, was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.



The same doctrine he will find taught in many other parts of the sacred volume. But, mark the gross misrepresentation of the doctrine. "By this accumulation of imputed sin," says the Doctor, "Christ became hateful to his heavenly Father." No such thing. He was never more the object of the Father's love, than when he was suffering on the cross. All that divines mean, when they say that he suffered the wrath of God, is, that he suffered the penalty of the broken covenant, which was a manifestation of the wrath of God against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men. But the Doctor observes still farther, that if the guilt of our sins were literally laid on Christ, he could not be a lamb without spot and blameless. Were Dr. B. acquainted with the principles he opposes, he would know, that there is a distinction between the *act* of sin, the *pollution* of sin, and the *guilt* of sin. He would know, that the *act* of sin is not imputed to Christ, so as to constitute him a *sinner*. The rash expressions of Luther, mentioned in the appendix, are, I believe, condemned by all Calvinists, as well as by Dr. B.—Calvinists abhor the idea, that Jesus Christ was a *sinner*; and much more that he was the *greatest of all sinners*. Neither was the *stain* or *pollution* of sin imputed to Jesus Christ. By pollution, I mean the depravity or corruption of the human heart. This depravity or corruption was not imputed to Jesus Christ. By imputation he was not constituted a depraved and corrupt being. Such ideas, though imputed to us by Dr. B., we spurn as blasphemous. Neither the *act* of sin was imputed to Christ, nor the *pollution* of sin, the corruption of nature. What then was imputed? I answer, the **GUILT** of sin, or the **LEGAL OBLIGATION TO PUNISHMENT**. This is all that was imputed to the Redeemer. By his own voluntary engagement he came under that legal obligation to punishment, which we had incurred by violating the divine law. He voluntarily submitted to the stroke of divine justice—was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities. All this he did without contracting the slightest stain of moral defilement. He still continued a lamb without spot and blameless. So far was the Redeemer from contracting any stain of moral defilement, that, as man, he was *sanctified*, and *made perfect* through sufferings.

Nor does the doctrine of imputed sin and imputed righteousness imply, as the Doctor asserts, "that man was rendered pure and innocent by laying his sins upon Christ."

**This assertion betrays a strange confusion of ideas. It confounds justification with sanctification. The imputation of a man's sins to Christ, changes his *state*, but not his *nature*. It frees him from *condemnation*, and exempts him from punishment ; but does not render him *pure* and *holy*. This is the work of the Spirit of God. This is done in *sanctification*.**

#### SECTION IV.

##### *Objections answered.*

##### OBJECTION I.

*That the innocent should suffer for the guilty, is contrary to justice.*

This is one of the most common, and indeed the most plausible, objections against the atonement. In urging it our author reasons thus : “ If penal justice must be satisfied, it can only be by the punishment of the offender. It can never be satisfied by one person's dying for another. That would be the height of injustice, if required by the legislator ; and, if he should accept of the voluntary death of the innocent, this would be more inconsistent with justice, than simply to pardon the guilty, without any compensation at all ; for, in this case, justice would be violated in two ways ; first, by remitting the punishment of the guilty ; and next, by inflicting it on the innocent.” Again : (p. 239) “ Some of our own species have taken delight in cruelty ; but they are universally considered as objects of detestation and abhorrence, Nero's putting an innocent person to death, instead of a criminal, would have had no effect in redeeming his character. But to torment and sacrifice an innocent and virtuous victim, from a notion, that a crime having been committed, some person must suffer ; and the more dignified and meritorious, so much the better for answering the ends of justice ; or to punish his dear and dutiful son, because he was exasperated against his rebellious subjects, whom he pardoned ; and all this, to satisfy his vengeance, and appease his wrath ; these are enormities, of which we could never suspect the most capricious tyrant.”

In reply to all such reasoning, or rather declamation, I would say—*The cases are not parallel.* What would be

unjust and cruel with regard to a mere man, was not so with regard to the Redeemer. Here is the fallacy. No mere man is master of his own life ; he has, therefore no right to lay it down when he pleases. His death might be a loss to himself—to his family—to his friends—to the church and to the commonwealth. The case was quite different with regard to the Redeemer.—His life was his own. He had power to lay it down, and he had power to take it up again. His death was an injury to none. It was no injury to *himself* ; for the laying down of his life was perfectly voluntary, and he resumed it again ; which no mere man could do—he resumed it with an immense increase of happiness. His death was no loss to *others* ; but infinite gain. Not to mention the redemption of souls by his blood, having resumed his life, he is employed in dispensing to the universe the inestimable benefits of his infinitely wise and benevolent administration. When, among men, the innocent suffers for the guilty, besides the loss sustained, a positive injury is done—the criminal is let loose on society to perpetrate new crimes. This, I grant, would be an act of injustice. The case, however, is very different with regard to the atonement. No injury is done, either negative or positive. The guilty person is not let loose to perpetrate new crimes. On the contrary, provision is made for his complete reformation.—Those who are redeemed by the blood, are also sanctified by the spirit, of the blessed Redeemer. (1 Cor. vi. 11), “ And such were some of you : but ye are washed ; but ye are sanctified ; but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the spirit of our God.” Jesus Christ gave himself for us—not that we might perpetrate new crimes, but—“ that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify to himself a people zealous of good works.” Why then should Dr B. misrepresent and calumniate the doctrine of the atonement ?—why should he attempt to bring an odium upon it by such foul aspersions as the following ? (p. 234) “ His displeasure at sin, it seems, is best shown by forgiving the sinner without amendment or compensation from him.”—The advocates of the atonement teach no such doctrine. The Scriptures of truth teach no such doctrine. The doctrine of the atonement gives no encouragement to sin ; but lays a foundation for universal holiness. It leads not to presumption, but inspires with reverence and godly fear. (Psal. cxxx. 4), “ But there is forgiveness (*a propitiation*) with thee, *that thou*



**"mayest be feared."** The person, who is justified freely by grace, through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, exclaims with indignation, Shall I continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid! Between the atonement and regeneration there is an inseparable connexion. Those who receive the one are the subjects of the other. They are regenerated, not merely by water in baptism—the only regeneration which Dr. B. acknowledges—but by "the re-  
 "newing of the Holy Ghost." They are "new creatures,  
 "created anew in Christ Jesus unto good works."

From the above observations, it is abundantly evident, that the innocent suffering for the guilty among men—and Jesus Christ suffering, the just for the unjust, are cases not at all parallel. The innocent person among men who suffers for the guilty, does an injury to himself—or to his family—or to the church—or to the state—or, perhaps, to *all these*. He also injures the community by encouraging criminals to perpetrate new crimes. But, as we have seen above, the very reverse is the case with regard to the atonement. No injury is done; but infinite good accrues. Let no person, therefore, presume to say, that the doctrine of the atonement is *unreasonable*. Let none presume to affirm, that it is *unjust* or *cruel*. Let none deceive themselves, nor attempt to deceive others, by instituting comparisons which will not hold, and by confounding cases which are *totally different*.

Whilst Socinian and Arian writers inveigh with great vehemence against the doctrine of the atonement, alleging, that the idea of the innocent suffering for the guilty involves in it the greatest injustice and cruelty; they unfortunately forget, that all their invectives may be retorted—that they rebound upon themselves with accumulated force. They seem to forget that, according to their own views, as well as according to ours, the innocent suffered for the guilty. They grant that Jesus was innocent,\* and that he suffered, not for himself, but for the benefit of sinners. We must *all* grant, that in the death of Jesus we have an instance of the innocent suffering for the guilty. We differ, however, in this—*They* say, that the innocent suffered for the guilty

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\* A few Unitarians—thank God, only a few—have arrived at such a degree of impiety, as to call in question the innocence of our blessed Redeemer!

to obtain a *smaller* good, whilst *we* say, that the innocent suffered for the guilty to obtain a *greater* good. *Socinians* say, that he died to set us an example, and to confirm his doctrines. *Arians* say, that in addition to this, he obtained from the Father, as a reward of his sufferings, the power of forgiving sins to the penitent. *We* say, that in addition to all these things, *he died in our room, as our substitute*—that he suffered the penalty of the law, which we must have suffered, and thus redeemed us by his blood. Now, if there be any absurdity in supposing, that the innocent Jesus suffered for the guilty to obtain a good *infinitely great*; it must be immensely *more* absurd to suppose that he suffered to obtain a good comparatively *small and inconsiderable*. If, in the innocent suffering for the guilty, there be any injustice or cruelty, the Socinian and Arian schemes must be *most unjust and cruel*.\*

## OBJECTION II.

*As it was only the human nature of the Redeemer that suffered, his atonement cannot be infinitely valuable.*—“Neither,” says the Doctor, could the sufferings of Christ be infinite. Their duration was temporary, and many individuals may have been exposed to greater torments: whereas the pains of hell, for which they were to serve as an equivalent, are supposed to be eternal, and the sufferers innumerable. Besides, his human nature, which alone is said to have suffered, was not infinite.” In this paragraph our author falls into his usual sophism, “*ignorantia elenchi*,” or a mistake of the question. He denies that the sufferings of Christ could be infinite, and *proves* that they could not. But why deny what nobody affirms, or why prove what nobody denies. Surely such trifling is quite beneath the dignity of the learned Doctor. We do not maintain, that the sufferings of the Redeemer were infinite; but we maintain, that they were of *infinite value*—we maintain, they were *infinitely meritorious*—we maintain, that though these sufferings were only temporary, they were fully equivalent to the eternal torments of the whole human family. This we maintain upon the principle, that though the *nature* which suffered was finite, the *person* that suffer-

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\* This argument is well managed by Wardlaw on the Socinian controversy.

ed was infinite—though the nature that suffered was human, the person was Divine. It was not Sir Isaac Newton's soul that died ; and yet it was his soul that rendered his death immensely more interesting than that of a peasant. Upon the same principle, it was not the divine nature of Jesus that suffered ; but it was his divine nature that rendered his sufferings and death infinitely interesting and meritorious.

We do not maintain that the sufferings of Christ were infinite ; but we maintain that they were immensely greater than can be accounted for, either on Socinian or Arian principles. If our blessed Redeemer did not suffer as our substitute, why did he offer up strong cries with tears ?—why was he amazed and exceeding sorrowful ?—sorrowful even unto death ?—why was he in an agony, and his sweat as great drops of blood ? If he was not at that time suffering the wrath of God ; or, in other words, the penalty of the broken covenant—if Jehovah was not then bruising him, putting him to grief, and making his soul an offering for sin, what account can be given of such circumstances ? they are utterly unaccountable—nay, such circumstances would have betrayed a timidity quite unworthy of the meanest martyr. If we adopt the Socinian or Arian hypothesis, we must admit the blasphemous conclusion, *that many a martyr displayed more fortitude than our blessed Redeemer.*

### OBJECTION III.

Another objection to the doctrine of the Atonement is stated thus : (p. 233) “ Lastly, to complete the climax of “ absurdity, the sufferer, in this case, is thought to be the “ same in essence and substance, coessential and consub- “ stantial with the sovereign himself. If Jesus and the “ Father be literally and identically one, he sacrificed him- “ self to himself, and accepted of his own sufferings as an “ atonement to himself ; while the real criminals were ex- “ empted from punishment, relieved from guilt, and re- “ warded with high privileges and blessings, without faith, “ repentance, or reformation.” In reply to this objection, I would observe, that Jesus Christ did not make the atonement in the same character in which he received it. He made the atonement in the character of *Mediator* ; but accepted it in the character of *God*. As a *gracious sovereign* he offered his human nature a vicarious sacrifice ; which



sacrifice, as a *lawgiver and judge*, he accepted in the room of guilty sinners. The same person may, in the character of a friend, pay a debt, and in the character of a judge, discharge the debtor. In this I see no absurdity at all, but a wonderful display of grace and condescension. The remaining part of the objection, that the real criminals are exempted from punishment, relieved from guilt, and rewarded with high privileges and blessings, without faith, repentance, or reformation, deserves no reply. I shall not call it a calumny or a falsehood: I shall only rank it amongst the almost infinite number of mistakes and misstatements which the Doctor has made, in consequence of his ignorance of the principles which he opposes. I regret much, that Doctor Millar, of Armagh, in animadverting on the passage under consideration, has joined with Doctor B. in an unjust and ungenerous attempt, to roll upon the Calvinistic system the principal odium of the above foul misrepresentation. "The Calvinist," says he, "does indeed teach, that the salvation of men is arbitrary, irrespective, and unconditional; and so he may be charged with holding, that faith, repentance, and reformation, are not conditions of salvation, however he may maintain, that by the influence of the grace of God they always follow election." I ask Doctor Millar—Does the Calvinist teach what Doctor B. has asserted?—Does he teach, that the criminal is exempted from punishment without faith? No. He teaches, that he who believes not shall be damned. Does the Calvinist teach that the criminal is relieved from guilt without faith? No: he teaches the very reverse. He teaches, that we are justified by faith—that in order of nature faith precedes justification—that in order of nature, faith precedes relief from guilt—that the criminal can never be relieved from guilt till he has first believed—that he who believes not is condemned already. Does the Calvinist believe in irrespective salvation, as Doctor Millar asserts. He believes in no such thing. He knows of no salvation irrespective of faith, repentance, and reformation. May the Calvinist "be fairly charged with holding that faith, repentance, and reformation, are not conditions of salvation." Though Doctor B. has charged him, he cannot be *fairly* charged, with holding any such doctrine. He holds that faith, repentance and reformation *are* conditions of salvation—not *meritorious* conditions indeed; but conditions *sine qua non—indispensable* conditions—conditions which

he is able to perform, not by the self-determining power of his own will, but by the omnipotent influence of the blessed Spirit of all grace. He holds that none can be saved without repentance—that none can be saved without reformation—a complete and entire reformation—a reformation which involves a new birth or regeneration—not a mere *baptism* regeneration ; but the renewing of the Holy Ghost, in which old things pass away, and all things become new. I say again, that I greatly regret to find a divine of the learning and talents of Doctor Millar, in a treatise expressly written against Arianism, joining issue with an Arian Doctor in misrepresenting Calvinism, though his own creed—as I shall afterwards show—is undoubtedly Calvinistic.

#### OBJECTION IV.

Our author contends, *that the doctrine of atonement is inconsistent with the freedom of pardon.* The Apostle, however, is of a different opinion. He assures us, that we are “justified *freely* by grace, *through the redemption* “ which is in Christ Jesus, whom God hath set forth to be a “ *propitiation* through faith in his blood.” It was the free grace of God that provided a Saviour, and though the pardon of sin cost the Redeemer dear, it is dispensed to us *freely*, without money and without price. Our sins are not to be regarded as a pecuniary, but as a criminal debt. Our creditor was not obliged to accept of payment from the surety, but might have demanded it from the original debtors. To provide such a surety, and to accept of such payment, was an astonishing display of *rich, free, and sovereign grace.*

#### SECTION V.

##### *Of the moral tendency of the Atonement.*

Our author very properly observes, *that we should prefer those views of religion, which are most conducive to good morals.* On this ground, the doctrine of the atonement is greatly preferable to the unscriptural views of Anti-trinitarians. Anti-trinitarian views are hostile to morality in two respects. 1, In reference to the law. 2, In reference to sin.

1. Anti-trinitarians have mean ideas of the moral law. They think that it may be violated with impunity—that, though

God has attached a penalty to the violation of his law, he is not bound to inflict that penalty ; but may pardon sin without a satisfaction. Such ideas of the law of God have a direct tendency towards vice and immorality. What doctrine can be more favourable to vice ?—What doctrine can be more hostile to virtue, than the doctrine which teaches, that vice may pass with impunity, and that sin may be pardoned without a satisfaction ? The enemies of the atonement are enemies of the moral law, and, therefore, enemies to morality. Though constantly declaiming in favour of moral virtue, they sap the very foundations of morality, by bringing into contempt the moral law of God. It is the observation of an eminent English divine, that all errors whatever may be resolved into opposition to the moral law. The doctrine of the atonement is a doctrine according to godliness, and is highly favourable to morality ; for it has its foundation—at least as taught by Calvinists—in the immutability of the divine law\*—it goes upon the principle, that though the heavens and the earth may pass away, yet a jot or a tittle can in no wise pass from the law till all be fulfilled.

2. Anti-trinitarian views are hostile to “good morals,” not only as they lower the standard of morality, and degrade the moral law, but also, as they represent sin as an evil of a comparatively trifling nature. Dr. B. reasons thus :

“ But grant, that Christ died to expiate the sins of the  
 “ world, how can the death of one be an equivalent for  
 “ pardoning the accumulated transgressions of millions, for  
 “ a succession of ages ? To obviate this objection, the  
 “ advocates for satisfaction are driven to a greater excess  
 “ of extravagance. They say, it is true, that the offences  
 “ of mankind were infinite in number and degree ; and  
 “ therefore it was necessary that the satisfaction should be  
 “ infinite ; and accordingly a being of infinite merit and  
 “ excellence was sacrificed, in order to atone for them.  
 “ But, in the first place, the sins of the world were not in-  
 “ finite : for as man is a finite and limited being, so every  
 “ thing pertaining to him is finite and limited ; his existence  
 “ and his powers of doing good or evil ; his virtues and his  
 “ vices. Guilt is, no doubt, aggravated by the relation in

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\* On the moral tendency of the Atonement, Fuller on Systems, and Stevenson on the Atonement, may be perused with great advantage.



“ which we stand to the authority offended, as of a son to  
 “ his father ; but, on this principle, every offence against  
 “ God would be chargeable with infinite atrocity, and  
 “ would require the expiation and atonement of an infinite  
 “ being.”

Arminians agree with Anti-trinitarians in denying the infinite evil of sin. The preceding reasoning, therefore, is applicable not to the Arminian, but only to the Calvinistic view of the atonement. Candour should have induced the Doctor to distinguish. Archbishop Magee (*Atonement*, vol. i. p. 171, writes thus : “ On this subject, Dr. Priestly  
 “ thus represents the arguments of the Orthodox. Sin,  
 “ being an offence against an infinite Being, requires an  
 “ infinite satisfaction, which can only be made by an in-  
 “ finite person ; that is, one who is no less than God him-  
 “ self. Christ, therefore, in order to make this infinite  
 “ satisfaction for the sins of men, must himself be God,  
 “ equal to God the Father. With what candour this has  
 “ been selected, as a specimen of the mode of reasoning,  
 “ by which the doctrine of atonement, as connected with  
 “ that of the divinity of Christ, is maintained by the Estab-  
 “ lished Church, it is needless to remark. That some few  
 “ indeed have thus argued, is certainly to be admitted and  
 “ lamented. But how poorly such men have reasoned, it  
 “ needed not the acuteness of Dr. Priestly to discover.  
 “ On their own principles the reply is obvious—that sin  
 “ being committed by a finite creature, requires only a  
 “ finite satisfaction, for which purpose a finite person might  
 “ be an adequate victim.” With great deference to the  
 Archbishop, I must confess myself one of those “ poor  
 “ reasoners,” who believe that sin is infinite and requires  
 an infinite satisfaction. Nor am I at all convinced of my  
 error, either by the reasoning of Doctor B., or that of the  
 celebrated author just now quoted. The former of these  
 writers reasons thus : “ As man is a finite, and limited  
 “ being, every thing pertaining to him is finite and limited.”  
 This I deny. Is man’s duration finite and limited ? Surely  
 not. His soul is immortal.—Again, if man may be the  
 subject of infinite or eternal misery, may he not, on the  
 same principle, be the subject of infinite guilt ? Though  
 man, therefore, is a finite and limited being, it is not true  
 that every thing pertaining to him is finite and limited. I  
 ask Doctor Bruce—Why may not the sin of a finite being  
 be infinite, as well as his duration, his happiness, or his

misery? Sin is infinite; because committed against an infinite God—because it is the violation of an infinite obligation. Our author himself grants—that “guilt is aggravated by the relation in which we stand to the authority offended, as of a son to his father.” Upon this principle, the more *amiable* the father, the greater our obligation to *love* him—the more *worthy* the father, the greater our obligation to *esteem* him—the greater the *authority* of the father, the greater our obligation to *obey* him. If the father is possessed of *one* degree of amiableness, dignity, and authority, we are under one degree of obligation to love, esteem, and obey him.—If he is possessed of a *thousand* degrees of amiableness, dignity and authority, we are under a thousand degrees of obligation to love, esteem and obey him.—If possessed of *infinite* amiableness, dignity, and authority, we are under *infinite* obligations to love, esteem, and obey him. It follows, of course, that if we violate these infinite obligations, we incur infinite guilt. Who will deny, that we are under infinite obligations to love, esteem, and obey our heavenly Father, and that in violating these obligations our guilt is infinite?

To this reasoning, I know, it has been objected, that if every sin is infinite, all sins must be equal; for nothing can be greater than that which is infinite. But this conclusion does not follow; for one infinite may be greater than another. An infinite surface is greater than an infinite straight line, and an infinite solid than an infinite surface. Or, in other words; an object infinitely long and broad, is greater than one only infinitely long; and an object infinitely long, broad, and deep, is greater than one that is only infinitely long and broad. All objects infinitely long are equal in that dimension, *length*; but they may differ widely in other dimensions: so all sins, though equal in this one aggravation of being committed against an infinite God, may nevertheless be very different in respect of other aggravations. “Some sins, in themselves,” says our Westminster divines, “and by reason of several aggravations, are more heinous in the sight of God than others.” And again: “Every sin deserves God’s wrath and curse, both in this life, and in that which is to come,”\*

Can Dr. B. resist the force of the preceding reasoning?

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\* These principles have been ably, I had almost said mathematically, demonstrated by President Edwards.

**He CANNOT.** It is true, he considers it highly absurd; but it is no less true, that he fully admits it! *In the very act of opposing it*, he fully admits it! He admits the premises, that “guilt is aggravated by the relation in which we stand to the authority offended;” and he admits the conclusion, that “on this principle, every offence against God would be chargeable with infinite atrocity, and would require the expiation and atonement of an infinite being.” Now, this is all we contend for. The highest Calvinist can ask no more. I am quite aware, indeed, that such an admission is a flat contradiction to what the Doctor is endeavouring to prove. He is endeavouring to prove, that sin is NOT infinite; and that it does not require an infinite satisfaction: and yet he fully admits the *very reverse*. How powerful is truth! How inconsistent and contradictory is error! Archbishop Magee grants, that from the Divinity of Christ we may infer “the great heinousness of human guilt, for the expiation of which it was deemed fit, that so great a Being should suffer.” But why not infer *infinite* guilt?—Would God, who does nothing in vain, apply an infinite remedy to a finite disease?—Would this be fit? Would this be proper? An infinite atonement to expiate finite guilt, in my humble apprehension—

“ Resembles ocean into tempest wrought,  
 “ To waft a feather, or to drown a fly.”

From the infinite value of the atonement we may surely infer the infinity of sin. Calvinists—I speak of them in general, for some individuals do not contend for the infinity of sin—Calvinists see more atrocity in one single sin, than Socinians, or Arians, or even Arminians, see in all the sins of all mankind! Sin, according to Socinian and Arian views, is comparatively nothing—an evil of a very trifling nature—a kind of cutaneous disease, that does not require any powerful remedy. According to Calvinistic views, sin is a disease of an inveterate, malignant, and alarming nature—a disease which no medicine can cure, but only the healing balm of the Redeemer’s blood. I appeal now to the candid reader—Which of the two systems is more favourable to morality? that which represents sin as a comparatively trifling evil? or that which regards it as infinitely malignant and atrocious? Surely no person possessed of the slightest degree of candour, can hesitate for a moment to pronounce that system most favourable to morality, which



regards sin as the greatest evil. Still farther, we may observe ; as the friends of the atonement conceive themselves infinitely deeper in debt, than its enemies do ; so they conceive that God forgives them infinitely more ; will they not therefore *love* more ? In proportion as Socinians and Arians see little need of a Saviour, in the same proportion they will feel themselves under little obligation, of course they will love but little ; and, as love is the fulfilling of the law, their obedience will be proportionally defective. It is, therefore, demonstratively evident, that the doctrine of the atonement is a doctrine according to godliness ; and that it is incomparably more favourable to good morals, than the Socinian or Arian hypothesis.

## SECTION VI.

### *Extent of the Atonement.*

With Dr. Bruce, I fully agree in reprobating that illiberality which confines the benefits of redemption to those who are baptised—or to those who belong to a particular church, sect, or party. In common with all Calvinists, I firmly believe in the sufficiency of the atonement. I believe that the blood of my Redeemer is of infinite value, and sufficient to save the whole human family—But the question is, Was it so *designed* ? Did God *design* to save all mankind by the death of his Son ?—Did Jesus Christ *design* to save all mankind by laying down his life ? Arminians, as well as Socinians and Arians, answer these questions in the *affirmative*.—Calvinists answer them in the *negative*. To suppose, that God *designed* to save all mankind, and yet, that all mankind *will not be saved*, appears to me absurd, I had almost said, *blasphemous*. To me it appears self-evident, that God's designs can never be frustrated—that his intentions can never be disappointed. If he designed that all should be saved, all *would* be saved ; for, “ who hath resisted his will ? ” If he designed that all should be saved, and yet all are not saved, then the divine design is frustrated, and the Divine Being is unhappy ! Every being must be unhappy in proportion as his designs are frustrated, and his intentions disappointed. In proportion to the greatness of the designer, and the grandeur of his designs, must be the greatness of his disappointment and mortification, if he fail in the accomplishment. Now, as God is an infinite

Being, and the design of saving souls is an infinite design, in the loss of every soul the Divine Being must feel infinite disappointment and mortification. In a word; *he must be infinitely miserable!!!* Such is the blasphemous but unavoidable consequence of maintaining, that God designed to save all mankind by Jesus Christ; or that Christ shed his blood with an intention to save the whole human family.\*

The Arminian doctrine of a universal atonement is clogged with a variety of other absurdities. If it is absurd to suppose, that God sent his Son to do that which he previously knew would never be done; and, that Jesus Christ shed his blood to accomplish that which he previously knew would never be accomplished, is it not equally absurd to suppose, that the same debt should be twice exacted, first from the sinner and then from the surety?—that Jesus Christ should suffer on the cross for the redemption of those who were at that very moment suffering the vengeance of eternal fire! Is it not equally absurd to suppose, that Jesus Christ would shed his blood for the whole human family, and yet would refuse to pray for them? (John xvii. 9,) “I pray for them; I pray not for the world, but for those whom thou has given me out of the world.” The Scriptures teach no such absurdities. They teach, that Christ laid down his life for the *sheep*; but they no where assert, that he died for the *goats*. They teach, that he died to gather together in one, the *children of God*, which were scattered abroad; and that he died for his *church*. (Eph. v. 25,) “Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the Church, and gave himself for it.” If the love of Jesus Christ in dying for his church was not *peculiar* and *discriminating*, it would not be a proper object of imitation for

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\* At a Missionary meeting, I once heard a very sensible Arminian addressing a large audience, on the propriety of prayer for the conversion of the heathen. Reasoning from that beautiful promise made to the Redeemer, “He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied,” he said, with great earnestness and emphasis, “*And he will not be satisfied: he will not be content, while there is one soul that is not brought home to himself.*” Had not the impropriety of disturbing the harmony of such a meeting prevented me, I would have immediately added; “Then the Redeemer *never will be satisfied!—he never will be content!—he must be for ever miserable!*” If the Redeemer will never be satisfied nor content, till every individual of the human family is saved; and if every individual will *never* be saved;—the conclusion is inevitable—*that the Redeemer will never be satisfied nor content!* Let any Arminian show, if he be able, that the doctrine of universal atonement does not lead to such blasphemous conclusions.

husbands. The doctrine of a definite atonement, or particular redemption, might be established by a multitude of other arguments, deduced both from Scripture and reason. To a mind unprejudiced, and capable of reasoning, the preceding, I hope, will be found satisfactory.

I am perfectly aware, that a multitude of Scriptures *seem* to favour the opposite doctrine. I know it is written that Christ died for *all*—for the *world*—the *whole world*—and *every man*. Every attentive reader of the Bible must, however, be sensible, that such terms are frequently used in a limited sense. We read that all the world wondered after the beast, while, at the same time, there were with the lamb one hundred and forty-four thousand. John declared that the whole world was lying in wickedness, when thousands were converted to the faith of the Gospel. Our Saviour himself declared, that, from the days of John the Baptist, the kingdom of God was preached, and every man was pressing into it: when, in fact, the far greater part of the human family had never heard of the kingdom of God. Multitudes of similar instances might be adduced to show, that there is nothing more common in Scripture, than the words *all, every, world, whole world, &c.* taken in a limited acceptation. But it may be asked—If Christ died only for the elect, why were such universal terms employed in reference to his death? I answer, to correct the prejudices of the Jews, who foolishly confined salvation to themselves. “He is the propitiation for our sins,” says the Apostle John, “and not for *ours* only, but also for the sins of the *whole world*”—that is, He is the propitiation for the sins, not only of us Jews, but also of the Gentiles—of all his sheep through the whole world. That these universal terms are not to be taken in their most extensive signification, is evident, not only from the reasons mentioned above; but also from this, that though the most extensive terms are used in English, yet not in the original Greek. The word *πᾶσιν*, in Greek, signifies every individual; and *ἅπας* and *ὅμντας*, signify all collectively; but none of these most extensive terms are ever applied to the death of Christ. It may however, be still further asked, If Christ did not die for all indiscriminately, why is salvation offered indiscriminately to all? Why does God offer salvation to all, if he never designed that all should be saved? Is not this to tantalize the creature? Does it not argue insincerity in God? This objection is, at first sight, plausible; but it



may be retorted thus : If God foreknew from all eternity those who would reject salvation through Jesus Christ, why does he offer them salvation ? Why does he invite those that he previously knew would reject the invitation ? Does not this argue insincerity in God ? Let the Arminian, the Socinian, or the Arian, show me, that it does not argue insincerity in God to offer salvation to the man that he previously knew would reject it, and I will show him, that it does not argue insincerity in God to offer salvation to the man whom he never designed to save. Thus the objection might be retorted. The difficulty arising from apparent insincerity in God, is common to all systems of divinity. The Socinian, the Arian, the Arminian, and the Calvinist, are all equally concerned to solve it. My views of this difficult subject, I shall endeavour to explain by the following illustration.

In the late French revolutionary war, the *Sans Culotte*, in an engagement with the English, was sunk. Her crew refused to accept of quarter. They went down with shouts of *Vive la Republique !* Supposing that the English admiral had picked up a certain number of the drowning French, and saved their lives. Supposing, moreover, that he had sent out a boat, and offered to save the rest, knowing, at the same time, that they would reject his generous offer—Could such an admiral be justly charged with insincerity ? His design in sending out the boat, it is true, was not to save them ; for he knew they would not accept of salvation ; but his design was to exhibit to all the clemency of the English, and, at the same time, the horrid infatuation and implacable enmity of the French. If the obstinacy of the French was so great, and their enmity against the English so inveterate, that they would rather drown than be indebted to British clemency, would not every person say, that they deserved their fate—that their blood was upon their own heads ? In this case, those who were saved, were wholly indebted for their salvation to the gracious clemency of the British admiral ; and those who were drowned had no apology to plead ; the admiral offered his clemency, but they basely and ungratefully despised and rejected it. They deserved to die, for they chose death rather than life. Such is the situation of sinners drowning in a deluge of wrath. Life and salvation are offered to all indiscriminately ; and all are disposed to treat the offer with contempt. Such is the enmity of the human heart against God, and his law,

and his Son, that none would come to the Redeemer for life—all would despise and reject the life-boat of salvation. But God, in his infinite mercy and grace, destroys the enmity of some, bends their stubborn wills by the influence of his Spirit, and makes them willing in the day of his power—willing to accept of salvation freely, without money and without price. The rest perish, not because they are reprobates—not because Christ did not die for them : but because they are sinners—because they are rebels—because they will not lay down their arms—they will not be reconciled to God—they will not come to his Son, that they may have life. When a drowning man is offered a boat, if, instead of embracing the offer, he should cavil and dispute about the design of the offerer, would he not be regarded as insane ? Undoubtedly he would. How much greater the folly and madness of sinners, who, instead of accepting salvation through Jesus Christ, as it is freely offered to them in the Gospel, stand cavilling at the decrees of God, and the particularity of redemption—curiously prying into the secret counsels of the Almighty, and foolishly inquiring, whether God, by sending his Son, intended *their* salvation, or whether Jesus Christ shed his blood for *them* ! Oh the stupidity and infatuation of men !

The ministers of Jesus should offer the Gospel indiscriminately to all. They should address rebels in the language of the apostle ; (2 Cor. v. 20,) “ We are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us ; we pray you in Christ’s stead, be ye reconciled to God.” Whilst, in thoughts that breathe, and words that burn, they call, invite, and exhort, they should at the same time fervently pray, that the Gospel may come, not in word only, but in power—that, by the blessed agency of the Divine Spirit, it may happily prove the power of God, and the wisdom of God unto salvation.

## CHAPTER VI.

*Original Sin.*

THE Calvinistic doctrine of original sin, our author attacks in his tenth sermon. In entering on this important subject, he abandons his "*sure guide*,"\* and contradicts himself. He asserts (p. 45,) that if any doctrine is not plainly declared in every one of the four Evangelists, we may be assured, that "*it is not even an important truth.*" In the commencement of this sermon he assures us, that the doctrine of original sin is not to be found in any of the Gospels, for our Saviour, he maintains, has not said one word about it: yet, strange to tell, he nevertheless grants, that "*it may be an important truth.*" In the one page he asserts, that it is not even an important truth; in the other he admits, that such a doctrine *may be an important truth.* This is Dr. B. *versus* Dr. B. ! It is a trite observation, that "*sometimes second thoughts are best.*" In this instance the proverb is verified. I am glad to find our author recanting—giving up a canon so unscriptural, so unreasonable, and at last candidly admitting, that a doctrine, though not contained in all the Evangelists, may nevertheless be an important truth; and particularly, that the doctrine of original sin may be an important truth. How glad should I be to find him admitting, not only that it may be, but that it actually is, an important truth. This instance, I am sorry to say, is not the only one calculated to show, that the Doctor passed too high a eulogium on his volume of sermons, when, in his preface, he pronounced it "*consistent with itself and the Gospel.*"

In the introduction to his sermon on original sin, the Doctor has not only contradicted *himself*, he has also contradicted *matter of fact*. He asserts, that "*the advocates of the popular notion of original sin do not pretend to appeal to any of our Lord's discourses in favour of their*

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\* If Dr. B. has not sufficient faith to follow his own "*sure guide*," how can he expect the first Presbyterian Congregation in Belfast to follow it?



“opinion.” Now this assertion is the very reverse of the fact. The fact is, that the advocates of the popular notion of original sin *do appeal* to our Lord’s discourses. They appeal to his discourse to Nicodemus, “That which is born of the flesh, is flesh.” The very first doctrines which our blessed Lord taught Nicodemus, were those which Dr. B. rejects—the *doctrines of original sin and regeneration*. Our Saviour taught that we are born, not only *depraved*, but *totally* depraved, not only *fleshly*, but *flesh itself*. He taught, that such is our natural state of depravity, that “Except a man (is any one, man, woman, or child) be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.”

To account for the origin of evil, is one of the most difficult problems in divinity. No view of the subject, perfectly free from difficulties, has, as yet, been exhibited to the world. The account given in the sacred volume is brief; and from it have been formed a variety of opinions. These may be all reduced to three—1, That by Adam’s fall we are both depraved and guilty. 2, That by Adam’s fall we are only depraved, but *not* guilty. 3, That by Adam’s fall we are *neither depraved nor guilty*.

The first of these opinions is that of the Calvinists.—That we are all guilty of Adam’s first sin, they prove from various texts of Scripture; but particularly from the fifth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, from the twelfth to the nineteenth verse inclusive. In this portion of Scripture we are assured, that by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all (σφ’ ω in whom) all have sinned—that by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation—and that by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners. The penalty attached to Adam’s disobedience was death: “In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.” This penalty was inflicted, not only on Adam, but on his posterity. Now Calvinists infer—and I think justly—that if Adam’s posterity had not been involved in his guilt, they would not have been involved in his punishment—in the penalty attached to his disobedience.—Doctor Bruce maintains, that this penalty was only temporal death; but that it included eternal death is evident from the words of the Apostle: “The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” Now, if that life which is the gift of God through Jesus Christ is

eternal life, the antithesis shows, that that death which is the wages of sin must be *eternal death*.\*

If, therefore, we believe the sacred oracles rather than Dr. B., we will believe, that, in consequence of Adam's sin, his posterity are not only exposed to *temporal* death, but death *eternal*; and that they are also *spiritually* dead—"alienated from the life of God—dead in trespasses and sins." This spiritual death, or depravity of nature, is every where taught in the sacred volume. That God made man upright, is a dictate both of Scripture and reason. The Scriptures assure us, that the Deity created Adam in his own image and after his own likeness. Having lost this moral image, he could not transmit it to his posterity. Accordingly we read, that Adam begat a son in his own image; and the Apostle assures us, that we have born the image of the earthly Adam. "What is man, that he should be clean; and he that is born of a woman, that he should be righteous? Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one." David acquiesced in this doctrine when he exclaimed, "Behold I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me!" That this depravity is universal, is abundantly taught in the sacred volume, particularly in the Epistle to the Romans, third chapter, from the tenth verse: "There is none righteous, no *not one*; there is none that understandeth: there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one.—Every mouth must be stopped, and all the world be found guilty before God." Against such descriptions Dr. B. cautions his hearers thus: "You are not to be deluded by general descriptions of the depravity of the world; for those passages do not apply to every

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\* Mr. M'Affee says, that by quoting this text in my defence of creeds and confessions, I have made a grand mistake; for the Apostle was not speaking there of the penalty of the Adamic covenant, but of that annexed to the covenant of grace.—If Mr. M'Affee be open to conviction, he may at once be convinced, that the grand mistake is made, not by me, but by himself.—he may be convinced of this by comparing the text in question with the last verse of the preceding chapter. "That as sin hath reigned unto death; even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord." This text is exactly parallel with the former, and the Apostle is undeniably treating of the penalty of the Adamic covenant. Many a grand mistake is made by neglecting to compare Scripture with Scripture.

“individual, but to the general corruption of mankind.” The Apostle assures us, that the corruption is universal. The Doctor assures us, that it is not universal. The Apostle assures us, that there is not *one solitary exception, none, none, none, none, no not one, no not one*: but, in the face of all this, the Doctor assures us, that there *are* exceptions, and that such “passages do *not* apply to every individual, but to the general corruption of mankind.” Reader of this treatise! believest thou the Prophets? Believest thou the Apostles? I know that thou believest. Learned divines may delude thee; but the Deity never can!

Such is the Calvinistic doctrine relative to the fall of Adam, and the effects of that fall upon his posterity, and such appears to be the scriptural account of that mournful, and all important event. Calvinists do not pretend to be able to assign all the reasons which influenced the divine mind in connecting so intimately the fate of Adam with that of his posterity. We see, however, something very similar in the connexion of one generation with another. The virtues and the vices, the happiness and miseries of men, we plainly see, are greatly influenced by previous connexions and relations—by ten thousand adventitious circumstances—circumstances over which they themselves had no control. Who would deny that such connexions, relations, and circumstances, have a powerful influence on human conduct; and yet we all acknowledge—for our own consciousness proves it—that man is a free and an accountable agent. The placing of Adam at the head of our family, as our representative, was a constitution, which, viewed abstractly, appears characterised both by wisdom and goodness.—Adam was much better qualified to stand for us, as our representative, than we would have been to stand for ourselves. We come into the world children; our appetites and passions get the start of our reason and consciences, and hurry us into vice before these higher powers of our nature have acquired sufficient energy to keep them in check. On this single principle alone, some have endeavoured to account for the universality of human guilt. This, however, was not the case with Adam. His appetites and passions did not get the start of his reason and conscience; for he was created not a *child*, but a *man*. In this respect it cannot be denied, that Adam was much better qualified to stand representative for his posterity, than each to stand personally for himself. Besides; Adam saw himself at the head of a nume-



rous family, whose happiness or misery was suspended on his good or bad management. If this motive has a powerful influence on men now depraved, and sometimes even on the most depraved of men—if it sometimes proves effectual to reform the rake and reclaim the prodigal—how much more powerfully was it calculated to operate on the mind of innocent Adam in preserving him in a state of persevering obedience? In this respect again, federal representation appears greatly preferable to personal responsibility.\*

*Upon the whole*; our opponents may pour forth torrents of declamation and invective against the federal representation of Adam; but, on the abstract question, Whether federal representation or personal responsibility were, in its own nature, better calculated to secure the happiness of the human family—on this abstract question they have never yet met us, and, I presume never will.

Having thus briefly stated the Calvinistic opinion relative to the *fall* and its effects, we come now to the

SECOND OPINION, which is that of the Arminians. They maintain, that, in consequence of Adam's fall, we are all depraved, but they deny that the guilt of his first sin is imputed to his posterity. To suppose that we are guilty of a sin, committed nearly six thousand years before we were born, involves, I confess, a great difficulty. To get rid of it the Arminians deny the fact.—They say we come into the world *depraved*, but *not guilty*. They deny that we come into the world *guilty*, but they admit that we come into the world so depraved, that as soon as capable of moral agency we *must become guilty*. Now, how does this relieve the difficulty? How does this vindicate the justice of God? Where is the difference whether I come into the world *guilty*, or with such an hereditary taint, that in a very short time I *must become guilty*? Besides: I am quite unable to distinguish between a depraved being and a guilty being. A depraved *innocent* being appears to me a contradiction in terms—as great a contradiction as an honest thief or a white negro. In a word; the Arminian removes the difficulty a little farther off; but affords no manner of relief—gives no solution.

THE THIRD OPINION is that of the Pelagians, Socinians, Arians, &c. They maintain that we come into the world neither guilty nor depraved, but as pure and holy as innocent

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\* These topics are ably illustrated by President Edwards on original sin.

