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THE  
BIBLICAL REPERTORY  
AND  
THEOLOGICAL REVIEW.

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OCTOBER, 1831.

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ART. I.—BIBLICAL ELOQUENCE AND POETRY.

SACRED Poetry and sacred Rhetoric have both shared, but too largely, in that inheritance from the heathen classics which has at once so enriched and corrupted the literature of Christian nations. The inspired volume *alone*, in its *original* and divine perfection, remains incorrupt and unmarred. Its poets and orators alone are found guiltless of idolatry, of flattery, of selfishness, of disingenuousness, or vain-glory. Whether by their antiquity, the peculiar customs and exclusive laws of their country, their unlettered condition, or solely and directly by the Holy Ghost, they were all secured from those fascinations of a foreign style and false philosophy, and an impure mythological fancy, which so often bewilder and betray those who essay to catch their spirit and execute their purposes. Even those devout and venerable "Fathers" who learned sacred eloquence from inspired lips, and employed its powers in a cause as sacred, are too often found like magnanimous, but unwary physicians, inhaling death while giving life; or like generous conquerors of a barbarous land, conferring liberty and peace, but catching tyranny and war, teaching truth, but learning error, imparting the gifts and graces of heavenly wisdom and Christian love, themselves, while, too often lingering in wistful meditation beneath the unhallowed shades of Academus, or dwelling in unguarded speculation on the storied

mysteries of the Parthenon, or of Delos and Delphi, or listening with unchastened sense to philosophic fancies, and melody and minstrelsy, founded on mythology, and canonized in impassioned heathenism. We turn with disgust and regret unfeigned from our holy religion as we find it fabled forth and well nigh caricatured by some of the "Apostolical Fathers," and ask, "Where—where is that *Divine Mentor* which ruled the intellect, and shielded the heart, and purified the lips of Paul, amid all the passing and recollected associations of Attic song and eloquence and wit?"

Some of the most fruitful branches of the Christian vine in the earlier centuries were also those grafted in from the luxuriant and cherished nurseries of Pagan poetry and eloquence and philosophy. Able and eloquent defenders of the faith they were, indeed; but their strong affections and intellectual powers would sometimes revisit their early *home* of heart and mind, and it were a miracle of grace, if some tones had not again been caught from the venerated voice of him who first taught them how to think and feel and speak. These did much, though designing directly the reverse, to introduce and perpetuate an incautious homage to the classic authorities of the heathen world. Even the sainted *Martyr Justin* will scarce escape this censure. His godly sincerity will not be doubted. Yet we find him in his elaborate "exhortation" to his unbelieving countrymen, virtually giving sanction to some of the mystical vagaries of the Platonic school, of which he had himself been once a deep disciple. As we rapidly descend in the dark history of the Bible and the Church, from their high defence and resting place upon the arm of the *Divine Helper*, down to their apparent helpless dependence upon an ignorant, selfish, perjured Pope and Priesthood, we trace, at every step, the palsyng spirit of *Classic Heathenism*, making or amalgamating with the very soul of Antichrist; diffusing mysticism and masonic charity, where should ever beam meridian truth and universal love; suggesting to simple or depraved and aspiring devotees their first crude thoughts of *holy mysteries* and *vows of sacrifice* and penance, of purgatory and posthumous saints, or *demi-deities of gates and keys* of heaven, and infallible *responses* and *Divine oracles* from human lips; until, at last, the sacred volume was wholly superseded and proscribed; the darkness became such as might be *felt*; the poor, in property, in power, or in spirit, could no longer learn nor sing the sweet songs of Zion, even in the

secret chambers of this house of their pilgrimage; the green pastures were withered, the still waters turbid, the trees of celestial fruit all girdled to the very heart, and the beloved city of our God sat solitary, famishing and defenceless, being no longer nerved to Christian contests and victories, by the Divine eloquence of her orators, no longer gladdened by the high praises and visions of her own poets and prophets.