**Adam.** This is the opinion of Dr. B. By thus denying both guilt and depravity, Socinians and Arians vainly imagine that they have completely solved the difficulty; but they deceive themselves, and they deceive their followers. The difficulty is, indeed, removed a little farther out of view; it is, however, nothing *lessened*, but rather *augmented*. Dr. B. admits, that the whole human family sin as soon as they become moral agents. Now, the great question is, Why do men universally run into sin as soon as capable of it? The Doctor answers this question by asking another. "Can it be difficult," says he, "to account for the sinfulness of men at present, surrounded as they are by necessities and pleasures, temptations and discouragements?" So then, we come into the world neither guilty nor depraved; but, nevertheless, as soon as capable of acting, we all become guilty, we all commit sin—we are surrounded with such necessities and pleasures, temptations and discouragements, that we cannot avoid it.—The temptations with which we are surrounded are so powerful, that none have ever been able to resist them! The *Calvinist* tells me, that I came into the world guilty. This is a great difficulty; but the *Arminian* kindly comes forward to relieve me. He tells me that I was not *born* guilty, but that I am so depraved, that in the course of a few years I *must become guilty*. This I regard as very poor comfort indeed! The *Arian*, seeing me still in distress, makes a generous proposal of his kind offices. You come into the world, says he, neither guilty nor depraved; but you come into a world so full of snares and temptations, that there is *no hope of your escape—you must become guilty in a very short time!* Cold comfort indeed!—May I not address the Arminian, the Socinian, and the Arian, in the language of Job to his mistaken friends; "Miserable comforters are ye all?" The *Calvinist* says, Your disease is coeval with your birth. The *Arminian* says, The seeds of disease are in your constitution, and the disease itself must make its appearance at a very early age. The *Arian* says, No; you are born in good health, and of a good sound constitution; but your benevolent Creator, at your very birth, has plunged you into a pest-house, where none have ever escaped the effects of contagion. Alas! then, say I—If I am to die of a disease, what matter whether that disease be coeval with my birth, arise necessarily from a radical defect in my constitution, or be caught by contagion which I cannot avoid? Thus we see,

that the Arminian and the Arian completely fail in removing the difficulty. But this is not all; their hypotheses, so far from casting light on the subject, involve it in difficulties still more embarrassing and insuperable. In commenting on the fifth chapter of the Romans, Dr. B. explains the terms *justify* and *condemn* thus: (p. 194) "As to justify  
 " signifies to make just, to place in the situation of just men  
 " by pardon; so this expression to make sinners is equivalent to condemn, to place men in the situation of sinners.  
 " As a guilty person may be treated as an innocent one, by  
 " being pardoned and received into favour, so an innocent  
 " man may be treated as a criminal and condemned.—The  
 " one situation is expressed in Scripture by being justified  
 " or made righteous, and the other by being made a sinner." Having thus explained, he goes on to comment thus; "For  
 " as by the disobedience of one many were made sinners,  
 " or were treated as sinners, being subject to death by the  
 " sentence of God," &c. From these quotations, it appears, that Dr. B. agrees with the Calvinists in maintaining, that God treats the posterity of Adam as if they were sinners; but he differs from them in this: The Calvinists say, that God treats us as sinners, because we *are sinners*, because we have all *sinned* in our federal representative; but the Doctor affirms, that God treats us as sinners, though we are *perfectly innocent*! The Calvinists say, that God condemns the *guilty* posterity of Adam; but the Doctor affirms, that God condemns Adam's *innocent* posterity!—He condemns to death his own *innocent* offspring!—He condemns them for a crime they *never committed*!—in which they had *no concern*!—of which they were *perfectly innocent*!—Thus the learned Dr. B., in the heat of his zeal against Calvinism, is forced to charge his Maker with that abominable thing which his soul hates—(Prov. xvii. 15),  
 " He that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth  
 " the just, even they both are abomination to the Lord."—Say now, reader, what system is most reasonable?—the system of the Calvinist, who says, God condemns the *guilty*; or that of the Arminian or Arian, who says, God condemns the *innocent*?\*

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\* In explaining the words justify, condemn, &c. the Dr. appears evidently to write without thinking. "In Hebrew," says he, "the simple word, (what simple word?) means to be a sinner. In another form of the verb, (what verb?) to make one a sinner. And it is so



Dr. Bruce quotes and condemns the Westminster Divines' description of original depravity. Dr. Millar, of Armagh, seems to justify our author in rejecting that description. "It is not unnatural," says he, "that an exposition of this doctrine, so strongly and so harshly stated, should dispose any man of mild dispositions to seek another interpretation. Such a temperate statement of this doctrine might have been found in the ninth article of our church." Now, what is the mildness of the ninth article? Let us see. The ninth article states, that original sin is the fault or corruption of every man that naturally is engendered of the offspring of Adam—and that in every person born into the world it deserveth *God's wrath and damnation!* Where now is the mildness? Did ever the *Westminster Divines*, or did ever any *Calvinist* say, that original sin deserves *more* than God's wrath and damnation? But, nevertheless, if we believe Doctor Millar, the doctrine is stated *mildly* by the Church of England. "The article, moreover, is concluded," says he, "with observing that the Apostle doth confess, not rigorously denounce, that this same concupiscence and lust hath of itself the nature of sin, even avoiding to declare that it is sin in a true and proper acceptance of the term." Now, with great respect, permit me to ask the learned Doctor, How does it come to pass, that original sin is not sin in a true and proper acceptance of the term, when, at the same time, it is acknowledged to deserve *God's wrath and damnation?* Let Dr. Millar answer this question if he can. He may defend Arminianism if he please; but, in defending it, he should not quote the thirty-nine articles of the Church of England; particularly, he should not quote the *ninth* article—an article so *highly* Calvinistic.

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"translated throughout the Old testament." Strange! So translated! It is *not* so translated. The very instances adduced by the Doctor to prove that it is so translated, prove that it is *not* so translated. The *first* instance is, "Whom the judges shall condemn." It is not so translated here. His second instance is, "If I justify myself, my own mouth will condemn me." It is not so translated here. His *third* is, "Wilt thou condemn him that is most just." It is not so translated here. It is not so translated in any one of the instances mentioned by the Doctor. In *all* these instances the word is translated, not *to make a sinner*, as our author affirms, but *to condemn*. They all prove, not what they were adduced to prove, but the very reverse—they prove not that the Doctor has *wilfully* violated matter of fact, but they prove that he does not always think when he writes, and that his book is not always consistent, either with itself or the Scriptures.

With regard to the "strong" and "harsh" language of the Westminster Divines, I would only request the candid reader to compare that language with the Scriptures referred to, and then say if the language of Scripture be not fully as harsh as that of the Catechism. After quoting the Divines' description of the sin and misery introduced by the fall, Doctor B. exclaims, "Thus are children initiated into the glad tidings of salvation, and taught to love God and honour all men." The Doctor, no doubt, regarded this sentence as a fine stroke of irony: but did he not know that the disease is one thing, and the remedy another? Did he not know, that the description of our sin and misery is one thing, and "the glad tidings of salvation" are another?—and that teaching "to love God and to honour all men," is another still? Why does he confound things so different? But though these things are so different, and should not be confounded, they are not *opposite*. A description of our sin and misery is no way inconsistent with the glad tidings of salvation: on the contrary, the one presupposes the other. Were we not previously convinced of our sin and misery, the good news of the Gospel would not be regarded as glad tidings at all. The Westminster Divines are not like those unskilful physicians, censured by the Almighty—physicians who heal the wound of the daughter of his people slightly, saying, "Peace, peace, when there is no peace." The Westminster Divines, like skilful surgeons, first probe the wounds of sin, and then apply to them the healing balm of the Redeemer's blood. Doctor B., breaking through his irony, and blending literal with figurative language, alleges that the description of our original sin, depravity, and misery, given by the Westminster Divines, is calculated to counteract the affectionate invitation of their gracious Lord, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven." Now, I confess myself utterly at a loss to know, how such a description can possibly counteract such an invitation. The greater the depravity and guilt of children, the greater necessity, I should think, to bring them to Jesus Christ the Saviour. On the contrary; if they have no depravity nor guilt at all, what necessity to bring them at all? A Socinian or Arian might reason thus: Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners: but my child is no sinner; and therefore Jesus Christ did not come into the world to save it; consequently, I need not bring it to Jesus Christ!

**Again : Jesus Christ came to seek and save that which was lost : but my child is not lost ; therefore Jesus Christ did not come to save it ; consequently, I need not bring it to Jesus Christ ! Once more : Jesus Christ came to save from the wrath to come : but my child is not a child of wrath ; therefore, Jesus Christ did not come to save it ; and consequently, I need not bring it to Jesus Christ ! I will not suffer my little children to come to the Redeemer. I see no need. They are not sick ; and therefore have no need of Jesus as a physician ! They are not sinners ; and therefore have no need of Jesus as a Saviour ! They are not defiled ; and therefore have no need of the fountain opened for sin and uncleanness ! In a word ; the little children of Socinians and Arians will require a separate apartment in heaven ; for they cannot join the general assembly in their song of praise—" Unto him " that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own " blood—to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. " Amen."**

Doctor B. asserts, that the little children brought to our Saviour, were the children of Pagans or Jews, neither baptized nor converted. How does he know this ? He does not know it at all. The probability is, that the facts were the very reverse of his statement. It is quite improbable that the children were Pagans, for the Redeemer was preaching the Gospel, not to Pagans, but to Jews in the coast of Judea beyond the Jordan. That the children were not baptized, is equally improbable. It is in the highest degree probable, that the parents were believing Jews. Had they been unbelievers, they would not have brought their children to the Redeemer to receive a blessing. It is also highly probable that the children were previously baptized. The very first ordinance to which believing parents would naturally bring their children, would be the initiating ordinance of baptism. That the children were not converted, but vessels of wrath, is a gratuitous assumption, still more improbable than the preceding. Notwithstanding all these improbabilities, the Doctor makes his assertions with as much dogmatic assurance as if delivering oracles. Indeed, his general manner shows, that he calculates largely on the implicit faith of his hearers.

To render the doctrine of original sin as shocking as possible, Dr. B. exclaims thus : (p. 201) " With what feeling of horror and disgust, as well as pity, must a parent



“ who really believes this doctrine, behold his child, when he presents him for baptism, and hears him denounced as a child of wrath, under the curse of God, and heir only of hell fire!” Answer. The believing parent, whilst presenting his child in the ordinance of baptism, is filled with feelings of love, and gratitude, and joy, whilst, after contemplating, with deep humility, his child’s lost state by nature, the eye of his faith is directed to the blood and water which issued from the pierced side of his crucified Redeemer—blood for justification, and water for sanctification. His eye affects his heart, whilst he contemplates that water which symbolically represents, not only pardon through the Redeemer’s blood, but regeneration through his blessed spirit. With feelings of ineffable gratitude and joy, he draws water out of the wells of salvation; he pleads the promises of the Gospel in behalf of his infant offspring—that God would pour water upon the thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground—that he would pour his spirit upon his seed, and his blessing upon his offspring—that God would be his God, and the God of his seed. Whilst he thus pleads the promises, and anticipates the eternal felicity of himself and his offspring, so far from being filled with feelings of horror and disgust, he rejoices with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

The Doctor proceeds: “ What respect or reverence can a child feel for a parent, who is a bondman of Satan, utterly opposed to every thing that is spiritually good?” I answer, For such a parent he cannot feel so much reverence as for a pious parent, a child of God—and what then? Let such a parent flee from the wrath to come. Let him repent of his wickedness and pray God, if perhaps the thoughts of his heart may be forgiven him, that he may escape from the snare of the Devil, and be no longer led captive by him at his will. Becoming a child of God by faith, and a favourite of heaven, he is entitled to more respect, and will obtain more respect from his own children.

The Doctor goes on with his interrogatories thus:—  
 “ With what distrust, aversion, and gloomy horror, must the parents themselves view each other during life, wholly inclined to all evil, and tainted in every action and sentiment with corruption—with what anguish and despair at the hour of death?” Answer.—Let such wicked parents forsake their ways, and such unrighteous parents their

thoughts, and let them return unto the Lord and he will have mercy upon them, and to our God, who will abundantly pardon. Let them look unto the Redeemer and be saved. Their distrust will then be turned into confidence—their aversion into love—their gloomy horror into the assurance of hope—and their anguish and despair into happiness and joy.

The last two questions I might have answered more briefly by asking another, viz: What bearing have such questions on the doctrine of original sin? Answer.—NONE AT ALL.

The Doctor goes on: “What encouragement have parents to bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, if they think them irreversibly doomed to damnation?” Answer.—No parent in his right mind ever thought that his children were irreversibly doomed to damnation. But what are we to think of that Divine who is capable of putting such a question.

The Doctor proceeds: “How can young people remember their Creator without hatred and terror, who has brought them into existence only to be vessels of wrath?” Answer.—Their Creator never brought *any* people into existence only to be vessels of wrath. Quære: Do such foul insinuations bear no resemblance to calumny?

The Doctor persists: “There was some consistency, at least, in those fanatics who renounced matrimony for fear of such consequences.” Answer.—There was *no consistency*—such consequences being only bugbears conjured up by the fertile imagination of Doctor B., and those fanatics to which he refers. All parents are encouraged to believe, and then the promise is to them and to their seed.

The Doctor again asks, (p. 202) “Are not such doctrines the source of those gloomy thoughts which distract so many pious souls? Do they not deter many from cultivating or crediting religion, and harden them in infidelity and iniquity? May we not fear that they impel many to hurry on their own fate, rather than endure the despondence, agitation, and torment of mind with which they are doomed to await it?” Answer.—Such is not the native tendency of the doctrines. Though, in some instances, such doctrines may be so abused, that is no argument against them. To argue against any thing from its abuse, is not logic, but sophistry. If soothing men’s minds, calm-

ing their fears, and lulling their consciences to sleep, be meritorious actions, Arian divines deserve great praise. But what should we think of that watchman, who, when the robber is wrenching the door, or the flames bursting from the window, should dissipate all fear by the pleasing intelligence, "*All is well—a fine morning!*" How much more faithful would we regard that watchman, who, without ceremony, and with a voice like thunder, should immediately vociferate—**FIRE! FIRE!** The horrid sound might injure some weak nerves. In a state of trepidation, one might break his arm, and another his leg. These are unfortunate circumstances, it is true, and much to be deplored; but not so deplorable as the fate of those, who, lulled to sleep by their treacherous watchman, fall a prey to the devouring element, or perish by the hand of the midnight assassin.

The Doctor introduces a confused mass of heterogeneous matter relative to the divine decrees. That God could not decree the fall without infringing the free agency of Adam, has never yet been proved, and, I am convinced, never will. Whenever our opponents reconcile the fall with divine foreknowledge, we will reconcile it with divine decrees. For farther remarks connected with this subject we refer our readers to a subsequent part of this treatise, when divine decrees will be more formally discussed, and the distinction between God's will of command and will of decree explained and established.

"It is agreed," says the Doctor, "that Adam's transgression and guilt became ours only by imputation." Answer—*There never was any such agreement.* We are *really* guilty before God *imputes* guilt; for his judgment is always according to truth. Our author then asks, "Did this imputation find us sinners or make us so?"\* This

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\* In the theological discourses of the Rev. James Thompson, of Quarrelwood, Scotland, a work which contains an immense fund of accurate information on the most important doctrines of religion—in a foot-note (Vol. i. p. 74) we find the following assertion:—"It is not then God's *imputing* act that makes them guilty; but that act by which he constituted Adam their moral head." This sentence shows how difficult it is to form accurate ideas, or to express one's self accurately on so abstruse a subject. I entirely dissent from this acute and discriminating Divine. God's act in making Adam our moral head could not possibly *make us guilty.* No act of God could make us guilty, otherwise God would be the author of sin. I believe all man-



question, and the former assertion, are inconsistent with each other, and mutually destroy each other; for if by imputation alone we *become* sinners, we were not sinners before, and therefore imputation could not find us sinners. The question, therefore, being inconsistent with the previous statement, is absurd, and shows great want of discrimination in the querist. If imputation found us sinners, the Doctor declares that imputation was unnecessary. What! *unnecessary!* If so, it is unnecessary to impute theft to a man whom we have found stealing, or burglary to a man who is found guilty of housebreaking! But our author tells us, that if imputation found us sinners, imputation was unnecessary. Why? "We might have perished by our own sins." But how we could have perished by our own sins, if those sins had not been imputed to us, will require all the talents and ingenuity of Doctor B. to explain. The Doctor proceeds: "If it found men innocent and made them sinners, then it was the cause of their sins, and God was the author of them. Again—If it found us free from sin, the imputation was false, charging those with sin whom it did not find sinners, and God condemned men on account of his own false imputation. Pardon the expression; for it is impossible to treat of these monstrous positions without contradiction and blasphemy." Monstrous positions indeed!—and sufficiently interlarded with contradiction and blasphemy! but they are his own positions—the contradiction his own—the blasphemy his own—we disclaim them *in toto*. I am glad, however, to find him on his knees begging pardon. He would do well to beg pardon, not only of his hearers, and his readers, but of his God, whose majesty he has insulted by such contradictory and blasphemous statements. Imputation neither finds men innocent, nor makes them sinners. Dr. B. should have studied imputation before he opposed it.

Dr. Bruce proceeds to ask, (p. 206) "But why should we be answerable for only one transgression? If our

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kind are guilty of Adam's first sin, and I believe the guilt of that sin is imputed to them. I believe these facts, but I cannot explain them. I believe these facts, because the Scripture *states* them, and because it would involve the greatest absurdity to *deny* them. If they had not been *guilty* of Adam's first sin, God would not have condemned the whole human family to death for it. God never condemns the innocent.

“ guilt arises from the guilt of Adam, it must be aggravated  
 “ by all his offences ; and if we suffer the consequent cor-  
 “ ruption of his nature, the penalty of his transgressions,  
 “ should we not also enjoy the benefit of his repentance and  
 “ subsequent obedience ? If we sinned in our federal head,  
 “ we must have repented also.”

Answer—After Adam committed his first sin, he ceased to be our representative ; and therefore it is, that we can neither be charged with his subsequent sins, nor enjoy the benefit of his subsequent repentance. By Adam’s first sin the covenant of works was broken, and Adam ceased to be our representative. A *new covenant*, the covenant of grace, was immediately proclaimed, in which covenant our blessed Redeemer represents all his spiritual seed. To all these (not the *repentance of Adam*, but)—the *obedience of Jesus Christ* is imputed for righteousness.

Dr. B. exclaims, “ How strange and paradoxical is it, “ that while God is forgiving our own sins, he should con- “ demn us for the offences of another ! ”—Answer—How- ever strange and paradoxical it may seem, it is a fact.\* Still stranger, it is a fact admitted by Dr. B. himself. He has fully admitted that the whole human family are condemned to death for the sin of Adam—and what is still more strange and paradoxical, *that they are all condemned to die for a crime of which they are perfectly innocent !* Surely this is strange and paradoxical indeed ! There are no such paradoxes in the Calvinistic scheme.

Doctor B. is generally careful to exhibit, in as frightful a form as possible, the difficulties of the system he opposes, whilst he studiously conceals those of his own. We frequently find him proposing, but seldom answering, objections. In this he shows a good deal of generalship. After proposing an immense number of objections to the Calvinistic doctrine of original sin, at the close of his sermon he proposes to answer one, and states it thus : “ But it has “ been asked, is not the doctrine of original sin necessary “ to account for the existence of sin ? How else came it “ into the world ? I answer by another question, How did “ original sin take place ? Was it by the corruption of

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\* When I say, *It is a fact*, I mean, It is a fact, that we are condemn- ed (not for the *offences*, as the Doctor erroneously states, but) for the *offence* of another. Neither Scripture nor Calvinism represents us as condemned for any offence of Adam but *one*.

“Adam’s nature? This will not be pretended,” &c. This objection is erroneously stated, and as weakly answered. We do not ask, “Is not the doctrine of original sin necessary to account for the *existence* of sin.” This would be an absurd question. But we ask, Is not the doctrine of original sin necessary to account for the *universal prevalence* of sin and corruption? We do not ask, “How else came it into the world?” This would be absurd—but we ask, How else has it spread so widely that none have ever escaped its contagion? Such is the real objection; let us now attend to the Doctor’s answer—It is this: “I answer by another question, How did original sin take place? Was it by the corruption of Adam’s nature?”

This is the old exploded answer of Dr. Taylor—an answer which President Edwards has triumphantly exposed, as completely weak and unphilosophical.

Because all men capable of moral agency sin, we infer a universal propensity to sin—a universal depravity, and corruption of nature. No general law was ever better established than this, the law of gravitation itself not excepted. How do we know that all heavy bodies gravitate towards the centre? We know it, and can prove it only by an induction of particulars. We know, that in every instance in which a stone or heavy body has been projected into the air, it has uniformly returned to the surface of the earth. Hence we infer, that all heavy bodies gravitate towards the centre. In this manner the law of gravitation is satisfactorily established. And yet, it must be acknowledged, that the induction of particulars from which the law is inferred, is far from being complete. With regard to thousands and millions of stones and other heavy bodies, it has never been tried whether they would return to the surface or not. The law of sin and death is much better established. Every son and daughter of Adam, (Enoch and Elias excepted) from the creation of the world down to the age in which we live, have died. Hence we infer, *That all men are mortal.*

Again: Every son and daughter of Adam, as soon as capable of moral agency, have sinned; and hence we infer—*That all men are depraved*—that there is in all mankind *an original and inherent propensity to sin.*—Thus, it appears, that this original inherent propensity to sin, or, in other words, this original depravity of nature, is proved by evidence stronger, if possible, than that by which the law of gravitation is established.—The law of gravitation is estab-



lished by a *partial induction*; but the depravity of our nature, by a *universal induction* of facts. Now, how do our opponents, Dr. Taylor, Dr. Bruce, &c. answer this reasoning? Why, they tell us, that if the universal prevalence to sin proves an original propensity to sin, in like manner, Adam's first sin proved in him a similar propensity;—that is to say—*one fact* is sufficient to prove a general law, as well as a *universal induction of fact*! Such is the philosophy of that Divine, who regards his neighbours as fanatics, enthusiasts, and bigots. Such is the reasoning by which Socinian and Arian writers think to run down the doctrine of original depravity—a doctrine founded on the clearest dictates both of experience and Divine Revelation.

To such of my readers as may feel still disposed to reject the doctrine of original sin, I would put a few questions: Did *Adam* eat forbidden fruit? and do not *we* eat forbidden fruit? Do we not in ten thousand instances commit those sins which God's pure and holy law forbids?—Again: Did *Adam* fly from the presence of the Lord? and do not *we* also fly from his presence? do we not frequently feel an aversion to secret prayer, and other ordinances, through the medium of which we are admitted to the high honour of holding intercourse and communion with God?—Once more; Did *Adam* and *Eve* form apologies for their conduct? Did *Adam* blame *Eve*, and *Eve* the Serpent? And do not *we* form ten thousand apologies for our crimes? Are we not apt to blame our neighbours, and every thing around us, rather than ourselves?—Finally; Did *Adam* and *Eve* sew fig leaves to conceal their nakedness? And are not *we* prone to think, that the patchwork robe of our own righteousness—our penances, our pilgrimages, our prayers, our tears, our alms, &c. will be perfectly sufficient to render us acceptable in the sight of God? Instead of submitting to God's righteousness, do we not go about to establish our own righteousness, forgetting that Jesus Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth? In a word: Do we not bear the *image* of Adam? Are not his features strongly marked in our character? With what face can we plead freedom from his guilt, whilst we continue to homologate his crimes? If we say we are perfect, we prove ourselves perverse.—If we attempt to justify ourselves, our own mouths will condemn us. Were we to take snow water, and wash ourselves ever so white, yet the Almighty would plunge us in the ditch, and our own clothes

would abhor us.—Let every son of apostate Adam prostrate himself before the throne of grace, confessing, with David, “Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me”—and praying with the same penitent, “Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.” In behalf of myself, my opponent, and all my readers, I would humbly and fervently pray—That as we have all borne the image of the *earthly*, so we may bear the image of the *heavenly* Adam. Amen.

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## CHAPTER VII.

### *Predestination.*

#### SECTION I.

#### *The Grace of God distinguishing.*

THIS doctrine has been attacked of late, not only by Dr B., but by a variety of eminent Arminian Divines of the Establishment. In this combined attack, the learned Bishop of Down and Connor leads the van, and the celebrated Doctors, Millar and Graves, bring up the rear. To attempt a defence against such formidable assailants may appear presumptuous. Possessing, however, as I verily believe, the vantage ground of truth, I do not despair of ultimate success. I shall endeavour to give a reason of the hope that is in me with meekness and fear.

In all our inquiries, whether scientific or religious, our wisest mode of procedure undoubtedly is, to advance from the consideration of those truths which are more plain, to the investigation of those which are more difficult. Keeping this wise maxim in our eye, were we able to ascertain what is the divine procedure respecting man in time, we might easily ascertain what were the divine designs from *all eternity*. Creation and Providence are the best commentary on the divine decrees; for “God executeth his decrees in the works of creation and providence.” Let us first inquire, What does God actually *do*? in order to ascertain what from eternity he intended to do. That the Deity does nothing without previous intention and design, every person who believes in his existence must grant; and that none of the divine designs or purposes are formed in

time, but that they were all formed from eternity, few, I presume, will venture to deny. Were we for a moment to suppose, that God forms any new design or purpose, we must at the same time deny his immutability—we must at the same time admit the blasphemous conclusion, that there is in the divine mind “variableness or shadow of turning.”

If, then, we wish to ascertain the eternal purposes or decrees of God\* concerning sinners of our family, we must previously answer this question, What is his conduct towards them now in time? How does he *now* treat them? If he makes any distinctions *now in time*, he must have determined and decreed from all eternity to make those distinctions. This is a position which no intelligent person will venture to controvert. That distinctions exist now, and that distinctions will exist hereafter, is acknowledged by all who believe the Bible. That the world is distributed into two great classes, believers and unbelievers, penitent and impenitent, righteous and wicked, or sheep and goats; and that the whole human family will be so divided at the judgment of the great day, all Christians admit. Now, the great question is, Who makes this distinction? Is it *God*, or the *creature*? When one man believes, repents, and reforms, whilst another remains in unbelief, impenitence and wickedness, Who makes the difference? Is it the believer himself, or is it God? A proper answer to this question, I humbly conceive, would settle the whole controversy between the Calvinist and the Arminian. If man makes the difference, the *Arminian* is right; if God makes the difference, the *Calvinist* is right. Whether the first movements in faith and repentance are from God or the creature, accord-

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\* Our author asserts, that it was infinitely absurd to puzzle ourselves about the divine decrees, and that, as the subject itself has never been revealed, it cannot be our duty to study it. Now, my dear Doctor, if you and I have never puzzled ourselves about the divine decrees—if we have never studied the subject—is it not infinitely absurd to preach and write upon it, and to expect the public to attend our sermons, and read our treatises? That our author has never puzzled himself about the divine decrees—that he has never studied the subject, is abundantly evident. We have already heard him asking, whether the decree that man should fall, originated before or after the fall. In his sermon on mysteries, (and a very mysterious sermon it is,) he speaks of that part of the economy of grace, which was planned before Christ appeared in the world. A part, of course, was planned *after* his appearance—but, if there are any new thoughts or plans in the mind of the Deity, what becomes of his immutability? By representing the decrees of the



ing to the judicious statement of the late talented Moderator of the Synod of Ulster, the Rev. Henry Cooke, *is the great cardinal point in debate*. If the first movements in faith and repentance are from God, the Calvinist is right; if from the creature, he is wrong. Arminians maintain that God has put salvation in the power of all—that if they make a proper improvement of the talents they possess, they shall infallibly arrive at faith, repentance, and salvation. Now this system, however plausible at first sight, appears to me totally subversive of the grace of God. If all men are brought into a salvable state, and if all have talents, which if they improve they shall be saved; when one man improves his talents and is saved, and another neglects them and is condemned; and when the question is put to the man who is saved, Who made thee to differ? May he not boldly reply—MYSELF? For this difference I am no way indebted to the grace of God, but wholly to my own exertions. My neighbour, who is now suffering the vengeance of eternal fire, was precisely in the same situation with myself—he enjoyed the same means—he possessed the same talents—but he did not improve them, and therefore is miserable; whilst I improved mine, and therefore am happy! I ask my reader, Is not this to exclude the grace of God, and to leave ample ground of boasting to the creature?

The Apostle represents it as a thing quite unreasonable and absurd, to suppose that one man should make himself to differ from another, with regard to the *miraculous gifts of the Spirit*. I ask, Is it not still more unreasonable and

Almighty as secret, belonging purely to God, and not revealed to us, he proves clearly that he has not studied the subject; for God has revealed many of his purposes. He has revealed them by creation, by providence, and by his word. I know that God decreed from all eternity to create the world, to govern the world, and to judge the world. I know he decreed whatever I know he has done; and I know he decreed whatever he has told me he will do. Those decrees which have neither been revealed by creation, providence, nor scripture, belong purely to God himself; but those which are revealed belong to us and to our children. Of revealed truths, the Doctor says, (p. 63,) “Some are merely speculative, others are calculated to influence our practice. It is evident, that these last are the truths which are said to ‘belong to us and to our children.’” So then only a PART of the truths of divine revelation belong to us and to our children. Is not this deism? or at least *semi-deism*. In attempting to explode the doctrine of predestination, our author resorts to his usual stratagem by involving the subject in clouds and darkness.

absurd, to suppose that one man should make himself to differ from another, with regard to what is incomparably more excellent—the *graces of the Spirit*. The Arminian makes himself to differ with regard to the graces of the Spirit of God. By persevering in prayer and other duties, he obtains faith, repentance, and other graces; and thus makes himself to differ from his unbelieving neighbours. For this difference he is in debt, not to the grace of God, but to his own exertions. His principles leave room for much greater pride and boasting than those of the proud Pharisee. The Pharisee acknowledged, that it was God that made him to differ: “God, I thank thee that I am not as other men—or even as this publican.”—The Arminian can, in consistency with his own principles, make no such acknowledgment. The consistent language of his prayer would run thus: Thanks to myself, I am not as other men—I am not unbelieving, impenitent, nor wicked! His system, as I said before, entirely excludes the grace of God. I know he denies this conclusion; but he cannot avoid it. Let us hear his defence. I shall give it in the words of Dr. Graves, the Regius Professor of Divinity in Dublin College, and Champlain to his Excellency the Lord Lieutenant: “In our accepting,” says the learned Doctor (Calvinistic Predestination, p. 448,) “this offer of mercy, is there any thing whereof to boast? Will the condemned criminal boast of his accepting of, and rejoicing in, a reprieve, rather than in being led to an ignominious death?—will the unhappy being, sinking under a pestilential disease, boast of his accepting a cure from that Great Physician, whom thousands around him hail as the preserver of their lives?—will the prisoner, plunged in a dark and loathsome dungeon, when his chains are loosened, and the gate thrown open which confined him from the light of heaven, boast, because he walks forth to liberty and life?” This reasoning is, I confess, extremely plausible. It seems to vindicate the grace of God, and to exclude boasting on the part of man. A few observations, however, will show, that it is quite inconclusive, and altogether unsatisfactory. The following question will expose the fallacy: Had God left all mankind to perish *without any cure, without any reprieve, without ever loosening their chains, or opening the gate of their prison*:—in a word; had he suffered all to perish *without ever putting salvation in their power*, would he have acted justly, or unjustly? Arminians, Socinians,

and Arians, all maintain, that it would be unjust in God to condemn any man, if salvation were not in his power. The learned Professor himself considers it not only inconsistent with the justice of God, but with "the whole tenor of the "divine attributes and government."—Of course, it was an act of *justice*, and not of *grace*, to put man into a salvable state: According to the Arminian system, if God brought us into being at all, he was obliged in *justice* to offer us a reprieve—he was obliged in *justice* to offer us a cure—he was obliged in *justice* to loosen our chains, and to set open our prison doors. All these, according to Arminian principles, were acts of *justice*, and not of *grace*. Of course, we need not thank the Deity for doing any of these things. We need not thank him for doing that which his *justice* obliged him to do, and which it would have been unjust not to do. Thus the Arminian scheme cuts up by the roots, and entirely excludes the grace of God. There is no grace in the *foundation* of the Arminian system: there is no grace in the *superstructure*: there is no grace in *any part of the building*. It is the very reverse of the system laid down in the Bible. The Scripture system is a system of *grace*. The *foundation* is of *grace*: the *superstructure* is of *grace*: and when the *top stone* is brought forth, it will be with "shoutings of Grace, Grace unto it." God's purposes towards his people are purposes of grace: his covenant is a covenant of grace: the election of his people is an election of grace: their calling is a calling of grace: they are saved and called with a holy calling, not according to their works, but according to his purpose and grace, &c.—They are justified by grace, adopted by grace, sanctified by grace, preserved by grace, and saved by grace. We Calvinists believe, that it would have been just in God to leave the whole human family to perish, as he has actually left apostate angels. We conceive that the Deity was under no obligations to save the one class of beings rather than the other. We believe that it is wholly owing to the sovereign distinguishing grace of God, that *we* are "*prisoners of hope*," whilst fallen angels are "*reserved in chains of darkness*." We are convinced that God was under no obligation, either to provide or offer us a Saviour. We adore his unmerited grace, and exclaim with the Apostle, "Thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift!"

Our Arminian brethren entertain different ideas.—They imagine, that if we are brought into being at all, we cannot



be justly abandoned to perish without remedy. The consequence is, though they do not perceive it, that even the *giving of God's own Son* is not an act of grace, but of justice! Had God not sent his Son, but abandoned us all to irremediable and unavoidable misery, the Arminian maintains he would have treated us unjustly. From these premises the impious conclusion unavoidably follows, That we have no right to thank God for his unspeakable gift!—That we have no reason to praise him, either for providing or offering a Saviour! To provide a remedy, according to Arminians, Socinians, and Arians, was no act of *grace*, but a *debt*: for it would have been unjust in God, according to them, to permit us to perish without a remedy! The truth is, that the atonement of Jesus Christ, according to the Arminian scheme, seems rather to be an atonement for the *injury God has done to us*, than for the sins we have committed against him! Arminians seem to regard our state by nature, as a state of great hardship; and the benefits of redemption, as a kind of *compensation* for the injuries which we innocently suffer by the fall. They bring the Deity into this dilemma—that he must either *not* bring us into existence; or, if he *do* bring us into existence, that he must bring us into a salvable state, and grant us some privileges to *counterbalance* and *compensate* the evils to which we have been innocently exposed! Dr. Graves (p. 392) writes thus: “Now, if the infant who expires before he has committed any crime, be condemned because of Adam’s sin, or if he inherits a nature so irremediably corrupt, that on his arriving at maturity, present guilt and future perdition are to him unavoidable; conferring on him such an existence, seems irreconcilable with the whole tenor of the divine attributes and government described in the Scripture, as, I trust, has been shown in the preceding discourses.”\*

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\* In a still more explicit manner, Mr. M'Affee, another defender of the Arminian system, writes as follows: (p. 24,) ‘As a consequence of the first transgression, all men are not only corrupted in their nature, but are also subject to temporal death.—As an antidote to the former, Christ is termed the true light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world. And to make compensation for the latter, a decree is passed, through the atonement and resurrection of Christ, which determines the resurrection of every man. In proof of the latter proposition, I need only refer you, Sir, to 1 Cor. xv. where the Apostle more than once tells us, that if the dead rise not, then v

The native tendency of Arminian principles is to depreciate, supersede, and make void the atonement. "Arminians in general," says President Edwards in his Inquiry, "are very inconsistent with themselves in what they say of the inability of fallen man in this respect. They strenuously maintain, that it would be unjust in God to require any thing of us beyond our present power and ability to perform, and also hold, that we are now unable to perform perfect obedience, and that Christ died to satisfy for the imperfections of our obedience, and has made way that our imperfect obedience might be accepted instead of perfect: wherein they seem insensibly to run themselves into the grossest inconsistency. For (as I have observed elsewhere) they hold, that God, in mercy to mankind, has abolished that rigorous constitution or law that they were under originally; and, instead of it, has introduced a more mild constitution, and put us under a new law, which requires no more than imperfect sincere obedience, in compliance with our poor, infirm, impotent circumstances since the fall. Now, how can these things be made consistent? I would ask, what law these imperfections of our obedience are a breach of? If they are a breach of no law that we were ever under, then they are not sins. And if they be not sins, what need of Christ's dying to satisfy for them? But if they are sins, and the breach of some law, what law is it? They cannot be a breach of their new law; for that requires no other than imperfect obedience, or obedience with imperfections, and, therefore, to have obedience attended

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\* Christ not raised. It appears to me that the Apostle's view of the subject was simply this: that as God, who is immutable in his designs, gave man a personal existence through Jesus Christ, and as that existence is necessarily accompanied with privations which subject him to temporal death, so as a counterbalance to this, God, according to his goodness and justice, immutably purposed that all men should be raised from the dead through Christ.—And again, (p. 13,) "As Christ died to give us a personal existence (accompanied with many privations, in consequence of the fall,) he has made ample provision for every one, whereby these things are counterbalanced."—Thus, the benefits of redemption, through Jesus Christ, are represented as a compensation for the privations we suffer—*innocently suffer*—in consequence of the fall! Thus, the offended sovereign of heaven and earth is represented, in the work of our redemption, as *giving compensation for damages, and paying a debt of justice*, to his rebel offspring, rather than displaying the infinite riches of his grace and mercy!

“ with imperfections is no breach of it ; for it is as much  
 “ as it requires. And they cannot be a breach of their  
 “ old law ; for that, they say, is entirely abolished ; and  
 “ we never were under it. They say, it would not be just  
 “ in God to require of us perfect obedience, because it  
 “ would not be just to require more than we can per-  
 “ form, or to punish us for failing of it. And, therefore,  
 “ by their own scheme, the imperfections of our obedi-  
 “ ence do not deserve to be punished. What need, there-  
 “ fore, of Christ’s dying to satisfy for them ? What need  
 “ of his suffering, to satisfy for that which is no fault ; and,  
 “ in its own nature, deserves no suffering ? What need of  
 “ Christ dying to purchase, that our imperfect obedience  
 “ should be accepted, when, according to their scheme, it  
 “ would be unjust in itself, that any other obedience, than  
 “ imperfect, should be required ? What need of Christ’s  
 “ dying to make way for God’s accepting such an obedi-  
 “ ence, as it would be unjust in him not to accept ? Is  
 “ there any need of Christ’s dying to prevail with God not  
 “ to do unrighteously ? If it be said, that Christ died to  
 “ satisfy that old law for us, that so we might not be under  
 “ it, but that there might be room for our being under a  
 “ more mild law ; still I would inquire, what need of  
 “ Christ’s dying, that we might not be under a law, which  
 “ (by their principles) it would be in itself unjust that we  
 “ should be under, whether Christ had died or no, because,  
 “ in our present state, we are not able to keep it ?” Thus  
 it appears that Arminian principles make void the grace of  
 God, supersede the atonement, and lead to Arianism or  
 Socinianism.

Doctor Millar, of Armagh, endeavours to retort the  
 charge—he endeavours to convince his readers, that it is  
 not the Arminian, but the Calvinistic system, that has thi  
 tendency. In his *Doctrines of Christianity*, (p. 130,) he  
 writes thus : “ It was not unnatural, that when the zeal of  
 “ Calvinistical Protestants was no longer sustained by  
 “ opposition, they should themselves recoil from the gloomy  
 “ and terrible doctrine of the arbitrary decrees of God.  
 “ Since Calvin, who seems to have been strongly actuated  
 “ by the spirit of a leader of a sect, could yet acknowledge  
 “ that the doctrine which he taught, was a horrible decree,  
 “ it may well be supposed that, in a later period, when the  
 “ zeal of his followers had been gradually moderated by  
 “ time and tranquillity, this doctrine should give offence to



“ the reason of reflecting men, and dispose them to indulge  
 “ themselves without any restraint in qualifying the articles  
 “ of their faith, that they might form for themselves what  
 “ they would denominate a rational religion. Nor was the  
 “ peculiar doctrine of Calvin free from a direct tendency  
 “ to generate this corruption of the genuine principles of  
 “ the Christian faith. When human salvation was referred  
 “ to the arbitrary and irrelative decrees of God, the  
 “ second person of the Trinity was easily conceived to be  
 “ degraded from the rank of a primary agent in the work  
 “ of redemption to that of a mere instrument in the execu-  
 “ tion of a preordained arrangement. Those who em-  
 “ braced this doctrine were accordingly disposed by it to  
 “ attach less importance to the agency of the Son of God ;  
 “ and the transition was natural from a degraded opinion of  
 “ his agency to a degraded estimate of his nature and cha-  
 “ racter.”

Now, surely, no charge was ever more groundless than  
 this. What ! Must the Redeemer's character be conceived  
 to be degraded, because he acted on a preconcerted plan ?  
 How unreasonable the conception ! To act without a pre-  
 vious plan would be degrading to the meanest mechanic.  
 Nor is it at all true, that those who believe in a preordained  
 arrangement are disposed to attach less importance to the  
 agency of the Son of God. The *reverse* is the fact. They  
 attach to his agency immensely more importance. Armi-  
 nians maintain that the guilt which Jesus Christ expiated  
 by his blood was only *finite*, Calvinists almost universally  
 maintain that it was *infinite*. As we therefore conceive,  
 that the Redeemer has performed an infinitely greater work,  
 we attach *infinitely greater importance* to his agency. It is  
 the Arminian, therefore, that entertains a degraded opinion  
 of the agency of the Redeemer ;\* and Dr. Millar assures

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\* That Antitrinitarianism tends to degrade the merits of the Re-  
 deemer, and to exalt *human* merit, is evident from their writings.  
 “ And if God constituted the first man a federal head,” says Mr.  
 M'Asce, “ and had he continued faithful, I see no reason why his  
 “ whole posterity, who would have been saved eternally by the imputa-  
 “ tion of his righteousness, might not have sung, glory, honour, and  
 “ blessing, be ascribed to our father Adam for ever and ever.” An  
 Arminian sees no reason why praises should not have been sung to  
 father Adam ; but a Calvinist sees every reason in the world. The  
 Calvinist believes, that had father Adam continued to obey, not only  
 the commandment relative to the forbidden fruit, but all the command-

us, that "the transition is natural from a degraded opinion of his agency to a degraded estimate of his character." The Arminian system, then, and not the Calvinistic, tends to Arianism, as the extract from Edwards fully proves.