In the guarded secrecy of the cloister, were the Holy Bible and the heathen classics both preserved, and have since consummated this union of sacred and profane, of which the rage for scholastic theology, with all its monstrous medley of facts and *forms* in philosophy, metaphysics, sciences and religions in the twelfth century, and the complete triumph of the philosophy of Aristotle in the fifteenth, will be found further illustrations, but too graphic and correct. Hence the fact, that when Wickliffe, the morning star of the reformation, arose, with the first English Bible in his hands, and biblical eloquence on his lips, he found every system of Christian morals, not to say religion, speedily merged in *heathen* philosophy: and when we reflect, that it was that eloquent philosophy of Greece and Rome, which, even in *style*, is said to have rivalled the finished productions of their ablest orators; and if the *stern moralists* of the Christian faith were brought thus universally and deliberately to bow before this classic shrine, shall we hope to find the licensed votaries even of *sacred* poetry and eloquence alone in independent and pure devotion to scriptural sentiment and scriptural diction? Whatever might be the hopes of the pious heart, and however humiliating the causes which may account for the fact, when we do first descry our Christian poets and orators emerging from this chaotic state of religion and literature, we find them, one and all, arrayed in a parti-coloured mantle, variously caught from Isaiah and *Homer*, *Plato* and Paul, David and *Anacreon*, Christ and Belial. To say nothing of the profaner poets, to whom their productions give Pagans by far the highest claim; review our own immortal *Milton*, on one page glowing with the seraphic fire of holy inspiration, on the next flushed with the classic vanity of converse with the fabled Muses. Even *Watts*, who takes his seat fast by the sweet Psalmist of Israel, was sometimes tempted to bow his reverend head at the goal of classic fame, wandering on the wings of his *Urania*, where the Holy Dove would not descend. A

more minute and critical investigation than is requisite for our present purpose, discovers in the productions of nearly all our modern poets and orators, a devotion to heathen models—*unchristian* to say the least, and, if we mistake not, clearly detects one great cause of that dearth of genuine sacred poetry and eloquence so long and so deeply and justly lamented in the Church. The epithet *classic*, abused as it may have been by modern empirics in *education*, has still, we doubt, acquired a meaning far too comprehensive, and a charm quite too potent for the independent unity and simplicity, the divine dignity and truth which become Christian poetry and rhetoric. The Pagan authors to whom this term is commonly appropriated, as if not content with their deserved power over the language and genius and intellect of Christians, would also erect a standard for their style, and ultimate objects for their attainment—not content with giving us an area and a starting point, they would likewise give laws for our course, a goal for our end—and then, alas! a wreath of fading laurel for our crown. But where, it may be asked, in behalf of our own *sacred* classics, where is the *revelation* which gives the prize of sacred poetry and eloquence to those who shall invoke and invent like Homer, or write in lines of grace like Cicero? And yet behold to this day, the *Christian* orator and poet struggle, even unto death, to preach in Pagan style the simple Gospel to the poor, or on wings of *fabled* muses to raise the souls of men to the *Christian's* heaven. Alas! where are the minds of heavenly mould, who dare to take the Holy Bible as their *standard* in poetry and eloquence, as well as in morality and religion? who demand *such unity* in a poem as throughout makes *one God* alone the one sovereign and pervading spirit of the universe, and such *genius* as will invent and execute nothing inconsistent with that holy unity, and such beauty and sublimity and pathos in expression as will touch no passion of the soul, but in unison with the laws of pathos and sublimity and beauty in the sacred Scriptures? There is one, indeed—honoured be his memory and his work—the immortal *Lowth*, with one disciple, “severe in youthful beauty,” who has just “rolled his numbers down the tide of time.” Their works in sacred poetry, will live in holy hearts beside the blessed book of God. But for the rest, and for these too, where they have been weak enough to need it, there is the *legalized* apology, that, from their *pliant childhood*, they

were moulded and severely measured by laws of *heathen* poetry and rhetoric; and how should they *not* find it hard to play with skill on *David's* lyre, or preach with power from the notes of Paul? Will you send the child and youth *six-sevenths* of his time to learn of Virgil, Homer, Horace, Quintilian and Demosthenes, and expect him to return a man in love and league with Prophets and Apostles? "We are taught to clap our hands enraptured, when we find a manuscript that speaks in praise of Pagan Gods"—meanwhile forget the book that tells of God who made the universe and saves the soul, and then required to sing or preach the perfections and precepts of the last, to those who pay idolatry to the first. How appropriate the pious aspiration of one, who, in this sacred cause, *labours* while he prays: "May the time soon arrive, when Christians shall think themselves in duty bound to give their children at least as much knowledge of the true God and Saviour, as of Jupiter and his associates." And how does this unyielding devotion of Christian poets and preachers to classic authorities, give immortality to the lines of Cowper:

"Is Christ the abler teacher or the schools?  
If Christ, then why resort at every turn  
To Athens, or to Rome for wisdom, short  
Of man's occasions, when in Him reside  
Grace, knowledge, comfort, an unfathom'd store.  
How oft, when Paul has served us with a text,  
Has Epictetus, Plato, Tully preached?"

It is not that the common principles of what is technically called *classic* poetry and eloquence, are inadequate to their own secular purposes, or that they are generally considered *adverse* to *sacred* ends, or that many of them do not necessarily enter into *every* production of genuine poetry and eloquence, sacred, civil, or profane. But may we not rationally doubt whether these principles, as a system or science, such as we find embodied in our standard books on this subject, are not too *contracted*, too *human*, too appropriate to their own earthly purposes, to be adequate to the infinite and eternal results of the Christian religion? And that, too, inclusive of any chapter you may chance to find entitled, "Sacred Rhetoric or Poetry," which, by the way, reminds us how a pious emperor of the Christian world, chained and decked in heathen fashion, would

grace a Turkish triumph or an Algerine ovation. Are we not taught by these systems to announce the truth of *God* and for the glory of *God*, in strict accordance with rules, whose sources and whose aims are merely human, and chiefly heathen? And if from reverence for the simple unalloyed eloquence of the Bible, or the instinctive inspiration of his high and holy object, the sacred poet or orator chance to deviate from this standard, is he not taught to tremble and retract, by the caustic criticism of that very world and the imitators of those very Pagans, whose conversion is the object of his poem or discourse? How complete, how withering through the Christian world, has been this thralldom which the classic writings of earth have been permitted to exercise for ages over the classic writings of Heaven—with reverence be it spoken, we mean the Holy Scriptures. And no appeal is more just or affecting, than that which Irving utters as from the opening lids of this neglected book, proclaiming its divine right of freedom from the bondage of scholastic task-masters. How long is this to last? How long are these new born powers of the *Christian* within us, thus to be compressed within the narrow compass of *human* genius and taste and sensibilities?

Is it asked where then shall be found a system of genuine sacred poetry or rhetoric? In Lowth and Herder, and precisely where they sought and found their system of sacred poetry. The elements of that system were in existence ages before Homer, or Horace, or Virgil dreamed of giving laws to the poetry of Christians. And does not fidelity demand of those, whether poets or orators, who address others for the sacred purposes of religion, that they adopt, as the *best possible*, that style which *God* has himself selected for the same purposes; and that every Christian orator task his powers to the utmost, to do that for himself, in sacred rhetoric, which Lowth and Herder have so nearly and so nobly accomplished for the world, in the department of sacred poetry. We cannot resist the conviction, that though the systems of secular eloquence which have so long controlled and contracted the energies of the Church, were in this hour consumed to ashes, there would still remain to every faithful student of simple *sacred* rhetoric, the elements of a system broader and purer and every way more worthy of his devotion: and that not merely in regard to the sentiment and spirit of sacred eloquence, but also to what rhetoricians would perhaps rank with the principles of *taste* in composition, involving the style of



address, the character and modes of illustration—all, in a word, except barely idiomatic or provincial peculiarities. Where, for instance, do we find the principle of rhetorical *repetition* or *variation* recognised and sanctioned, and yet so guarded from abuse as in the sacred Scriptures? insomuch that two and three, and five, and even ten successive expressions of the same idea are accounted no violation of correct taste or rhetorical effect. Or where, as in this divine volume, do we learn the resistless power of *characteristic* or *personal* illustrations and appeals, by which the sacred orator constitutes his hearer at once the honest witness and the impartial judge in his own cause? Or where such striking developments of that figure in rhetoric which characterises causes by their effects, as, for example, this exquisite couplet of the Prophet Joel:

“The land is as the garden of Eden *before* them,  
And *behind* them a desolate wilderness.”

Equally powerful in practice, though more complex in principle, is that which may be called the scriptural style of *heraldry* or *proclamation*, by which anticipations of threatened conquest and judgment are heightened by an extended enumeration of those resources for defence or refuge, of which the guilty are wont to boast: Thus, in Isa. ii. 12—17.

“For the day of the Lord of Hosts shall be upon every one that is *froud* and *haughty*.

And upon every one that is lifted up,  
And he shall be brought low,  
And upon all the cedars of Lebanon that are high and lifted up,  
And upon all the oaks of Bashan,  
And upon all the high mountains;  
And upon all the hills that are lifted up,  
And upon every high tower,  
And upon every fenced wall,  
And upon all the ships of Tarshish,  
And upon all pleasant pictures,  
And the loftiness of man shall be bowed down,  
And the haughtiness of men shall be made low,  
And the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day.”

It is obvious that we plead for no exemption from salutary *rules*, or diligent and systematic study in this matter. The original languages, and the exhaustless variety in the sentiment and style of the sacred Scriptures, will imperatively demand both.

We deprecate as the fittest work and the veriest curse of Satan, that lawless fury of the untaught tongue, which would set the world on fire of hell, and call it the flame of sacred eloquence. The unruled, reckless storm, which sweeps the main, is unlike the "doctrine

Which drops as the rain,  
And distils as the dew."

And equally unlike the "whirlwind and the storm" in which *Jehovah* hath *his* way.

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#### ART. II.—REVIEW.

- Lectures on Infant Baptism, by Leonard Woods, D. D. Abbot Professor of Christian Theology in the Theological Seminary at Andover. Published and for sale by Mark Newman. Hogg and Gould, printers, pp. 222. 1829.*
2. *Essays on Christian Baptism, by J. S. C. F. Frey, Pastor of the Baptist church in Newark, N. J. Boston, published by Lincoln and Edwards, 59 Washington street, pp. 122. 1829.*
  3. *Infant Baptism a Scriptural ordinance; and Baptism by sprinkling lawful. By William Hamilton, A. M. Pastor of the 1st Presb. church, Newark, N. J. Newark, printed by William Tuttle, 1831.*

THE subjects and mode of Christian Baptism have long been matters of earnest, and not unfrequently, angry controversy; and from all appearances, the disciples of Christ will continue to be divided by their discordant views on this external rite. In other cases, Christians may differ in regard to matters of much more vital importance, and yet not break the sacred bonds of church-fellowship; but in this, although they may be perfectly agreed on every other point, they feel that they must separate from one another: for as baptism is the outward sign of Christianity, the badge of discipleship, and the door of entrance into the visible church, if one portion of Christians view another as unbaptized, they think they cannot recognise them as regular members of the visible church,

while they remain in this state; however sincerely they may esteem them as pious and orthodox, in all other respects. On this point, however, Baptists are divided among themselves; for while the majority adhere to the principle, that no unbaptised person can with propriety be admitted to the Lord's table, there is a respectable section of that denomination in England, and a few in this country, who maintain, that where there exists satisfactory evidence of piety, no one should be excluded from the communion of the church for want of regular baptism, when there are insuperable obstacles in the way of his receiving that ordinance, arising from his full persuasion that he has already submitted to it, agreeably to Christ's appointment. This question has been ably discussed, beyond the Atlantic, by men of the first abilities, in the Baptist denomination; and it must be confessed, that the subject is hedged in with difficulties. But we adopt the broad principle, that no barrier should be permitted to separate those who appear to be the disciples of Christ; and that all terms of communion which would exclude permanently, any one whom we cannot but acknowledge as a brother in Christ, are erroneous, inconsistent with the unity of the church, and ought to be relinquished. Whatever irregularity may seem to be connected with the practice of admitting to communion in the eucharist, those, who in our opinion, have not been lawfully baptised, is greatly overbalanced by the revolting principle, that we are bound to reject from our fellowship those whom we cannot but admit, that Christ, the head of the church, receives, and who, with no other baptism than that which they have, will be admitted into the blessed society of heaven. Our sentiments, therefore, harmonise with those Baptist churches who admit to their communion all real Christians; although, in their opinion, they may be unbaptised. The advocates of close communion, however, charge us with inconsistency, in censuring them for excluding Pedobaptists from the Lord's supper; and are in the habit of appealing to us, whether we would admit a person whom we knew to be unbaptised. Now we are prepared to say, that if any whom we esteem to be the real disciples of Christ, should be placed in precisely similar circumstances, we would not hesitate to receive them to the communion of the Lord's supper. In common, we acknowledge, that the regular order of Christian duties is, first to be baptised, and that we should insist upon this, if there were no