The Doctor, however, persists in his attempt to substantiate his charge. He endeavours to prove it by facts. P. 224, he writes thus; "If, to remove this uncertainty the Synod (of Ulster) should be induced to recur to their ancient confession of faith, they would return to that, which, as has already been exemplified in every instance, has naturally tended to pass into that very Arianism or

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ments of God; not only for a few years, but for thousands of ages, he would have merited—*just nothing at all*. When he had done all he could, he would have been only an unprofitable servant—he would have only done what it was his *duty* to do. Were some Nobleman to present a large estate to Mr. M'Affee and his posterity for ever, on this simple condition, that Mr. M'Affee should return to the donor *one barley-corn*, would the fulfilment of this condition be so *meritorious*, as to entitle Mr. M'Affee to the praises of his posterity through all generations? How absurd the idea! And yet, there is an infinitely greater proportion between a barley-corn and the fee simple of a large estate, than between the obedience of Adam and the eternal happiness of the whole human family. In the former case, according to Calvinistic ideas, the praises would be due, not to Mr. M'Affee, but to his kind benefactor; and in the latter—not to father Adam, but to our *Father in Heaven*. Calvinists believe, that the obedience, not only of Adam, but of all his posterity—nay, that the united obedience of all the men on earth, and all the angels in heaven, can merit *nothing*; and at the same time they believe, that *every act* of the Redeemer's obedience was *infinitely meritorious*. Had Adam continued in obedience, and, in consequence of his perseverance, had the whole human family been confirmed in a state of holiness and happiness, his posterity, according to Calvinistic ideas, would have attributed all to the *free grace of God*, they would have felt no temptation to celebrate the praises of father Adam. So far from thinking with Mr. M'Affee, that the obedience of Adam would have been more meritorious than that of the Redeemer!—they would have regarded his obedience as having *no merit at all*. Mr. M'Affee labours hard to prove, that the human family would have enjoyed much greater happiness had they never fallen, than is to be enjoyed through the mediation of Jesus Christ—he degrades the work of redemption, and merits of the Redeemer, by sinking them into comparative insignificance. Calvinists, on the contrary, entertain a low opinion of human merit; but high and exalted ideas of the merits of their Redeemer, and of the benefits of redemption—they believe, that immensely more glory will redound to God, and happiness to his creatures, through the mediation of Jesus Christ, than would have accrued from a permanent state of unsinning obedience.—The reader may now judge whether it is the Calvinistic or Arminian system, that exhibits degrading views of the Redeemer's agency and character.

“ Socinianism, from which, in returning to it, they would  
 “ endeavour to escape. What then would be gained by the  
 “ change? They would have abandoned a system, in which  
 “ very various opinions are held at the same time, for ano-  
 “ ther, the natural tendency of which has actually shown  
 “ itself to be an alternate movement between the extremes  
 “ of Calvinistic trinitarianism, and of Arianism or Socini-  
 “ anism.”

In this paragraph the learned Doctor professes to reason from facts: Why then does he not adhere to facts? It is not a fact, that the confession of faith, or the Calvinism of that confession, has in every instance tended to pass into Arianism or Socinianism. Has the Westminster Confession in the *Secession church*, tended towards Arianism or Socinianism? No:—there is not in that church a single Arian or Socinian. Has the Westminster Confession, in the *Reformed Presbyterian church*, tended towards Arianism or Socinianism? *It has not.*—There is not in that church one single Arian or Socinian. Dr. Millar should be better acquainted with facts before he begins to reason from them. He should beware of stating as facts things which are not facts at all. It is a fact honourable to the Westminster Confession, that in every instance, in this country, where subscription to that formula has been required, it has proved a bar to the introduction of Arianism. Another fact equally honourable to the Confession is, that Arianism made little or no progress in the Synod of Ulster, till that barrier was removed—till subscription to that Confession ceased to be required.

The last fact I shall mention, and one highly honourable to the Westminster Confession, is, that in no country in the world do “ *Sound doctrine and the power of godliness*” more prevail, than in that country where Presbyterianism and Calvinism, as taught in that Confession, are the established religion of the state. What country on the face of this globe can bear a comparison with Scotland, either for orthodoxy or morality? So much for the charge of Dr. Millar, That the Calvinism of the Westminster Confession has a tendency towards Arianism. *What system it is that has such a tendency, the reader is now left to judge.*



## SECTION II.

*Of Free Agency.*

The whole controversy between Arminians and Calvinists originates, I humbly conceive, in a misunderstanding with respect to free agency. It is generally imagined, that Calvinists deny the free agency of man; but this is a gross mistake. The Calvinist, as well as the Arminian, grants, that if man were not free, he could not be accountable. The Calvinist, as well as the Arminian, grants that man is a voluntary agent, and, when subject to no external restraint, can do what he pleases. The Calvinist believes that man, by the fall, did not lose his natural freedom. Had he lost this freedom, he would have ceased to be an accountable agent. But, though man did not lose his *natural* freedom by the fall, he lost his *moral* freedom. He is a slave to sin.—This moral slavery is quite consistent with natural freedom. In a philosophical sense, he acts as freely now in pursuing the paths of vice and folly, as he did before the fall in running the ways of God's commandments. It is true, that man, in consequence of the fall, is not able to keep the whole law of God; nor is he able of himself to believe and repent. Man, by the fall, has lost his ability—not his *natural*, but his *moral* ability. By the fall, man lost none of his powers and faculties. He has still an understanding, will, and affection.—These faculties are only perverted, but not destroyed. Man has lost his *moral* ability: or, in other words, he has lost his *inclination to good*. He is now wholly inclined to evil. The imaginations of the thoughts of his heart are only evil, and that continually.

Arminians conceive, that indifference is essential to liberty—that to constitute an action virtuous, the mind must be in a state of equilibrium. Calvinists are of a quite different opinion. They conceive, that the greater a man's bias or propensity towards good, he is the more *virtuous*; and that the greater his bias or propensity towards evil, he is the more *vicious*. This appears to me to be a dictate both of Scripture and of common sense. The Scriptures represent the debauchee as arrived at the highest degree of wickedness, when his eyes are full of adultery, or rather of the adulteress, and when he *cannot cease from sin*. In accordance with this view are the dictates of common sense.

The common sense even of the Arminian himself, when the matter is brought home to his business and his bosom, rebels against his speculative principles. No Arminian in the world would prefer a servant whose mind should be in a state of equilibrium or indifference with regard to moral honesty. In this case, with the Calvinist, he would certainly prefer that servant whose principles of honesty were so confirmed, that he could not deliberate for a moment whether he would rob his master ; but would *immediately*, and, as it were *instinctively*, *spurn* every idea of dishonesty.

In a court of judicature, no criminal was ever known to plead, in arrest of judgment, his moral inability.—Was any parricide ever known to plead, in extenuation of his crime, that his hatred to his father was so great, that he found it quite impossible to avoid committing the horrid deed ? Such a plea was never set up in arrest of judgment by any murderer. On the contrary, malice prepense is that which stamps the crime with its characteristic enormity, and distinguishes it from manslaughter. If indifference were essential to liberty and free agency, as Arminians contend, holy angels, and the spirits of the just made perfect, could neither be virtuous nor free agents. Nay, the Deity himself could neither be virtuous nor free ! None of these has a liberty of indifference, they are all *wholly* and *invariably* inclined to good. Nor could devils and damned souls be virtuous ; for they have no liberty of indifference : they are *wholly* and *invariably* inclined to evil. To such absurd conclusions, Arminian ideas of liberty and free agency unavoidably lead.\*

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\* Some Arminian writers almost admit those conclusions. "The moment Adam committed this one act of disobedience,"—says Mr. M'Affee in his Rational and Scriptural Investigation—"he entailed on himself a state of debilitation, which laid him under the necessity of following his corrupt inclinations without any power to resist them."—Again ; (p. 19,) he says, "The first act of disobedience, therefore, rendered Adam as guilty as he ever after could become ; because it rendered his after actions necessary, and consequently as such they were incapable of incurring additional guilt."—"Hence I come to this conclusion"—says the same writer in the same page—"That had Adam lived 930 years after his fall without any restoration of his lapsed powers, his guilt would have been no greater than it was upon the perpetration of his first sin." Now, if, in consequence of his inability, it was impossible for Adam after the fall to commit sin ; surely it is equally impossible for the damned in the place of misery to commit sin ; for their inability is at least as great as that of Adam.

Were the distinction between natural freedom and moral freedom, natural ability and moral ability, carefully observed, the controversy between Arminians and Calvinists would, I humbly conceive, soon terminate. When such distinctions are confounded, Calvinism appears an *absurd*,

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Upon the same principle, it is equally impossible for the devil and his angels to commit sin; for their inability, also, is equally great. When the celebrated Mr. Wesley first taught, that believers in this life may arrive at such a state of perfection as to live without sin, many were astonished. But the disciple has far outdone the master. Mr. M'Asce, on Arminian principles, has proved—not that believers can live without sin; this would be a small thing; but he has proved—that *Adam after the fall, independent of a Redeemer, and without the aid of divine grace, or influence of the blessed Spirit, could have lived without sin 930 years*—Yes, NINE HUNDRED AND THIRTY YEARS!! Now, if this “able antagonist” has succeeded in establishing this conclusion—and on Arminian principles the conclusion is undeniable—with still greater force of evidence he may conclude, that the sin of the “*old Serpent the devil and Satan*” is no greater now than the moment he fell! Though in Scripture, the devil is represented as that “*wicked one who sinneth from the beginning, and goeth about as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour;*” yet, according to Mr. M'Asce's principles, he and all his angels are living lives of perfect innocence!—they have lived without sin nearly six thousand years!—and will so live to all eternity! On the same principles, the damned in the place of misery and wo live without sin!—and hell itself is a place of *sinless perfection!!!*—Having mentioned sinless perfection, I beg the reader's indulgence whilst I offer a few observations on the doctrine.—The advocates of this opinion brand us with infamy, as holding a “death purgatory,” because we believe, that no man is totally freed from sin till the moment of death. They stigmatize us as Antinomians. Now, in all my life, I never knew an instance in which a charge could with more justice and truth be retorted. The advocates of sinless or Christian perfection do not pretend that they can live without sin with respect to the *old moral law given to Adam*; but only with respect to a *new law*, which they call a *law of liberty*. And thus they bring their hearers to a state of perfection, not by bringing them up to the law, but by bringing the law down to them—not by making them conform to the pure and holy law of God, but by making that pure and holy law conform to their obliquities—not by making the object measured conform to the rule, but the rule to the object measured! By such ingenious management as this, the most crooked object in nature might be proved to be straight! Thus it appears, that Christian perfection is attained at the expense of bending and bringing down the law of God, and lowering the standard of Christian morality. If this is not Antinomianism, I should be glad to know what it is. The trite observation, that extremes are nearest meeting, is here remarkably verified. The Arminian who cries up good works, and the Antinomian who cries them down, meet in this point—opposition to the pure and perfect law of God. The very attempt to lower the standard of morality proves imperfection. If we say we are perfect, we prove ourselves perverse.



*unreasonable*, and *horrible* system.—We are commanded to obey the whole law of God—to believe, repent, &c.—and yet, according to the Calvinistic system, we can no more do these things than we can remove mountains. We are commanded to do things which we *cannot* do—things which are *impossible*—and punished for *not doing them!* This is regarded by Arminians as hard, unjust, and cruel. And, indeed, it would be so, were the inability *natural* and not *moral*. Nothing could be more unjust, than to command a man to walk without legs, or to fly without wings, and then punish him for disobedience. But this moral inability of man—his inability to believe, repent, and obey—is of a *quite different nature*. It consists not in the want of *natural powers*; but in the want of *will and inclination*. Were a man ever so willing, he could not walk without legs, or fly without wings, or remove mountains: these are natural impossibilities. But if a man were willing to believe, repent, and obey, these duties would be performed. The *inability*? or impossibility, consists in the want of will and inclination. Ye will not come to me, says our Saviour, that ye may have life. It is accepted, says the Apostle Paul, according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not, if there be first a willing mind.

To these observations it may be objected, that the darkness of the understanding, as well as the obstinacy of the will, may be regarded as a cause of unbelief, impenitence or disobedience. I grant it. But I humbly conceive, that no darkness, blindness, or ignorance is at all criminal, any farther than as it is *voluntary*, or connected with the inclination or disposition of the heart. This I consider to be not only a dictate of common sense, but also of divine revelation. This is the condemnation, that light has come into the world, and that men *love* darkness rather than light. It is not men's darkness, blindness, or ignorance that is here represented as the ground of their condemnation, but their *love* of that darkness. Unregenerate men love darkness and hate the light. It is because men receive not the *love* of the truth—not the truth, but the *love* of the truth—that God gives them over to strong delusion, to believe lies, that all may be damned who believe not the truth, but have pleasure in unrighteousness. Thus it appears, that the inability of fallen man is a *moral* inability, consisting, not in the want of *natural powers*, but rather in the want of *will and inclination*. Such inability is per-

fectly consistent with natural freedom, and is no excuse for disobedience, unbelief, or impenitence. Every person who thinks at all, must at once see, that disinclination to what is *right*, can never be an apology for what is *wrong*. Disinclination to obedience can never be an apology for disobedience. If disinclination to virtue were an apology for vice, the greater the aversion or disinclination, the better the apology; which is evidently absurd. That inability, which consists in a man's want of will and inclination to do his duty, is so far from being an excuse, that it is the very thing in which his criminality consists. The greater a man's *natural inability* to do his duty, he is the more *excusable*; the greater his *moral inability*, he is the more *inexcusable*—the more *guilty*. The greater a man's propensity to vice, the greater is his inability to practise virtue. If such inability were an excuse, then the greater the inability the *better* the excuse. On this principle, it would be wise to confirm the habits of vice and immorality. On this principle, the more *wicked* any person is, he is the more *innocent*! The more wicked he is, he is the less able to do his duty; and the less able to do his duty, he is the less guilty for neglecting it: of course, when he is so desperately wicked, so completely depraved, that he is totally unable to do his duty, then he has *no guilt at all*; but is completely *innocent*! Such is the monstrous conclusion, to which we must necessarily come, if we deny that moral slavery is consistent with natural freedom—or if we deny that there is any distinction between natural and moral inability—or if we deny that moral inability is inconsistent with guilt or blame. Inattention to the distinction between natural and moral inability, natural and moral necessity, natural and moral impossibility, &c. has been the cause of interminable disputes, and inextricable confusion. The distinction has in general been but ill understood. It has been a thousand times confounded both by Calvinists and Arminians. Whenever a Calvinist confounds the distinction, he betrays his cause; and often has the cause been so betrayed. 'Arminians constantly confound the distinction. I have never yet met with any plausible Arminian reasoning, but what proceeded on the principle, that there is *no distinction* between natural and moral inability, necessity, &c. Were the principle on which Arminians proceed correct—were there no distinction between natural and moral inability, &c.—I would have no hesitation in saying, that their

reasonings are *completely conclusive*, and that I myself would become an Arminian immediately. But I am not more convinced of my own existence, than I am that the distinction is well founded; and, of course, that the Arminian reasonings are altogether inconclusive and sophistical. They may be resolved into that species of sophism which logicians denominate *ignorantia elenchi*, or a mistake of the question. Even Doctor Reid himself, (one of the most eminent moral philosophers,) falls into this sophism. He supposes a sailor to maim himself, in order to be exempted from duty—and that his captain commands him, thus maimed, to climb the shrouds, and punishes him for disobedience. The Dr. conceives that this would be great cruelty; and so it would. But between this case and that of fallen man there is no analogy. The one is *natural*, the other is *moral*. The sailor could not obey, were he ever so willing: not so with fallen man. His inability consists in the want of will and inclination. Let us suppose another sailor, who has the use of all his limbs, but is, at the same time, of such a malignant disposition and stubborn temper, and has conceived such an implacable hatred towards his captain, and unconquerable aversion to his duty, that he cannot obey. This sailor, as well as the former, may be unable to climb the shrouds. But, surely, their cases are very different. The former might be justly blamed for maiming himself, but, after he was maimed, he could not be blamed for not using those limbs which he did not possess. To command, invite, and exhort him to do his duty, and punish him for not doing it, would be the greatest injustice and cruelty. But there would be no injustice, nor yet cruelty, in commanding, inviting, and exhorting the latter sailor, whose inability to obey arose, not from the want of physical strength, but from *stubbornness* and *obstinacy*—not from any deficiency in his limbs, but from *enmity* and *aversion*. The case of this latter sailor, and not of the former, represents the situation of fallen man. His inability is moral, and not physical. Were his inability physical, it would be altogether unjust and cruel to command, invite, or entreat him, and then to punish him for unbelief or disobedience. But his inability is *moral*, and, therefore, there is no injustice or cruelty at all. Were man's inability natural, God would be obliged to remove that inability before he could justly issue any commands. On this supposition, Arminian ideas would be per-



fectly correct. But the inability is *moral*, and God is not obliged to remove *this species of inability* before he issues his commands.

That God is obliged to remove man's moral inability, and to give him grace, which if he improve he shall be saved, seems to me to be the GREAT FUNDAMENTAL ERROR of the Arminian system. It is this radical mistake, I humbly conceive, which leads Arminians into all their other errors. That I am fully justified in thinking so, will appear from the following remarks of the learned Divinity Professor, Doctor Graves: (p. xiv.) "But it seems to me, that to prove  
 " God vouchsafes divine grace to all to whom is promul-  
 " gated his revealed will, it is sufficient to show, that in such  
 " Revelation he commands an obedience requiring such  
 " divine assistance, for it is inconsistent with all he teaches  
 " us of his attributes, to suppose that he would command  
 " what could not be performed, or rather withhold the  
 " means of performing what he commands. Nor can I  
 " agree to the doctrine that would impute to that Deity  
 " who punished Pharaoh for demanding the same tale of  
 " bricks while he withheld the straw, a system of moral  
 " government which would be equally inconsistent with his  
 " mercy and justice. Whenever this revealed will then is  
 " promulgated, I would assert, that this power is commu-  
 " nicated in different degrees indeed, as God sees fit to deal  
 " out the measure of his grace; but to all, what if used  
 " would lead to further grace and ultimate salvation,\* and  
 " if neglected shall rise up in witness, and condemn the  
 " despisers of God's holy will."—(See also, p. 211.)  
 In this quotation, the Doctor concludes, that because God gives commands which cannot be obeyed without grace and assistance, he therefore gives grace and assistance to all to

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\* If, as Arminians contend, there is so much grace given to all, that if they improve it they shall be saved, I ask, how much improvement is necessary to secure salvation? What endeavours are necessary? If a man use half the endeavours in his power, will this be sufficient—will *one-third* do? or must he use *two-thirds*? Where must the line be drawn? It must be somewhere. Suppose at one half. The man, therefore, who uses half the endeavours in his power, obtains grace, and is saved; but he who does not come up to this line, though within a hair-breadth of it, is condemned. One man goes to eternal happiness, and the other to eternal misery, and yet there was only a hair-breadth's difference in point of exertion or improvement! Let Doctor Graves solve this difficulty.—See *Edwards's Remarks*.

whom those commands are addressed. Now, here lies the *grand error*. If our inability to obey were *natural*, the Doctor would be right ; but it is *moral*, and therefore he is mistaken. God commands us to believe, to repent, and to love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, strength, and mind, and our neighbour as ourselves. These commands, without divine assistance, we can no more obey than we can remove mountains. But our inability is no excuse : it is the very thing in which our criminality consists. Our inability is great. No power less than omnipotent can remove it. But all this proves the greatness of our criminality—the enormity of our guilt. Our inability is great, because our *pride is great*, our *hatred is implacable*, our *enmity irreconcilable*. Would any rational being venture to apologize for his unbelief, disobedience, and impenitence, thus : *I hate my God* : my mind is filled with enmity against him ; and therefore I cannot be justly commanded to love him !—*I hate my Redeemer* : I see no form nor comeliness in him—no beauty why I should admire him ; and therefore I cannot be justly commanded to believe in him !—I would rather die in my sins than accept of salvation through his blood ! I must therefore be excused, though, by my unbelief, I make God a liar, trample under foot the blood of my Redeemer, and do despite to the spirit of grace, who stands knocking at the door of my heart ! My enmity is so great, I cannot help it !—*I hate the pure and holy law of my God* : my mind is full of enmity against it : I cannot, therefore, be justly commanded to obey it !—I must be excused, though I trample it under my feet !—*I love my sins* : I roll them as a sweet morsel under my tongue ; and therefore I cannot repent of them nor turn from them : I would rather die in them, and be eternally punished for them ! In short ; *my pride and my hatred are so great*, that I can neither love God, nor his law, nor his Son !—*My enmity is so great*, that I can neither believe, repent, nor obey ; and therefore faith, repentance, and obedience, cannot be justly required, unless God grant his grace and assistance !—Would any of the sons of apostate Adam dare thus to apologize for their unbelief, impenitence, or disobedience ? Have such monsters of wickedness any claims on divine grace or assistance ? Is it not a miracle of mercy, that God does not pour on such miscreants the cataracts of his wrath, and consign them to eternal separation from his presence—“ unrespited, unpitied,

“unreprieved?” Is it not a miracle of mercy, that instead of making bare his red right arm, and hurling against such rebels the thunderbolts of his vengeance, he has sent his Son to *save* them—to *die* for them? Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he first loved us. While we were *enemies* we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son.

The Arminians are guilty of two grand mistakes: 1, In supposing, that God was in justice obliged to provide a remedy, and to put salvation in the power of such rebels. 2, In supposing, that his perfections oblige him to remove our moral inability, and to make us willing to accept of that remedy. We maintain, that the Deity is under *no* such obligations. What! when God’s own children, whom he has nourished and brought up—to whom he has given life, and breath, and all things—when these unnatural children turn round on their heavenly Father, and, with hearts filled with enmity, lift hostile arms, and wage impious war, against him who is the author of their existence, the length of their days, and the source of all their enjoyments—instead of crushing such rebels under his feet, or dashing them to pieces like a potter’s vessel, is the insulted governor of the universe obliged to put into their power the means of salvation? *Surely not.* When they had so basely forfeited his favour, he was under no obligation to make provision for their happiness. Or, if any will be so unreasonable as to affirm, that his perfections obliged him to make such provision, they will be forced to admit, as we have already shown, *that there is no grace in such provision—that it is purely a debt.*

Again; if God was not obliged to make provision for the recovery of his rebel offspring—if he was not obliged to provide a cure, much less was he obliged to make them willing to accept of that cure—if he was not obliged to offer them a reprieve, much less was he obliged to make them willing to *accept* of that reprieve—if he was not obliged to *loosen their chains, and open their prison doors*, much less was he obliged to make them willing to walk forth to liberty and life. Can God not command us to accept of that remedy which he has provided at infinite expense?—can he not command us to accept of a reprieve? and when our chains are loosened, and our prison doors thrown wide open, can he not command us to walk forth to liberty and life?—can he not issue these infinitely gracious commands till he



has previously given us will and inclination to obey them?—Surely, nothing can be more absurd, or unreasonable than such a supposition. Should Arminians reply, We do not say that God is obliged to give us will and inclination—I ask, What then do you mean by power to obey the commands of God? If you mean *natural power* or *natural faculties*, we have no dispute with you on this subject: but if you mean *moral power*, that is nothing else than will and inclination. The supposition that God is obliged to vouchsafe his assisting grace to enable men to obey his commands, is, in every view of the subject, absurd. For, if God is obliged to vouchsafe his grace, that grace vouchsafed is no longer grace, it is a debt. That which God in justice is bound to give, is not grace. Dr. Graves, and other Arminian writers, talk absurdly, and are guilty of a gross abuse of language, when they call by the name of grace, that assistance which they allege God is bound to give in order to enable us to obey his precepts.—They should either give up their system, or, at least, they should call things by their proper names. From their vocabulary the word *grace* should be entirely expunged. It is a gross misnomer.

Both Arminians and Calvinists agree in this, that man, in his natural state, without divine assistance, is utterly unable to believe, repent, and obey. This inability, as we have already seen, arises from, or rather consists in, our moral depravity. This depravity is *universal*. There is none that doeth good; no, *not one*. It is *total*. All the faculties of the soul are depraved—the understanding—the will—the affections—the imagination—the conscience—the heart. Men in their natural state (Eph. iv. 18,) have their “*understanding* darkened, being alienated from the life of “ God through the ignorance that is in them, because of “ the blindness of their heart.”—Their *will* and *affections* are carnal, and filled with enmity. (Rom. viii. 7,) “ The “ carnal mind is enmity against God: it is not subject to “ his law, neither indeed can be.”—Men in their natural state are “ haters of God, and live hateful, and hating one “ another.” “ Madness is in their heart.” It is “ deceit- “ ful above all things, and desperately wicked.” “ Every “ imagination is only evil continually.” The state of fallen man involves in it two things, *guilt* and *depravity*. Guilt is removed by the atoning blood of Jesus, as we have already seen; and depravity is removed by the renovating and sanctifying influence of the Holy Ghost. Dr. B. main-

tains, that baptism is regeneration.\* To expect any subsequent regeneration, he stigmatises as rank enthusiasm. He is not the first master in Israel who knew not these things, and needed to be taught the first principles of the oracles of God. Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews, was also ignorant of this great important doctrine. Our Saviour assures him, that he needed not only baptism by water, but regeneration by the power of the Holy Ghost. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a man be born of water and of the spirit, he cannot see the kingdom of God. Baptism with water was the sign; but *regeneration*, or the *new birth*, was the thing signified. Water is the great regenerating agent in the *natural world*; the holy spirit in the *moral world*. The one is a fit emblem of the other. The vegetable world during the winter is in a state of decay. By the vernal showers it is regenerated, and the decayed face of the earth renewed.—In like manner, by the blessed spirit of all grace the souls of men are renewed, and the *moral world* regenerated. (Is. xlv. 3, 4,) “For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring: And they shall spring up as among the grass, as willows by the water courses.”—Old and New Testaments unite in teaching the same blessed doctrine. (Titus, iii. 5,) “Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost.” We may as well expect the renovating of the vegetable world without water, as the regeneration of the moral without the all-powerful influence of the Divine Spirit. The same divine influence which created the world and raised the dead, is necessary to the restoration of our fallen nature, and regeneration of our perverted faculties. To illuminate our darkened understanding, requires the influence of that omnipotent agent, who said, “Let there be light, and there was light.” It is the same Almighty Being that commanded the light to shine out of darkness,

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\* Dr. Mant, now Lord Bishop of Down and Connor, in his Bampton Lectures, and the Bishop of Lincoln, in his Refutation of Calvinism, advocate the same dangerous and uncharitable doctrine. For a refutation of it, the reader may consult the work of an eminent Divine of the Church of England,—*Scott's Remarks on the Refutation of Calvinism*.

who shines in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of his son Jesus Christ. Some imagine, that as light expels darkness, so all that is necessary to expel the darkness of our minds is the light of the divine word. This, however, is a gross fallacy. Light, indeed, introduced into a dark room will banish the darkness; but it will not give light to a man born blind. With regard to such a man, it is not only necessary that he should be introduced to the light, but, in order that he may profit by it, the cataract must be couched; his eyes must be opened. Just so with the natural man.—He requires not only an external revelation, but an internal illumination. Hence the judicious prayer of David, “Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wonderful things out of thy law.” Were Dr. B. to offer the same prayer, it might not be unprofitable.—By divine illumination he might be brought to see in the sacred volume many wonderful things which he has never yet seen; particularly the necessity of the new birth—the necessity of a regeneration quite different from water baptism.

The omnipotent power of the blessed spirit is not only necessary to open the darkened understanding, but also to bend the stubborn will. We have already seen, that men are naturally unwilling to come to the Redeemer that they may have life; and that the carnal mind is enmity against God: but God sends forth the rod of his strength out of Zion, and makes his people willing in the day of his power. (Psal. cx. 3.)—By the powerful energy of the blessed spirit, he destroys the enmity of the carnal mind, and sheds abroad divine love in the heart.—In a word; man by nature is spiritually dead—dead in trespasses and sins. To raise him from his spiritual death, and enable him to walk with Jesus in newness of life, requires an exertion of divine power equal to that which raises the dead. To enable an unregenerated man to believe, requires not only the power of God, but the *exceeding greatness* of his power. (Eph. i. 19,) “And what is the *exceeding greatness* of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead.” The same Apostle prays for the Thessalonians, “That God would fulfil all the good pleasure of his will, and the work of faith with *power*.” It is the powerful agency of that same spirit which entered into Ezekiel’s dried bones, that quickens dead sinners—that



begins the good work of grace, and carries it on to perfection till the day of Christ Jesus. It is the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus that makes us free from the law of sin and death. By his blessed agency, sinners are created anew in Christ Jesus unto good works—they are renewed in the spirit of their minds—old things pass away, and all things become new. My readers are now left to judge, what kind of a system that must be, which does not embrace, but rather excludes, the regenerating and sanctifying influences of the Holy Ghost.

Should any person ask, Is it the duty of fallen man to regenerate himself? I answer, *It is*. Many, I know, will be astonished at this answer. They will be ready to exclaim; What! The duty of fallen man to regenerate himself! What monstrous absurdity! Might he not, with as much reason, be required to create himself? or to raise himself from the dead?—By no means: though the impossibility in the one case is as great as that in the other, it is of a quite different nature; and therefore the greatness of the impossibility does not affect the obligation of the duty, nor render the requirement of it unreasonable. That it is the duty of fallen man to regenerate himself, cannot reasonably be doubted by any who believe the Bible to be the word of God. In the sacred volume, we are expressly enjoined to regenerate ourselves. (Ezekiel, xviii. 31.) “Make you a new heart, and a new spirit.” Now, if regeneration, or the making of a new heart and a new spirit, were not a duty, it would not be enjoined. The righteous governor of the universe cannot possibly issue any command, which it is not our duty to obey. His commandments are not grievous: they are all holy, just, and good. Would it be unjust or cruel in a husband to address his unfaithful spouse thus: Break off your adulterous connexions, and become a *new woman*. Be a faithful, loving, and obedient wife. Be no longer “for another man, and so will I also be for thee.”—Would such an address be unreasonable or cruel? *Surely not*. Such an abandoned female might indeed find it as great an impossibility to become a new woman—to become a faithful, loving, and obedient wife—as to create herself out of nothing, or to raise herself from the dead. But surely every person must see, that such impossibility, arising from dissipation and depravity, could not possibly be any excuse—it could not possibly relax her obligations to duty and obedience.

I ask again : Would it be unjust or cruel in a father to address his prodigal son thus : Leave off your courses of dissipation and prodigality. Become a new man. Behave as a dutiful and obedient son, and you shall be heir of all my possessions ?—Would such requisitions be unjust or cruel ? Surely not. And yet the son might be such an abandoned and dissipated character, that he could no more obey his father's injunctions, than he could raise the dead or create a new world. Why then may not God, our heavenly Father, address us, his prodigal and rebellious offspring in similar language ? Why may he not say unto us, " Repent and turn yourselves from your transgressions ; so " iniquity shall not be your ruin. Cast away from you all " your transgressions whereby ye have transgressed ; and " make you a new heart, and a new spirit ; for why will ye " die ? " When enjoined to make a new heart and new spirit, all that is required is, to love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, strength and mind, and our neighbour as ourselves. Is it unreasonable, I ask, for God to require of us to love himself, and to love one another ? Surely nothing can be more reasonable. It is true, I acknowledge, that in our present depraved state we can no more comply with those reasonable requisitions, than we could create ourselves out of nothing, or raise the dead. But such inability proves what ?—It fully proves, that we are MONSTROUSLY DEPRAVED, DESPERATELY WICKED, AND QUITE INEXCUSABLE.

With regard to the unfaithful wife and prodigal son mentioned above, would any one say, that the husband, after making the gracious proposals previously stated, was obliged, moreover, to change his wife's depraved and dissipated mind ?—that he was obliged to change her hatred and disaffection into love ?—or that the father was obliged to eradicate his son's vicious habits and corrupt propensities, and to infuse into his mind filial piety and virtuous affections ? Surely this would be highly unreasonable. But perhaps it may be said, the cases are not parallel. The husband was not able to change the dispositions of his wife, nor the father of his son, but God is able to change the dispositions of all his children. I grant it. But because he is able, is he therefore bound to do it ? Surely not. He is able in a moment to eradicate every vestige of wickedness out of the minds both of men and devils, but he is not therefore bound to do it. He is neither bound to prevent men from sinning,

nor, after they have sinned, is he under the smallest obligation to eradicate their depravity, and restore them again to a state of holiness and bliss. If he were bound to do these things, the operation, as I stated before, would not be *grace*, but *debt*.

The learned professor of Divinity in Trinity College, and Arminians in general, maintain, that God has *conditionally* bound himself to give a new heart, faith, repentance, and other graces. They allege, that he has engaged to give these things to all who sincerely seek them. He has promised, they tell us, to give his holy spirit to them that ask him.

In all this there is a complete fallacy. Arminians here are altogether mistaken. In the whole sacred volume there is not a single promise made to the prayers or endeavours of unregenerate men. In the prayers and endeavours of unregenerate men there is nothing of the nature of true virtue—nothing that is well pleasing in the sight of God. Their prayers and other endeavours cannot be acceptable, because they do not proceed from *faith*; for without faith it is impossible to please God—they cannot be acceptable, because they do not proceed from *love*. Nothing can be acceptable that proceeds from a mind filled with enmity. If we give all our goods to feed the poor, and have not charity, (*love*) it will profit us nothing. Finally, unregenerate men have no regard to the *divine glory*, and therefore their prayers and other endeavours are altogether unacceptable. Whether we eat, or drink, or whatever we do, all should be done to the glory of God. Arminians talk absurdly when they talk of the *sincere* prayers and endeavours of unregenerate men. In an unrenewed heart—in a heart filled with pride, enmity, and unbelief, there can be no *true* sincerity—no *godly* sincerity. There may be a sincere desire to *avoid misery*, or a sincere desire to be *happy*. The Devil himself has this sincerity. But there is no sincere *love to God*—no sincere *love to his law*—no sincere *love to holiness*. In a word; an unregenerate man has no sincerity which is truly virtuous, and, on this account, well pleasing in the sight of God. God has not promised his spirit, as Arminians suppose, in answer to the prayers of unregenerate men. It is true he has promised his holy spirit to them that ask him: but how must they ask? Is it not in faith? And does not faith presuppose



regeneration?—and does not regeneration presuppose a previous influence of the Holy Ghost?

When our Saviour says, Ask and ye shall receive, and assures us that every one that asks receives, &c. he only intends that species of asking, seeking, and knocking, which is accompanied with faith. (Matt. xxi. 22,) “All things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, *believing*, ye shall receive.” The Apostle James teaches the same doctrine. (James i. 5, 6,) “If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God—but let him ask in *faith*, nothing wavering.” That the promises of the Gospel are not made to every species of asking, seeking, and knocking, is evident, not only from the above cited texts, but the spirit of God positively declares, with regard to certain characters who are not believers, (Prov. i. 28,) “Then shall they call, but I will not answer: they shall seek me early, but shall not find me.” It is only the prayer of faith that God has promised to hear: and faith, the Apostle assures us, is not of ourselves, it is the gift of God.\*

Dr. Graves fully admits, (p. 273,) that we cannot pray acceptably till God previously pour upon us a spirit of grace and supplication: and thus we are furnished with a striking example of that species of sophism, which logicians denominate “reasoning in a circle,” or the “circulating syllogism.” Ask Doctor Graves how we are to obtain faith; he will say, *By prayer*. Ask him again, How can we pray acceptably? he will reply, *By faith*. That is to say, acceptable prayer precedes faith, and yet faith precedes acceptable prayer! Such is the contradiction in which the Arminian system involves one of its most learned advocates!

It is therefore abundantly evident, that when a man believes and repents, God is the *first mover*. It is God that

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\* Arminians endeavour to evade the force of this text by a grammatical criticism. They say, it cannot be *faith* that is the gift of God; for the relative *ταυτο*, being in the neuter gender, cannot agree with *πιστις*, which is feminine. Now, if this criticism be admitted to be just, upon the very same principle, Arminians might contend, that in Phil. i. 28, salvation is not said to be of God; for *ταυτο*, in the neuter gender can no more agree with the antecedent *πιστις* in the *one case*, than with *πραγμα* in the other. The truth is, that in these cases, and others that might be adduced, the neuter relatives do not refer immediately to the feminine nouns that precede them, but to the word *σπινθηρας* understood.

has made that man to differ from his unbelieving and impenitent neighbours. The Arminian says, No. The man himself was the first mover. By his earnest prayers he moved God to grant him faith and repentance. But, let me ask the Arminian, who poured upon him this spirit of grace and supplication? who enabled him to pray so fervently? Surely it was God. The Deity then was *still* the first mover, and still it was God that made him to differ. Dr. Graves maintains, that all the divine promise and dispensations are conditional. I grant, indeed, that certain privileges are promised on certain conditions; but then I maintain, that, in all those who are saved, God himself works *those very conditions*. Salvation is promised on the condition of faith; but, in all those who are saved, God himself works this condition. Faith is the gift of God. Jesus Christ is both the author and finisher of faith. Unto you it is *given*, says the Apostle, not only to *believe*, but to suffer for his name. The conditions which are mentioned in Scripture, are conditions of connexion. There is a real and inviolable connexion between faith and salvation. It is the duty of all to believe, and all who believe shall be saved. These propositions are both true—but it is equally true, that none will believe, but those whom God by his omnipotent grace persuades and enables to embrace Jesus Christ, freely offered to them in the Gospel. To all others the Redeemer may say, as he said to the unbelieving Jews, “Ye will not come unto me that ye may have life.” No less unwilling are those who believe, till in the day of his power God *makes them willing*. The careful student of the sacred volume will easily perceive, that what God enjoins as a condition, and commands as a duty, he has elsewhere promised as a *privilege*. Wash ye, make ye clean, is a duty commanded; but what is thus commanded is elsewhere promised. (Ez. xxxvi. 25,) “Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean; from all your filthiness and from all your idols, will I cleanse you.” The conditional promises to all the heirs of glory are converted into absolute promises. For instance, “If ye are willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land,” is a conditional promise, but it is turned into an absolute promise thus; “Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power.” Arminians look only at *one* side of the subject, at the *conditions* of the promises; but they seem to forget that those very conditions God has promised effectually to

work in the souls of all who shall be finally saved. Supposing, for a moment, the Arminian doctrine to be true, that all the promises are conditional, and that the conditions of the promises depend on the self-determining power of the will; then it is possible that *no promise should ever be fulfilled*. For example, "He that believes shall be saved," is a conditional promise. Now, if it depend on the free will of every man whether he believe or not—if every individual may reject the Gospel, then all may reject it, and none may be saved! According to this Arminian tenet, it is in the power of free will to frustrate the whole work of redemption. God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life; but the free will of man may render all this love useless. Notwithstanding this love, all may perish and not one be saved. Jesus Christ loved his church and gave himself for her.

"He was betrayed, forsook, denied,  
 "Wept, languished, prayed, bled, thirsted, groaned and died;  
 "Hung, pierced and bare, insulted by the foe,  
 "All heaven in tears above, man unconcerned below!"

—But it is in the power of free will to render all that Jesus Christ has done and suffered quite vain and without effect. His love may have been exercised in vain, his blood may have been shed in vain, and the ransom, the price of our redemption, paid in vain! Doctor Graves tells us, that the Holy Spirit may be resisted, quenched, and grieved: upon his own principles he might have added—that his mission, and all his gracious operations, may, by the free will of the creature, be rendered altogether vain and ineffectual.

"Time flies, death urges, knells call, heaven invites,  
 "Hell threatens: all exerts; in effort, all;  
 "More than creation labours."

—But all the exertions of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost—of prophets and apostles, pastors and teachers—of God, angels and men—all these mighty and combined exertions to save sinners, may ultimately prove utterly abortive: the perverse will of man may completely counteract and frustrate them all!—the old serpent may prevail over the seed of the woman—Michael and his angels may be completely foiled, whilst the devil and his angels enjoy an eternal triumph! All this may be done by Arminian free will! Free



will must turn the balance ; free will must decide, whether the dragon or the lamb shall be ultimately victorious ! According to the Arminian system, and the plain language of an Arminian poet,

— “ God *wills*—Almighty man *decrees*,  
“ *Man* is the maker of the almighty fates.”

By the omnipotent power of free will the almighty power of God may be counteracted, and all the promises he has made relative to the success of his Son's undertaking, may fail of accomplishment ! God, who cannot lie, promised eternal life before the world began ; but Arminian free will can frustrate this promise !—God, who cannot lie, promised that Jesus Christ shall see his seed, and prolong his days, and that the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand ; but Arminian free will may determine, in opposition to all these promises—that the Redeemer shall never see one of his seed—one of the travel of his soul—that he shall never be satisfied, but for ever discontent—that the pleasure of the Lord shall never prosper in his hand—that he shall never obtain the heathen for his inheritance, nor the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession ! These promises, with regard to us, are all, I humbly conceive, *absolute* ; but free will can frustrate them all ! It depends on free will, according to the Arminian, whether any one of them shall ever be accomplished ! In vain do Arminians attempt to evade the force of the preceding reasoning, by saying, that God foreknew that free will would determine otherwise. The evasion will not do. It makes bad worse. The foreknowledge of contingent events involves a contradiction, as we shall afterwards see : and we all know that contradictions can solve no difficulties.

But were we to suffer such contradictions to pass ; and were we to admit that God foresees that some will believe, though at the same time they may never believe—*still the evasion would not do*. Were every iota to come to pass exactly as God had promised, still it was not *God* that fulfilled those promises. Were I to promise that Dr. Graves shall preach first Christmas-day in the Castle Chappel—and that the Lord Lieutenant shall be a hearer ; and were all this to come to pass as I had promised ; surely nobody would say that I fulfilled the promise. The Doctor's preaching does not depend upon *my* will but upon his *own* will—the Lord Lieutenant's hearing does not depend upon *my* will

but upon *his own*. Supposing, therefore, that the one should preach, and the other should hear, as I had promised, surely it requires no logic to prove, that it was not I who fulfilled the promise. Just so with regard to the promises made to the Redeemer—the fulfilment of them, according to Arminian principles, does not depend on the will of God, but on the free will of the creature. Supposing, therefore, that every iota that God promised to his Son should actually come to pass, still no person could say, that God had fulfilled those promises. On the Arminian hypothesis, it would be impossible for the Deity to fulfil *one* of them!

From the preceding reasoning, I hope it is evident—that when any believe, repent and are saved, it is God who makes them to differ from those who continue in unbelief and impenitence—and if this be so, the doctrine of election and reprobation is established. If God makes a difference, he must have *determined* to make that difference. The Deity can do nothing without *determining* to do it. And as there cannot possibly be any new determination in the divine mind, he must have determined to make that difference from *all eternity*. In other words; from all eternity he must have chosen to salvation all those who shall be finally saved. *This is election*.—On the other hand, God does not work faith, repentance, &c. in the minds of all. He leaves some in their unbelief, impenitence, and wickedness, on account of which he finally condemns them. Of course, he must have *determined* so to do—determined, *not in time*, for there are in the divine mind no new determinations, but from *all eternity*.—*This is reprobation*.—If it is just in God *now in time* to make such distinctions between one class of his rebel subjects and another, where was the injustice in decreeing *from eternity* to make those distinctions? On such principles, as well as on a multitude of express declarations of Scripture, some of which shall be afterwards quoted, I rest the doctrine of predestination.

### SECTION III.

*Election and Reprobation more formally defended; and the attacks of the most eminent Anti-Calvinists repelled.*

The decrees of election and reprobation are stigmatized by Arminians, Socinians and Arians, with the most opprobrious epithets. Dr. Bruce, Dr. Millar, Dr. Graves, and

Bishop Mant, scarcely ever mention them without prefixing such epithets as the following—*arbitrary* and *irrespective*, *cruel* and *unrelenting*, *severe* and *terrific*, *gloomy* and *horrible*! These epithets are generally prefixed in couples, as if one of them would be too little to excite in the minds of men a suitable degree of *horror* and *disgust*.

As an abusive epithet, the adjective *arbitrary* is admirably adapted for exciting an odium. It conveys the idea of something *capricious* and *tyrannical*. If, however, there is nothing capricious or tyrannical in *divine providence*, neither can there be any thing of a capricious or tyrannical nature in the *divine decrees*; for the latter are an exact copy or counterpart of the former. The decrees of God, being the dictates of infinite wisdom, and being infinitely opposed to every thing capricious or tyrannical, are designated, in Scripture—“THE COUNSEL OF HIS WILL.”

The epithet *irrespective* is also well calculated to excite an odium against the doctrine of divine decrees.—In a qualified sense it may indeed be admitted, as applied to election. We have no objection to the term, if it is only meant to convey the idea, that election was not founded on foreseen faith, or good works, or any other virtuous qualification or disposition of its object. In this sense we fully admit that election is *irrespective*. The Arminian doctrine, that election was founded on foreseen faith and good works, has its foundation neither in Scripture, nor in reason, nor yet in the standards of the Church of England. It has no foundation in Scripture. Election, in Scripture, is described as an election of *grace*, and if it be of grace, it is no more of works. In Scripture we read, not that those who were *foreseen to believe* were ordained to eternal life, but that as many were ordained to eternal life believed.

Dr. B. boasts of the simplicity of his system, and wishes his hearers to believe, that, in the support of it, there is no necessity for a deviation from the received version. The reverse, however, is the fact. New translations and verbal criticisms are constantly necessary. Acts xiii, 48, affords a striking example. Our translation, “As many as were ordained to eternal life believed,” is so clear a proof of predestination, that, in order to subvert it, all the powers of verbal criticism have been roused to action. Socinians, Arminians, and Arians, all attack our version. As the case is desperate, the opposition is determined. When the assailants fail in argument, they increase in confidence, and,



by pouring contempt on their Calvinistic opponents, they vainly hope to drive them off the field. Dr. Adam Clarke represents the text as *pitifully* misunderstood by the Calvinists, and the Bishop of Down and Connor quotes with approbation Pyle and Grotius, who pronounce those *blind* who cannot see the propriety of their new version. Dr. A. Clarke very properly observes, that we should be careful to examine what a word means, before we attempt to fix its meaning. He then proceeds thus: "Whatever *τεταγμενοι* " may mean, which is the word we translate *ordained*, it is " neither *προτεταγμενοι* nor *προορισμενοι*, which the Apostle " uses, but *τεταγμενοι*, which includes no idea of preordina- " tion or predestination of any kind." What! Has the Doctor forgotten his favorite maxim, that with the De it past knowledge and present knowledge are the same?— Or does he need to be told, that with God to *destine* and to *predestinate*, to *ordain* and to *preordain*, are all one? The Doctor's criticism, made with so much pomp, depends upon the absurd hypothesis, that there are in the divine mind *new* thoughts, purposes, and determinations! Grant that any were *ordained* to eternal life, and—unless there be in the divine mind variableness and shadow of turning—the conclusion inevitably follows, that they were *pre-ordained*. The word translated *ordained*, our opponents render *disposed*, *well disposed*, or *possessed of good dispositions*. On this translation I would make the following remarks:

1. It substitutes a *far-fetched* meaning (if any meaning at all) for an *ordinary* one. Whether is that system more likely to be true, which takes words in their *common acceptance*, or that which constantly needs the aid of *far-fetched meanings*?

2. I do not conceive that it has ever been satisfactorily proved, that the word has *any such meaning* as that assigned to it by our opponents. The instances adduced by Whitby, to prove that the word signifies persons internally *disposed*, and not outwardly *ordained*—though relied on with great confidence by the Lord Bishop of Down and Conner, and other Anti-Calvinistic writers—appear to me altogether unsatisfactory. If I am not much mistaken, they completely fail in establishing the point. In affixing to a word a meaning which has not been generally received, and which is disputed, it is necessary to quote instances which cannot be explained on the principle of any of its ordinary significations. I lay down this as a canon, which

I flatter myself no candid critic will controvert. On the principle of this canon, I proceed to examine Whitby's instances. His first is, "Acts xx. 13, St. Paul went on foot to Assos " *ἄνω γὰρ ἣν διατεταγμενος*, for so he was disposed to do." Now, I appeal to every candid critic, if the Doctor's translation be not quite *gratuitous*, and if the words would not be more naturally translated thus—*for so he was appointed according to mutual arrangement*. The preposition *δια* shows that an arrangement had been made *between* Paul and the ship's company.

The Doctor's second instance is Ecclus. x. 1, *ἡγεμονία συνέστον τεταγμενη εἶσται*, "The government of the wise man " will be well ordered or disposed." But this refers not to the *internal dispositions of the mind*, but to the *external administration of government*. It is, therefore, totally inapplicable.

His third instance is Philo's address to Cain, "Thou " needest not fear being killed by them who are *ἐν ᾧ* " *τεταγμενοι* *Συμαχία*, "ranked on thy side," *i. e.* of the "same dispositions and affections." Now, to say that this Greek phrase is designed to express the internal dispositions, and not the external hostilities of the enemies of the church, is nothing but a mere begging of the question.

His fourth instance is the words of Philo respecting "those children, who, having had vicious parents, have " themselves proved virtuous." He says that they are *ἀμεινω τεταγμενοι ταξει*, "placed in a better rank." And, speaking of Esau and Jacob, he represents Esau as fierce, subject to anger and other passions, and governed by his brutish part; but Jacob as a lover of virtue and truth, and so *ἐν τῇ βελτιονι τεταγμενον ταξει*, "placed in a better rank " of men, or one of a better temper and disposition." Jacob was placed in a better rank; but who placed him? was it *God* or *himself*? The children mentioned above were placed in a better rank, but who placed them? was it *God* or *themselves*? To say that either Jacob or those children wrought in themselves good dispositions, and by this means placed themselves in a better rank, is a barefaced begging of the question, and contrary to the whole tenor of Revelation. (Rom. ix. 11–13, ("For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or " evil, that the purpose of God according to election might " stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;)) It was

“ said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. As it  
“ is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.”

His fifth instance is still less to the purpose. Samuel was τεταγμενος θεω, “ one well disposed towards God.”—This I regard as a complete mistranslation—θεω is the dative of the agent. The clause should be translated, “ *Samuel was ordained, appointed, or placed by God*” (according as the context may require.) The rule of syntax which warrants this translation is the following : Agens aliquando effertur in dativo ; sic, τι πεπραχται τοις αλλοις ; Quid ab aliis factum est ?

Whitby’s last instance would induce one to think, that he had abandoned the meaning for which he was contending, and had completely come over to the Calvinistic camp. It is the words of Epictetus, απο θεου τεταγμενος εις ταυτην την ταξι, being by God placed in that rank. The person here is represented as placed in a rank, not by his own inclinations or dispositions, but *by God*, or in other words, *by divine ordination and appointment*—God exciting him, as Simplicius interprets.—Now, surely this instance, so far from overturning, completely establishes, the received version. On the whole, we deny the word τεταγμενοι has—in any one of those instances—the meaning which our opponents attempt to impose upon it. The most learned lexicographers and philologists acknowledge *no such meaning*. Schleusner does not recognise it—his translation of the text is, “ Quot quot destinati erant a Deo felicitati Christianorum æternæ.”—And the learned Morus, though a decided Anticalvinist, translates it thus : “ Atque eam (doctrinam) amplexi sunt fide quicunque felicitati æternæ destinati erant.” Whether Dr. A. Clarke’s charge of prejudice do not recoil upon himself, and on Anticalvinists in general, the learned reader is now left to judge. Should criticism fail, the Lord Bishop of Down and Connor imagines he can make his escape, by alleging that God ordained to eternal life the persons mentioned, on the foresight of their good dispositions—but the evasion will not do.—From the beginning of Genesis to the end of Revelation—from the creation of the world down to the present day, his Lordship will not find one single person possessed of good dispositions till implanted by the Almighty. In Scripture we read, not that those who were foreseen to be holy, or possessed of good dispositions, were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, but that “ we



“ were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, *that we might be holy.*”—Holiness and good dispositions are represented, not as the causes or foundation, but as the fruits and effects of election. What our Saviour said to his Disciples in the days of his flesh, is equally applicable to believers in every age, “ Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that you should bring forth much fruit.” As we love God because he first loved us, so we choose him because he first chose us.—(Psal. lxxv. 4) “ Blessed is the man whom thou chooseth, and causest to approach unto thee.”

2. That election is founded on foreseen faith and good works, is contrary, not only to Scripture, but also to reason. On Arminian principles, it involves a contradiction. Arminians allege, that it depends on the free will of the creature whether any believe or do good works. According to them, it is possible that *all* may remain unbelievers and wicked. Now, if the Deity foresee that some will believe and do good works, and yet those persons may *never* believe nor do good works—it follows, that what God foresees as *future* may nevertheless *not be future*—and what he foresees will come to pass may nevertheless *not come to pass*—it follows, that God may be mistaken and disappointed!—that he foresees and does *not* foresee at the same time! I conclude therefore—and I think I do it on the incontrovertible principles of mathematical demonstration—I conclude, that election could not possibly be founded on foreseen faith and good works, because faith and good works, on Arminian principles, could not *possibly* be foreseen.

3. As the doctrine of election founded on foreseen faith and good works is both unscriptural and unreasonable, so it has no foundation in the Articles and Homilies of the Church of England. Bishop Mant, and Doctors Millar and Graves, wish us to believe, that the Thirty-nine Articles are Arminian—and that the clergy of the Church of England were Arminian at the time the Articles were framed: but they labour in vain.—The following extracts from the letters of Dr. Millar, of New-York, abundantly prove the vanity of the attempt. “ Calvin was not only respectfully consulted by the English Reformers; but he had also much influence among them. That great defence was paid to his judgment, will appear from this fact, that on the first appearance of the English Liturgy,

“ it prescribed praying for the dead, chrism, extreme un-  
 “ tion, and other Popish superstitions. These Calvin, in a  
 “ letter to the Protector, very frankly and decidedly blamed.  
 “ The consequence of which was, that all these offensive  
 “ things were left out, agreeably to his advice. Dr. Hey-  
 “ lin himself declares, that these alterations were made in  
 “ compliance with Calvin’s wishes.—“ The first Liturgy,”  
 says he, “ was discontinued, and the second superinduced  
 “ upon it, to give satisfaction unto Calvin’s cavils, the cu-  
 “ riosities of some, and the mistakes of others, his friends  
 “ and followers.” And Dr. Nichols gives us the same in-  
 formation. “ Four years afterwards,” says he, “ the book  
 “ of Common Prayer underwent another review ; wherein  
 “ some ceremonies and usages were laid aside, and some  
 “ new prayers added, at the instance of Mr. Calvin of Ge-  
 “ neva, and Bucer, a foreign Divine who was invited to be  
 “ a Professor at Cambridge.” Nor was the authority of  
 “ Calvin without its influence in drawing up the Articles of  
 “ the Church of England. It is commonly said by our  
 “ Episcopal brethren, that those Articles are anti-Calvinis-  
 “ tic, and that especially on the doctrine of Predestination,  
 “ as exhibited in the seventeenth Article, the Reformers  
 “ hold, and meant to express, a different opinion from those  
 “ of Calvin. Now, it happens, that this Article itself bears  
 “ the most unquestionable internal evidence of the contra-  
 “ ry.—The qualifying clause toward the end of it, which  
 “ has been quoted as decisive proof that the framers reject-  
 “ ed Calvinism, is nearly quoted from Calvin’s Institutes ;  
 “ and the latter part of it is a literal translation of that Re-  
 “ former’s caution against the abuse of this doctrine. For  
 “ evidence of the former, see his Institutes (iii. 2, 4, 5)  
 “ compared with the article.—For proof of the latter, read  
 “ the following—“ Proinde in rebus agendis, ea est nobis  
 “ perspicienda Dei voluntas quam verbo suo declarat.” In-  
 “ stit. i. 17, 5.—Furthermore, in our doings, that will of  
 “ God is to be followed, which we have expressly declared  
 “ to us in the word of God.” Art. 17th.—The Thirty-  
 “ nine Articles of the Church of England are undoubtedly  
 “ Calvinistic. This is proved, not only by the bare inspec-  
 “ tion of the articles themselves, but also by the known  
 “ sentiments of those who framed them ; and by the deci-  
 “ sive interpretation of some of the ablest Bishops and  
 “ other Divines that ever adorned that Church. The same  
 “ convocation which drew up the Thirty-nine Articles, re-

“ viewed, corrected, formally approved, and ordered to be  
 “ published, as it now stands, the celebrated Catechism of  
 “ Dr. Newel.—This Catechism is acknowledged, by the  
 “ worst enemies of Calvin, to be decidedly Calvinistic. It  
 “ is acknowledged to be so by Bishop Cleaver, who, a few  
 “ years ago, gave a new edition of it. And yet the Con-  
 “ vocation, which embraced all the principal Dignitaries of  
 “ the Church, publicly recommended it, “ as a standing  
 “ summary of the doctrines professed in that Church ;”  
 “ and, many years after, it was held in such high esteem  
 “ by Archbishops Whitgift and Parker, and other contem-  
 “ porary Prelates, that even Ministers were enjoined to stu-  
 “ dy it, that they might learn true divinity from it.\* The  
 “ illustrious reformer, and martyr, Bradford, a short time  
 “ before he suffered, wrote and published a decidedly Cal-  
 “ vinistic work on election and predestination, which he  
 “ sent to Archbishop Cranmer, and to Bishops Ridley and  
 “ Latimer, who all gave it their approbation ; after which  
 “ it received the approbation of the rest of the eminent Mi-  
 “ nisters in and about London.”†

“ The famous Lambeth Articles, formed in the reign of  
 “ Queen Elizabeth, are acknowledged by all who ever read  
 “ them, to be among the most strongly Calvinistical com-  
 “ positions that ever were penned. Yet these Articles  
 “ were drawn up and signed by Archbishop Whitgift,  
 “ that very Prelate of whose character and principles Dr.  
 “ Hobart frequently speaks in the most exalted terms, and  
 “ whom he holds up to view as one of the most illustrious  
 “ Divines and fathers of the Church of England. The  
 “ Archbishop was assisted in this service by the Bishops of  
 “ London and Bangor, and by some others. After receiv-  
 “ ing the public approbation of these Dignitaries, the Arti-  
 “ cles were sent to the Archbishop of York and the Bishop  
 “ of Rochester, who also subscribed them. Thus ratified,  
 “ Archbishop Whitgift sent them to the Unisersity of Cam-  
 “ bridge, with a letter, in which he declared, “ That these  
 “ articles were not to be considered as laws and decrees,  
 “ but as propositions, which he and his brethren were per-  
 “ suaded were true, and corresponding with the doctrine

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\* Strype's Annals, 313—316.—Life of Parker, 122, 301.

† Strype's Memorials of Cranmer, p. 350. The editors of the Christian Observer attest that they have seen Bradford's Treatise, and that it is unquestionably Calvinistic.



“ professed in the Church of England, and established by  
 “ the laws of the land.\* Nor is this all : It having been  
 “ suggested by some, that the Archbishop agreed to these  
 “ Articles, rather for the sake of peace, than because he  
 “ believed them ; Strype, his episcopal biographer, repels  
 “ the charge with indignation ; declaring that such an in-  
 “ sinuation is as false as it is mean and disparaging to the  
 “ Primate.† We have seen also in a foregoing part of this  
 “ letter, by the confession of Heylin himself, an implacable  
 “ enemy of Calvin, that the great body of the Bishops and  
 “ other clergy of the Church of England, were doctrinal  
 “ Calvinists, for more than half a century after the articles  
 “ were formed. And we have found a modern Episcopal  
 “ clergyman asserting, on undeniable evidence, that “ Cal-  
 “ vin’s Institutions were read and studied in both the Uni-  
 “ versities by every student in divinity, for a considerable  
 “ portion of a century ; nay, that by a Convocation held at  
 “ Oxford, that book was recommended to the general study  
 “ of the nation.” All the Delegates from the Church of  
 “ England to the Synod of Dort, among whom were Bi-  
 “ shop Carleton, Bishop Hall, and Bishop Devenant, for-  
 “ mally subscribed to the five Calvinistic Articles drawn up  
 “ and adopted by that venerable Synod. On their return  
 “ home, they were attacked by a certain writer, and charg-  
 “ ed with having departed from the public standard of their  
 “ own Church.—Against this attack they thought proper to  
 “ defend themselves, and accordingly wrote a Joint Attest-  
 “ ation, which contains the following passage : “ Whatso-  
 “ ever there was assented unto and subscribed by us, con-  
 “ cerning the Five Articles, either in the joint synodical  
 “ judgment, or in our particular collegiate suffrage, is not  
 “ only warrantable by the Holy Scriptures, but also con-  
 “ formable to the received doctrine of our said venerable  
 “ mother ; which we are ready to maintain and justify  
 “ against all gainsayers.‡ Again, Bishop Hall, in a work  
 “ of his own, addressing some who had charged him, and  
 “ other Bishops of his day, with entertaining Arminian sen-  
 “ timents, as to the doctrine of election, thus indignantly  
 “ replies to the charge—“ You add, Election upon faith

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\* Strype’s Life of Whitgift, p. 461—463.

† Ibid. p. 462.

‡ See their Joint Attestation.

“foreseen.” “What! nothing but gross untruths? Is this the doctrine of the Bishops of England? Have they not strongly confuted it, in *Papists* and *Arminians*? Have they not *cried it down to the lowest pit of Hell*?”

Such are the arguments by which Dr. Millar, of New-York, has proved, that the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England are Calvinistic, and that the great body of the clergy were Calvinists at the time those articles were framed. That the evidence is decisive, I humbly presume, no candid reader will venture to deny. Divines of the Establishment may preach, if they please, the doctrine of election founded on foreseen faith, love, and good works; but let them not charge with that doctrine, either the Thirty-nine Articles, or their *reforming forefathers*. That very doctrine which these modern Divines are now crying up to the starry heavens, the English Divines, the fathers of the Reformation—if we believe Bishop Hall—“*cried down to the lowest pit of hell!*”

Having endeavoured to prove, and I hope with success, that the doctrine of election, founded on foreseen faith and good works, has its foundation, neither in Scripture, reason, nor the Thirty-nine Articles, I would now proceed to observe—that when our opponents characterise election as *irrespective*, if all they mean is, *that election was not founded on any foreseen virtuous qualification of its object*, we have no objection to the application of the epithet. We believe, however, that in the decree of election men were chosen, not only to eternal life, but also to faith, holiness, and all those means which lead to that end. If, in any sense inconsistent with this, our opponents denominate election *irrespective*, we spurn the epithet as inapplicable and unjust.

The great popular outcry against predestination is—that it supersedes the use of means, and is quite inimical to holiness and good works. I regret to find learned Divines reiterating this stale objection, after it has been answered a thousand times. Dr. B. (p. 172) writes thus:

“It (predestination) contradicts every exhortation to holiness and faith, every dissuasive from sin and infidelity, every conditional promise of everlasting life, and every warning against endless perdition, that we find in his (Christ’s) discourses. In fact, if it were true, the mediation, mission, death, and intercession of Christ, would be absolutely nugatory and ineffectual; since they could

“neither improve the condition or prospects of the elect  
 “few, nor redeem the reprobate from that fate to which  
 “they are destined by the eternal and irreversible decree of  
 “the Almighty.”

Powerful reasoning indeed! The purport of it is this :  
 “God decreed to bring the elect to the enjoyment of eternal  
 “life, by means of exhortations, warnings, and promises ;  
 “and therefore, these exhortations, warnings, and promises,  
 “are absolutely nugatory and ineffectual ! God determined  
 “to save the elect by the mediation, mission, death, and  
 “resurrection of Christ ; and therefore the mediation, mis-  
 “sion, death, and resurrection of Christ, are absolutely  
 “nugatory and ineffectual ! God determined to punish the  
 “reprobate for their sin and infidelity ; and therefore every  
 “dissuasive from sin and infidelity, and every warning  
 “against endless perdition, are absolutely nugatory and in-  
 “effectual !” Admirable logic !—Bishop Mant, in his  
 Bampton Lectures (p. 146), urges the same objection—  
 quoting Bishop Sherlock, he writes thus :

“If I be elected, no sins can possibly bereave me of the  
 “kingdom of heaven : if reprobated, no good deeds can  
 “advance me to it.” Such was the language of a German  
 “potentate in former times, when his friends admonished  
 “him of his vicious conversation and dangerous state.  
 “An objection,” remarks Heylin, “not more old than com-  
 “mon : but such, I must confess, to which I never found a  
 “satisfactory answer from the pen of Supralapsarian, or  
 “Sublapsarian, within the small compass of my reading.”

So, it appears, that this old and common objection is, in  
 the estimation of these learned writers, unanswerable. At  
 least, *they* have never met with any satisfactory answer.  
 Now, I do not promise to give a *satisfactory* answer ; for  
 some minds are not easily satisfied ; but with great ease, I  
 can give an answer which *ought* to satisfy. It is this. *The  
 objection separates what God has joined.* Election and ho-  
 liness are inseparably connected in the same decree. We  
 are “chosen to salvation through sanctification of the Spi-  
 “rit and belief of the truth.” But the Arminian objection  
 runs thus : “If I be chosen to salvation through sanctifica-  
 “tion of the Spirit, I shall be saved whether I be sanctified  
 “or not—if I be chosen to salvation through belief of the  
 “truth, I shall be saved whether I believe or not—if God  
 “from all eternity decreed to save me from my sins, I shall  
 “be saved whether I continue in my sins or not !”—Such  
 is the logic of Arminians, by which they hope to overturn



the Calvinistic doctrine of election! Dr. Bruce, and the learned Bishops Sherlock and Mant, might have carried their objection farther, and reasoned thus: "If God determined to save the Apostle Paul by means of a ship, there was no *need* of a ship! If God determined to save the Apostle by the instrumentality of sailors, there was no *need* of sailors!"—When the Apostle Paul declared, "Except these abide in the ship ye cannot be saved," had Dr. B. and the learned Bishops been present, they would have immediately exclaimed, "What! not saved! If God has determined to save you, ye shall be saved whether the sailors abide in the ship or not! God has determined to save you by the medium of a ship, and by the instrumentality of sailors, and therefore the ship and the sailors are *quite nugatory and ineffectual!*" So much for that old and common objection, which Dr. B. relies on with so much confidence, and which the learned and talented Bishops, Sherlock and Mant, consider as altogether unanswerable.

In the divine decrees, means and ends, like links in a chain, are inseparably connected. Now, is it not evident, that the closer the connexion between means and ends, the greater the encouragement to use means. The links of a chain being inseparably connected, when we pull one link, we are quite confident the whole chain will follow. Were the links detached, we would not have the same confidence or encouragement. Such a connexion between means and ends encourages Calvinists to activity and diligence—to avoid all sin and to practise every virtue. They are encouraged to "abound in the work of the Lord, for as much as they know, that their labour shall not be in vain in the Lord."—The Apostle Paul, in spiritual as well as in temporal matters, acted on those consistent principles. He had made his calling and election sure. He was assured that God would preserve him to his heavenly kingdom. But this assurance did not supersede the use of means. He kept under his body, and brought it into subjection, lest, whilst he preached the Gospel to others, he himself should be a castaway. From this and similar texts, Dr. Graves and other Arminians infer, that believers may possibly fall from a state of grace. The inference, however, is completely illegitimate. With equal propriety they might infer from the declaration of the Apostle, "Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved," that it was possible for Paul never to reach Rome, notwithstanding the divine assu-

rance to the contrary. Such propositions show the connexion between means and ends, but do not at all prove the possibility, that either the means should not be employed, or the ends not accomplished. Our Saviour says, speaking of the Father, "I know him; and if I should say I know him not, I would be a liar like unto you." Would any Arminian, from this hypothetical proposition, infer, that it was possible for Jesus Christ, either to deny the Father, or to be a liar? Why then do they infer, from similar propositions, that it is possible for believers to fall away from a state of grace, or the divine decrees to fail of accomplishment?

Having endeavoured to show in what sense election is irrespective; and having endeavoured to prove, that it is not unfavourable to good works, nor inconsistent with the means of grace and salvation; I now proceed to animadvert on the epithets, *arbitrary and irrespective, as applied to reprobation*. In what sense our opponents apply these epithets, will be best understood by a quotation or two. Dr. Graves, (*Predestination*, p. 116), writes thus: "So unboundedly merciful, so unspeakably encouraging, is the genuine doctrine of the Gospel of Peace: how totally repugnant to a scheme which represents, that all who are not in the number of the elect are passed over, rejected, or reprobated by God, who has by an eternal unalterable decree, preordained them, before they were born, to certain and everlasting death; for which God himself prepares them, to which they are devoted, not because he foresees their unworthiness, but solely because he wills it, and which from the very hour of their birth he hath foreordained them not to escape, and hath precluded them from the means of escaping." Bad as this quotation is, it is not so bad as that portion of the Bampton Lectures from which it is extracted. The Bishop's representation of Calvinism was too terrific for the learned Professor. Shuddering at the picture, he broke off the quotation before he came to the end of the description. It runs thus: (*Bampton Lectures*, p. 129) "It is the Calvinistic doctrine, that all those, who are not in the number of the elect, are passed over, rejected, or reprobated by God; who has by an eternal unalterable decree preordained, predestined and doomed them, before they were born, to certain and everlasting death, ruin, perdition and damnation; for which he himself fits and prepares them, to which they

“ are devoted, not because he foresees their unworthiness,  
 “ but solely because he wills it ; and which from the very  
 “ hour of their birth, he hath made it impossible for them  
 “ to escape, and hath precluded and repels them from the  
 “ means of escaping.” Another sample of his Lordship’s  
 mode of representing Calvinism we find in p. 252 : “ The  
 “ Calvinist teaches, that God elected a few individuals to  
 “ salvation, and that Christ died to make atonement, for  
 “ their sins alone, to the exclusion of the great mass of  
 “ mankind ; that the salvation of these elect depends solely  
 “ upon certain absolute and irrespective decrees of God,  
 “ and is effected solely by the grace of God, so that no  
 “ conditions are required to be fulfilled, no co-operation to  
 “ be given on their parts, but that, however great and  
 “ numerous may be their sins, they are eternally sure of  
 “ salvation : and that the great bulk of mankind are eter-  
 “ nally doomed to perdition, no reference whatever being  
 “ made to any faults of theirs ; no possibility whatever be-  
 “ ing allowed them of escaping their doom ; the sole cause  
 “ of which is the pleasure, and the sole object of it the  
 “ glory of God.”

As an appendix to such a description, why did not his Lordship add, “ From such Calvinism—such *horrible* Cal-  
 “ vinism—such *monstrous* Calvinism—Good Lord deliver  
 “ us.” Had the good Bishop added this prayer, I am per-  
 fectly convinced, that not only all the Socinians, Arminians,  
 and Arians in the world, but that all the Calvinists on the  
 face of the globe, would have echoed in one universal re-  
 sponse—AMEN! AMEN!

I can assure the learned Bishop, that Calvinists regard with unutterable contempt, and unqualified detestation, the doctrine contained in the preceding quotations. They believe in no such doctrines : they teach no such doctrines ; they abhor all such doctrines. I regret much, that talents so respectable as those of his Lordship, should be exhausted in beating the air—in refuting doctrines which nobody holds—in charging upon Calvinists doctrines the very reverse of those which they believe—doctrines which they hold in the utmost contempt and abhorrence. What then do Calvinists believe ? I answer negatively, They do not hold themselves bound to believe every thing that *Calvin* taught, that *Austin* taught, that *Zanchy* taught, or that *any one of our reformers* taught. Much less do they hold themselves bound to believe every foolish thing said by Calvinists for



three hundred years past! To collect those foolish sayings—to add some things which they *never* said—to combine all these into a system—and to call that system Calvinism—is neither *candid*, *generous*, nor *just*. It is an *insult* offered to the Calvinistic system. For such disingenuous conduct there is *no apology*. Even the *mitre of a Bishop* should not screen him from censure. Every person knows, or at least might know, what Calvinism is. It is the doctrines contained in the Westminster Confession of Faith and Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England—doctrines as different from Bishop Mant's Calvinism, as light is from darkness. Were any writer to profess to give an account of the doctrines of the Church of England, and instead of exhibiting those doctrines as they are stated in the Thirty-nine articles, should rake together the most foolish things written by the members of that Church for 300 years past—adding some things which they never wrote—and then denominate such a compound of folly and nonsense, "*The doctrines of the Church of England*"—in what point of light would such a writer be viewed by Bishop Mant and his learned coadjutors, What terms could be found in the English language sufficiently strong to characterise such a work? To the learned Bishop, and his Arminian colleagues, I would only say, "Whatsoever ye would that Calvinists should do unto you, do ye even the same unto them; for this is the law and the prophets.

What Calvinist ever taught, that God elected to salvation only a "*few individuals*?" No Calvinist ever taught so. All Calvinists believe, that the elect are so far from being only a few individuals, that they are *ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands*—that they are "a number which *no man can number*." It is *no tenet of Calvinism*—though Bishop Mant, Dr. Graves, Dr. Millar, and Dr. Bruce, are constantly representing it as a Calvinistic tenet. *It is no tenet of Calvinism*, that the number of the elect is smaller than that of the reprobate. Many Calvinists believe the very reverse. Our Westminster Divines wisely abstain from giving any opinion on the subject. With regard to the *number* or *proportion*, of those who will be finally saved, we have no controversy with any, except with those who maintain a universal restoration. From the very nature of the case, all rational controversy is excluded. "Secret things belong to the Lord our God." Socinians, Arminians, Arians, and

Calvinists are equally ignorant, and must remain so, till the judgment of the great day. Our opponents may therefore save themselves the trouble of any reference to the number of the elect, for on this subject we profess ourselves totally ignorant. Should any ask me, "Are there few that be saved?" I can only answer, in the words of our Saviour, "Strive to enter in at the strait gate; for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, but shall not be able."

Is the Bishop's statement true, that, on Calvinistic principles, the elect do not co-operate with God in the work of their own salvation? *It is not.* Calvinists believe, that the elect, though *passive* in regeneration,\* are *active* in sanctification: they are "*workers together with God,*" "*and work out their salvation with fear and trembling.*" They ask, they seek, they knock—they run, they strive, they fight—they give all diligence to make their calling and election sure—they "*press into the kingdom of God,*" and take "*the kingdom of heaven by force.*"

Is the Bishop's representation true—that the elect, on Calvinistic principles, however great and numerous their sins, are eternally sure of their salvation?—*It is not.*—The elect can have no assurance of their salvation till after their conversion.—And after conversion, many of them have no assurance during life. And even in those who enjoy that privilege, it is often by sin interrupted and lost. Such is the doctrine of the Westminster Confession (Chap. 18, sect. 3, 4)—such is the doctrine of the Larger Catechism (Quest. 81)—such is the doctrine of Calvinists in general—a doctrine very different, indeed, from that with which they are unjustly accused by his Lordship.

Is the statement of Bishop Mant true—that, upon Calvinistic principles, God has preordained, predestinated {and doomed the reprobate to everlasting death, ruin, perdition, and damnation, without any reference to their fault?—*It is not.*—It is as far remote from truth as light is from darkness. This will appear by comparing it, or rather *contrast-*

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\* Calvinists maintain, that, even before regeneration, it is the duty of all to attend all the ordinances of divine institution, and to use all the means of grace which God has appointed—and that it is to those who attend such ordinances, and use such means, *that he usually communicates his saving grace.*

*ing* it with the genuine Calvinistic doctrine, as it is distinctly stated by the Westminster Divines. In their Confession (Chap. iii. sec. 7) they affirm—that God has ordained the reprobate to dishonour and wrath *for their sin, to the praise of his glorious JUSTICE*. In their Larger Catechism (Quest. 13) they assert—that God has passed by the reprobate, and “foreordained them to dishonour and wrath, *to be for their sin, inflicted to the praise of the glory of his JUSTICE.*” The blasphemous doctrine charged upon the Calvinists by Bishop Mant, is—that the will and pleasure of God, and not men’s sins, are the cause of their damnation. Their *own* doctrine is the *very reverse*, that *no decrees of God*, but men’s *own sins*, are the *sole* cause of their condemnation. God’s treatment of the reprobate is entirely *judicial*—it proceeds upon principles of *strict justice*. Upon what ground will he pronounce the doom of the wicked at the judgment of the great day? Upon the very same ground did he determine from all eternity so to doom them. If there will be no injustice or cruelty in *dooming* the wicked to eternal misery for their sins, there could not possibly be any injustice or cruelty in *decreeing* so to doom them. Doctor Graves argues against predestination from the justice and mercy of God; but if God is not unjust or unmerciful in consigning men to eternal separation from his presence, he was not unjust nor unmerciful in *decreeing* thus to consign them. If there is no cruelty nor injustice in *doing* a thing, there can be no cruelty nor injustice in *decreeing* to do it. Whatever God does, he decrees or determines to do: and, as there are no new determinations in the divine mind, he decrees nothing in *time*, which he did not decree from *all eternity*. These are the dictates of common sense, as well as of divine revelation. Let not, therefore, Dr. Millar, nor Dr. Graves, nor Dr. Bruce, nor the Lord Bishop of Down and Connor—let no Arminian, Socinian, nor Arian, stigmatize the decree of reprobation as *irrespective*. It was no more *irrespective*, than the condemnation of the wicked will be at the judgment of the great day. The one is the exact counterpart of the other.

Bishop Mant represents Calvinists as maintaining that *no possibility whatever* is allowed the reprobate of escaping their doom. Is this representation true?—*It is not.*—No *natural* impossibility stands in the way of the salvation of the reprobate. No impossibility stands in their way, but



that which aggravates their guilt ; I mean that moral impossibility, which arises from their own *hatred* and *enmity*. None will ever be able to say, “ I was willing to accept of “ Jesus as a Saviour, and to walk in his commandments “ and ordinances blameless, but the decree of reprobation “ prevented me.”

The heaviest part of the charge of Dr. Graves and Bishop Mant is—that, according to the Calvinistic system, *God prepares* the reprobate for damnation. Is this charge just ?—*It is not.*—Calvinists maintain that God prepares the *elect* for happiness ; but, that the reprobate, by their sins, prepare *themselves* for misery. (Rom. ix. 22, 23,) “ What if God, willing to show his wrath, and to make his “ power known, endured with much long-suffering the ves- “ sels of wrath fitted to destruction : And that he might “ make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of “ mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory.” In this remarkable passage it is asserted, that God *prepares* the vessels of mercy for glory ; but it is not said, that God *fits* or *prepares* the vessels of wrath for destruction. It is said, indeed, that they are *fitted* ; but it is not said that *God fits* them. They are fitted not by God ; but by *their own sins*.\*

It may be objected, however, that these very sins were foreordained, and could not be avoided.—Answer. The origin of evil is the most abstruse and difficult subject to which the human mind has ever been directed. That God

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\* In a long continued strain of invective the Lord Bishop of Down and Connor pours contempt on the Calvinistic system, by representing it as inconsistent with *mildness* and *clemency*. For this purpose he plunges into politics, and charges the Scotch Covenanters with selling their king, and the English Calvinists with beheading him. Now, were his Lordship able to prove that the Scotch Covenanters sold king Charles I—which I am convinced he will never be able to do—and that he was afterwards beheaded by the English Calvinists—which we do not deny—what follows ? Does it follow, that the Calvinists of that age were more *ferocious*, than Arminians under the subsequent reigns of Charles II and James VII ? Does his Lordship mean to tell us now, in the nineteenth century, that there was more cruelty in beheading an *arbitrary tyrannical despot*, who, in violation of the British constitution, was trampling under his feet the liberties of his subjects, than in *deluging with the best blood of her citizens a whole nation for twenty-eight years* ? Surely his Lordship's prudence had completely forsaken him, when he adverted at all to the transactions of those times.

is not the author of sin, Calvinists as well as Arminians and others strenuously maintain.—The contrary imputation they repel with abhorrence.—They maintain that all good comes from God, and that all evil comes from the creature. This, however, they do not consider inconsistent with the doctrine—“That God has foreordained whatever comes to pass”—sinful actions not excepted. The decree that sin should, by divine permission, have a place among the works of God, does not make God the author of sin; for sin’s introduction is not to be ascribed to any *positive influence* of the Deity. That God permits sin, all must acknowledge; for if he did not permit it, it could not exist. Now, if he permits it, he must *will* to permit it; he must *decree* to permit it. God can do nothing without a previous act of his own will, or, in other words, without a previous decree. That God decreed to permit sin, is a position which admits of no rational contradiction. It is also demonstrably evident, that if God’s *permitting* sin does not make him the author of sin, neither is he made the author of sin by *decreeing* to permit it. If there be no harm in *doing* a thing, there can be no harm in *decreeing* to do it.

That God from all eternity decreed, that sin, by divine permission, should have a place among his works, I prove by the following arguments :—

1. My first argument is drawn from the appointment of Jesus as a Saviour. That God determined to send his Son into the world to save sinners, none will deny : and, as there are no *new* determinations in the divine mind, he must have so determined from all eternity. Now, if God from all eternity determined or *decreed* to send his Son into the world to save his people from their sins, he must have decreed from all eternity, that those sins, by divine permission, should have a place among his works—it must have been from all eternity *certain* that they would have such a place : for if it were possible that those sins might never be committed, then it was possible that God might decree to send his Son in vain !

2. My second argument is drawn from the appointment of a general judgment, (Acts, xvii. 31,) “Because he hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained.” Now if God on this day will condemn the wicked, he must *will* or determine to condemn them ; for he can do nothing without previously *willing* or *determining* to do it : and as

there can be no *new* purposes or determinations in the divine mind, God must have determined or decreed *from all eternity* to condemn the wicked. And, still farther; if God decreed from all eternity to condemn the wicked for their sins, it must have been certain from all eternity that those sins would be committed. If it were possible\* that the persons whom God from all eternity decreed to condemn and punish might never sin; then it was possible that God might condemn and punish the *innocent*. It is therefore, demonstrably evident, from the divine procedure at the general judgment, that God from all eternity decreed that sin, through divine permission, should have a place among his works. Should any allege, that neither the decree that Jesus Christ should come into the world to save sinners, nor the decree that at the judgment of the great day he should condemn and punish sinners—should any allege that neither of these decrees proves that the futuration of sin was *decreed*, but only that the futuration of sin was *certain*, I shall answer their objection in

3. My **THIRD ARGUMENT**, which is drawn from the foreknowledge of God.—The foreknowledge of God proves his decrees. It proves, that God foreordained whatever comes to pass, sinful actions not excepted.—If God from all eternity *foresaw* all events, it was from all eternity certain that those events would occur. For example; if God from all eternity *foreknew* that Dr. B. would write a book against the plenary inspiration of his word, the Divinity and Atonement of his Son, the Supreme Deity of his Spirit, &c. then it was certain from all eternity that Dr. B. would write that book. If it was possible that Dr. B. might never write that book, though God foreknew that he *would* write it, then it was possible for the Deity to be mistaken and disappointed! Every person must see, that it is impossible for the Deity to know that a thing exists, if it does not *really* and *certainly* exist. Equally impossible is it to foreknow that a thing *will* exist, if its *future* existence is not *certain*. As *knowledge* presupposes the *certain present existence* of things *known*, so *foreknowledge* presupposes the *certain future existence* of things *foreknown*. If God, therefore,

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\* The reader will still bear in mind, that I do not speak of an *absolute* or *natural* possibility or impossibility.—I mention this to prevent all misunderstanding or cavilling.



from all eternity foresaw whatever comes to pass, the future existence of every thing that comes to pass was from all eternity certain.

To say that God foresaw any thing as future which yet never come to pass, is an evident contradiction. It is to say that God foresaw it, and yet did not foresee it : for that which never comes to pass could never be the object either of *sight*, or *foresight*—of *knowledge*, or *foreknowledge*. Arminians sometimes labour hard to prove, that foreknowledge could have no influence on future actions ; but they labour in vain : they labour to prove what we do not deny. We do not say, that foreknowledge *renders* future events certain ; but we contend, that it *pre-supposes* their certainty. Foreknowledge does not *constitute*, but it *proves* the certainty of future events. This is what we assert.\*

Now, if all things that come to pass were from all eternity certain, what *rendered* them certain ? To bring things out of a state of mere possibility of existence into a state of certain futurity, is an effect ; and every effect must have a cause. In this case, what was the cause ? The cause must have either been the things themselves, or the decree of the Deity. It could not be the things themselves that rendered their own future existence certain ; for nothing can produce an effect before it exists : it follows then, by necessary consequence, that it was *the will or decree* of the Deity.—Thus, the doctrine of divine decrees, notwithstanding the contempt with which it is loaded, appears to me capable of the *strictest demonstration*. The steps are extremely simple, God from all eternity foreknew all things that come to pass ; therefore, all those things were from all eternity *certain*. Again : What rendered the future existence of those things certain ? Was it the will of God—or was it the things themselves ?—It must have been either the one or the other of these causes. It could not be the

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\* Dr. Dwight (Theol. p. 199) says, “ Foreknowledge *renders* the future existence of that which is foreknown certain ; therefore the actions of the agent supposed are all *rendered certain* and will of course exist.” And again (p. 200), “ God’s foreknowledge of voluntary actions does in no respect lessen or affect their freedom, although it *renders* their future existence absolutely certain.” “ Aliquando dormitat bonus Homerus.”—The Doctor here has expressed himself quite inadvertently and inconsistently with what he has elsewhere maintained. He elsewhere maintains, that foreknowledge can have no influence whatever on the nature of actions.

things themselves ; for no cause can produce an effect before it exists. It must therefore have been the *will of the Deity*—or, in other words—*the divine decree*.—(See *Edwards' Remarks*.)