insuperable obstacle in the way: but if a Quaker, who appeared to be a genuine Christian, should say to us, that he was persuaded that it was his duty to attend on the Lord's supper, but that he could not see his way clear to submit to water-baptism, upon our principles, we would receive him as a weak brother, not to doubtful disputations, but in the arms of charity; for it never can be made appear, that baptism is, in the nature of things, necessary to a cordial remembrance of the death of Christ at the Lord's supper. And if a Christian, through ignorance or prejudice, is so situated that he cannot perform one duty, shall we prevent him from observing another on which he wishes to attend? It is surely sacrificing the substance to form, and edification to a mere point of order, to insist rigorously on the precedence of baptism in such cases; and especially, as the fact is, that the eucharist was celebrated before Christian baptism was instituted. But as this is contested ground, we shall dismiss this subject, and proceed to the work which we have undertaken.

The lectures of Dr. Woods, which stand at the head of this article, were originally a part of his regular course of instruction to his pupils; it may be expected, therefore, that the arguments are rather adapted to the capacity of the educated and improved part of society, than to the common people. This, we think, is one of the principal objections to this treatise. It is learned, discriminating, and candid; but it is not exactly suited to a large class of readers who need instruction, and are anxious to obtain satisfaction, on this point. In two respects, however, Dr. Woods has avoided the faults into which a large majority of Pedobaptist writers have fallen: the one is, the use of arguments founded on principles which are universally denied by Anti-pedobaptists; and the other is, that hateful spirit of acrimony which has been so freely indulged by most writers on this subject. When we express this censure of the spirit of writers with whom we agree in opinion, we do not mean to excuse those on the other side. Indeed, we can scarcely recollect any point on which there has been exhibited a greater defect of candour, and a more ill-judged ridicule, than by the opposers of infant baptism. We rejoice, therefore, that an example of moderation and kindness is now given; and cannot but hope, that as the writer occupies so high and conspicuous a station, it will be followed generally, by all

who may think it proper to discuss the subject; on whichever side they choose to take their stand.

In regard to the second article prefixed to this paper, we have little to remark. There is nothing peculiarly offensive in the style and spirit of the writer; unless we should except a more than common degree of egotism. But, really, Mr. Frey should have allowed himself more time to prepare on a subject which involves much ecclesiastical and biblical learning; and he might have furnished, if not stronger arguments, yet such as were more original, and more pertinent; for upon a careful examination of his work, we find scarcely any thing which is not extracted from the work of the Rev. Abraham Booth. We are much inclined to respect the sound evangelical principles, and solid learning of Mr. Booth; but we have ever been of opinion, that his parade of citations from eminent Pedobaptist authors was a very useless labour. Those very authors, notwithstanding they are made to speak against the cause which they maintained, were all firm believers in the doctrine of infant baptism, and in the validity of the rite, performed otherwise than by immersion. It can answer little purpose, therefore, to gather up declarations which may be found in their writings, to establish a point which none of them believed. It is evident that Mr. Frey knows very little of the learned authors whom he cites; and surely such an array of testimonies cannot be appreciated by the great mass of the people on whom he wishes his book to produce an effect. Perhaps, if our author had perused and impartially weighed, Dr. Edward Williams' able answer to Booth, he would not have laid so much stress on all the arguments which he employs. If we have any judgment in matters of this sort, the answer of Dr. Williams, on the subject of *positive institutions*, is completely satisfactory; and if any reader should wish to see an able discussion of this point, we would refer him with confidence to the first part of the first volume of Williams' Reply to Booth. The fallacy in the arguments of Booth and other Anti-pedobaptist writers on this point is, the application of a principle which is true as it relates to the being and essential parts of a positive rite, to all the circumstances which attend its administration. The very definition of positive duties shows, that they owe their existence, and consequently their obligation, to an express command. For example, neither circumcision, nor the passover, would have