Doctor Adam Clarke maintains that there is, strictly speaking, no *foreknowledge* nor *afterknowledge* with the Deity—that his knowledge is all present knowledge—that, past, present, and future, are with the Deity *one eternal now*. To this opinion Archbishop Tillotson, one of the ablest defenders of the Arminian system, was quite opposed. He poured upon it the utmost contempt. To me, the opinion appears quite rational.—I agree with the Doctor, rather than with the Archbishop. I AM is one of the names of the Deity ; and our Saviour says, not before Abraham was, I *was*, but, Before Abraham was, I AM. It appears to me, that past, present, and future, are all equally present with the Deity. With him, past knowledge, and present knowledge, and future knowledge, are all the same. I therefore perfectly agree with Dr. Clarke, Mr. Drew and others, in this view of the knowledge of God.—It is in my mind both more scriptural and more philosophical than that of the learned Prelate. At the same time, I perfectly agree with the Archbishop, in wondering that men should “call this ‘explaining things.’” It gives no explanation at all of the Arminian difficulty. On the contrary, it exhibits the difficulty in a more striking point of light. It renders the contradiction of foreseeing contingencies more apparent. Does not God’s knowledge of *past* events prove the certainty of those events ?—does not his knowledge of *present* events prove the certainty of those events ?—On the same principle, does not his knowledge of *future* events prove the certainty of those events ? If, with the Deity, foreknowledge, present knowledge, and after knowledge, are all the same, then they all equally *presuppose* and *prove* the certainty of their object.—As nothing can be otherwise than God sees it to be ; so nothing can be otherwise than he *foresees* it. If, with the Deity, foreknowledge and present knowledge are the same, then what is true of *present* knowledge is also true of *foreknowledge* ; but *present* knowledge *presupposes* and *proves* the certainty of the thing known ; and, therefore *foreknowledge* must also *presuppose* and *prove* the certainty of the thing *foreknown*. No Arminian in the world can possibly refute this reasoning, nor evade the force

of it, without trampling under his feet the very first principles of argumentation.

Divines of the first-rate learning and talents are sensible of this : they decline the controversy, and resolve the whole into faith.—Socinians, finding that they must either give up the contingency of future events or the foreknowledge of God, adopted the desperate alternative of making a sacrifice of this divine attribute.—Dr. A. Clarke, following their steps, has chosen to give up the omniscience of Deity rather than his Arminian tenets. Dr. Millar and Doctor Graves, with a modesty more becoming Christian Divines, confess the weakness of their own faculties, and, finding demonstration against them, endeavour to make their escape by taking refuge in faith. Arminian writers of an inferior class, with less reason but more effrontery, pertinaciously adhere to their principles, not only in the face of demonstration, but in contempt and defiance of those self-evident truths—those *axioms* on which demonstration is founded.\*

\* From my Defence of Creeds and Confessions, Mr. M<sup>^</sup>Afee quotes the following words : “ Every person must see, that it is impossible for the Deity to *know* that a thing exists, if it does not *really* and *certainly* exist. Equally impossible is it to foreknow that a thing *will* exist, if its future existence is not certain.” On this quotation he makes the following remark : “ The first proposition in this quotation is evidently true ; but the latter appears to me, not only to be erroneous, but contrary to that timidity and modesty which should accompany all our disquisitions concerning the unsearchable God.”—Now, if the knowledge and *foreknowledge* of the Deity are the same, is it not a self-evident truth—is it not an axiom—that what is true of the *knowledge* of God, must be also true of his *foreknowledge*? Yet the timid and modest Mr. M<sup>^</sup>Afee, in defiance of this axiom, modestly affirms of the divine *knowledge*, what he denies of the *foreknowledge* of Deity!—Such is that champion of Arminianism whom Mr. Drew, editor of the Imperial Magazine, dignifies with the epithet of an “ able antagonist.” If continuing to reason after one is defeated—if continuing to argue in the face, not only of demonstration, but of axioms—if this constitutes an able antagonist, Mr. M<sup>^</sup>Afee has certainly strong claims to that title.

“ In reasoning, too, the parson owned his skill ;

“ For, even though vanquished, he could argue still.”

But will the reader believe that this same “ able antagonist,” who, even in the face of self-evident truths, reasons against the certainty of future events, has, in the very same pamphlet, *fully admitted that certainty*? “ The espousers of liberty are well aware of an objection urged against their scheme by the advocates for necessity and Calvinism. Why (it is triumphantly asked,) is there so much stress laid upon the freedom of the will? Are not the good and evil actions the same, in point of certainty, as if they had been all decreed? and will not the number of the saved and lost be as definite



4. With regard to whatever comes to pass, God must either be *willing* that it should come to pass, or *unwilling*. If he is unwilling that it should come to pass, and yet it *does* come to pass, then his will is crossed, and he is unhappy.

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“at the last, according to the doctrine of liberty, as according to that of necessity? Granting the certainty of the actions and the definiteness of the numbers spoken of, we only say that things are just as they *really are*.—Again—The number is definite by that *certainty* which always accompanies contingent actions.” He afterwards admits, that the number of the saved would be actually as great, and finally certain, as if Deity had passed Calvinistic decrees concerning them. Thus, it appears, that this able antagonist gives up the whole controversy, and surrenders to the Calvinists at discretion. If the certainty of an event does not destroy liberty, how could that liberty be destroyed by the decree of God, which *rendered the event certain*? If *apprenticeship* does not forfeit the freedom of a corporation town, no man can forfeit that freedom by being bound an apprentice. If the apprenticeship itself cannot deprive him of his freedom, the binding him an apprentice—or *that act by which he was bound*—cannot deprive him of it: so, in like manner, if certainty cannot destroy liberty, the decree of God constituting that certainty cannot destroy it. By admitting certainty of event, Mr. M’Afee has given up the Arminian cause. All the necessity we plead for is a necessity consisting in certainty of event. A natural necessity, a universal necessity, a necessity of compulsion, coercion, or constraint, is unjustly and injuriously charged on the Calvinistic system by its ignorant or prejudiced opponents. Mr. M’Afee quotes President Edwards, strongly disclaiming, and decidedly condemning the doctrine of a *universal necessity*: and yet this “able antagonist,” with his characteristic timidity and regard for truth, modestly charges Edwards, and Calvinists in general, with holding that same universal necessity! Absurdly confounding the laws of mind with those of matter, he even attempts by a *diagram* to demonstrate the absurdity of the Calvinistic system! Had I considered Mr. M’Afee’s pamphlet worthy of an answer, my motto would have been, “Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.”

Mr. M’Afee admits that the number of the saved and the lost “is definite by that *certainty* which always accompanies *contingent* events—that is to say—the *certainty* which accompanies *uncertain* events! Who can doubt that such a writer is an “able antagonist?”

Again—Mr. M’Afee declares (p. 24,) that, as a compensation for that death incurred by the fall, a decree is passed, which determines the resurrection of every man; and that God immutably purposed to raise all men from the dead. He also admits, that the number of the saved and the lost is as definite as if fixed by a Calvinistic decree. Take these doctrines in connexion, and the amount of them is, That God has passed a decree, and immutably purposed, to raise to the resurrection of damnation a definite number of the human family—and all this as a compensation for that death which they incurred by the fall! By such mild and sensible doctrine, our “able antagonist” proposes to mend Calvinistic decrees! How appropriate the modest title of his pamphlet, “*A Rational and Scriptural Investigation!*”

No man can rationally maintain that God is unwilling that sin should have a place in his works. If he maintains this, he must run into the gross absurdity of maintaining, *that*

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Mr. M'Afee, in his preface, informs us—not that his design was to answer the arguments of his opponent; no, this might be troublesome; but he informs us—that his plan was “to advance a system as forcibly and argumentatively as possible, which, if true, necessarily proves that of the Rev. Gentleman he opposes to be false.”—Now, one would suppose that this “able antagonist” would grant his opponent the same privilege. One would think, that, according to the law laid down by Mr. M'Afee, the Calvinist, by proving his own system *true*, at the same time proves Mr. M'Afee's to be *false*. But—*no such thing*. This “able antagonist” explains the laws of war quite differently. Page 30, he states them thus: “Before it can be proved, Sir, that we sinned in Adam as a federal head, from the words now in question, the absurdity of the above conclusions must be clearly shown, and the various arguments advanced throughout these epistles fairly and rationally answered.” So then, Arminians are not bound to answer the arguments of *Calvinists*; but Calvinists are *indispensably obliged* to answer all the arguments of *Arminians*! The Arminian has only to prove his own system true, in order to prove Calvinism false; but the Calvinist must prove Arminianism *false* before he can prove his own system *true*!

Such is the logic of Mr. M'Afee; and the editor of the Imperial Magazine assures us, that Mr. M'Afee is “an able antagonist.”

In this miscellaneous note, I should have taken some notice of the efforts of Mr. Drew, editor of the Imperial Magazine, to reconcile *contingency* with *foreknowledge*. Of metaphysics, when used on the *Arminian* side of the controversy, he appears very fond—and is himself no contemptible metaphysician—but when used by *Calvinists*, he does not seem to like them at all. He discovers a particular dislike to the metaphysical “fastnesses,” from which President Edwards and some of his successors cannot easily be dislodged. Could Mr. Drew raise as many Arminian troops as would storm those fastnesses, I am convinced he would do an essential service to the Arminian cause. For his own part, he uses every effort in his power; but, in my humble opinion, without success. In attempting to reconcile the contingency of human actions with divine foreknowledge, he soars so high in the regions of metaphysics, that, to my feeble sight, he becomes quite invisible. I find it impossible, and, I am happy to say, unnecessary to follow him in his flight—I see him when he rises, and recognise him when he descends. He represents the Deity—I write from recollection—as penetrating duration, and looking back, as it were, at contingent events, looking at them as if they were past.—He seems, however, strangely to forget, that his *seeing* those events proves their *certainty*—no matter whether he looks *backward* at them, or *forward* at them: If he sees them *at all*, their existence must be certain, and Arminian contingency must be overthrown! An Arminian writer in the Imperial Magazine—a writer of very respectable talents, Mr. Tucker, of Belfast, has abandoned the absurd doctrine of contingency. I am decidedly of the opinion, that Dr. Clarke, Mr. Drew, and all Arminians whatever, would discover their wisdom by imitating his example.

*sin has forced its way into the works of God in opposition to the divine will—in defiance of the Divine Being!* He must maintain, that the will of the Deity is crossed in millions of millions of instances, and that the ever-blessed God, instead of being the most *happy*, is, in reality, the most *miserable* being in the universe. Now, if God be not *unwilling* that sin should have a place among his works, he must be *willing*; and if he is willing, then he decrees it; for with God, to will and to decree are the same thing.

Dr. Bruce, in common with all Socinians, Arminians, and Arians, ridicules the distinction between the secret and revealed will of God, or his will of decree and his will of command. He writes thus: (p. 174) “Nor do the most learned advocates for this doctrine shrink from these absurd and blasphemous consequences: for thus they write: “The Lord sometimes orders a thing to be done by a man; and yet by his secret will does not wish that it should be done by him:” for God has a secret and revealed will. “It does not follow because he commands all men to believe in Christ, that he wills them to do so. But though we cannot understand how God can be unwilling that his commands should be executed, yet we ought not to deny it. Though God calls the wicked to repentance, he does not wish them to be saved. Though he declares, that he wishes the wicked or reprobate to believe, he does not actually wish it. God does not always mean what he says that he means; and yet is not guilty of hypocrisy.” So that, according to these Divines, God practices mental reservation, when he wills that “all men should be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth.” It is to be feared, that some mercenary or fanatical declaimers even labour to aggravate these horrible representations.

Thus Dr. B., in his usual manner, endeavours to bring Calvinism into contempt, by charging upon it the most foolish things said by its advocates. I must therefore again remind my readers, that the foolish and absurd things said by Calvinists *are not Calvinism*.—The nonsensical, contradictory, and blasphemous expression of Piscator—if ever he uttered them, which I very much doubt—Calvinists hold in sovereign contempt. Nor do I believe the most mercenary or fanatical declaimer living would approve, much less aggravate, such horrible representations. A little more of that charity which thinketh no evil would have a great ten-



dency to allay the Doctor's fears on such subjects.—Dr. B. and other writers may pour contempt on the distinction between God's will of decree and his will of command ; but they will never be able to prove it groundless. They cannot deny, as I have already shown, that it is the will of God, that sin should have a place among his works. The existence of sin is not contrary to his decretive or providential will, otherwise there could be no sin at all ; and yet all will grant, that it is contrary to his preceptive will—his will of command. The distinction, therefore, between the secret and revealed will of God—or rather between his will of decree and his will of command, is capable not only of *proof*, but of *demonstration*. The distinction is not only founded in reason, but is taught with the clearest evidence in the sacred volume. “ Though we cannot understand ”—says Trigland as cited by the Doctor—“ Though we cannot understand, how God can be unwilling that his commands should be executed ; yet we ought not to deny it.” Dr. B. denies it ; but if he does, he must also deny the word of God. God commanded Abraham to sacrifice his son Isaac, and yet he was unwilling his command should be executed.—Will the Doctor deny this ? God decreed that Isaac should not be sacrificed ; and yet he commanded that he should be sacrificed. Will the Dr. deny this ?—Let Dr. B. say—let all the opponents of Calvinism say—Is not this a decisive instance of the distinction between God's will of decree and will of command ? his providential and preceptive will ? Again—God commanded Pharaoh to let Israel go, and yet hardened his heart so that he should not let them go. Here, again, the distinction between God's will of command and his will of decree is as clear as noon day.

Another striking instance of this important distinction is recorded in 2 Sam. xii. 11, 12, “ Thus sayeth the Lord, “ behold, I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own “ house, and I will take thy wives before thine eyes, and “ give them unto thy neighbour, and he shall lie with thy “ wives in the sight of this sun. For thou didst it secretly : “ but I will do this before all Israel, and before the sun.” Will any person deny, that it was the *decretive* or *providential will* of God, that David's adultery and murder should be punished by the subsequent incest of his unnatural son Absalom ? And will any person deny, that Absalom's incest was contrary to God's *preceptive will* ? Surely not.

Once more : The selling of Joseph into Egypt was sin-

ful. It was contrary to the *preceptive will* of God ; and yet it was quite agreeable to his *providential will*, or his will of *decree*. “ It was not you that sent me hither,” says Joseph, “ but God. Ye thought evil against me ; but God meant “ it unto good.”—In like manner, the crucifixion of the Redeemer, though contrary to the revealed will of God, and highly criminal, was nevertheless agreeable to his will of decree. It was by the “ *determinate counsel and foreknow-  
“ ledge of God that he was taken, and by wicked hands cru-  
“ cified and slain.*” All the indignities and cruelties of the Jews were nothing more than God’s “ *hand and counsel  
“ determined before to be done.*” “ Those things, which God  
“ before had showed by the mouth of his prophets that Christ  
“ should suffer, he so fulfilled.”

The last instance I shall quote—for the instances are almost innumerable—is Rev. xvii. 17, “ For God hath put in  
“ their hearts to fulfil his will, and to agree and give their  
“ kingdom unto the beasts, until the word of God shall be  
“ fulfilled.” Will Dr. B. deny—will any opponent of Calvinism deny, that for the ten kings to give their kingdom to the beasts was contrary to the revealed will of God? or, will any deny that it was agreeable to his will of decree? They fulfilled his *will*.—*What will?* not his *preceptive will* surely. It must have been his will of *decree* or *purpose*. If my learned antagonists, or any other opponents of the Calvinistic system, think they can explain the above-cited passages, without admitting a distinction between God’s will of decree and his will of command ; let them try it. Let them show, if they can, that the arguments drawn, first from *reason* and then from *Scripture*, are inconclusive : but let them not think to run down the distinction by the quotation of a few nonsensical sayings—sayings which all Calvinists, as well as Socinians, Arminians, and Arians condemn.

Our opponents allege, that this distinction which we make between God’s will of command and will of decree, represents the Deity as possessed of two *contradictory* wills. In answer to this objection, I would observe, that if the distinction is a matter of fact—as I have proved it to be—my *opponents* are as much bound to reconcile any apparent contradiction as *I* am. My object, however, being, not so much to silence an adversary, as to investigate truth, I would observe—That God’s will of command and will of decree are not to be regarded as two different and

opposite wills ; but as the same will operating differently on different objects.—An apothecary permits poison to enter his shop—not as *poison*—not for the purpose of *destroying his fellow-men*—but he permits its entrance, that, being compounded with other ingredients, it may eventually become a *powerful medicine*. If an apothecary, without any contradiction, may *prohibit* poison as *poison*, and yet *prescribe* it as a *medicine* ; may not the Deity, without any contradiction, *prohibit* sin as *sin*, and yet *permit* it, and decree that through his *permission* it shall have a place in his works, for the greater manifestation of his own glory, and the greater happiness of the universe at large ?—

“ There is no inconsistency or contrariety,” says President Edwards, “ between the preceptive and decretive will of God. It is very consistent to suppose that God may hate the thing itself, and yet will that it should come to pass. Yea, I do not fear to assert that the thing itself may be contrary to God’s will, and yet that it may be agreeable to his will that it should come to pass ; because his will in the one case has not the same object with his will in the other case. To suppose God to have contrary wills towards the same object is a contradiction ; but it is not so to suppose him to have contrary wills about different objects. The *thing itself*—and that the thing should come to pass—are *different*, as is evident ; because it is possible that the one may be *good* and the other may be *evil*. The thing itself may be evil, and yet it may be a good thing that it should come to pass. It may be a good thing that an evil thing should come to pass : and oftentimes it most certainly and undeniably is so, and proves so.” Agreeably to these remarks, we may observe, that the crucifixion of Christ was, in itself, an *evil thing*—one of the *worst* things that ever occurred ; and yet the *occurrence* of that event was the *greatest blessing* ever conferred on our apostate family. That “ every sin has in it something of the good work of God,” is one of those foolish sayings brought forward by our author to blacken Calvinism—a saying which all Calvinists abhor. I would nevertheless say, without the fear of rational contradiction, *That not one sin was ever permitted to enter the works of God, but will ultimately be overruled to the promotion of universal good.* (Psal. lxxvi. 10) “ Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee ; the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain.” (Rom. viii. 28) “ And we know



“ that all things work together for good to them that love God.” Had sin never entered, God’s love in sending his son—the love of Jesus in dying for sinners—or the love of the Holy Ghost in applying the work of redemption, could never have been displayed. The grace of God in pardoning the guilty, and his mercy in saving the miserable, could never have been manifested. Meekness, patience, forgiveness of injuries, and other Christian virtues, could never have been exercised. Men would never have been exalted to so high a state of dignity and glory, nor angels to such a state of felicity. Though sin, therefore, *as sin*, be contrary to the will of God, it is not contrary to the will of his decree, to permit so much sin to enter his works, as under his infinitely wise providence shall ultimately terminate in the more illustrious display of all his perfections, and the greater felicity of the universe at large.\* Nor do we make God the author of sin by maintaining that he decreed to permit sin, and that by such permission sin should have a place among his works. The influence of the Deity with regard to *sin*, is very different from that which he employs in the production of holiness. The production of holiness requires the *positive influence* of the Deity, and therefore he is properly the *author* of holiness ; but the introduction of sin requires no such influence, and therefore the Deity is not the *author of sin*. To produce *light* requires *positive influence* ; but no such influence is necessary to the production of *darkness*. The sun, by the pouring forth of his rays, has a positive influence in the production of light ; but all that is necessary to the *production of darkness* (if I may use the expression,) is the withdrawing of those rays. When the sun withdraws his rays, darkness ensues ; but shall we therefore say, that the sun is the author of darkness ? Surely not. Equally absurd would it be to charge God with being the author of sin, because, on withholding that divine influence which would have pre-

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\* “ If any man,” says Bishop Davenant, “ shall go about to see men’s will at liberty, and to tie up short the decreeing and determining will of God, as if this had not the determining stroke amongst all possible evil actions and events which shall infallibly be, and which shall infallibly not be, he may avoid the suspicion of Stoicism or Manicheism, but he can hardly avoid the suspicion of Atheism. For the greater number of men’s actions being wicked and evil, if these come into act without God’s determinate counsel and decree, human affairs are more over-ruled by man’s will than by God’s.”

vented it, sin enters the works of God. Again : The sun thaws snow and ice by the influence of his heat ; but the production of snow or ice requires no such positive influence. When the sun withdraws his rays, snow and ice ensue ; but would any one say that the sun is the author of snow or ice ? Surely not. In like manner, when God is said to harden mens' hearts, no positive influence is intended. All that is necessary to produce the effect is—to give men up to the hardness of their own hearts, by withholding that grace which would otherwise mollify them. (Psal. lxxxi. 12,) “ So I gave them up unto “ their own hearts' lusts, and they walked in their own “ counsels.”

The most formidable objection brought against Calvinistic decrees is, *that they are inconsistent with liberty or free agency*. In reply to this objection, I would observe, that there is no greater difficulty in reconciling the *decrees* of God with the free agency of man, than there is in reconciling the *foreknowledge* of God with the same free agency. Whenever the Arminian or the Arian solves the *latter* difficulty, we will solve the *former*. Archbishop Tillotson, Doctor Millar, Doctor Graves, and all the ablest opponents of Calvinism, confess themselves unable to reconcile the foreknowledge of God with the freedom of human actions, and plead, as an apology, the weakness of their faculties.

Now, if our opponents, Arminians, Socinians, and Arians, are unable to reconcile the *foreknowledge* of God with the free agency of man—Why do they call upon us to reconcile the *decrees* of God with the same free agency ? If the doctrine of the divine decrees is clearly taught in the sacred volume, and can be demonstrated even by reason—and if the free agency of man is also taught both by experience and Scripture—may we not safely conclude, that those doctrines are not inconsistent, though, from the limited nature of our faculties, we should be unable to reconcile them ?—This is surely as good a solution of the difficulty in *our* case, as the Arminians have given in *theirs*. Nay, I maintain that the solution is infinitely better. For no solution can ever reconcile a contradiction. We can demonstrate, and we have demonstrated, that it implies a contradiction to maintain, that God can foresee future contingent actions or events. In vain, therefore, do Arminian and Arian divines plead the weakness of their faculties. The faculties of an

angel could not reconcile a contradiction. If Arminian and Arian Doctors be permitted, in the face of reason and demonstration, to resolve into faith the doctrine of the *Divine foreknowledge of contingent events*, why may not the Doctors of the church of Rome be also permitted to resolve into faith *the absurd doctrine of transubstantiation*? No doctrine can possibly be true which contradicts either our senses, or our reason. I grant, indeed, that doctrines may be *above* our reason, and then we may resolve them into faith; but if they are really *self-contradictory*; and if the contradiction can be *demonstrated*; they *cannot* be the doctrines of Divine Revelation. Our opponents, indeed, consider Calvinistic decrees as unreasonable—as inconsistent with the free agency of man; but have they ever been able to demonstrate a *contradiction*? *They have not.* The great question between Calvinists and their opponents is this—*Can God create free agents, and govern free agents, and have all his ends, designs, and purposes respecting the final destination of these agents accomplished without infringing their liberty or free agency?* We say he *can*, and our opponents say he *can not*. I believe that my Maker created me a free and accountable agent—I believe that he had a particular design to accomplish by me—and I firmly believe, that he *can* and *will* accomplish that design, without doing me the slightest injustice, or infringing in the least my liberty or free agency. Let the opponents of Calvinism demonstrate, if they can, that this creed involves a contradiction. This is a task they have never yet been able to accomplish, and I am convinced they never will. I now say again, that if we can demonstrate by reason, and prove from Scripture, the doctrine of divine decrees; and also the doctrine of the free agency of man, we may safely conclude, that those doctrines are perfectly consistent, though, from the weakness of our faculties, we may feel unable to reconcile them. On this ground we might safely take our stand; but if we could proceed a little farther in this difficult subject; and if we could actually reconcile those doctrines; an object of great magnitude would be obtained. To accomplish this object has long been a problem in divinity. If I am not much mistaken, Doctor Dwight, of America, has ultimately succeeded. I shall give the solution in his own words: (p. 199.) “I will suppose once  
 “ more a voluntary agent, either self-existent or existing  
 “ casually, possessing powers of understanding similar in



“ their extent to those of angels or of men ; and, at the  
 “ same time, free, in the highest sense annexed to that term.  
 “ Let him be also supposed to be known and comprehend-  
 “ ed by God in the same perfect manner in which any  
 “ angel or man is known by him ; so that God can foresee  
 “ with an omniscient survey and absolute certainty, all his  
 “ future actions. At the same time let it be supposed, that  
 “ God exercises over him no government or influence what-  
 “ ever. This being will undoubtedly be acknowledged to  
 “ be free, even by those who make this objection ; because  
 “ he was neither brought into existence by the will of God,  
 “ nor is controlled nor influenced in any manner whatever  
 “ by any will beside his own. Let me further suppose,  
 “ what, as it must be granted, cannot lessen or affect his  
 “ freedom, that all his actions, thus foreseen, are agree-  
 “ able to the divine pleasure. Now, let me ask, whether  
 “ the divine omniscience could not contrive, and the divine  
 “ power create, a being exactly resembling this which I  
 “ have here supposed, in every respect ; except that he  
 “ was not self-existent, nor casually existent ; and so per-  
 “ fect a copy, that he would differ from this supposed being  
 “ numerically only ; would possess the same attributes ; be  
 “ in the same circumstances ; and perform both in sub-  
 “ stance and mode exactly the same actions. Were this  
 “ supposed being, for example, to be placed by God in his  
 “ kingdom, in certain circumstances, and acting a certain  
 “ part in the system, which was exactly agreeable to the  
 “ divine pleasure ; would not the created being who was  
 “ his perfect counterpart, if substituted in his place, perform  
 “ precisely the same actions, with the same faculties, and  
 “ the same freedom ? The only difference between them  
 “ would be, that he who was casually existent, would per-  
 “ form these actions in consequence of possessing such  
 “ and such attributes, without having been created for this  
 “ purpose ; while the other would perform them in conse-  
 “ quence of having been thus created with the very same  
 “ attributes.” Such is Dr. Dwight’s solution of the diffi-  
 culty—a solution which, to me at least, appears completely  
 satisfactory.

Our opponents cannot deny that the Scriptures teach the  
 doctrine of election, but they either maintain, that it is  
 founded on foreseen faith and good works, or they contend  
 that it is not *particular* or *personal*. They maintain that  
 the Scriptural election is only a national election, or an

election to the enjoyment of the external privileges of the Christian church. Against a personal or particular election, they not only put into a state of requisition all the forces of logic and criticism, but they display an evident and deep-rooted prejudice. Out of many instances I shall mention only one or two. Jacob, by the Calvinists, is regarded as one of the *elect*, and Esau as one of the *reprobate*. For this reason Anti-Calvinists discover a strong partiality in favour of Esau, and a deep-rooted prejudice against Jacob. Doctor B. writes thus: "In the lives of  
 " the patriarchs he finds an inexhaustible source of instruc-  
 " tion, religious, moral, and prudential, whether he re-  
 " flects on the faith or resignation of Abraham, the piety  
 " and mildness of Isaac, the *art* and *duplicity* of Jacob,  
 " or the *liberal*, *affectionate* and *forgiving* character of  
 " Esau."

Dr. Adam Clarke maintains, that Esau with his four hundred men had no hostile intention against Jacob; but only meant to honour him! When he runs to meet Jacob, the learned Doctor rapturously exclaims, "How sincere and  
 " genuine is this conduct of Esau, and at the same time  
 " how magnanimous! He had buried all his resentment,  
 " forgiven all his injuries, and receives his brother with the  
 " strongest demonstrations, not only of forgiveness, but of  
 " fraternal affection,"—Again, he asks, "If the blessings  
 " had referred to their eternal states, had not Esau as fair a  
 " prospect for endless glory as his deceitful and unfeeling  
 " brother? Justice and mercy both say—*Yes*." That it  
 is not justice nor mercy, but deep-rooted prejudice against Calvinism, that says—*Yes*—I appeal to the Doctor's own words: they run thus: "It appears that Jacob was on the  
 " whole a man of more religion, and believed the divine  
 " promises more, than Esau." Now, I ask, has a man of  
*less* religion as fair a prospect for endless glory as one of  
*more* religion?—*justice, mercy, scripture, and common sense*, say—*No*. The truth is, that no man whose mind was not deeply imbued with prejudice, would ever think of *comparing* the characters of Jacob and Esau with respect to religion. Religion! Where was the religion of Esau? The Scriptures do not represent him as a man of religion at all, but as a *profane, irreligious* character. They set him up as a beacon on a mountain, that others, being shocked by the *grossness* of his profanity, may avoid the rock on which he made shipwreck. "Looking diligently," says

the Apostle, "lest there be any fornicator or *profane person* " as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright." On the contrary, in the whole word of God, there is not a character more celebrated nor more honoured for his piety than Jacob. John, the beloved Disciple, leaned on the bosom of the Redeemer: Moses conversed with him as a man with his friend: but *Jacob wrestled with him*. He said, "I will not let thee go except thou bless me." *Like a prince, he had power with God and man, and prevailed*. In a variety of respects he was honoured above all the men that ever lived. The Old Testament church was called by his name; and New Testament believers are also styled "*the Israel of God*." One calls himself by the name of *Jacob*, and another subscribes with his hand unto the Lord, and surnames himself by the name of *Israel*. Nay, the Deity himself appears to delight in such epithets as these; "*The God of Jacob*"—"the mighty God of Jacob"—"*the God of Israel*."—In the 24th Psalm, he seems to assume the very name *Jacob*. "This is the generation of them that seek him, that seek thy face, *O Jacob!*" He even swears "by the excellency of *Jacob*." In a word, the spirit of God does not compare, but contrasts, the characters of Jacob and Esau. He declares again and again, that he loved Jacob and hated Esau. He holds up Jacob as a pattern of piety, and Esau as an example of profanity. He loads Jacob with honours, and brands Esau with disgrace.

Between the manner in which God treats the characters of Jacob and Esau, and the manner in which Dr. B. and Dr. A. Clarke treat those characters, there is a very striking contrast. God treats Jacob with the greatest respect; but these Doctors treat him with the greatest disrespect! God exhibits in a striking point of light all the virtues and perfections of Jacob; but these learned Divines throw those virtues and perfections into the shade! Dr. B. does not mention one of them.—His jaundiced eye sees nothing in that patriarch but "art and duplicity!" God brands with infamy the character of Esau; whilst those learned Doctors are careful to emblazon it—to exhibit it in the most amiable and interesting point of light! To his servant Jacob God does not say one reproachful word; whilst those Rev. Divines load him with the most opprobrious epithets! On the contrary, God never applies one epithet of respect to the character of Esau: whilst Dr. B. and Dr. A. Clarke endeavour to embalm it by such honourable appellations as



*liberal, affectionate, forgiving, and magnanimous!* In the name of every thing sacred, I ask, why do these Divines fly in the face of their Maker? Why do they pour contempt on that character which God delights to honour, and load with honours that character which God has branded with infamy? The most charitable account that can possibly be given of conduct so extraordinary, I had almost said *impious* is—a *deep-rooted prejudice against the Calvinistic doctrine of election and reprobation.*—On the same principle we can account for Dr. Clarke's extraordinary exertions to prove, that Judas will be saved. The Deity assures us, that it would have been good for Judas had he never been born—that he was the son of perdition—and went to his own place. Almost the whole of the one hundred and ninth Psalm is employed in denouncing vengeance on the head of the traitor. We are there particularly assured (if we translate into the future tense instead of the imperative mood), that when judged he shall be condemned; and that his very prayer should become sin.—But Dr. Clarke endeavours to prove that Judas was a true penitent, and shall finally be acquitted and saved! We do not deny, that the Scriptures teach a national election, or an election to the enjoyment of church privileges; but we maintain that the Scriptures also teach a *personal* election, or an election of *particular persons*, not only to *external privileges*, but to *eternal life*. Their number is as definite as if their names were written in a book. Of Clement and others it is said, (Phil. iv. 3.) that their names are written in the book of life. In various other Scriptures the heirs of glory are so represented. The Apostle John addressed his second epistle to the *elect* lady and her children, and mentions also her *elect* sister. “When the children of Jacob are styled God's “chosen ones,” Dr. B. assures us, that it is not meant that “every one of the Israelites was chosen, but that they were “members of the chosen nation.” Supposing that this sentence did not contradict the axiom, that “*The whole is equal to its parts.*” Supposing the assertion *true*—still it would not follow, that the election of which *we* are treating is not particular or personal—for Clement is an individual—the *elect lady* is an individual—and *her elect sister* is an individual. Particular persons are elected, and particular persons have their names written in heaven. (Luke, x. 20.)—Romans, eighth, from the twenty-eighth to the thirtieth verse inclusive, is an irrefragable proof of

particular election. "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified."

Dr. B. alleges, that in this beautiful passage the Apostle "Speaks of the Christian church at large." Let us try the application. Are all the members of the church at large conformed to the image of God's Son? Are all the members of the church at large justified? Will they all be glorified? Surely not. The Doctor understands the clause "*whom he called,*" as equivalent to—whom he "invited into the Christian church." Now, I ask, Did all things work together for good to such? By no means. Many were called, and invited into the Christian church, who made light of the invitation, who said, "We will not have this man to reign over us; this is the heir, come let us kill him." Did all things work together for *their* good? Quite the reverse. "The King of Heaven sent forth his armies and destroyed these murderers, and burned up their city." Again, I would ask, Do all things work together for good to those who are not only invited into the Christian church, but who accept of the invitation, and become church members? are all such *justified*? will all such be *glorified*? Surely not. It is therefore abundantly evident that the Apostle is *not* speaking of the "*Christian church at large,*" as the Doctor affirms, but only of a *particular select number*, or, in other words, *the elect*.

Dr. B. declares, that "if we cannot explain this passage conformably to our Saviour's doctrine, we should rather abandon it as unintelligible, than prefer the lower authority to the higher." Plain language indeed! To apply the epithets *higher and lower authority* to the Holy Scriptures, which were all given by inspiration of God; and to express a readiness to abandon any portion of those sacred oracles, savours more of *Deism* than of *Christianity*. To do the Doctor justice, however, he *must* abandon the passage in question. He must either abandon *it*, or abandon his own favourite hypothesis. He must either abandon *it*,

or admit the doctrine of predestination against which he preaches so long a sermon. The Calvinist is determined neither to abandon this, nor any other passage of the sacred volume. To the *Arian* it may appear unintelligible, and *must* appear so, whilst he denies predestination; not so to the *Calvinist*. To him it appears a glorious chain of special-privileges extending from eternity to eternity. His view of it is this—That those of the fallen human family, who were the objects of God's foreknowledge, or of his eternal distinguishing love,\* he *predestinated* or *fore-ordained* to be conformed to Jesus Christ his Son, not only in suffering, but in holiness and happiness. Those same persons whom he thus predestinated, he in due time *calls*, not only *externally* by his word, but *internally* and *efficaciously*, by his *Spirit*. He calls them from darkness to light—from death to life—from Satan to God. "He persuades  
 " and enables them to embrace Jesus Christ freely offered  
 " to them in the Gospel." The persons thus effectually called he also *justifies*. "He freely pardons all their sins,  
 " and accepteth them as righteous in his sight, only for the  
 " righteousness of Christ imputed to them, and received  
 " by faith alone." Those same persons whom he thus justifies, he finally *glorifies*. He makes them "perfectly  
 " blessed in the full enjoyment of God to all eternity." After ten thousand attempts to torture the passage, this appears to be its plain and unsophisticated meaning. Nor is the doctrine of particular election, thus plainly taught by the *Apostle*, at all inconsistent with the doctrine taught by our *Saviour*. Doctor B. may *boldly insinuate* that they

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\* It is generally acknowledged by Divines—those who oppose as well as those who advocate the doctrine of predestination—that foreknowledge in the text implies love or favour. Knowledge is frequently put for love in Scripture. "You only have I known of all the families of the earth." Other families of the earth, as well as the Jews, were the objects of God's simple knowledge; but the Jews alone were the objects of his distinguishing love, (Deut. vii. 6, 7, 8,) "The Lord thy  
 " God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all  
 " people that are upon the face of the earth. The Lord did not set  
 " his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number  
 " than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people. But because  
 " the Lord loved you."—It is to this distinguishing, unmerited love and gracious election that God refers when he says "You only have I  
 " known of all the families of the earth." On the same principle, it is to the distinguishing and electing love of God that the apostle refers when he says, "Whom he did foreknow he also did predestinate."



are inconsistent ; but the insinuation is as *groundless* as it is *impious*. It appears to me that the doctrine of election and reprobation is taught by our Saviour in language nearly, if not *altogether*, as explicit as that of the Apostle. “ I have other sheep,” says he, “ that are not of this fold, them also must I bring,” &c.—“ All that the Father hath given to me shall come unto me.—Thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he may give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him.—I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes ; even so Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight.—Rejoice, because, your names are written in heaven.—But ye believe not because ye are not of my sheep.”

As Doctor Bruce’s commentary on the eighth of the Romans leads into this gross absurdity—*that the whole visible church will be saved* : to avoid this consequence, Dr. A. Clarke adopts an ingenious expedient. As Rehoboam substituted shields of *brass*, instead of the *golden shields* which Shishack, King of Egypt carried away, so Doctor C. takes away the *golden link of eternal glory*, and substitutes the *brazen one of temporal privileges* ! The clause, “ Them he also glorified,” he explains thus : “ He has honoured and dignified the Gentiles with the highest privileges. He has rendered them illustrious by innumerable gifts, graces, and privileges, in the same manner as he had done to the Israelites of old.” Thus, to get rid of Calvinistic decrees, this learned commentator “ *shrivels into meagreness*” the most beautiful passage in the whole book of God. That the word *glorified* refers not to *temporal privileges*, as the Doctor imagines, but to eternal felicity, is evident from the antecedent context, (verses 17, 18,) “ And if children, then heirs ; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.” The various unsuccessful and contradictory attempts made by the enemies of Calvinism, to explain the passage in question, are a strong presumptive argument, that the Calvinistic interpretation is the true one.

Were the word election, in Scripture, applicable only to nations, but not to individuals, what would our opponents gain ? It will be said, no doubt, that this election to ex-

ternal privileges was very different from a particular election to eternal life. To show, however, that the difference is not so great as is generally imagined, I would ask, were not thousands saved in consequence of this national election, that would *not* have been saved had they *not* been elected? This question, I presume, will be universally answered in the affirmative. No person will venture to maintain, that as small a number of Jews obtained eternal life, as of the *surrounding heathen nations* of equal extent. Even Doctor A. Clarke, who affirms, that Esau had as fair a prospect for immortal glory as Jacob, will not be bold enough to assert, that the *Edomites* had as fair a prospect for glory as the *Israelites*. He will not venture to assert, that as many of the *one* nation were saved, as of the *other*. "Happy art thou, O Israel, who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord?" Salvation was of the Jews. Now, if thousands of Jews were saved, that would *not* have been saved had their nation *not been elected*, all those thousands, whatever be their number, owe their salvation, their *eternal* salvation, to election—to a *gratuitous* election—an election, not of *works*, but of *grace*. The same may be said of those nations elected to the enjoyment of Christian privileges. Are not thousands saved in Britain and Ireland, that would *not* have been saved had they been left in a state of Heathenism? To what do all these owe their salvation? TO THEIR ELECTION—to the *free sovereign and electing love of God*, who purposed from all eternity to separate them from the rest of the world, and elected them to the enjoyment of those external privileges, by the means of which they are finally saved. Where now is all the noisy declamation against the doctrine of particular election? Does it not recoil on the opponents of the doctrine? Where is now the loud cry of favouritism and partiality? Was there no favouritism or partiality in electing a whole nation, whilst all the rest of the world was rejected? whilst all other nations were permitted to walk in their own ways? Has the Deity shown no favouritism or partiality in electing the various nations of Christendom to the enjoyment of the privileges of the Christian Church, whilst all the other nations of the earth, enveloped in darkness worse than Egyptian, are left "without God and hope in the world." Did the Almighty discover no favouritism or partiality by so loving the world as to send his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not pe-

rish but have everlasting life ; whilst a more noble order of beings, who kept not their first state, “ were cast down “ to hell, and reserved in chains of darkness till the judgment of the great day ?” Let our opponents show, that the Deity has discovered no favouritism or partiality in these things, and we will show, that he has discovered none in *particular election*.

The charge of partiality so long and loudly vociferated, goes upon the false principle, that sinners of our family have claims on divine grace and bounty. But, even Dr. B. himself being witness, we have *no such claims*. “ Few,” says the Doctor, “ very few indeed, are the legal claims “ which we have upon the divine *justice*, and we have none “ upon his *bounty* ; and yet infinite are the gifts he has to “ bestow.” Why then, I ask, should any venture to charge the Deity with favouritism and partiality, because he dispenses his own unmerited bounty as he pleases ? To every such objector the Almighty may justly reply, “ Is it not “ lawful for me to do what I will with mine own ? Is thy “ eye evil because I am good ?”

The Arminian objection of partiality leads into *Deism*. A principal objection against revelation is drawn from its partiality. Deists argue that the Scriptures cannot be the word of God, because they are not communicated to all ; and this, they allege, would make God partial.—The very same objection would lead to *Atheism* : For, in the works of creation and providence, God does not confer the same favours upon all. His sovereignty shines in all his works, and in all his dispensations.

Another objection—an objection on which our opponents seem principally to rely, and which Dr. B. chiefly urges—is, that particular election supersedes the necessity of prayer and other means of grace. Why need we pray ? why need we strive ? say our opponents. If we are elected, we shall be saved ; but if not, we shall be condemned. Had not the absurdity of this objection been already pointed out we might retort it thus : If nations are elected to the enjoyment of Gospel privileges, why need we pray that the Gospel may be sent to the heathen ? Why need we form missionary societies, for the purpose of sending through the world the glad tidings of great joy ? The nations that God has elected to enjoy such privileges shall enjoy them ; therefore our prayers and missionary exertions are altogether useless !



## CHAPTER VIII.

*The Perseverance of the Saints.*

IN the general attack made by Dr. B. on almost all the fundamental truths of Christianity, we could not expect the doctrine of the Saints' Perseverance to escape. He has assailed it, not only incidentally, in his Sermons, but endeavoured to hold it up to detestation and contempt in his Appendix. With the abominable Antinomian quotations which he has given, we have no manner of concern. Dr. B. himself does not hold those quotations in greater abhorrence than *we* do. However foolishly, impiously, or blasphemously, Antinomians may talk or write on the subject; no doctrine contained in the sacred volume is capable of a more triumphant defence. Out of an immense mass of evidence, I shall lay before my readers a few of those reasons which induce me to believe the doctrine.

1. To me it appears, that a multitude of texts of Scripture must be *false*, if the doctrine of perseverance is not *true*. I shall mention a few.—Our Saviour asserts, “He that believeth shall be *saved*,” but Dr. Bruce asserts, and all Anti-Calvinists assert, that believers may fall from a state of grace and be *condemned*!—Our Saviour asserts, that whosoever believeth on him shall *not perish*, and that his sheep shall *never perish, nor be plucked out of his hand*;\* but Dr. B. and all Anti-Calvinists assert, that believers *may* perish, and that Christ's sheep *may* be plucked out of his hand! Our Saviour assures us with a double verily, that the believer “*shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life*;” but Dr. Bruce, and all Anti-Calvinists, assure us, that he *may* come into condemnation, and *never see life*! Our Saviour will say to the wicked at that great day, “Depart from me, I never knew *you*.” Had any of those addressed fallen away from a state of grace, the Redeemer's declaration *would not be true*!—*it would not be true that he had never known them*!

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\* If they do not assert *in so many words*, that Christ's sheep may be plucked out of his hands, they assert what is fully equivalent.

From these counter-declarations I ask two questions: 1, Whether should we believe our blessed Redeemer, or Dr. B. and other opponents of the Saints' perseverance?—2, Does the Doctor's volume of Sermons deserve that high character which he himself has given it? is it "*consistent with the Gospel?*"

Agreeable to the above-cited declarations of the Redeemer are those of the Apostles. The Apostle John declares, "That he that doth evil hath not *seen* God," and that "Whosoever sinneth hath not *seen* him, neither *known* him."—Now, if the doctrine of perseverance is not *true*, these texts are false. If any fall away from a state of grace, commit sin, and do evil, it is not true, that they have not *seen* God, neither *known* him. Dr. B., and other opponents of the Saints' perseverance, maintain, that a man *may have seen God and also known him*, and after all he may *fall away*, "*commit sin, do evil*," and finally perish. Between this doctrine and that of the Apostle, is there not a flat contradiction? Surely there is.

2. The doctrine of the Saints' perseverance rests on the solid basis of the divine perfections. The foreknowledge of God proves the doctrine. "God hath not cast off his people whom he foreknew." "Whom he did foreknow he also did predestinate, and whom he did predestinate them he also called, and whom he called them he also justified, and whom he justified them he also glorified." Unless this golden chain can be broken, the Saints' perseverance cannot be denied. The Apostle's chain is what logicians denominate a sorites. The conclusion is not expressed, it is this: *therefore whom he did foreknow them he also glorified*. If this conclusion be *denied*, then the Apostle's chain is not a sorites, but a sophism! If it be *admitted*, the doctrine of the Saints' perseverance is *fully established*. Some Divines, with a boldness bordering on impiety, attempt to break the Apostle's chain. Were they to succeed, they would prove—What?—that the Apostle is an inconclusive and sophistical reasoner!

*The omnipotent power of God* secures the final perseverance of the Saints. They are "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation."—*The love of God and the Redeemer* secure the Saints' perseverance. Whom the Redeemer loves "he loves unto the end." God loved believers with an everlasting love—draws them with loving kindness—declares that his loving kindness shall not depart

from them—and, accordingly, the Apostle exclaims, (Rom. viii. 35) “ Who shall separate us from the love of Christ ?  
 “ shall tribulation; or distress, or persecution, or famine,  
 “ or nakedness, or peril, or sword ? As it is written, For  
 “ thy sake we are killed all the day long ; we are account-  
 “ ed as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things  
 “ we are more than conquerors through him that loved  
 “ us.—For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor  
 “ angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present,  
 “ nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other  
 “ creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of  
 “ God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

3. I believe the doctrine of the perseverance of the Saints, because they are “ *members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.*” Could any of those members be torn off, the mystical body of the Redeemer would be a maimed and mutilated body ! It would not be perfect and glorious, but unsightly and deformed !

4. I believe that none of the Saints shall ever fail of obtaining the heavenly inheritance, because their character to that inheritance is the very same with that of the *Redeemer himself*. They are “ heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ.” If the Redeemer’s charter be good; so is *theirs*. If his charter cannot be broken, neither can *theirs*. Their lives are hid with *Christ in God*. Because *he* lives, *they* shall live also.

5. I believe that the Saints cannot totally and finally fall away from a state of grace, or fail of obtaining the heavenly inheritance ; because they have *the first fruits and earnest* of that inheritance. If an earnest gives security among *men* much more so with *God*. Men *may* refuse to make good that bargain which they have confirmed by giving earnest ; but God will not tantalize his creatures by first giving them the Holy Spirit as the earnest of their inheritance, and afterwards excluding them from the full possession.

6. I believe that the Saints cannot finally fall away from a state of grace ; because “ *they are sealed by the holy spirit of promise—sealed to the day of redemption.*” They cannot fall away and be lost, except *the broad seal of heaven can be broken !*

7. I believe in the perseverance of the Saints, because I believe that “ *he who begins the good work of grace will carry it on to perfection.*” I believe that the Deity is not like the foolish man, who began to build and was not able



to finish. When God threatened to destroy the Israelites for their rebellion, Moses intercedes thus : (Deut. ix. 26, 27, 28, 29,) “ O Lord God, destroy not thy people and  
 “ thine inheritance which thou hast redeemed through thy  
 “ greatness, which thou hast brought forth out of Egypt  
 “ with a mighty hand. Remember thy servant Abraham,  
 “ Isaac and Jacob ; look not unto the stubbornness of this  
 “ people, nor to their wickedness, nor to their sin : Lest  
 “ the land whence thou broughtest us out say, Because the  
 “ Lord was not able to bring them into the land which he  
 “ promised them, and because he hated them, he hath  
 “ brought them out to slay them in the wilderness. Yet  
 “ they are thy people and thine inheritance, which thou  
 “ broughtest out by thy mighty power and by thy stretched  
 “ out arm.”—On similar principles, Joshua intercedes :  
 (Josh. vii. 7, 8, 9) “ Alas, O Lord God, wherefore hast  
 “ thou at all brought this people over Jordan, to deliver us  
 “ into the hand of the Amorites, to destroy us ? would to  
 “ God we had been content, and dwelt on the other side  
 “ Jordan ! O Lord, what shall I say, when Israel turneth  
 “ their backs before their enemies ! For the Canaanites  
 “ and all the inhabitants of the land shall hear of it, and  
 “ shall environ us round, and cut off our name from the  
 “ earth : and what wilt thou do unto thy great name ?”—  
 If it would have reflected dishonour on the great name of  
 God, to redeem the Israelites out of Egypt, and then to de-  
 stroy them in the Wilderness ; still more inconsistent with  
 the divine perfections would it be, to suffer those to fall  
 and finally perish, whom God has redeemed from sin and  
 Satan.

8. Finally ;\* if the Saints might totally and finally fall from grace, their state now under the *covenant of grace* would be worse than it was under the *covenant of works*. Under the covenant of works the happiness of man was suspended on the free will of an *innocent* being ; but, according to the doctrine of those who deny the Saints' perseverance, it is suspended on the free will of a *weak, corrupt, and depraved* being !—Men may fall away from an *external profession of religion*, but not from *true faith*. “ From him  
 “ that hath not,” says our Saviour, “ shall be taken away

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\* I might have argued the doctrine from the death of Christ—his suretyship—his intercession—and a variety of other topics.

“ that which he hath ;” or, as it is explained, “ that which  
“ he seemeth to have.” “ They went out from us,” says  
the Apostle John, “ but they were not *of us* ; for if they  
“ had been *of us*, they would have no doubt continued with  
“ us ; but they went out, *that they might be made manifest  
that they were not all of us.*”

*Creeds and Confessions Defended,*

AND

ATTACKS MADE ON

**COVENANTERS, SECEDERS, &c.**

**REPELLED,**

IN

**A SERIES OF LETTERS**

Addressed to the anonymous author of

**“ THE BATTLE OF THE TWO DIALOGUES.”**

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*Doth our law judge any man, before it hear him; and know what he doth ?*

*Paul, thou art permitted to speak for thyself.*



## ADVERTISEMENT.

**ATTACKS**, from various quarters, having lately been made on the principles which the writer of the following letters has espoused, and on the denomination to which he has the honour to belong—for some time past he has waited with anxiety, expecting every moment to see them repelled by some abler antagonist. In this expectation he has been hitherto disappointed. Those gentlemen, who, by talents, learning, and other accomplishments, seemed best qualified for entering the lists, appear to have regarded such attacks as despicable : they have therefore treated them with silent contempt. On this subject the author entertains a different opinion.

Though a pamphlet in itself may be really insignificant ; and though, in the estimation of men of learning and talents, it may be truly contemptible ; yet, if, falling in with the tide of popular prejudice, it be written in a bold declamatory style, its effects may be pernicious. By treating such pamphlets with silent contempt, sufficient deference is not paid to the opinion of the world. Silence may be construed into conscious imbecility, and contempt into cowardice. With fresh increments of audacity, attacks may be reiterated, till the press at last teem with the crude eructations of every “ assuming pedagogue.” By such considerations the author feels himself impelled to stand forward as the feeble advocate of a cause which has long been despised—as the apologist of a society obscure and inconsiderable.

The various and important ends and uses of creeds and confessions have been accurately exhibited, and ably defended, by divines of great eminence. Dunlop on Confessions may be consulted with advantage. The writer of the following letters has confined himself to one single view of the subject ; and the chain of reasoning, which he has employed, has at least one recommendation—it is, so far as he knows, new.

Some may blame the author, because on all occasions he has not been careful to preserve his gravity : whilst others again, considering the spirit of the pamphlet on which he animadverts, may think that he is only *too* grave and serious. Whether he is actually guilty of running into *either* of these

extremes, is not his province to determine. All he can say is, that attention to the golden medium has been his object. The principle upon which he proceeds, is—that reasoning ought to be refuted by argument ; but that satire is the *only* weapon with which folly and impertinence can be successfully assailed. The author hopes, that the candour of the reader will prevent him from identifying the Rev. Presbyterian with the Synod of Ulster, or imputing to that learned body the blunders, absurdities, and contradictions of one of its members. Nothing can be more unfair, though nothing is more common, than to impute the errors of an individual to a whole community.

With regard to the continuance of the controversy, the author has only to say, that he neither feels disposed to provoke, nor to deprecate discussion. He holds no principle which he has not previously examined in private, and which he is not willing to submit to a *public* examination. If the tenets of any other denomination can be clearly shown to be more agreeable to the word of God, he can have no interest in refusing to adopt them. As truth excels error, as far as light excels darkness—so, when she is exhibited holding not only in her right hand spiritual blessings, but in her left riches and honour, surely they must be worse than fools who would refuse to embrace her.

Should the Rev. Presbyterian, or any other gentleman, think proper to renew the attack, the author hopes that he will not, like Joab, carry his dagger under a cloak, for the purpose of stabbing in secret the characters of his superiors: wrapping himself up in ignominious obscurity, he will not attempt to screen himself from public chastisement.

## LETTER I.

### TO THE REV. PRESBYTERIAN.

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Sir,

THAT, both among the advocates and opponents of creeds and confessions, men of great talents, learning and piety might be found, is a fact which I flattered myself none would dispute. In this it appears I have been mistaken. The advocates of creeds and confessions, in your *Battle of Dialogues*, you represent as a truly despicable race of mortals, you contemptuously style them creed-makers and creed-mongers, who coin formulas to measure men's consciences, and you gravely inform us that "ninety-nine out of a hundred who contend for creeds never think what they are; and the few who do read them never think of the meaning of language." What contemptible miscreants are these same advocates of creeds and confessions! Ninety-nine out of a hundred, though they *subscribe* them, and though they *contend* for them, yet never read them! How implicit their faith! How blind their zeal! "And the few who do read them, never think of the meaning of language." Still worse; a still lower degree of degradation! Hide your diminished heads, ye contemptible advocates of creeds and confessions. Never lift your pens—never open your mouths—be for ever silent; for ye never think of the meaning of language! With infinite contempt, Rev. Sir, you look down on the "pitiable creatures who know not between *t-h-e* and *t-h-e-y*;" and with proud disdain, mingled with pathetic lamentation, you stigmatize that "most ungrammatical *talking*, which is frequently palmed on the people for preaching." Surely, said I, (whilst meditating on these things) surely, said I, the writer of this dialogue is an admirable Scholar—an accurate grammarian—a profound philologist. In this, however, I confess, I found myself a little disappointed. The perusal of your pamphlet, I candidly acknowledge, did not altogether answer the expectations you



had raised. Glancing at your pages in a critical point of view, to my great astonishment I found them replete with grammatical blunders. For my own entertainment, I marked a number of them on the margin : and for your gratification, I shall exhibit a specimen.\*

Page 6, line 6 from the bottom, the pronoun *they* is in the plural number, whilst *Seceder*, the noun for which it stands, is singular. On the contrary, page 19, line 12, the pronoun *it* is singular, whilst *instructions*, the noun for which it stands, is plural. Same page, line 7 from the bottom, the verb, *must subscribe*, has two nominatives, *negro* and *he* : on the contrary, page 9, line 4 from the bottom, the verb *hope* has no nominative at all ; for when two verbs of different moods or tenses are coupled together by a conjunction, the nominative of the former must be repeated before the latter. Additional violations of this rule will be seen, page 21, line 19, and page 30, line 10. In page 22, line 16 from the bottom ; and page 43, line 2, examples will be seen of the verb disagreeing with its nominative case. A variety of other grammatical blunders might be pointed out ; but these may suffice at present.

Let us attend a little to the style of your dialogue. Of your talents for composition you appear by no means diffident. Whilst you reprobate the advocates of creeds and confessions, as ignoramuses who never think of the meaning of language, you speak, with apparent self-complacency, of the well ordered words you have used in a former dialogue. Of that dialogue, having never seen it,† I can only say, I hope its words are much better ordered than those of the one now under review.

\* Omitting this letter, at least the grammatical part of it, the unlearned reader may pass on to Letter II.

† Since writing the above, the original Dialogue has fallen into my hands. For a specimen of the philological talents of its author, we have only to consult the bottom of the title page.—“Belfast, printed this present year, 1817.” Lest any person should imagine that 1817 was *not* present when it *was* present ; or lest any person should imagine that it was not printed 1817, A. D. but 1817, A. M. ; or in other words, that it was printed in the days of Noah, a little after the universal deluge—to prevent all misconceptions of this kind, the author “in words few and well ordered,” not only informs us, that the pamphlet was printed 1817 ; but gravely assures us that that year was then present. After such a specimen of accuracy in the title page, who can doubt that the Dialogue itself is admirably composed ?

In your *Battle of Dialogues*, page 14, we read thus ; “ But there were many exceptions to the Talmud amongst the Jews ? and we have every reason to believe, that Timothy and his forefathers were of the number.” Were Timothy and his forefathers exceptions to the Talmud ? Are these words well ordered ? are they sense ? Same page, near the bottom, we are informed, that “ the birth of Jesus Christ, his person, &c. were handed down by the Holy Ghost through the instrumentality of the apostles.” Pray, sir, how was the person of Christ (as distinct from his preaching and doctrines, which are tautologically mentioned in the same sentence,) how was the person of Christ handed down by the Holy Ghost, through the instrumentality of the apostles ? Had you been a Rev. Catholic, instead of a Rev. Presbyterian, I would have at once recognised the doctrine of transubstantiation.

In page 16, we are informed that “ the Israelites had *disagreed to walk* according to God’s commandments.”—To *agree* to walk according to the commandments of God, is perfectly intelligible ; but to *disagree* to walk according to these commandments, is neither English nor sense.

Page 19, we are told, that “ though the Spirit was given to Jesus without measure, yet the apostles got it as it were step by step.”—To get a gift, as it were step by step, is not English.

Page 20, we read thus : “ you have now passed over the whole of his arguments.”—The words *passed over* convey the erroneous idea, that he had not adverted to those arguments at all.—Same page, at the bottom, you propose to put Layman in possession of a standard, which will answer in all engagements, and against all enemies. Now, what is this standard ? It is the girdle of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, the shoes of gospel preparation, &c. A very remarkable standard, indeed ! One would expect, that the hero who fought the *Battle of Dialogues* would understand military terms better, than to confound a girdle, a breastplate, or a pair of shoes, with a standard !

Page 22, we read thus : Charity, or at least prudence, might have *constrained* your colleague from making such an attack, and from warping into it the motives, &c. Not to mention constrained for restrained, which may possibly be only a typographical error—what a jumble of metaphors ! *Warping* motives into an attack ! A very extraordinary web, no doubt !

Page 26, the Presbyterians of Scotland, and the protestants of England are styled the most learned assemblies in the world.—We know, that the Presbyterians of Scotland are under the inspection of a very learned assembly ; but are the Presbyterians themselves an assembly ? Are the Protestants of England an assembly ! Well ordered words indeed !

Page 13, we read thus : “ On being asked, ‘ Do you think that either the divine Jesus or his apostles, made use of any other standard of faith besides the scriptures ? ’ he says, ‘ I am quite certain that they did. ’ After such boldness, a person of plain sense would expect a quotation or two from that of which he is so certain. ”—Now, that of which he is so certain, is, “ that the divine Jesus, and his apostles, made use of another standard besides the bible. ” It is the truth of this proposition, of which he is so certain. To expect a quotation or two from the truth of a proposition, is surely ludicrous enough ! So absurd an expectation, “ I am quite certain, ” was never entertained by any person of plain sense.

Page 35, you express yourself thus : “ The ground of my loyalty is not founded on the countenance of government. ” This sentence, when analysed, will read as follows :—The foundation of my loyalty is not built on the foundation of the countenance of government. Well ordered words indeed !

Campbell, in his Philosophy of Rhetoric, has a chapter on “ What is the cause that nonsense so often escapes being detected, both by the writer and by the reader ? ” A careful perusal of this chapter I would earnestly recommend to all who read the Battle of Dialogues. The various kinds of nonsense enumerated by Campbell, are, The puerile, the learned, the profound, and the marvellous. With great submission, I conceive the enumeration is incomplete : he ought to have added the *pedantic*.

In the preceding pages, I have exhibited a few of the blunders, in grammar and in style, with which the Battle of Dialogues abounds. I say, a *few* ; for, to exhibit them all, would swell this letter to a size much larger, than that of the Dialogue itself.

My Reverend and dear Presbyterian, I am extremely sorry for your calamity. Before you attacked the advocates of creeds and confessions, you were doubtless an excellent scholar, an accurate grammarian, an acute philo-



logist: but now, alas! your learning is fled—your talents are blasted. As an atonement for your sin, by which you have brought upon yourself so awful a judgment, I shall take the liberty of prescribing for you a course of penance. It is this: that, at the first meeting of Synod, you come forth from your lurking place, with tears in your eyes, and the Battle of Dialogues in your hands, confessing yourself to be the author of that performance.

2dly, That in open Synod you fall on your bended knees, humbly begging the pardon of all the advocates of creeds and confessions, professing, at the same time, the deepest sorrow for the scurrilous manner in which you have treated them.

3dly. That you bring forward a motion to the following effect:—That no member of the Synod of Ulster shall, on pain of public censure, presume to attack the Westminster Divines, or any of the advocates of Creeds and Confessions, till, having previously studied Murray's grammar, he is able to write a couple of pages without committing any material blunder.

The utility of this motion you will easily perceive. In the first place, it may be the means of averting future judgments. In the second place, it will preserve the respectability of the Synod. It will prevent that venerable and learned body from being disgraced by the incoherent effusions of every contemptible scribbler. In the third place, (for I love to be methodical) it will have an admirable effect upon pulpit exhibitions. It will prevent "The most ungrammatical talking from being palmed on the people for preaching." Those, you know, who write ungrammatically, will, of course, talk no better. And, indeed, either to write or talk ungrammatically, in this learned age, is quite intolerable, I had almost said unpardonable. With great propriety, therefore, you drop the tear of lamentation, whilst you express yourself thus: "Alas! sir, you are well aware, that the most ungrammatical talking is frequently palmed on the people for preaching." It is true, indeed, that a bigoted Seceder or Covenanter would have probably said, alas! sir, you know that the most *erroneous* and *heretical* talking is frequently palmed on the people for preaching. Alas! sir, you know that "there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation; ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the Lord God, and our Lord

Jesus Christ.”—Alas! sir, you know, that, for a long time past, “false teachers have been privily bringing in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bringing upon themselves swift destruction”—Alas! sir, you know, that “many follow their pernicious ways, by reason of which the way of truth is evil spoken of.” Alas! sir, you know, “that, through covetousness,” these false teachers, “with feigned words, make merchandize of” their hearers.—Alas! sir, you know, that their “judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not.” Alas! sir, you know, that because men “receive not the love of the truth, that they may be saved, for this cause God sends them strong delusion, that they may believe a lie; that they all may be damned who believe not the truth, but have pleasure in unrighteousness.” Such, my dear sir, was current language seventeen or eighteen hundred years ago: nay, so rude are some of the old advocates of creeds and confessions, that they retain it even in the present day. You assure us, however, that the term heretic is used only as a bug-bear to frighten children; and that the utmost we can expect of men is, “to act on their opinions.” We have no just reason, therefore, to lament, that errors and heresies are frequently palmed on the people for preaching. We have no reason to blame the propagators of these errors, heresies, and doctrines of devils. The utmost we can expect of them is, to act on their opinions.

With regard to ungrammatical talkers, the case is quite different. For these there is no apology. The remedy is obvious. Let them return and spend a few additional months at the grammar school—for the same purpose, let them peruse this letter, which I design for their edification.

I am, Sir, your sincere friend,

And fellow-labourer in grammar,

JOHN PAUL.

## LETTER II.

My dear Sir,

The Rev. Covenanter, with whom you contend in your Battle of Dialogues, appears to be a very puny antagonist ; the simplest and best-natured creature in the world. During the whole of the conflict he never strikes a single blow ; but when smote on the one cheek, with the greatest meekness and good humour, turns to you the other. To be candid, sir, I am afraid you have mistaken your man : I am afraid your antagonist is a Quaker, and not a Covenanter. Covenanters, I can assure you, are not quite so tame as represented in your dialogue. A mistake, not altogether unlike the one just mentioned, I am sure you have made, when you assert that the dialogue which occasioned yours was written by a teacher, and not by a layman. Of this mistake, should you call in question the authenticity of my information, you can be convicted in the most satisfactory manner. Equally groundless is your ungenerous suspicion that the Rev. Covenanter was a member of a mixed club, who often assembled to drill Layman. In vain, sir, has that gentleman employed almost the whole of his life, (including seven years at Glasgow college)—in vain, I say, has he employed almost the whole of his life in cultivating talents of a superior order ; if, after all, afraid of appearing in the public field of controversy, he skulks in obscurity, and dares only to carry on a clandestine and inglorious war. The truth is, your supposition that Layman was drilled by the clergyman, is completely destroyed by your former assertion, that the layman was actually the clergyman in disguise.

In your controversy with Layman I do not design very formally to interfere. If you imagine you have fought a hard battle, and gained over him a signal victory, I shall not, unless in a few instances, attempt to pluck the laurels from your brow. I would only admonish you not to be too hasty in laying aside your armour ; for it does not appear to me, that the victory is quite so decisive. Your antagonist may arise and renew the conflict.



In your late Battle; had you acted merely on the defensive—had you only endeavoured to repel the attacks of Layman, *I* should never have entered the lists: but when you carry on offensive operations against all creeds and confessions, particularly the Westminster Confession of Faith, the National Covenant, the Solemn League and Covenant, together with that venerable assembly by which those ancient documents were compiled, I feel myself called on to take up the gauntlet—to stand forward in defence of principles and characters, which, in my humble opinion, are worthy to be held in the highest estimation, but which you have indecently and furiously assailed.

The whole of your reasoning against creeds and confessions appears to me resolvable into that species of sophism which logicians style *ignorantia elenchi*, a mistake of the question. In page 10, you inform us, that the question is, “Whether the word of God be a perfect rule of faith and manners.” Now, sir, this is not the question at all. This never *was* the question. I appeal to your own motto, “The word of God, which is contained in the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, is the only rule to direct us, how we may glorify and enjoy him.” This motto, which, by mistake, you quote from the Westminster Confession of Faith, will be found in the Shorter Catechism. It contains an explicit declaration of the sentiments of our Westminster Divines, with regard to the sufficiency and perfection of scripture. It declares those sacred oracles to be, not only the rule, but the *only* rule to direct us in the glorification and enjoyment of God; and it proves, beyond a doubt, that your statement is erroneous.

Pray, sir, what advocate of creeds and confessions ever called in question either the perfection or infallibility of scripture? For what purpose, then, do you again, and again, and again, talk about the perfection of scripture, and the infallibility of scripture—about mending that which is perfect, adding to infallibility, &c. What a waste of time and paper! On these points there is no dispute. You have fought, indeed, a hard battle; but with whom? Not with the advocates of creeds and confessions, but with certain imaginary beings, who deny the perfection and infallibility of scripture! In a word, you have set up a man of straw, and over him you have gained a signal victory!

In reply to these observations, you will doubtless exclaim—Of what use, then, are human creeds and confessions?

I answer, they are useful, not for mending the word of God, not for adding to its perfection or infallibility, not as a rule of faith and manners—but they are useful, as they assist us in applying the rule of God's word ; they are useful as they assist us in understanding each other, with regard to the ideas we attach to the word of God—for these purposes, I contend, they are useful, and not only useful, but *necessary*.

The controversy about creeds and confessions may be reduced, if I mistake not, to very narrow limits, thus :

Either a simple profession of faith in the scriptures (so far as belief is concerned,) is sufficient to entitle to the privileges of the Christian church, or it is not. If such a profession *is* sufficient, then creeds and confessions are unnecessary ; if it *is not* sufficient, then both the necessity and utility of creeds and confessions are fully established.

Now, my dear sir, as you talk so much of the sufficiency, perfection, and infallibility of scripture, I ask you, Do you imagine that a simple profession of faith in the scriptures, *is* sufficient to entitle to the privileges of the Christian church ? Were a person to apply to you for admission, and, upon his application, declare that he believed the scriptures to be the word of God, and, of course, that he believed all the doctrines contained in that sacred volume, would you regard this declaration as perfectly satisfactory ? —as perfectly sufficient to entitle him to admission ? Upon this principle, would you actually admit him ? If you say you would, and prove that in doing so your conduct would be proper, you have gained your point : the controversy is ended. But, my dear sir, do you not perceive, that if a simple profession of faith in the scriptures were all that is necessary to qualify for admission, the most erroneous and fanatical persons that ever lived could never be excluded. Those who “ give heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils, forbidding to marry, and abstaining from meats,” must all be admitted into your community. Those who hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes, and contend for a community of wives ; and those who plead for polygamy, divorce, and even fornication, must all be received. Those who deny the Christian sabbath, baptism, the Lord's supper, the preaching of the word, and even the obligation of the moral law of God, must all become members of your society. Those who believe the Redeemer to be the Supreme God ; those who believe him to be a superangelic

being ; those who believe him to be a mere man, a peccable being like ourselves ; and those who believe that he had no human nature at all, that his incarnation, death, resurrection, and ascension, were all imaginary—all these must be admitted by you to the enjoyment of the most solemn ordinances. If they profess their faith in the scriptures, you cannot refuse them. Dancers, Dunkers, Jumpers, and Shakers, must all be admitted into your community. If they profess their belief in the scriptures, you can ask no more ; yourself being judge, “ the utmost that can be expected of them is, to act on their opinions.” Of course, when public worship commences, your alleys must be cleared, that the dancers may “ trip it on the light fantastic toe ;” whilst the Jumpers and Shakers, having stripped off their clothes, leap till their heads strike the joists of your galleries, and their bodies fall down in convulsions before you.

Nor must you by any means refuse admission to the Flagellantes, who believe that salvation can only be obtained by faith and whipping. Presume not to deny them the most effectual means of their salvation—the cat-o’-nine-tails.—Whilst, with energy and zeal, they exercise their godly discipline, and vigorously persevere in their pious flagellations, dare not to interfere. “ The utmost you can expect of them is, to act on their opinions.”

Suppose the next class of candidates for admission to be the Circoncelliones. With the clubs of Israel in their hands, and the war-whoop of “ Praise be to God” in their mouths, these ancient fanatics sallied forth in frantic fury. As “ vindicators of justice, and protectors of the oppressed,” they enfranchised slaves, discharged debtors, cancelled bonds, and forced masters to exchange situations with their servants. With the clubs of Israel (for they used no swords, our Saviour having forbidden the use of one to Peter,) with the clubs of Israel, breaking the bones of their victims, and pouring into their eyes a solution of quick-lime and vinegar, they left them to perish in the utmost agonies. Violating their vows of chastity, they gave themselves up to wine, and every species of impurity. At last, by voluntary martyrdom, or suicide, they terminated a series of unexampled atrocities—These, no doubt, you would consider a coarse description of Christians. But what could you do ? If willing to subscribe the scriptures, you could not



refuse them. "The utmost you could expect of them would be, to act on their opinions."

The Adamites, the Cainites, the Serpentarians, and Satanians, must all be admitted members of your society. It is true, the tenets of the Adamites might, perhaps, displease you a little—particularly the fundamental maxim of their society, "Jura, perjura, secretum prodere noli"—Swear, forswear, and reveal not the secret. Whilst they strenuously maintain, that it is highly improper to marry, or to wear any clothes, you must not presume to condemn their tenets; for, according to your own doctrine, you are fallible as well as the Adamites; you are as liable and as likely to be mistaken, as they. In imitation of old father Adam, you must allow them the privilege of appearing in your assembly *naked*. "The utmost you can expect of them is, to act on their opinions."

Upon the same principle, I conclude, you are by far too liberal, to exclude from your community, the sect of the Cainites. You would not condemn this sect, for holding in the highest veneration such worthy characters as Cain, Corah, Dathan, Abiram and the Sodomites, but particularly Judas Iscariot, who was singularly useful in betraying the Redeemer, by whose blood we are saved!

Nor must you, by any means, reject the Serpentarians, who venerate the serpent that beguiled Eve, supposing it to be the son of God!

Nor could you refuse the right hand of fellowship to the good old Satanians, who very wisely considered, that as the Devil was a being of great power, it was a dictate of prudence to venerate and adore him. You must not condemn any of these tenets; for you are a fallible being, as liable and as likely to err, as any Serpentarian or Satanian in the world. "The utmost you could expect of such characters, is, to act on their opinions."

The Amsdorfians asserted, that good works were not only unprofitable, but obstacles to our salvation.

The Beguines maintained, that when once we are united to God, we arrive at a state, not only of sinless perfection, but impeccability—that we may indulge all our appetites and passions without restraint—that the greatest enormities are perfectly innocent—and that we are bound by no laws, neither civil nor ecclesiastical.

The Libertines contended, that God was the immediate

author of every action—that, properly speaking, there was no such thing as sin, nor any essential difference between right and wrong—that we might indulge all our appetites and passions without restraint—that all our actions and pursuits were perfectly innocent—that our blessed Redeemer was nothing more than a mere *je ne scai quoi*,\* composed of the Spirit of God and the opinion of man.

Now, Sir, is it not evident, that, upon your principles, Amsdorfians, Beguines, and Libertines, must all be admitted and recognised as church members? Professing to believe in the word of God, you could not refuse them. Nor could you at all condemn their tenets. Why?—You will answer the question yourself. You are “as fallible, as liable, and as likely to err,” as any Beguine, Amsdorfian, or Libertine in the world. “The utmost we can expect of men is, to act on their opinions—”

To render your church a little more respectable, you might have a few Stylites, or pillar-saints. These worthy characters, like St. Simeon Stylites, perched on the-tops of towers forty or fifty cubits high, might stand there motionless for thirty or forty years. The elevated piety and exalted devotion of these anchorites, could not fail to excite universal admiration: they would undoubtedly be looked up to by Christians of every description. Should our Rev. Presbyterian prove a little sceptical, and attempt to bring down from his high station one of these exalted characters, the anchorite might quote his authority thus: “I will set me on my tower, &c.” Continuing still a little sceptical, should your Reverence remonstrate with him—assure him that this was a perversion of scripture—and attempt to substitute your own interpretation, his high mightiness might rejoin: According to your own doctrine, you are as fallible, as liable, and as likely to err, as any pillar saint. “One interpretation may be as good as another.” Mine may, therefore, be as good as yours. I will not come down.

Thus, Sir, it appears, that upon your principles, persons whose opinions are the most fanatical, the most erroneous, the most immoral, the most impious and abominable, must all be admitted, and recognised as church members: professing their faith in the scriptures, they cannot be rejected.

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\* I know not what.

Of the heterogeneous materials of such a church, the population of Noah's ark would be only a faint representation. So far from living together in love and peace, the whole British army could not restrain them from cutting each others' throats. From such a church "Good Lord deliver us." If this be liberality, let me for ever remain a bigot.

In the preceding pages, I have endeavoured to point out the consequences, which naturally, and in my humble opinion, necessarily follow from the position, that a profession of belief in the scriptures, is all that is necessary to entitle to the privileges of the Christian church. The consequences I have inferred, I humbly conceive, naturally and necessarily follow from the premises. Sorry, however, would I be to insinuate, that my friend, the Rev. Presbyterian, would acknowledge these consequences. I can assure you, my dear sir, that I hope better things of you. I flatter myself, that you were not aware of the consequences, to which the principles laid down in your dialogue would naturally lead you. I cannot believe, Sir, that upon their acknowledgment of the scriptures, you would profess yourself willing to hold communion with all descriptions of men, however immoral, impious, or abominable their tenets.

Though Latitudinarian and sceptical principles are frequently palmed on the world under the specious guise of liberality and charity; yet I do not believe there is any Rev. Presbyterian hardy enough to avow the consequences mentioned above.

Now, Sir, if you grant (and I am confident you will) that on a bare profession of their belief in the scriptures, you would not admit to church fellowship such characters as mentioned above, I have gained my point. The utility and necessity of creeds and confessions follow of course; and all your reasoning falls to the ground, or may be easily retorted. A Nicolaitane, for instance, applies to you for admission. You inform him, that he cannot be admitted, so long as he pleads for a community of wives. He replies, that in the days of the apostles, they had all things common. You begin to explain this portion, and to point out the absurdity of his opinion. He answers, "The Bible is my creed. I am willing to subscribe the word of God; I am willing to seal it with my blood; but I am not willing to subscribe your doctrines or opinions. The bible is infallible; your opinions are fallible—if God's word be an infallible standard, can you add to infallibility? The word of God is a perfect rule; measure me by that; but



I will not submit to be measured by the imperfect rule of your opinions. No man, or body of men, has a right to prescribe any other terms of communion between Christ and me, than those which he himself hath prescribed ; which terms are a belief in his doctrines as contained in Revelation. Nay, further, however innocent you may presume yourself to be, you are guilty of rebellion against the person of Christ, as the king and head of the church, and of presumptuously making additions to that which he has pronounced perfect. You might as well set up a candle, when the sun is in his splendour, as your opinion, where the gospel shines. You should never dare to dictate to me, what I am to believe. Jesus I know, and Paul I know, but who art thou ?”

Thus, Sir, you see that a Nicolaitane, or any other person of erroneous principles, when refused admission, might, in your own words, retort upon you all your invectives against creeds and confessions. The reason is obvious : the moment you refuse admission to any person on account of his tenets, you are, by your own acknowledgment, setting up “ your conscience against his conscience, your opinion against his opinion. You are setting up your interpretation of scripture, as the confession of his faith—as a creed to measure his conscience. You are a fallible, uninspired man, as liable and likely to mistake and wrest the true sense of scripture, as any of those for whom you are contriving tests, and excluding under the name of heretics : and yet, fallible and uninspired as you are, we must suppose you to be wiser and more merciful than God, and capable of delivering his mind and will in terms more clear, express, and unexceptionable, than Jesus Christ himself.—Still farther ; if the Nicolaitane is willing to subscribe the scriptures, though in an unscriptural sense, what then, I ask, should hinder him from subscribing your interpretation in the same manner ? If he will deal treacherously with the words of God, why not much more so with the words of man ?”—with the words of the Rev. Presbyterian ?

Thus, Sir, you see the dilemma in which you are involved. If, upon their simple profession of faith in the scriptures, you refuse to admit persons of the most impious and abominable principles, you have given up your cause ; you are acting upon the principles of creeds and confessions. All your own reasoning recoils upon yourself ; and I may justly address you in the words of the apostle. Therefore, thou

art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest ; for wherein thou judgest another thou condemnest thyself, for thou that judgest dost the same things.

But, if, on the contrary, you say, that upon their acknowledgment of the scriptures, you *would* admit persons of all descriptions, however immoral, impious, and abominable their principles—and particularly, that you would admit the Nicolaitans mentioned above, you stand reprov'd by the Spirit of God, Rev. ii. 14—17, “ But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit fornication. So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate.” Read the words of your Redeemer in the 16th verse, and tremble as you read : “ Repent or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth. He that hath an ear let him hear what the spirit saith unto the churches.” Were it necessary I might quote a variety of other texts, in which the previous Latitudinarian principle is condemned ; but till once some person appear in public, bold enough to avow that principle, I shall not proceed any farther in its refutation.

The principles of Latitudinarians stand condemned by common sense, as well as by the word of God ; for how can two walk together except they be agreed ?\*

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\* Notwithstanding the abuse you have poured upon Layman for quoting this text in favour of creeds and testimonies, I have ventured to commit the same crime. In this verse, and those that follow, the premises only are laid down ; they are all incontrovertible truths, dictates of common sense. The literal meaning of the text quoted is, How can two *men* walk together except they be agreed ? The conclusion to be inferred is, therefore how can God and his people walk together, &c. The validity of the conclusion depends upon the truth of the premises—upon the truth of that maxim, “ That no two men can walk together, except they are agreed.”—Your commentary on the text concludes thus : What folly to rub the dust off our bibles, while we only read half sentences ! My dear Sir, did you really believe that the text was a half sentence ? or did you wish to impose that belief upon Layman ? Did you really think, that the hue and cry you had raised in the beginning of the paragraph, together with the notes of admiration appended to the end of it, would terrify Layman out of his senses, so that he would be unable to distinguish between a half sentence and a whole one ? Trust me, dear Sir, we should not calculate too much on the stupidity of laymen. Some centuries ago, their confidence in the ipse dixit of a clergyman was much more implicit than it is at present. Of

How can thousands and tens of thousands whose principles and practices are the most heterogeneous, discordant, and opposite—as opposite as light and darkness, Christ and Belial—how can thousands and millions of such characters walk together in love and peace? Sooner may we expect to see wolves and lambs, leopards and kids, foxes and geese, laying aside their natural antipathies, and uniting in one amicable and harmonious commonwealth!

It must be confessed, however, that though Latitudinarian principles are inconsistent with scripture and common sense; they are nevertheless perfectly consistent with themselves. If persons of all descriptions, upon the adoption of the bible as their creed, ought to be admitted to church fellowship, it follows, of course, that human creeds and confessions fall to the ground.

Nor is it at all strange, that men of corrupt minds, who walk in craftiness, handle the word of God deceitfully, and corrupt the Gospel of Christ—it is not at all strange, that such characters should cordially hate, and vigorously oppose, all creeds and confessions. Those who bring in damnable heresies, the apostle assures us, do it *privily*; they “*creep in unawares.*” But creeds and confessions tear off the mask, and expose to public odium those, who, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, lie in wait to deceive. To such men, creeds and confessions are no less odious, than locks and bars to nightly depredators. Such characters, I say, in their opposition to creeds and confessions, act consistently, and as might be expected. But creeds and confessions are opposed by vast numbers of a very different description—by individuals, and by communities, strongly attached to the doctrines of the gospel, and firmly resolved, not to open the doors of the church for the reception of those, whom they regard as heretical. Such characters do themselves, what they condemn in others.—Between them and the advocates of creeds and confessions the difference is merely circumstantial. Whenever they exclude an erroneous person, they do it on the principle of a creed, as we have already observed. They exclude him,

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late, they appear very much in the habit of thinking for themselves. And, indeed, it must be confessed, that to see the layman walking in the path of common sense, whilst the clergyman is wandering from it, and completely bewildered, is no uncommon case.



not because he refuses to profess his faith in the scriptures, but because, they conceive he has not correct views of the scriptures. Their own views are exhibited to him as a confession of faith, which he is requested to subscribe. If he cannot acquiesce in these views, he is refused admission. For instance, if he refuse to profess his faith in the supreme deity of the Redeemer—his atonement—the depravity of nature—the efficacy of grace, &c. he cannot be admitted. Now all these doctrines, be they what they may, are so many articles of their creed. The difference between it and ours, (as I have already observed,) is merely circumstantial, and the balance appears decidedly in our favour. Theirs is a verbal creed, ours a printed one.—Theirs private, ours public. Theirs exhibited by obscure individuals, ours by a learned and venerable assembly of divines. Every candidate for admission with us, has an opportunity of examining our creed at his leisure. He may pause, ponder, sift, and compare every article with the word of God. In joining those who have no public creed he has not this privilege. He has not the same advantage for becoming acquainted with the principles of those into whose society he is about to enter. Of course, the union cannot be supposed so complete, nor the communion so comfortable.

To the reasoning employed in the preceding pages, it may be objected, that I have not attempted to prove the necessity or utility of creeds and confessions from the word of God. In reply to this objection, I would observe, that if the Latitudinarian scheme, which I have in the preceding pages, endeavoured to expose, stands *condemned* by the word of God, it follows, of course, that creeds and confessions, by the same divine word, are fully *recognised* and *established*. Between the Latitudinarian scheme, and the adoption of creeds and confessions, I have endeavoured to prove that there is no medium. It necessarily follows, that the condemnation of the one, is the recognition and establishment of the other. Should this answer, to persons accustomed to close thinking, appear not altogether satisfactory, in confirmation of it I would ask a few questions. Are we not commanded to reject a heretic? Were not the Asiatic churches reprimanded for not excluding erroneous persons? Are we not commanded to speak the same things? to be perfectly joined together in the same mind and the same judgment, &c.? Now, sir, I presume

it will be a task too hard for you, or any man, to show, how it is possible to obey these injunctions, upon any other principle, than that of the adoption of creeds and confessions. If we throw open the door of the church for the reception of persons of the most opposite, jarring and heretical opinions, it is evident, we do so in direct violation of the above mentioned precepts: on the other hand, if we exclude any, on account of their opinions, we must do it by a creed. Our views of scripture are a creed, and we exclude them because they do not acquiesce in these views. It follows, of course, that if we have any authority in scripture for the exclusion of heretical persons, we have the same authority for the use of a creed; because it is only *by a creed* that any person can possibly be excluded. Our creed may be a verbal one, a written one, or a printed one, (the difference is not essential,) but still it is only by the medium of a creed we can possibly obey the above scripture precepts.

I am, Sir, a notorious creed-monger: but, at the same time, -

Your sincere friend,

And very humble servant,

JOHN PAUL.

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### LETTER III.

Rev. and dear Sir,

Having, in the preceding letter, from principles both of scripture and reason, endeavoured to prove, not only the utility, but also the necessity of creeds and confessions, I shall in the present, briefly advert to a few of the most plausible things you have said in opposition to the cause which I advocate.

Page 19, you conclude, that "when there are twenty different confessions, nineteen of them must be wrong." With equal force of reasoning, you might infer that when there are twenty pictures (suppose of Bonaparte) nineteen of them must be badly executed, and only one of them a true likeness. Nay, farther, if such a mode of reasoning be legitimate, the blasphemous consequence would follow,

that only one of the four gospels contains a true biographical account of our blessed Redeemer! Creeds may be different, but not opposite: notwithstanding apparent or circumstantial differences, there may be, upon the whole, an astonishing agreement.

Page 24, you reason thus: "But let us suppose the utmost, that your human creed, or test, whatever it may be, contains the true sense of scripture, yet still it is incomprehensible how *it* should be any remedy against heresy, or any means of detecting the heretic more than the scriptures themselves. Heretics, you allow, will readily subscribe the scriptures, though in an unscriptural sense; and what then, I ask, should hinder them from subscribing human creeds and tests in the same manner? If they will deal treacherously with the word of God, why not much more so with the words of men!!"

This argument, being a remarkable one, you very wisely set off by two notes of admiration. With reverence and awe let us approach it! When you talk of heretics dealing treacherously with the word of God, what do you mean? Do you mean that all heretics are hypocrites—that they do not believe what they profess—that they do not believe their tenets to be founded on the word of God? If this be your meaning, allow me to inform you that a bigoted Covenanter is more liberal in his ideas respecting heresy, than the Rev. Presbyterian. If it is essential to the character of a heretic that he is condemned of his own conscience, he never could be known, and of course could never be rejected. Would a heretic tell the world that he was acting in opposition to the dictates of conscience? It would be absurd to suppose it. How then could any person ascertain the fact? It would be impossible. The truth is, that, however false and erroneous the tenets of heretics, we have no reason to imagine that they do not believe them. On the contrary, we are assured by the highest authority, that because men receive not the love of the truth, for this cause God gives them over to strong delusions—to believe lies. Their tenets are lies; but they actually believe them. They believe them to be founded on the word of God; and, therefore, they can profess their faith in the scriptures without any violation of the dictates of conscience. With regard to a human creed, the case may be different. We shall illustrate by an example. Suppose a person, such as Hymeneus, Philetus, or one of the Corinthian heretics, applies



to you for admission. You ask him what he believes concerning the resurrection? He replies that he believes what the scriptures teach on that subject. You inquire still farther, do you believe that the dead bodies of men, both of the righteous and the wicked, shall, at the last day, be raised from their graves, and united to their souls, never more to be separated? He answers, I believe no such thing—I believe that the resurrection mentioned in scripture is to be understood in a spiritual or mystical sense; all that is intended by it is only a resurrection from sin, &c. This, I believe, is what the scripture teaches. The scriptural account I am willing to subscribe; but I will not subscribe your creed.

Thus, my dear Sir, it appears to me quite easy to conceive how a human creed might shut the door of the church against a heretic, whilst the scriptures themselves would be no obstruction. Indeed, I acknowledge, that when the tide of self-interest sets strongly in, creeds, confessions, scripture and conscience, frequently prove but feeble barriers. The exclusion of such characters will always be found difficult in proportion to the temptations of wealth and aggrandizement. No wonder, therefore, if the English establishment answer the laconic description of Pitt: "A Calvinistic creed, a Popish liturgy, and an Arminian clergy." In a word, it is not creeds, but royal emoluments, that make men deal treacherously with the words both of God and man.

Page 18th, Covenanter asks: "Do you not honestly think that it is necessary for men to be on their guard with respect to the solemn subject of religion?" To this you reply: "Most assuredly I do: and as these subjects will not run out of the bible more than the stars out of the heavens, we should imitate the example of navigators, who never steer by a blaze, and always endeavour to make advances in science by viewing the heavenly bodies as they are arranged by God, and not as they are fancied to be by this man or that. All aid is fair; but whatever the systems be, they will best appear in the volume of nature, which cannot be touched, and the volume of revelation, which ought not to be assorted. Each object will appear best in its own situation; and the moment you remove it to any other, it becomes deformed, and leaves a breach behind. Take, for example, a particular verse out of one of the gospels, and who can tell its meaning by itself, or discover the

sense of the whole, once it is removed?" But why, my dear Sir, did you dismiss this paragraph without the usual insignia? If the former one was judged worthy of two notes of admiration, surely this was fully entitled to at least half a dozen. In the commencement of it you talk of subjects running out of the bible, and stars running out of the heavens—a very remarkable race indeed! The Olympic course never exhibited one so interesting. You then inform us, that we should imitate the example of navigators, who never steer by a blaze. If this be so, then down with all light-houses. You next assure us, that navigators always endeavour to make advances in science by viewing the heavenly bodies as they are arranged by God, and not as they are fancied to be by this man or that. Pray sir, is there a single navigator on the face of the earth who is no way indebted to human systems? When once you have convinced the world of the impropriety of studying navigation by the help of books and systems—when once you have persuaded navigators to throw away these helps, and to study the art merely by consulting the volume of nature; then let creeds and confessions be for ever exploded, and let the bible and the volume of nature be the only two books in the universe!—But, "O," says the Rev. Presbyterian, "all aid is fair." A very candid confession indeed! It is all I ask. Indeed it is much more than I could have possibly expected. All aid is fair; then doubtless the aid of creeds and confessions is fair. If all aid is fair in studying the volume of nature, why not in studying the volume of revelation? My dear sir, had you duly considered the import of these four monosyllables, "all aid is fair," you would have thrown down your arms, and the Battle of Dialogues had never been fought. But the Rev. Presbyterian is not so easily driven off the field. As if my friend had made no concession, with undaunted courage he proceeds to observe, "whatever the system be, they will best appear in the volume of nature which cannot be touched, and the volume of Revelation which ought not to be assorted." But, in the name of common sense, what does my friend mean by the volume of nature which cannot be touched? Of this *new* volume. I solemnly declare, that down to the present moment, I have never heard one single syllable. It is only with the *old* volume of nature which *can* be touched that I am acquainted. This old volume, Sir, according to my dull apprehension, we all touch—we cannot avoid touching

for we are living in constant contact with it. Nay, more ; of this old tangible volume both the Rev. Presbyterian, and his humble servant, are constituent parts.

Philosophically remarking, that the volume of nature cannot be touched, and theologically observing, that the volume of revelation ought not to be assorted, you assure us, that whatever the systems be, they will best appear in these two volumes. Here again, I must confess my ignorance. I must candidly acknowledge, that I never before knew, that any system, but the true ones, would appear best, either in the volume of nature or revelation. According to you, it is no matter what these systems are, whether they be true or false ; you assure us that *whatever* they be, they will best appear in these two volumes. Pray, Sir, do you really think, and are you perfectly sure, that not only the Copernican or Newtonian system ; but that the old exploded systems of Ptolemy and Des Cartes, will best appear in the volume of nature ? Do you really believe, that the Socinian, Arian, Arminian, Calvinistic, Antinomian systems—nay, that all the systems of divinity, that ever were written, will best appear in the volume of Revelation ? If you believe all this, (and you have boldly asserted it) you are much more credulous than any of the advocates of creeds and confessions. They really believe, that various systems, exhibited both by philosophers and divines, are so far from appearing best in the volumes of nature and Revelation, that they do not appear in those volumes *at all*. Nay, farther ; they verily believe, that many of those systems have no existence in *nature*, but only in the bewildered imaginations of their blinded votaries.

With great sagacity you go on to observe, that “each object will appear best in its own situation, and the moment you remove it to any other it becomes deformed, and leaves a breach behind.” That each of the stars, planets, &c. appears best in the situation assigned to it by the Almighty, I readily admit ; but how it would appear, when removed from that situation, I am not at present prepared to say. You assure us that it would appear deformed—it may be so. Covenanters, not being “great astronomers,” have not yet begun to pluck the planets from their orbits.” Of course, I can say very little on this subject.

But when you talk of removing objects from one situation to another, perhaps you mean not stars or planets, but



objects in this lower world : Your language indeed implies both ; but, as we cannot always ascertain your meaning from your words, perhaps you had no thought of removing a star or planet, but only terrestrial objects, such as trees, flowers, stones, &c. Now, my dear sir, do you really think, that trees and flowers become deformed, in consequence of their removal from the forest to the orchard or flower garden ? Do stones become deformed, when removed from the quarry to occupy a place in the splendid edifice ? Say, ye botanists, ye florists, and ye architects, is this doctrine true ? is it true, that the moment ye remove any object from its own situation to another, it becomes deformed ? If so—on the face of this globe can ye find no better employment, than to render deformed the works of your Maker !

The truth is, that in Astronomy, Natural history, Botany, Chemistry—in every department of science and of art, classification and arrangement are absolutely necessary. In every branch of literature the necessity of systematic arrangement is universally felt. Even to the Rev. Presbyterian himself, the hero who fought the Battle of Dialogues, I would recommend a little more attention to classification and arrangement. The Duke of Wellington will inform him, that, without strict attention to order and arrangement, he had never gained the victory in the Battle of Waterloo ; and I can assure my friend, that unless in all his future military operations he display more attention to order than formerly, he needs never dream of conquering the Westminster Divines.

My Rev. and dear Presbyterian, I do not think it strange, that you oppose classification—(I do not mean clerical classification, or the classification of regium donum,)—I do not think it strange, that you oppose classification, both in theory and practice ; for, to be candid, I am afraid you have not a single correct idea on the subject. Do you really imagine, that there can be no such thing as classification or arrangement without removing objects from their own situation to another, and leaving a breach behind ? Is it not possible, for instance, to classify the stars or planets without plucking them from their respective systems, rendering them deformed, and leaving a breach behind them ? In like manner, is it not possible to quote texts of scripture, and to classify and arrange those texts, without rendering them deformed, and leaving a breach in the sacred volume ? “ Take, for exam-

ple," say you, "a particular verse out of one of the gospels, and who can tell its meaning by itself, or discover the sense of the whole, once it is removed?" I confess, my dear friend, that I do not like this example at all. "Take a particular verse out of one of the Gospels." {No, sir, I would not take a particular verse out of one of the Gospels for the whole world. For, "if any man take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his part out of the book of life." Indeed, my dear Sir, could any person be found impious enough to make the sacrilegious experiment which you recommend—could any person be found, who would take away a part of the scriptures, I perfectly agree with you, that it would be difficult, nay impossible, to discover the sense of the whole, that part being removed. But does your Reverence really imagine, that any of the advocates of creeds and confessions have it in contemplation to take away a part of the sacred volume, and to leave mankind to guess the meaning of the remainder? Trust me, dear sir, you need not be in the least apprehensive. In reducing divine truths into a system, all that is necessary is the liberty of quotation. There is no necessity of taking a single text out of the bible.

But perhaps you will say, that by taking a particular text out of one of the Gospels, all you intended was the quotation of that text. Now, if this was your intention, why do you talk of the difficulty of ascertaining the meaning of the whole, when that text is removed? The text, upon this principle, is not removed. The whole of the portion from which you quote, is the same after as before quotation; and, of course, the discovery of its meaning equally easy.

With regard to the text quoted, you ask, who can tell its meaning by itself? Now, my dear friend, if there be any difficulty here, the weight of it falls on your own head. Page 25, at the top, you have (to use your own perspicuous phrase) taken a verse out of one of the Gospels: you have quoted Matthew, xv. 9. "But in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." Pray, sir, who can tell the meaning of this text by itself? For what purpose then did you quote it? Is it not become deformed by being removed from its own situation to occupy a place in your Dialogue? Has it not left a breach behind it? and who can discover the meaning of the whole, now it is removed? The inconsistency of your principles and practice here reminds me of Berkeley the sceptic, who, by a

close chain of reasoning, endeavoured to prove that all reasoning was inconclusive. That subtle genius unfortunately forgot, that if all reasoning were inconclusive, his own reasoning, by which he was endeavouring to establish that point, must, by consequence, go for nothing. Alas! how inconsistent a creature is man! Even men of the greatest talents, when once they have wandered out of the path of common sense, soon run into the grossest absurdities.

Before you sent your pamphlet to the press, had you carefully perused it, you might have perceived, that it is not merely in your animadversions on the quotations of a single text, that you have contradicted yourself: but also in your observations on the quotation and arrangement of various texts. You condemn the quotation of numerous portions of Scripture adduced in proof of the different articles of the confession of faith. You assure us, that it would have been much *fairer* and *more convenient*, to have had the whole of Revelation before us. Now, in pages 24 and 25, you have quoted no fewer than seven portions of scripture. You have arranged them according to your own taste, in an order quite different from that in which they stand in the sacred volume. Pray, sir, had you reflected for a moment, might you not have easily perceived, that any person might retort your own arguments in your own words, thus: "It would be much *fairer* and *more convenient*, to have the whole of Revelation before us. I cannot see how you will carry the principles of the bible out of the bible, so as to give them greater force. If any man can arrange them more conspicuously than the Holy Spirit, he will then prove his superior wisdom in communicating the knowledge of the truth. It is a strange compliment to revelation, to suppose, that though it should fail in establishing its own sufficiency and perfection, yet these doctrines are so methodically arranged in the *Battle of Dialogues*, as fully to accomplish that end." Thus, sir, you see, that the readers of your dialogue might, in your own words, retort your own arguments—in the language of the ancient proverb, they might sarcastically address you: "Physician, heal thyself!"

The truth is, that between the volumes of nature and Revelation there is a very striking analogy. In the volume of nature, objects are not arranged according to genus and species. Trees, animals, &c. of all descriptions, are promiscuously blended. To assist us in acquiring the knowledge of these objects, men of learning and science have



classified and arranged them. In botany, how great the utility of the system of Linnæus? In the study of natural history, how much are we indebted to the systematic productions of a Goldsmith and a Buffon? The case is quite similar with regard to the volume of divine revelation. The truths relating to the same subject, are not all contained in the same chapter or the same book. They are not systematically arranged, but promiscuously blended. In the study of those sacred oracles, as ‘all aid is fair,’ compends of Christian doctrine, creeds, confessions, catechisms, &c. are of admirable use. It is true, indeed, they may be abused, as the best of things are; but this is no argument against their utility. To deprive us of those means so remarkably calculated to facilitate our progress in scripture knowledge, is certainly a mode of discovering our respect for the scriptures, extremely worthy of modern illumination! Warmly attached to systematic arrangement, both in philosophy and divinity, I am, dear Sir,

Yours, &c.

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#### LETTER IV.

Rev. and dear Sir,

Wishing always to give honour where honour is due, I must acknowledge that your language is appropriate when you assure us that the Synod of Ulster have *decently* laid aside the confession of faith. In giving up that confession, if your account be correct, the general Synod have proceeded very decently indeed. They have given it up, not all at once, but gradually: first, by the pacific act; next by a resolution founded upon that act; then by using it in such a qualified manner as to render it a mere name—a piece of appearance; and lastly, by scarcely mentioning it at all, in cases of license and ordination. The whole of this procedure all must acknowledge to be highly *decent* and *respectful*. That the Westminster confession is so decently laid aside, you seem to glory; and indeed no wonder, if our subordinate standards have been set up, as you insinuate—“*to supersede the scriptures, to rival their splendour, and to divert the attention of mankind from their*

*perfection.*” If such be their actual tendency, they should have been laid aside long ere now—they should have been laid aside, not decently, but with the greatest contempt. With the national covenant and the solemn league, they should have been burned by the hands of the common hangman. But, my dear Sir, do not candour and justice say, that before these standards are condemned, they should be fairly tried and found guilty? Tell me, Sir, has the use of the confession of faith actually produced those evils you so much dread and deprecate? Or has the laying of it aside been attended by a great augmentation of respect for the scriptures? Is family worship more punctually performed? Are the sacred oracles more frequently read? Are they daily read, morning and evening, by the heads of families? Are they daily read even in the families of clergymen, and particularly those clergymen who decry all creeds and confessions, who are enemies to the doctrines of the Westminster confession, and extol the perfection and infallibility of Scripture? Are both clergymen and laymen more in the habit of associating in fellowship meetings for the purpose of reading the word of God, and conversing on its sacred contents; of addressing the throne of grace; of teaching and exhorting each other in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in their hearts unto the Lord? Where are now those days when the houses of your pious ancestors, both laymen and clergymen, resounded with the praises of their Creator and Redeemer?—when a portion of the divine word was publicly read every morning and evening in the families of many?—when family prayers, like clouds of incense, daily ascended the throne of the Most High?—when, on the mornings and evenings of Christian sabbaths, our towns and cities were rendered vocal by the chanting of divinely-inspired anthems? “How is the gold become dim, and the fine gold changed!” Say, my dear Sir, has not the laying aside of the confession of faith been followed up by a corresponding dereliction of the most sacred duties?—of family worship, social worship, reading the word of God, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in the heart unto the Lord? I trust, however, that the neglect of those duties, though mournfully prevalent, is not universal. I hope, nay I firmly believe, there are exceptions, honourable exceptions, both among the laity and the clergy of your com-

munity—men of piety and zeal, who strain every nerve to stem the torrent of defection, who exert all their energies to revive the practice of those sacred duties. But who are those men? Are they not generally attached to the confession of faith, or at least to the doctrines of that ancient volume? Tell me also, my dear sir, who are most forward in excluding from their psalmody the divinely inspired compositions of scripture? Who are most forward in substituting for the psalms of David, hymns, paraphrases, &c. the productions of uninspired and fallible men? Is it by the friends or the enemies of the confession that the dictates of revelation are thus sacrilegiously shuffled out, and supplanted? Where are now all your fears for the ark of God? Are you no way alarmed lest our fine modern poetic effusions “supersede the sacred oracles,” “rival their splendour,” and “divert the attention of mankind from their perfection?” Have not those who were most forward in laying aside the confession of faith, been also the most forward in giving up, and decently laying aside, the psalms of David? With what decency and decorum do our modern reformers proceed in this business! First, a few paraphrases are occasionally sung; next, a few, hymns of human composition; then the psalms of David are culled, the cursing ones, (as they are called, or rather miscalled,) entirely rejected, and a few of the better sort sung alternately with the hymns of Watts, Newton or Cowper; afterwards this selection is used so sparingly as to render it a mere name—a piece of appearance! and lastly, these sacred hymns are scarcely ever mentioned in public worship. How gratifying to think that the psalms of David are likely to obtain so decent a funeral! But, again:

Tell me, dear sir, who are most forward in excluding from public schools the sacred oracles? Solomon once thought it a dictate of wisdom to train up a child in the way he should go; but in this it appears he was completely mistaken; for we have now discovered, in this age of reason, that an early religious education is highly injurious—that it has a tendency to fill the mind with prejudices and prepossessions, to bias it in favour of a system, and ultimately to destroy all freedom of inquiry. We have, therefore, wisely excluded the scriptures from our seminaries of education. Our children must not be allowed to read these sacred oracles, lest too much familiarity should breed con-



tempt. Their young and tender minds must be left, like the sluggard's garden, overrun with noxious weeds, in order to prepare them for the good seed of the word of God ! The enemy must be allowed time to sow his tares before the good husbandman be permitted to plant his wheat ! In respect for the scriptures these modern illuminati are only one step behind the old mother church. To prevent their being abused, they have only to lock them up from the laity altogether ! Speak out, my dear sir, and inform the public by what class of Christians the bible is thus betrayed with a kiss—whether by the advocates of creeds and confessions, or those Latitudinarians who oppose these standards, because they cordially hate their contents. Inform the world by what class of Christians the bible is most read, studied, and respected—whether by the friends or enemies of the Westminster confession and its doctrines. By what class of Christians is the plenary inspiration of the Bible denied, and the Old Testament Scriptures represented as an antiquated almanac ?

After the confession of faith, psalms of David, &c. the next thing to be laid aside is that code of discipline which our blessed Redeemer has established in his word. The various articles of this code will be found in different departments of the New Testament. A number of those articles we shall here exhibit in one view.

“ Moreover, if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him of his fault between thee and him alone : if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother ; but if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established ; and if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church ; but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican. But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner ; with such an one, no, not to eat. Now we command you, brethern, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us. And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed ; yet count him not as an enemy, but entreat him as a brother. Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses. Them that sin, rebuke

before all, that others also may fear. A man that is **an heretic after the first and second admonition, reject, &c.**"

Such, my dear sir, is a specimen of that code of discipline handed down in the New Testament by our Lord Jesus Christ, the king and head of the church. Such are the immutable laws which the Redeemer himself has established, and which you have presumed to supersede and alter. Out of your own mouth you stand condemned; for, page 20, you say: "If the constitution and laws of the church be fixed by Christ himself, I know not how any man can take the liberty to supersede or alter them." Now, sir, you are the very man who has taken the liberty to supersede and alter the laws of Christ; for, in page 23, you assure us, "that though the doctrines should remain as they came from Heaven, yet the discipline may be varied as circumstances require." Nay, sir, you have dared to supersede the Redeemer's code of discipline by a civil code—a code which may be necessary in one age, but unnecessary in another—a code which, you candidly confess, has no more foundation in the word of God, than the hour for public worship. Thus, sir, you have laid aside, not decently, but rudely and presumptuously, the disciplinary laws of your exalted Redeemer! In the room of those laws, you have set up a civil, unauthenticated, fluctuating code, from which, even to the word of God, you will not allow so much as even the privilege of appeal! Let us hear your own words: "Even where human standards of doctrines exist, the appeal will always be made to Revelation; but in codes of discipline, the appeal must be made to the code itself." Say now, my dear friend, and let all the world judge, whether you, or the advocates of creeds and confessions, are most sincerely attached to the sacred oracles. With *them*, you candidly grant, the last appeal is to revelation; but with *you*, the laws of Christ are a dead letter; they are completely superseded: from your fluctuating code there is no appeal!

Is this, my dear sir, the result of all your flaming professions of respect for the scriptures? Are you the clergyman who declared himself unwilling to be measured by any other rule, but the perfect one of divine revelation? Are you the Rev. Presbyterian who was so much afraid of setting up any human standard, lest it might supersede the word of God, rival its splendour, or divert the attention of men from its perfection?—and yet, after all, without shame

or remorse, by one stroke, you sweep away the whole of that divinely inspired code of disciplinary laws established by the blessed Redeemer of men! In all this, (to use your own words) "however innocent you may presume yourself to be, you are guilty of rebellion against the person of Christ as the head of the church."

The church and the world are distinct societies—the one is an enclosure, the other a common. In scripture the church is represented by a walled city, a field, a vineyard, a garden enclosed, a spring shut up, a fountain sealed. It is the will of heaven, that the distinction between the church and the world should be perpetually kept up—that the church's enclosure should remain for ever inviolable. This distinction was established by the Almighty himself, when there was only one family on the face of the earth. Cain, as unworthy of church privileges, was excommunicated by his Maker, banished from the presence of the Lord, and excluded from the fellowship of the saints. This was the first partition wall built between the church and the world. The breaking down of this wall was the cause of the deluge. The church of God, mingling with the excommunicated offspring of Cain, rapidly degenerated, till the earth was filled with violence, and till (Noah and his family excepted,) all flesh were corrupted, and the flood came, and swept them all away.

Every person knows, that the Jewish church was a complete enclosure. Subjected to a code of discipline remarkably rigorous, by a middle wall of partition she was separated from the world. If, at any time, she suffered her walls of discipline to be broken down, she was severely reprimanded and chastised. Her priests, if guilty in this matter, were degraded; whilst those who were faithful obtained the highest encomiums; and were encouraged to persevere, and to teach the people of God the difference between the holy and the profane, and to cause them to discern between the clean and the unclean. Relaxation of discipline was uniformly accompanied by a corresponding relaxation of morals, and was always followed by alarming visitations of Providence.

Under the gospel dispensation, the middle wall of partition between Jews and Gentiles is broken down, but not that wall which separates the church from the world. In the New Testament scriptures quoted above, and a variety of others, the separating lines are distinctly drawn. Per-



sons of heretical opinions, or immoral character, have no right to be recognised as Christians. We are commanded to reject them—to treat them as heathen men and publicans—to have no company with them, that they may be ashamed. A sense of shame is a powerful principle. Its influence is incalculable. Hence we find, that the laws of honour are frequently obeyed, whilst the laws of the state are treated with contempt. Now, if a sense of shame operate so powerfully in securing obedience to the laws of honour, falsely so called—to the laws of gambling, &c.; how much more powerful must be its operation in securing obedience to the laws of morality—to the laws of religion—to the laws of God! By confounding all distinction between the church and the world, the operations of that powerful principle of shame are completely paralysed, and effects the most baneful and pernicious produced. Such conduct, though dignified with the specious epithets of liberality and charity, I have no hesitation to pronounce alike repugnant to the laws of Christ, and the soundest principles of reason and philosophy. Could a city be more completely exposed to the incursions of her enemies, than by the breaking down of her walls and fortifications? Could a corn field be more effectually ruined, than by the breaking down of its fences? Could a vineyard be more effectually destroyed, than by the removal of its hedges? “Why hast thou then broken down her hedges, so that all they that pass by the way do pluck her? The boar out of the wood doth waste it, and the wild beast of the field doth devour it.” “I went by the field of the slothful, and by the vineyard of the man void of understanding; and, lo, it was all grown over with thorns, nettles had covered the face thereof, and the stone wall thereof was broken down.”—Tell me, my dear sir, could you more effectually ruin the church of God, than by breaking down the walls of her discipline? How is it possible for the holy city to be trampled underfoot of the Gentiles? Is it not by admitting into the church of God the impious and immoral, the profligate and the profane? It is not by giving things that are holy to \*dogs, and

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\* In the present enlightened age it is becoming unfashionable to exclude from solemn ordinances any who have a desire for communion. No discipline—no tokens of admission—no debarring—these are only the relics of bigotry and superstition. It is left to the consciences of all, whether they will participate or not. Now, in the word of God,

casting pearls before swine ? Is it not by admitting to the most solemn ordinances, persons who should be treated as heathen men and publicans ? When such persons are admitted, then the holy city is trampled under foot of Gentiles. It is profaned by persons, who, though they may wear the name of Christians, are in reality baptized infidels. Nay, sir, when the walls of discipline are broken down, the temple of God is destroyed—and “ if any man destroy the temple of God, him will God destroy.” Presume not, therefore, to supersede or alter the laws of your Redeemer. Dare not to substitute any civil code in the room of that system which he has established. Attempt not to legislate for the church of Christ. Content yourself with the faithful execution of those laws which he has enacted. Allow me to address you in the language of Paul to Timothy ; “ I charge thee before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the elect angels, that thou observe these things, without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality.”

I am well aware, that to break down the walls of discipline, and to build the temple of God with wood, hay and stubble, as well as with gold, silver, and precious stones, is a dictate of worldly wisdom. I know that the most abandoned characters are frequently the most opulent, and that the faithful exercise of discipline would be attended with a prodigious reduction of numbers, and diminution of emoluments. From these considerations I do not think it strange, that ministers of the gospel should reason thus : “ If we exercise Christian discipline, our meeting houses will be immediately deserted : we shall soon find ourselves left in a small minority. Stripped of all our wealth and respectability, we shall be hissed off the stage as enthusiastic bigots—the offscouring of all things and the refuse. On the contrary, by decently laying aside the discipline of the church, we shall be looked up to as gentlemen of liberal, enlightened minds—minds quite free from the prejudices and bigotry of the dark ages ; we shall obtain both wealth and aggran-

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the profane are denominated dogs and swine—animals not the most remarkable for diffidence or modesty. Serious as the subject is, it is scarcely possible to avoid smiling, when we hear downy doctors gravely addressing dogs and swine—politely appealing to their consciences, whether they will taste the children's bread : Surely this is liberality with a witness !

dizement ; and, having large congregations, we shall have it in our power to do more good." In reply to all such reasonings the words of the divinely inspired apostle, when treating of this very subject, are appropriate : " Let no man deceive himself ; if any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool that he may be wise ; for the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God."

Decidedly hostile to every thing calculated " to supersede the sacred oracles," " to rival their splendour," or " divert the attention of mankind from their perfection,"

I am, &c.

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## LETTER V.

Rev. Sir,

Having displayed your military prowess, in combating creeds and confessions in general, you select a few doctrines of the *Westminster* confession, and against these you direct your death-dealing artillery. The first doctrine selected, is that of the covenant of works—a doctrine, which you assure us, has given rise to countless volumes. But why were all these volumes written ? that the world, no doubt, might be dazzled by a most brilliant display of the polemical talents of our Rev. Presbyterian ! Ye divines of the greatest respectability, both of ancient and modern times ! where are now your boasted learning and talents ? they are completely eclipsed. Where are now the countless volumes you have written on the covenant of works ? our Rev. Presbyterian, by less than two lines of his *Battle of Dialogues*, has swept them all into the gulf of annihilation ! " I now venture to affirm," says this redoubtable champion, " I now venture to affirm, that there is not a single syllable, in the whole book of God, concerning such a covenant—there is not the most distant hint of it in *Revelation*."

To be serious, Sir, is it not consequential enough in you to imagine, that now, in the beginning of the nineteenth century, your simple ipse dixit will be regarded as a sufficient refutation of countless volumes ? The covenant of



works is a doctrine which has stood the test of examination during a series of centuries : the friction of opposition has only tended to brighten its evidence : its advocates are daily increasing, whilst myriads of those virulent pamphlets published against it, have, like Jonah's gourd, " sprung up in a night and perished in a night." As countless volumes have already been written on the subject, I shall not, at present, increase the number. Till you condescend to reason a little on the subject, I shall submit to your consideration only a few remarks.

You assert, that there is not a single syllable in the whole book of God concerning the covenant of works. In opposition to this assertion, I could adduce a variety of scriptures beside those quoted by our Westminster divines. But, as you object to the mode of establishing doctrines by a collection of quotations, and assure us, that " it would be much *fairer* and more *convenient*, to have the whole of revelation before us," I shall for once endeavour to gratify your taste. Wishing to do every thing that is *fair*, and to consult your *convenience* as far as possible, I shall allow you the privilege of having the whole of revelation before you.\* Read it verse by verse, and then tell me if you do not find thousands of syllables concerning the covenant of works. Tell me, in particular, if you do not find something about the covenanters, or parties contracting—about the condition of the covenant—the penalty of the covenant—the reward attached to the fulfilment of the covenant—the seals of the covenant, &c. ; in a word, tell me if you do not find in the sacred volume every thing essential to the constitution of such a covenant. When Adam sinned, were not his posterity treated, as if they had been represented in the same covenant? were they not treated precisely as he was? The penalty threatened was death: now this penalty was inflicted, not only on Adam, but on all his posterity. " By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." The last clause should be literally rendered

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\* Good news, ye Rev. Divines of every denomination! No concordances—no marginal references—no laborious search, to find texts of scripture to prove your doctrines. Thanks to the Rev. Presbyterian, this old-fashioned method practised by the Westminster divines, is now exploded. As a much more *fair* and *convenient* method, refer your hearers to the whole of revelation!!!

(*en ō*) *in whom* all have sinned. That the penalty threatened included, not only temporal but eternal death, is evident ; for the apostle assures us, " That the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." Now, if that life, which is the gift of God through Jesus Christ our Lord, is *eternal life*, does not the contrast lead us to conclude, that the death which is the wages of sin, is *eternal death*? Pray, Sir, how could Adam's posterity be subjected to the same penalty with their sinning ancestor, had they not been represented in the same covenant? But why need I reason any farther on the subject? Were I to fill volumes with such reasoning, in reply to them all, you would only call upon me to produce a single text of scripture, in which it is asserted, that God entered into a covenant with Adam, as the representative of his posterity. That no such text is contained in the bible, I readily admit ; but if this be any reason for exploding the doctrine, a variety of doctrines of great importance, held by the Rev. Presbyterian himself, must, on the same principle, be expunged from his creed. You hold, for instance, the doctrine of infant baptism : Pray, sir, produce a single text in which it is asserted that children ought to be baptized.— You believe in the divine institution of the Christian sabbath : produce a single text, in which it is asserted, that the Redeemer has changed the sabbath from the seventh to the first day of the week. You admit females to the Lord's supper ; produce a single text in which their right to admission is asserted. If by boldly asserting, that there is not a single syllable, in the whole book of God, concerning the covenant of works—that, in revelation, there is not the most distant hint of that covenant—if, by such bold assertions as these, you have led your people to believe that they are quite free from the guilt of Adam's first sin, I would request you, to try the same experiment with regard to their privileges—with regard to infant baptism, and the admission of females to the Lord's supper. When parents apply to you for the administration of baptism, address them thus : " Infant baptism has given rise to countless volumes, but, in order to prove, that they are all built on mere conjecture, I now venture to affirm, that there is not a single syllable in the whole book of God, concerning infant baptism—there is not the most distant hint of it in revelation. I will not therefore baptize your children." Pray, Sir, would parents be satisfied with such a mode of reason-

ing? Would they insist no farther on having their children baptized?—Suppose, again, that the female part of your congregation apply for admission to the Lord's supper, and you address them thus: "I venture to affirm, that there is not a single syllable in the whole book of God, concerning the admission of females—there is not the most distant hint of such admission in revelation: I cannot, therefore, admit you." Pray, sir, would such a mode of reasoning be perfectly satisfactory? Would females immediately relinquish their privileges?

Indeed, my dear friend, it is a difficult thing to argue people out of what they suppose to be their privilege. But oh! how astonishing their credulity—how easy to practise on it, when the tendency of our reasoning is, to free them from the imputation of guilt, or the infliction of punishment! No wonder, therefore, that your bare ipse dixit should satisfy your hearers—that there never was any such thing as a covenant of works, and that they are quite free from the guilt of Adam's first sin; whilst the strongest reasoning you could possibly employ, would be far too feeble to induce them to renounce infant baptism, or the claims of females to the holy communion. In a word, sir, prove from scripture the divine institution of the Christian sabbath, and the divine right of infant baptism, and of the admission of females to the Lord's supper; and I shall pledge myself to prove, with equal, if not greater force of scriptural argument, the doctrine of the covenant of works, which you have exploded.

Before I conclude this letter, suffer, my dear sir, the word of exhortation. Never attack the Westminster Divines with weapons which may be turned against yourself—never attempt to overturn any doctrine which they have taught, by arguments which would deprive your own congregation of their most solemn privileges—of the Christian sabbath, baptism, and the Lord's supper.

A warm friend of all those doctrines, which have their foundation in scripture, though they may not be asserted in so many words,

I am, &c.



## LETTER VI.

Rev. Sir,

After the covenant of works, the next article of the confession you attack, and over which you flatter yourself you can gain an easy victory, is the doctrine of predestination. In advancing to the charge, you "stiffen the sinews, summon up the blood, and disguise fair nature with hard-favoured rage." The manner (you declare) in which the Westminster divines have arranged their proofs, "must exasperate the indignation of any man, who may find it inconvenient to believe the doctrine." Under the influence of such exasperated indignation, you write a paragraph, calculated to excite feelings—(if not of indignation, yet) of pity, mingled with contempt. It commences thus: "I say, that the Westminster divines did not understand the New Testament on that subject, or that they have most foully quoted revelation to prove their own scheme of it. In the 3d chapter and 5th section of the confession, they assert, that the predestination of mankind to life took place without any foresight of faith or good works: and then they quote separately, as they do in every other place, the 30th verse of the 8th chapter of the Romans, which begins even with a moreover, but which is compelled, in this insulated state, to answer their purpose," &c.

In this extraordinary paragraph you represent our Westminster divines as treating of the predestination of *mankind* to life. Now, my dear sir, allow me to assure you, that the predestination of mankind to life is a doctrine of which the Westminster divines are totally ignorant. They *believe* no such doctrine: they teach no such doctrine, neither in the 5th section of the 3d chapter, nor in any other section of any other chapter. It is only the predestination of a *part* of mankind—of the *elect*, that is the subject of that section: it reads thus—"Those of mankind that are predestinated unto life, &c." Is this a wilful misrepresentation? No: it is only a Rev. Presbyterian blunder.

You proceed: "and then they quote separately, as they do in every other place, the 30th verse of the 8th chapter of the Romans." Is it possible! Do the Westminster

divines quote, not only in this place, but in every other place, the 30th verse of the 8th chapter of the Romans? Is this a wilful misrepresentation? No: it is only a Rev. Presbyterian blunder!

Tell me, my dear sir, tell me candidly, have the Westminster divines, either here, or in any other place, quoted the 30th verse of the 8th chapter of the Romans, in proof of predestination without foreseen faith and good works? **THEY HAVE NOT.** Let the section referred to be read, together with the scripture proofs, by any person possessed of sufficient intelligence to trace those quotations; it will then appear, that it is not the Westminster divines, who do not understand the New Testament—it is not the Westminster divines, who have foully quoted revelation—it is the *Rev. Presbyterian*, who has most foully misrepresented the Westminster divines. Rom. viii. 30, is quoted to prove predestination in general, and this it *does* prove. To prove that predestination was not founded on foreseen faith or good works, with their usual good sense and discrimination, the divines have quoted, among others, the following appropriate texts: 2 Tim. i. 9. Who hath saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. Eph. i. 4. According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy, and without blame before him in love, &c. These texts, which the Westminster divines quote in proof of their doctrine, you throw completely into the shade—you *decently* pass them over, as if no such texts had been quoted—instead of these you foist in one, adduced by the divines for quite a different purpose—you then raise the hue and cry against them: you pour upon them a torrent of abuse: you brand them with infamy, for ignorance of the New Testament—foul quotation of scripture, &c.!—Is this, my dear sir, your boasted candour? is this the liberality of the nineteenth century? Might I not here retort your own words,—“Sir, it is a happy blunder which enables me to show that some people turn all they touch into error and misrepresentation, and then raise the cry of absurd assertion against their neighbours?” Your readers may now judge what credit is due to the following sweeping assertions. “There is not a single chapter in the confession of faith, to support which some passages have not been wrested from their ori-

ginal meaning—even if its doctrines were true, there is constant misapplication of scripture to support them.”—Such assertions as these, published by a man confessedly under the influence of exasperated indignation, and convicted of the grossest misrepresentation, will not be admitted as sufficient proof, that the Westminster divines were the most ignorant and dishonest men in the world.

Say, my dear sir, does it not argue a weak—a *desperate* cause, when, in defence of it, you are obliged to brandish such disgraceful weapons? Why did you not allow the Westminster divines to speak for themselves? Why did you not lay before the public those texts they had quoted in proof of their doctrine? Why did you basely suppress those texts adduced by them to prove that predestination was not founded on foreseen faith and good works? Were you afraid that those texts would flash conviction in the faces of your readers? To me, I confess, it appears very difficult to conceive how any person, not previously biassed in favour of a system, could read those texts, and not believe the doctrine true. We are said to be “chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy, &c.” We were chosen, not because we were *foreseen* to be holy, but that we *should* be holy. From this very text, is it not demonstrably evident, that our holiness was not the foundation of our election, but our election the foundation of our holiness? Hence it is styled “an election of grace—and if it be of grace, it is no more of works, otherwise grace is no more grace.” Such is the uniform language of scripture. In favour of foreseen faith and good works there is not a single text in the bible. Rom. viii. 29, 30, the only one on which you seem to rely, is perfectly silent on the subject. It does not say that God predestinated to life those, who he foreknew would believe, and perform good works. This is what *you* would probably say; but the scriptures say no such thing. Whatever be the meaning of the phrase, “whom he did foreknow,” the Arminian\* gloss cannot be the true one. That predestination is not founded on foreseen faith and good works, is demonstrably evident from this—that faith and good works, upon Arminian principles, *cannot possibly be foreseen.*—

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\* The term Arminian is used merely as a term of distinction, not of reproach.



Arminians maintain that it depends upon the self-determining power of the will, whether any person believe or do good works. Upon their principles, every individual person may refuse to believe. Now, if any individual may refuse to believe, *all* may refuse to believe. According to this scheme it was possible, that not one promise made to the Redeemer, with regard to the salvation of sinners, should ever be fulfilled—it was possible that the Redeemer should never see “*one of his seed—one of the travail of his soul;*” it was possible that notwithstanding all our Mediator has done and suffered, *not one single soul should ever believe—that not one single soul should ever be saved—it was possible that all mankind might continue in unbelief and wickedness, and perish eternally!*

Now, I would be glad to know, how it was possible for God to have a certain foreknowledge of those, who should believe and do good works, when it was possible that *none* would ever believe or do good works. Believe me, dear sir, had your prudence been equal to your “exasperated indignation,” you would have studiously avoided any controversy about the foreknowledge of God. Arminians have laboured for ages, but laboured in vain, to reconcile their system with this divine attribute. Tillotson, Groves, Abernethy, Dr. Sam. Clarke, and a whole host of philosophers and divines, have exerted their combined energies, and exhausted their gigantic powers, in fruitless efforts to accomplish this more than herculean labour. The present learned and acute Doctor Adam Clarke has not been a whit more successful than his predecessors. “We grant,” says the Doctor, “that God foresees nothing as absolutely and inevitably certain, which he has made contingent: and because he has designed it to be *contingent*, therefore he cannot know it as absolutely and inevitably certain. I conclude, that God, although omniscient, is not obliged, in consequence of this, to know all that he can know; no more than he is obliged, because he is omnipotent, to do all that he can do.” This is to *cut*, but not to *loose*, the Gordian knot—it is the dernier resort—the forlorn hope of Arminians—it is to deny one of the perfections of God, rather than give up a favourite system. Though, *in words*, the learned Dr. acknowledges the omniscience of God; yet, *in fact*, he denies that attribute. If the deity is not possessed of the *actual knowledge* of all things, but only of the *power of knowing* all things, he is not omniscient. To

say that the supreme Being has a power of acquiring knowledge, is the same as to say, that at one period of his existence he may be comparatively *ignorant*, and at another period more *knowing*—that his knowledge may increase with his years, and that he may become wiser as he grows older! If the deity is capable of any accessions of *power*, he is not *omnipotent*; in like manner, if he is capable of any accessions of *knowledge*, he is not *omniscient*. To say that God is *omniscient*, and yet deny that he must *know* all things, is a contradiction in terms. It is as great a contradiction, as to maintain that he is omnipotent, and yet deny that he must be possessed of *all power*. To say that the deity is not possessed of *all power*, is to deny his *omnipotence*; to say that he is not possessed of *all knowledge*, is to deny his *omniscience*. The Doctor, therefore, denies the omniscience of God—he acknowledges the *name*, but denies the *thing*.

But still farther, by denying that the Deity has the *actual knowledge* of all things, and maintaining that he has only the *power of knowing* all things, Dr. Clarke has gained *just nothing at all*. The difficulty remains the same. The question still recurs: How can the Deity, on Arminian principles, be possessed of such a power? How can he foreknow things which are contingent? things which may never come to pass? As *knowledge* pre-supposes the certain existence of the thing *known*, so *foreknowledge* pre-supposes the certainty of the future existence of the thing *foreknown*. If the Deity *knows* that Dr. Clarke is *at present* a believer, it is certain that Dr. Clarke *is* a believer. If it is possible that Dr. C. is *no* believer, whilst the Deity knows him to *be* a believer, then it is possible for the Deity to be mistaken. So, in like manner, if the Deity *foreknew* from all eternity that Dr. C. *would be* a believer, it was certain from all eternity, that Dr. C. *would believe*. If it was possible that Dr. C. might *never* believe, though the Deity foreknew that he *would* believe, then it was possible for the Deity to be mistaken!

Every person must see that it is impossible for the Deity to *know* that a thing exists, if it does not *really* and *certainly* exist. Equally impossible is it to *foreknow* that a thing *will* exist, if its *future* existence is not *certain*. That these things are *equally* impossible, the Doctor himself must acknowledge; for, according to his own doctrine, *fore knowledge, after knowledge, and present knowledge,*

are all the same. With the Deity there is nothing, strictly speaking, but *present* knowledge. To say, therefore, that the Deity knows that a thing exists, and yet that it is possible that it does *not* exist, is to say that the Deity has a certain knowledge of its existence, and yet has *no* certain knowledge of it. In like manner, to say that the Deity *foreknows* those things which *will* exist, and yet that those things may *never* exist, is the same as to say that the Deity has a certain foreknowledge of their future existence, and yet that he has *no* certain foreknowledge of it!

Again, to say with Dr. Samuel Clarke, Mr. Bird, and others, that God foreknows *necessary* events *as necessary*, and *contingent* events *as contingent*, is to say nothing at all to the purpose. The question still recurs: How is it possible that contingent events *should* be foreknown. Mr. Bird illustrates his reasoning by the following example: We see the sun shining over our heads, and at the same time we see a man walking upon the earth. The one we see as voluntary, the other as natural. He grants, however, that both must be done, or we could not *see* them at all; but he denies that they were both necessary *before* they were done—it was only necessary that the sun should shine; but not that the man should walk. Now, in opposition to this I contend that if it was necessary that the man should walk, in order that he might be *seen* walking, it was *equally* necessary that he should walk, in order to be *foreseen* as walking. *The walking of the man* is an event which must certainly and infallibly come to pass, (as well as *the shining of the sun*,) in order to be either *seen* or *foreseen*. As *knowledge* and *foreknowledge* are the same with the Deity, he can no more *foreknow* what *will* not certainly and infallibly exist, than he can *know* what *does not at present* certainly and infallibly exist. Mr. Bird asserts that God *necessarily foreknows* all that will come to pass. Dr. A. Clarke asserts that God is *not obliged to know all that he can know*. This flat contradiction in the principles upon which these gentlemen proceed, does not prevent the Doctor from declaring that *Mr. Bird's* argument is a good one, and that *his own* is better. The Doctor must pardon me for thinking that *Mr. Bird's* argument is no argument at all, because it affords no solution of the difficulty; and that *his own* is *still worse*, because it fails in solving the difficulty, and in-



volves, besides, not only a plain contradiction, but also the denial of a divine perfection.\*

Some of the most penetrating Arminian divines and philosophers have given it as their opinion, that no man will ever be able to reconcile the contingency of future events with the foreknowledge of God. In this opinion I heartily acquiesce. I firmly believe these things will never be reconciled, because I believe they are *irreconcilable*. If any man is able to prove that it is possible for a thing to be and not to be at the same time—if he can prove that it is possible to know a thing, and at the same time *not* to know it, then he may prove that it is possible for the Deity to foreknow those events, which may possibly never come to pass.

Thus, Sir, it appears that predestination cannot be founded on foreseen faith and good works; because, upon Arminian principles, it is *absolutely impossible* that either faith or good works *should be foreseen*. It appears that the doctrine of our Westminster divines, with regard to predestination, is not only sanctioned by the word of God; but the absurdity of the opposite opinion is capable of a demonstration, as strict as any contained in Euclid's elements. Calvinistic principles stand upon a proud pre-eminence—they rest upon the immoveable basis of Divine Revelation, and are consistent with the soundest principles of philosophy. Our moral philosophy class-room and divinity halls do not now resound with the doctrine of the self-determining power of the will: the salt is now cast into the fountain. For more than half a century past, Calvinistic principles have been gaining ground, both among the learned and illiterate. At present they are rapidly progressing. If I can rely on the testimony of one of themselves, a young gentleman of great respectability, the students of the Synod of Ulster have, for some time past, been almost universally Calvinists. From the new wine they are turning with list-

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\* If the denial of one of the attributes of Deity, and the belief of a contradiction, which is capable of the strictest demonstration, be necessary to free Calvinists from the gross absurdities and blasphemies charged upon them by Dr. C.; I am fully of opinion, they will universally agree with me in thinking, that the remedy is incomparably worse than the disease—they will regard the Arminian cause as desperate indeed, when in defence of it, a gentleman of the learning and talents of Dr. A. C., is reduced to such extremities.

less apathy, with the general exclamation, "The old is better." That the general Synod are retracing their steps—that they are returning to the Calvinistic principles of their ancestors, is a fact which I believe admits of little doubt. The unanimity displayed in their judicious appointment of a divinity professor, speaks volumes on this interesting subject. And, indeed, from my inmost soul I congratulate them on their return to what I conceive to be the true and genuine principles of the gospel. "I have no greater joy than to see" Christians of every denomination "walking in truth."

I am, &c.

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## LETTER VII.

My Rev. and dear Presbyterian,

I flattered myself that the vengeance you had taken on your enemies in your hard-fought Battle of Dialogues, would have fully gratified your "exasperated indignation." I flattered myself, that after the battle was over, the Westminster divines would find in the Rev. Presbyterian a generous foe. It never once entered my mind that so illustrious a warrior would return again to the field of battle, for no other purpose than to insult and abuse the wounded and the dying! In this it appears I have been mistaken. In your Battle of Dialogues, having knocked down, (or *thought* you had knocked down,) your enemies, you return, in your appendix, to kick them for falling. You assure us that the Westminster confession "is not only inconsistent with the scriptures; but that it is many times inconsistent with itself." To establish this charge, you give a garbled account of the 3d Sec. of the 9th chapter; after which you exclaim, "How miserable then is the state of this unregenerate man, since, if he pray to God it is a sin, and since if he pray not it is a greater sin!"

In the section referred to, the Divines teach that the works of unregenerate men, though they may be materially good, being done according to the divine command, and useful both to themselves and others, are nevertheless sinful, on a variety of accounts,—because they do not proceed

from *faith*; for without faith it is impossible to please God; —because they do not proceed from *love*; for though we give all our goods to feed the poor, and have not charity, it profiteth nothing, &c. The Divines also teach us that the *neglect* of these works is still *more* sinful, and displeasing to God. This they establish by irrefragable evidence. If we give our alms to be seen of men, we have no reward. Without charity, giving all our goods to feed the poor, profits nothing; and yet, at the judgment of the great day, men shall be condemned for *neglecting* acts of charity. “I was an hungered, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink, &c. Inasmuch as ye did it not to the least of these, ye did it not to me, &c.” Instead of laying before your readers this appropriate proof, you foully suppress it, and quote only the introductory verse, which you are pleased to hold up to ridicule. “Then shall he say unto those on his left hand: Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.” This you style a singular proof; but did you not know, my dear friend, that this is no proof at all? Was it ignorance, or was it a fraudulent design, that induced you to represent it as a proof? Did you not know, that it was only the *introduction* to a proof; and that the proof itself was contained in the subsequent verses, which I have already quoted, but which you have disgracefully suppressed? You pretend to lay before the public the proofs which the divines have advanced in support of their paradox. Instead of this, you only bring forward two garbled texts, in proof of the one part—the other part you leave entirely destitute of proof. Of the two texts brought forward, the one you represent as quoted for a purpose quite the reverse of that for which it was really adduced—the other you represent as a *proof* when it is only the *introduction* to a proof. Such management needs no comment; the only observation I would make, is, that you acted wisely in concealing your name.

To support their paradox the Divines produce a multitude of appropriate texts, which the reader may consult at his leisure. That an action may be sinful, and the neglect of it *more* sinful, is a paradox consistent both with scripture and reason. “The ploughing of the wicked is sin,” and yet I trust you will readily acknowledge, that not to plough would be a *greater* sin. The conduct of Henry VIII. in promoting the reformation, considering the abominable ~~no~~



tives by which he was actuated, was undoubtedly sinful ; and yet, what Protestant will deny, that his conduct would have been *also* sinful, had he neglected to promote the Reformation ? Jehu's conduct, in cutting off the house of Ahab, because it proceeded from improper motives, was sinful ; and yet, had he disobeyed the divine command, his conduct would have been *more* sinful. Suppose a man sees his neighbour's house on fire, and hates the family so much that he would gladly see them all consumed ; there being, however, in the house, a person who owes him a sum of money, he assists in extinguishing the flames, and rescuing the family from the devouring element. Considering the state of his mind, and the baseness of his motive, is not his conduct sinful ? and yet, to suffer the whole family to perish would be *more* sinful. May I not here exclaim in your own style, " How miserable is the situation of this poor man ! if he quench the flames, it is a sin, and if he do not quench them, it is a *greater* sin." " The sacrifice of the wicked, we are assured, is an abomination to the Lord ;" and yet, had he neglected to sacrifice, he would have been guilty of a *greater* sin. In like manner, the prayer of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord ; and yet, not to pray would be a *greater* sin. In your introductory sentence you say, " Perhaps he (the author) may venture to suppose, that independent of the inconsistency which exists between it (the confession) and the word of God, it is many times inconsistent with itself." In reply to this, you will now permit me to say, *that perhaps I may venture to suppose, that you are mistaken.*"

As paradoxes appear to be the order of the day, let us advert to those of the Rev. Presbyterian. Whatever may be your inferiority to the Westminster divines in other respects, candour and justice oblige me to acknowledge, that, in writing paradoxes, you are not " behind the very chiefest of them." Those of the Westminster divines are easily solved ; but the solution of *yours*, I am perfectly convinced, will baffle the ingenuity of all the philosophers and divines in the world. Compared with *them*, Sampson's riddle is not worthy to be named. Page 43, you assure us, " that if the general assembly and Seceders were to act up to the principles of their predecessors, Covenanters would be punished as heretics." Now, my dear sir, as the predecessors of these two bodies were *Covenanters*, were they to act up to the principles of their

predecessors, they would be *also* Covenanters. How then could Covenanters be punished as heretics : Here is a paradox !

Page 26, you inform us, that though Layman be orthodox in Ireland, he would be a heretic in England. Now, my dear sir, every schoolboy, who has read a little geography, knows, that the established religion of England and Ireland are the same. How then could Layman be orthodox in Ireland and a heretic in England ? Another paradox !

Same place, you assure us, that " Layman, if a Seceder, would be banished from the united kingdom by the solemn league." Now, my dear sir, if Seceders swear and subscribe the solemn league, how is it possible, that by that same league they should be banished from the united kingdom ? Another paradox ! Most extraordinary and paradoxical covenants to be sure ! Those who *believe* them would be punished by them, and those who do *not* believe them would be punished by them—those who *subscribe* and *swear* them would be punished by them, and those who do *not* subscribe and swear them would be punished by them—*Seceders* would be punished by them, *Covenanters* would be punished by them, and *all others* would be punished by them ! Diabolical covenants indeed ! No wonder they were burned by the hands of the common hangman !

Page 36, you assure us, that the covenants and confession are inseparable. How then were they separated by the synod of Ulster ? How were they separated by the general assembly of Scotland ? Another paradox !

Without mentioning any more of your paradoxes, perhaps I might now venture to suppose, that independently of the inconsistency of your sentiments with the word of God, they are many times inconsistent with themselves.

I am, sir, notwithstanding, your sincere friend and paradoxical correspondent, &c.

## LETTER VIII.

My Rev. and dear Presbyterian,

It would not be doing justice to your talents and ingenuity, to pass unnoticed your lucubrations on Covenants, Covenanters, Seceders, &c. With regard to covenants, you express yourself thus : “ If our forefathers, instead of composing leagues and covenants, and swearing to them, had bound themselves to spread the scriptures by the gentle arts of persuasion, under the protection of the civil magistrate, you must grant, that they would more readily and rapidly have melted down oppression from amongst themselves, and persecution from amongst their enemies.” Pray, sir, how could our forefathers have bound themselves to spread the scriptures, but *by* a league and a covenant ? The paragraph, when analyzed, will read thus : If our forefathers, instead of binding themselves by leagues and covenants, had bound themselves by a league and a covenant, &c. After reading an observation so sagacious and sensible, can any person doubt your qualifications for discussing the subject of leagues and covenants ? I confess, however, that notwithstanding the flood of light you pour all around you, there is one difficulty still rests upon my mind—it is to ascertain, whether the Rev. Presbyterian be not himself a kind of mongrel Covenanter. To covenants, binding to spread the scriptures, you seem to have no dislike—on the contrary, you appear to approve of them highly. Now, sir, were you to enter into a covenant to spread the scriptures, do you not know that you would be a covenanter ? You appear to hesitate. When Covenanter observes, “ you are such an advocate for the Gospel alone, that you would refuse, I plainly see, to sign them, (the covenants,) or swear to them in any case ;” “ *that I cannot tell,*” says the Rev. Presbyterian. You appear to doubt, whether, in any case, you would become a Covenanter. In clearing this doubt perhaps I could assist you a little.

Page 43, you assure us, that the ministers of the church of Scotland swear and subscribe every article of the league and covenant. In this sentence, sir, there is a slight inso-



curacy—I mean that what you have asserted is not matter of fact. It happens, that the ministers of the church of Scotland neither swear nor subscribe *one single article* of the league and covenant. No matter: You *thought* they did; for I am sure you would not wilfully publish a falsehood. You thought, that the ministers of the church of Scotland swear and subscribe the league and covenants—in other words, you thought they were Covenanters. Now, my dear sir, when you were exerting yourself to obtain a union with these ministers, did you not think that you were about to become a Covenanter? Why then do you not join the *Irish* Covenanters? It cannot be lucrative motives that prevent you, for you assure us, “that the foundation of your *loyalty* is not founded on the countenance of government;” much less can we suppose that “the foundation of your *religion* is founded on that countenance.” Perhaps you will allege, that the true reason why you give a preference to the imaginary covenanters of the general assembly, is, that though they swear and subscribe the same standards; yet, with them, they are in a great measure dead letters. That this is actually the case, you assure us, page 26. Now, sir, if this be so, why do you censure Covenanters and Seceders, because, with regard to a section or two of the Confession of Faith, there is a slight diversity of opinion; and because the subscribers explain the sense in which they understand these sections? To me, I confess, such a mode of proceeding appears quite candid and fair. You think otherwise. You express yourself thus: “For I do assure you, that society is now fully persuaded, from experience, that neither Covenanters nor Seceders are too honest or too holy, and that subscription to the whole doctrines contained in the confession of faith, larger and shorter catechisms, often turns out a rope of sand, which they can snap at pleasure.” All very good: but pray, sir, what do you think of the honesty and holiness of the general assembly of Scotland? If *your* account of them be true, they swear and subscribe the confession and covenants, and afterwards allow them to remain in a great measure dead letters. Could a more infamous banditti be found on the face of this earth, than you have represented the general assembly?—a banditti of perjured villains, who are no way influenced by oaths or subscriptions—who trample underfoot the most solemn obligations! Now, sir, if Covenanters and Seceders have a right to be

stigmatized as dishonest and unholy, because they subscribe a few sections of the confession and covenants in a qualified sense ; must not the general assembly, upon your own principles, be ten thousand times *more* dishonest and *more* unholy ? and yet, strange to tell, dishonest and unholy as they are, you courted their fellowship !—still stranger to tell ! dishonest and unholy as they are, they considered themselves *too* honest, and *too* holy, to admit *you* into their communion ! Their language to you was, “ Stand by thyself ; come not near us ; for we are holier than thou ! ”

But again : Do you really imagine, that the two presbyteries of the Synod of Ulster, that, according to your own account, use the confession of faith “ in such a qualified manner as to render it a mere name—a piece of appearance ! ! ! ”—do you really imagine that these two presbyteries have much the advantage of Covenanters or Seceders in point of honesty or holiness ? Ye Seceders and Covenanters ! ye Christians of every denomination ! come see the zeal of the Rev. Presbyterian for honesty and holiness ! in *him* contemplate a perfect paragon of candour and impartiality !

Page 26, you say, “ Let any humble Christian compare the acts and testimonies of Seceders and Covenanters, and then let him judge, as to the harmony and uniformity which are brought about by adhering to the same human confession.” Here, I am convinced, both Seceders and Covenanters should plead guilty. They have not, on all occasions, treated each other with that meekness and gentleness, which become disciples of the meek and lowly Redeemer. The only legitimate conclusion, however, which follows from this, is, that creeds and confessions go only a certain length in producing peace and concord—they do not eradicate *all* our corruptions—they do not render men *absolutely perfect*. The objection, however, would prove too much ; it would prove that the scriptures themselves are only an imposture ; for these sacred oracles do not produce universal peace and harmony. Because perfect harmony cannot be attained by all the means we can possibly employ, is this any reason that *no means at all* should be used for obtaining so desirable an end ? Surely not.

That the controversial writings of Seceders and Covenanters, published fifty or a hundred years ago, should participate a little of the spirit of those times, is not very strange. It is hoped, however, that the candid inquirer

will judge of their spirit and temper by their modern productions. Let any unprejudiced person consult "A short account of the old Dissenters," and "An explanation and defence of their terms of communion," both published by the Reformed Presbytery in Scotland. Let him also consult the Act and Testimony published by the Covenanting church in America, Reid's pamphlet against Fletcher, and Longmoor's pamphlet against the Covenanters; and then let him say, if they do not breathe the manly, but, at the same time, mild and candid spirit of the Gospel.\*

For a considerable time past, it has been in contemplation to revise some of our subordinate standards, particularly our Act and Testimony. In the mean while, I trust it will be distinctly understood, that it is not for *words or phrases*, but for *principles*, that Covenanters contend. If, in their Act and Testimony, or other public documents, the language employed is in any instance harsh, or calculated to give unnecessary pain to any denomination of Christians, Covenanters do not approve of such language. Their object, however they may fail in its accomplishment, is, under a deep sense of unworthiness, fallibility, and imperfection, to testify against the evils of the age in which they live, in language calculated, not to irritate and mortify, but to conciliate and reform—in language calculated, not to widen, but to heal those breaches which so mournfully prevail.

The truth is, that if there be any want of harmony between Seceders and Covenanters, it is not to be attributed to their subscribing the same standards. It is not the *identity*, but the *difference* of their standards that has occasioned their disputes. Among Covenanters themselves, who all subscribe the same standards, has there not been from the earliest period of their history, an astonishing uniformity of sentiment? With them, doctrines the most heterogeneous and opposite are not exhibited from the same pulpit. One

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\* The only exception with which I am acquainted, is a sermon entitled the *Times*, published by the Rev. Mr. Edgár, present Seceding Professor of Divinity. In this sermon the author has poured upon Covenanters a torrent of illiberal abuse. In less than half a page he has lavished upon them nearly a score of abusive epithets. The poison, however, is accompanied by the antidote. Such railing accusations against sister sects is strongly and repeatedly reprobated in the same sermon. The author assures us, that such a mode of supporting truth is wearing away. I believe it is. I hope that his own virulent invective may be safely regarded as the *last expiring groans of party spirit*.



does not teach that the Redeemer is the supreme God ; another, that he is the highest of all creatures ; and another, that he is nothing more than a mere man. One does not teach, that the Redeemer's blood is a vicarious sacrifice ; and another, that it is only a beneficial attestation of the truth of his doctrine. One does not teach, that we are justified by our own righteousness, and another, that we are justified by the righteousness of the *Redeemer*. One does not ascribe our sanctification to the efficiency of the Holy Ghost, and another, to the self-determining power of the will. In a word, with them, one is not employed in destroying what the other builds. Neither, Sir, do Seceders differ among themselves, nor dispute with Covenanters about these great and important doctrines of our holy religion. With you a greater diversity of opinion prevails, than would obtain among Seceders, Independents, and Covenanters, were they all united into one community. Nor can you boast very much of your harmony ; at least you have exhibited a very poor specimen. You represent two of your Presbyteries as guilty of the deepest dissimulation—as acting a solemn farce in setting apart candidates to the office of the holy ministry—as using the confession of faith in such a qualified manner as to render it a mere name, a piece of appearance ! You represent a Rev. brother, whom, (if I mistake not the object,) learning, talents, zeal, and popularity, have raised to the highest eminence, and rendered an object of envy—this worthy character you represent as so completely absorbed in self, that duty never predominates over interest—as “ always in a strait between two, the opinions of his hearers and the laws of his master, whilst the former frequently turn the beam ! ” Were you to break cover, and come forth from your dark retreat, the general Synod, I have no doubt, would do its duty, by inflicting on you that chastisement, which such insolence, not to say malignity, deserves. Tell me, my friend, could you exhibit to the world no better specimen of the harmony which pervades the general Synod, or of that liberality and charity which characterise the enlightened enemies of creeds and confessions ? Your quondam Rev. father, Dr. M. Dowal, of Dublin, has expressed himself thus : “ A society made up of jarring principles is more likely to defeat the designs of the gospel than to promote them. It bears some resemblance to Sampson's assemblage of foxes, which being enclosed in the same field, with their heads looking different

ways, but fastened together by the tails, with firebrands betwixt them, snarled, bit, and struggled, drawing different ways, until they laid waste the pleasant field, and utterly destroyed the plentiful crop." Whether the Doctor would have regarded you as one of those foxes, bound to the Synod only by the tail, as he and I are not in the habit of corresponding, I am not at present prepared to determine. Nor can I say much about the *fundamental* bond of union. That it is not the confession of faith is evident, for this you have *decently* laid aside—that it is not the bible is equally plain; for it would not teach you to snarl, bite, and devour. What the fastening ligament *really* is, as the Doctor is silent on the subject, I shall leave to you and the public to decide. I confess, my dear sir, that, from your Battle of Dialogues, it is difficult to ascertain your real principles. You style yourself a Rev. Presbyterian—a title which you assure us *exclusively* belongs to the members of the general Synod. Your sentiments, as we have already seen, would sometimes lead us to conclude that you are a *Covenanter*; whilst other parts of your pamphlet would authorize us to infer, that you were neither more nor less than a *good old Roman Catholic*. For instance, you triumph over Layman for asserting that fallible men may produce [teach] infallible doctrine. This you represent as the greatest contradiction, and the rankest popery. Now, Sir, if this be so, I hope to prove, to your own satisfaction, that you are a rank papist. That we may not forget our logic, I shall prove it syllogistically, thus:

Whoever teaches truth teaches infallible doctrine:

But the Rev. Presbyterian teaches truth;

Ergo, the Rev. Presbyterian teaches infallible doctrine.

You will not deny, I hope, that *truth* is infallible; and of course, that every true doctrine is an infallible doctrine—nor will you deny that you sometimes teach truth, or in other words, that you sometimes teach infallible doctrine.

Now, Mr. Aristotle, just one syllogism more, and I have done:

Whoever teaches infallible doctrine is a rank Papist;

But the Rev. Presbyterian teaches infallible doctrine;

Therefore, the Rev. Presbyterian is a rank Papist.

Do not blush, my good friend: you have not the least reason to be ashamed; you have performed a glorious achievement. You are surrounded on all hands with excellent company. All the ministers of the general Synod—all Seceding ministers,—Covenanting ministers—Indepen-

dent ministers—Methodist Ministers—in a word, all the Protestant ministers in Christendom are rank Papists! You have reclaimed them all—reduced them all to obedience to the Holy See! You have effected more by a few lines of your Battle of Dialogues, than all the anathemas of Rome—than all the Pope's bulls—than all the tortures and executions of the holy Inquisition! A jubilee, not only at Rome, but a *universal* jubilee, will, no doubt, be immediately proclaimed: and, hark ye, my friend! when the chair of St. Peter becomes vacant, who is better entitled to fill it than your reverence?—after death, whose name will be more deserving of a place in the calendar of Saints?—whose shrine will be more generally visited than yours? that of St. Thomas-a-Becket, will be almost entirely deserted—it will sink into comparative contempt.

Hail, universal peace and harmony! Animosities and divisions are now no more. All distinctions of sects and parties are entirely abolished. Heresy is completely annihilated. The term, heretic, will no longer be used—not even “*as a bugbear to frighten children.*” The only heretic in the world is the Rev. Divine, your neighbour, who, you assure us, “is a teacher of words; but in no instance of truth.” I confess, indeed, that I was of opinion there was no such teacher in the world—I thought that errors and lies, without any mixture of truth, were a dose by far too nauseous for human beings of any description; but in this, it appears, I have been mistaken; for your neighbouring clergyman, you assure us, is “*in no instance, a teacher of truth.*” Now, if this be so, (and who can doubt it, after you have asserted it?) if this be so, it is quite plain, that the preacher in question is no Papist. If he teaches no truth, he teaches no infallible doctrine—if he teaches no infallible doctrine, he is no Papist—if he is no Papist, he is a heretic,—and if he is a heretic, *you* know how to treat him. After you have ascended the chair, of St. Peter, by your Inquisitor General proclaim an *auto da fe*; and by one decisive blow banish heresy for ever from the world.

Leaving you in the bosom of your old mother church, and congratulating you on the prospect of your advancement to the Papal chair, I am, sir, warmly attached to infallible doctrine, and at the same time,

Your sincere Friend, &c.



## LETTER IX.

Rev. Sir,

Against Covenanters, both ancient and modern, you prefer the heavy charges of intolerance and persecution. "It is notorious," you assure us, "that numbers were banished and confined for non-conformity, and that many were put to death for denying some of the doctrines of the confession. Among those who were tried and hanged was a student of Edinburgh College, for speaking against the trinity and incarnation of Christ. He was denied the common place of interment, and was appointed to be buried in the same ground with notorious criminals and malefactors. Such was the manner in which the covenanted uniformity was prosecuted." I suppose, sir, you will not deny, that every man should be held innocent, till once he is proved guilty. This privilege is all I ask for our reforming ancestors. You are their public accuser: bring forward your evidence. You say numbers were banished—pray *what* number? You affirm that many were put to death—pray, how many? Such vague and indefinite language is indeed a very fit vehicle for slander and calumny, but is ill adapted for the ascertaining of truth. Please be a little more particular: quote your authorities: specify time, place, and other circumstances. The characters of our reforming ancestors, to whose magnanimous exertions we are indebted both for civil and religious liberty, are too precious and respectable, to be allowed to fall victims to your licentious, unauthenticated abuse. Remember, sir, you are publicly called on to substantiate your charges. If you fail in your evidence, or refuse to bring it forward, you must be content to be viewed as a public calumniator.

I have no idea, that either the civil constitution or administration of our reformers was perfect. I am no way bound, nor do I feel disposed, to vindicate all their measures, acts of parliament, &c. In some instances they might be too severe: in general, however, I am convinced they ruled, considering the circumstances of the times, with a very mild sceptre. Their measures were sometimes quite too lenient. So far were they from attempting, ac-

ording to your groundless accusation, to put down all who differed from them in opinion ; that a considerable minority, who refused to acquiesce in the established order of things, were nevertheless allowed to live unmolested in the enjoyment of personal liberties and property under the protection of the law. These men were generally attached to prelacy and arbitrary government : many of them had fought against the liberties of their country under the reign of Charles I. : and many of them were men of infamous moral character, hence called malignants ; yet notwithstanding, so foolishly indulgent were our reforming forefathers, that they admitted these men into places of power and trust, to the complete subversion of the constitution, and introduction of prelacy and arbitrary power, with all the horrors of tyranny and persecution in their train ! Be candid, my dear sir, and distinguish between that just chastisement inflicted on those who were conspiring against the civil and religious liberties of the nation, and any severity which may be supposed to have been exercised on men merely on account of their religion—make this candid distinction, and I am convinced that the mountain of persecution which you have conjured up before the imagination of your readers, will instantly dwindle into a mole hill.

As, in the reformation period, the circumstances of the times might justify a degree of severity, which in the present age would be highly criminal ; so we might expect, that modern Covenanters would be much more mild and humane than their forefathers. It appears, however that the case is quite otherwise. You assure the world, that if Covenanters could get the king to sign and swear the covenants, we should soon feel the wholesome effects of their contents—what these wholesome effects would be we may learn from page 44, where you assure us, that “ all must believe, or seem to believe, the doctrines contained in the covenants and confession, or be burned, buried, or banished, as Covenanters and the magistrate might think proper.” —Pray, sir, how many were burned, buried, or banished for those crimes, when the king *did* sign and swear the covenants ? Was a single individual burned ? *not one*. Was a single individual buried ? yes, no doubt, after death. An odd kind of punishment indeed, to bury people after they die ! I suppose the majority of the nation were so punished.—But perhaps you mean, (for your words would generally require an interpreter,) perhaps you mean that

Dissenters would be buried *alive*. Pray, sir, how many were buried alive during the Reformation period? It is true indeed, this is not the question—the question is not what Covenanters did nearly two centuries ago; but what they would do in the *present age*.—The ancient Covenanters, it seems, had a *small* portion of humanity; but the modern ones have *none*. The old ones were content with *hanging and beheading*; but nothing less than *burning and burying alive* would gratify the ferocity of their degenerate sons! What a perverse race of mortals are these same Covenanters! Whilst all other classes and denominations are in a progressive state of civilization, *these savages* are constantly becoming *more sanguinary and ferocious*! In the course of less than two centuries more, we may expect them metamorphosed into complete cannibals!—Compose yourself, my dear friend; dismiss your fears; I hope you need not be very uneasy: I trust there is no great danger of your being either burned or buried alive: your fears on this quarter are nearly as groundless, as those you entertain lest the Covenanters should pluck the planets from their orbits. “It is well,” says the Rev. Presbyterian, “that you (Covenanters) are not great astronomers, or I dread you would pluck the planets from their orbits, that you might the better arrange their courses.” Now, sir, your fears of being burned or buried alive are, I presume, as groundless as your dread of the planets being plucked from their orbits—nay they are more groundless. From the fewness of their numbers, it is not very likely, that Covenanters will attempt to overturn the state: and as they do not stand on a very respectable footing with his majesty’s government, there is little danger of the king joining them in their diabolical scheme of *burning* the people, or *burying them alive*. But with regard to the plucking of the planets from their orbits the case is very different. To qualify for this, according to your own doctrine, all that is necessary is, that Covenanters be *great astronomers*. Now, who can tell but, some time or other, this may actually be the case. I can assure you, sir, it is whispered, nay, it is confidently affirmed by some, and they appeal to the records of Glasgow college for the truth of their statement—that for more than twenty years past, the Covenanting students, in proportion to their number, have taken more prizes, particularly in the higher philosophical classes of that university, than the students of any other denomination in the united



empire. It is even reported, that the gentleman who, in philosophical studies, has lately eclipsed all his fellow students, and who, at this very moment, is in possession of a large burse, is an *Irish Covenanter*. Now, sir, I must confess, that according to your doctrine, there is something in these appearances *truly alarming!* Should Covenanted students go on in this way, eclipsing their fellow students, it is hard to say but some of them may at last become great astronomers; and in case of this event, I would not guarantee the safety of the solar system. What mischief might enter the minds of such aspiring headstrong fellows, it is difficult to say. Should they actually pluck any of the planets from their orbits, for aught I know, the consequences might be universally pernicious. Not only would these planets, according to your doctrine, appear deformed; but, as you are a *great astronomer*, you know much better than I do, that these planets are peopled as well as our own; and of course, should those desperadoes drag them to a nearer conjunction with the sun, their miserable inhabitants though not buried alive, might be *burned alive*—on the other hand, should those miscreants sweep the planets to a greater distance, the conqueror of the French, general Frost, might, without the least mercy, overwhelm in one universal catastrophe their entire population!

Now, my dear sir, being a very humane gentleman—your benevolence being not at all confined to this *dirty little world*, but embracing in its extensive grasp the inhabitants of *distant stars and planets*, I have no doubt you will memorialize the faculty, not to permit any Covenanter to enter the higher philosophical classes in Glasgow college, till he has previously given sufficient security, that he will not on any account whatever, either pluck, or assist in plucking from their orbits, any of the planets of the solar system. Allowing you time to draw up your memorial, and in the meanwhile, warmly participating in your benevolent concern for the safety of the planets,

I am, &c.

## LETTER X.

Rev. Sir,

To convince the world that the principles of Covenanters are intolerant, you quote the following paragraph from their Act and Testimony : “ And further they declare, that it is most wicked, and what manifestly strikes against the sovereign authority of God, for any power on earth to pretend to tolerate, and by sanction of civil law to give license to men to publish, and propagatè with impunity, whatever errors, heresies, and damnable doctrines, Satan and their own corrupt and blinded understandings may prompt them to believe and embrace : *authoritative toleration* being destructive of all true religion, and of that liberty wherewith Christ hath made his people free, and of the great end thereof, which is, that being delivered out of the hands of our enemies we may serve the Lord, &c.

Now, sir, you will certainly grant, that the Presbytery who published the above document are the best qualified to explain it.

In an abstract of their principles, designed as an introduction to their Act and Testimony, they express themselves thus : “ While Dissenters testify against toleration, they are not to be understood as meaning a merely *passive toleration*, implying nothing more than simply permitting men to exist unmolested, to hold their different opinions, without using external violence to make them change these, or to exterminate them from the face of the earth if they do not. Forbearance of this kind, after every scriptural and rational means has been used without effect, *cannot be condemned* ; but what they have in view, is, *that authoritative toleration*, in which the rulers of a kingdom, assuming the character of judges in these matters, by their proclamations or other public deeds, declare what different opinions or systems they will allow to be taught and propagated ; and to what modes of worship they will give countenance and protection, while they exclude others from that supposed privilege.”—

Such are the principles Covenanters have published to the world. Be candid, sir, and tell your readers, that it is

only against *authoritative toleration* that Covenanters testify. *Passive toleration*, they have declared in their public deeds, they *by no means condemn*. They approve of no weapons for converting men, but the *bible, the preaching of the gospel, arguments, prayers*, and the like. That toleration against which they testify, even in the paragraph you have quoted, is expressly styled *authoritative toleration*. Viewed in this light, the texts adduced in proof of the doctrine are perfectly appropriate. They read thus: "There is one lawgiver who is able to save and to destroy: who art thou that judgest another?—Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth—But Peter and John answered and said, whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto God more than unto you, judge ye—And now, Lord, behold their threatenings, and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word—Ye are bought with a price; be ye not the servants of men—And call no man your father, upon the earth, for one is your father who is in Heaven, &c.

By way of inuendo, you tell us that these texts are worthy of observation—and then you go on to observe: "If these texts mean any thing, it is, that no magistrate, or man, or body of men, has a right to prevent their fellow creatures from believing whatever doctrines their understandings may prompt them to believe and embrace."

Pray, sir, did the Reformed Presbytery teach in the passage you have quoted; or have they taught—in any other part of their writings, that any magistrate has a right to prevent men from believing according to the dictates of their understandings? No, Sir: neither the *Reformed Presbytery*, nor *any other Presbytery*, have taught as you ridiculously insinuate. They have taught no such absurdities. No Spanish inquisitor can prevent a man from believing according to the dictates of his understanding. He might as well attempt to prevent him from seeing colours, or hearing sounds, according to the dictates of his *senses*. Not to believe the doctrines which our understandings prompt us to believe, is a *contradiction*: it is to *believe* and *not to believe* those doctrines at the same time.—Now, sir, were the texts quoted above written for the purpose of proving—that no man has a right to do that which is *impossible*—that which implies a *contradiction*? A new and admirable commentary indeed!

The texts, my dear sir, were quoted against *authoritative*



**toleration.** They were quoted to prove, that no man or magistrate has a right to assume the character of a judge in matters of religion—that he has no right to license men to publish and propagate whatever doctrines he may think proper, and to prohibit by law the publication of others.—The doctrines which are tolerated are either the true and genuine doctrines of the bible, or they are *not*. If they are *not* the doctrines of the bible ; for any mortal man to give them the sanction of his authority, is downright rebellion against the king and head of the church—to sanction by *civil* law what is contrary to the *divine* law, is nothing less than treason against the king of Heaven. What would be thought of the lord lieutenant of Ireland, were he to issue proclamations, tolerating us to obey laws directly contrary to the laws of the land ? On the other hand ; if the doctrines tolerated are the true and genuine doctrines of the bible, they *require* no toleration—they *disdain* it. To pretend to tolerate such doctrines, is to insult the majesty of Heaven. How impious for any monarch, who is but a worm of the dust, to say to the subjects of king Jesus, “ I tolerate you to obey your master ! ” Does not such language imply, that he has a right to prohibit their obedience if he pleases, and that his authority is *paramount* to that of the blessed Redeemer ! What would be thought of the President of the United States, if, coming over to Ireland, he were to issue proclamations, tolerating us to obey the laws of our country !

Such, my dear sir, is that *legal toleration*, of which you appear to be so great an admirer, and against which Covenanters esteem it their duty to testify. Now, every person must at once see, that it is not the *enemies* of legal toleration, but its *friends*, that plead for the interference of the civil magistrate in matters of religion—they must see, that Covenanters, in testifying against *legal toleration*, are testifying against the interference of the civil magistrate : and that the Rev. Presbyterian, by *approving* of legal toleration, approves, at the same time, of *magistratical interference*.

You tell us, that our forefathers, like Jesus and his apostles, could have struggled for toleration. Pray, in *what one instance* did our blessed Redeemer and his apostles struggle for a *legal* toleration ? It would border too nearly on *blasphemy* to suppose it. Did the Redeemer struggle to obtain a legal toleration from Herod ? How different his

conduct!—"Go ye and tell that fox, behold I cast out devils and do cures to-day and to-morrow, and the third day I shall be perfected."

It is true, indeed, that in your dialogue you declaim very much against the interference of the magistrates in matters of religion. I confess, however, that I find it very difficult to give you credit for the *sincerity* of your declamation.—I am sure it would require more ingenuity than I can boast of, to reconcile your *professions* and your *practice*. We have just now seen, that you contradict those professions by approving of authoritative toleration. In a variety of other particulars, the inconsistency of your conduct is still more glaring—For instance; why do you allow the civil magistrate to dictate to you in the appointment of days of public fasting and thanksgiving? Is this to disclaim magistratical interference? Is this to "call no man master?" Is this to act in agreeableness to the divine prohibition—"Be not ye the servants of men?" Again:

Why do you allow the civil magistrate to dictate to you in the manner of swearing? Swearing is one of the most solemn acts of worship. To direct us in the manner of its performance we have the example of God himself—of his saints—and of his son. Our blessed Redeemer "lifted up his hand to heaven, and swear by him that liveth for ever and ever—that there should be time no longer." *Book-swearing* has its foundation neither in scripture precept nor example: it can only be traced to heathenish idolatry.—No matter: it is enjoined by the civil magistrate; and with you, it appears that *his authority* for the manner of performing this solemn act of worship is perfectly sufficient.

Allow me, sir, to ask you as a *Dissenter*, Why did you separate from the church of England? Was not our principal reason *the imposition of human rites and ceremonies*? Now, sir, if you submit to the imposition of *one* ceremony, why not of *two*? why not of *ten*? why not of *all* the ceremonies of the church of England? If you obey the civil magistrate when he commands you to touch and kiss the book in swearing, upon the same principle, would you not obey him, were he to command you to kneel at the sacrament, to use the sign of the cross in baptism, or to conform to *all the other ceremonies* of the established church? You would not suffer the *church* to wreath about your neck a yoke of ceremonies. You stood fast in the liberty

wherewith Christ has made you free : why then have you surrendered that liberty at the discretion of the *state*? By submitting to the dictation of the civil magistrate in the article of book-swearing, have you not entirely given up one principal ground of your dissent from the church of England? You assure us, that it is impossible to prove, that magistrates have any authority to dictate to us how we are to worship the Deity. *I think so too.* Why then do you suffer them to dictate to you in that solemn act of worship, swearing? Has not our Saviour expressly declared, "In vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men."\*

You are very much afraid lest creeds and confessions divert our attention from the word of God. Pray, sir, whether do Covenanters or you adhere most closely to that divine word in the article of swearing?

But again : If you are in earnest in deprecating the interference of the civil magistrate in matters of religion, why do you strain every nerve to obtain a coalition with the general assembly of the church of Scotland? Do you not know, that the king is virtually the head of that church ; or at least, that a compromise is made of her headship between the king of England and the Lord Jesus Christ? Do you not know, that the king assumes the right of calling, adjourning, or dissolving her assemblies at his pleasure ; and that he has sometimes exercised that right in a very arbitrary manner? Do you not know, that he claims it as his prerogative to circumscribe the objects of their attention, and to prohibit them from discussing such matters as he may judge improper? Do you not know, that he prescribes for the ministers of that church whatever political oaths he pleases, as an *indispensable* qualification for the exercise of their office? Do you not know, that

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\* The above observations are not intended as a censure on the civil government. The government is Episcopalian. Episcopalian act *consistently* ; and yet, book-swearing has been condemned by some of the most respectable dignitaries of the established church. It is only Dissenters who are *inconsistent*. Nor would this mode be imposed upon *them*, were government convinced that it was really obnoxious. A respectful remonstrance would obtain for them immediate relief—judges and inferior magistrates are, in general, extremely indulgent.—Some of the latter have, in a very generous and disinterested manner, been exerting themselves to have the grievance redressed.



he peremptorily commands the ministers of that church, as his servants, to read on the Lord's day his proclamations, or other state papers, which may be subservient to the purposes of government? Do you not know that the right of presenting to vacant charges, is, in many instances, vested in the crown?—Now, sir, can any person in the world give you credit for the sincerity of your professions? Can any person believe, that you have a strong aversion to the interference of the civil magistrate in matters of religion? If you have such an aversion, why did you persevere so long in fruitless attempts to obtain a coalition with the *Erastian church of Scotland*?

The truth is, that a variety of churches at present, so far from deprecating the interference of the civil magistrate, seem to value themselves in proportion to the intimacy of their connexion with the state. The general assembly were not ashamed to *avow* this principle, when, in their communication to the general synod, they declared—that in consequence of the respectable footing on which the synod stood with his majesty's government, they thought it might be expedient to have communion established between the two bodies, &c. The church of England looks down on the church of Scotland, because she does not stand on so respectable a footing with his majesty's government: the church of Scotland looks down on her Presbyterian sister in Ireland, because she does not stand on so respectable a footing with his majesty's government: for the same reason does not the general synod look down on the secession church, &c. ? and yet sir, where is the candid observer who would presume to deny, “That the declension of churches from primitive christianity may in general be estimated by the respectability of the footing on which they stand with the civil governments of the nations?” Did not an aged and respectable member of the general synod, when commenting on the assembly's letter, shrewdly observe, “that neither the twelve apostles of the lamb, nor even the Lord Jesus Christ himself, were he to come down from the right hand of God; would be admitted into the pulpits of the general assembly of Scotland?” Why? because they would not stand on a respectable footing with his majesty's government! Would to God the above pointed remark were applicable to no assembly in the world, but only the general assembly of Scotland!

That all churches without exception, so far as they have deviated from primitive Christianity, may with one accord retrace their steps, "seeking the Lord their God, and inquiring the way to Zion with their faces thitherward," is the fervent prayer of,

Rev. Sir,

Your sincere friend,

And very humble servant,

JOHN PAUL.

*Loughmourne, April 1, 1819.*

**FINIS.**