been duties obligatory on the church, if God had never published a law injoining their observance. It is also freely admitted that whatever is essential to the right performance of such duties must be distinctly revealed; otherwise, men would not be able to comply with the divine will. Thus also, baptism and the Lord's supper owe their existence as duties incumbent on Christians, to the positive command of Christ, who only has the power of legislating for his kingdom; and the law establishing these ordinances, must be so far explicit as to inform us, what the actions are which we are required to perform. As in the former, we need to be told that baptism is the application of water to the human body, in the name of the adorable Trinity, and in the latter, that bread and wine must be received in remembrance of Christ. But when the writers on the other side insist, that in regard to the age of the persons who may partake of either sacrament, or in relation to the mode in which water should be applied, or the attitude and time of receiving the Lord's supper, we must also have an express direction, they attempt to establish a principle which cannot be sustained by a reference to the positive institutions recorded in the Bible; and which, indeed, is inconsistent with the practice of the Baptists themselves. For first, in regard to the sex and age of the persons whose duty it was to partake of the passover, the law enjoining the observance says nothing: although, in regard to circumcision, these things are expressly and definitely fixed. If, however, it should be alleged, that the subjects of the passover are clearly designated, since it is expressly commanded that no uncircumcised person should partake of this ordinance, we answer, that it is not said expressly, whether females who were excluded from circumcision, were required to eat the passover; and again, it is not expressly determined in the law, whether circumcised infants, or children in minority, might partake of the passover. If it should be urged, that the true subjects were well known at the time, or that they can now be determined by legitimate inference from what is said: this is the very thing for which we contend, but it is a complete relinquishment of the principle, to establish which, Mr. Booth has taken so much pains. It was doubtless known, when the passover was instituted, who were the proper subjects of the ordinance; but how did the Jewish church ascertain this a thousand years afterwards? It may be answered, that they knew it by the uni-

form and uncontradicted tradition and practice of the church. No doubt this was the fact: and it is all that we ask to determine the proper subjects of baptism. But if another ground be taken, and it be asserted that the persons who were required to eat the passover can be ascertained by a fair construction of the law itself, we are perfectly willing to admit it, although the proof is not so easy as some seem to imagine; but this does not amount to an express command. It is not said that females of the Hebrew nation should eat the passover, and the law did not oblige them to attend on this feast, as it did the males. It is not said, that infants might partake of this ordinance, nor are they expressly forbidden; and we maintain, that it is as difficult to determine the proper subjects of the passover, as it is of baptism, on the principles of the Pedobaptists. All that we require to prove the right of infants to this ordinance, is the liberty of giving a reasonable construction to the law authorizing baptism, and reasoning by fair inference from what is expressly revealed. The very same method which must have been pursued by the Jews living after the return from captivity, to prove that their children had a right to eat the passover, or that they had not—for this point is even now warmly disputed—is the one which the judicious Pedobaptist now pursues, to prove that the children of believers are properly admitted to Christian baptism. But if the Anti-pedobaptist should insist, that the principle of the necessity of an express command should be applied to the passover, and will exclude infants from that ordinance as well as from baptism, we reply, that it will be found very difficult to reconcile this construction with the facts of the case; for the paschal lamb was required to be eaten by each family apart, or by two or more united, when each consisted of few members. It is also to be recollected, that the unleavened bread, which formed a part of this ordinance, must have been eaten by all, for not a crumb of any other bread was permitted to exist at the time. Moreover, there is no express command requiring females to eat the passover, and the fact can only be established by inference. And in regard to communion, although the precise age and sex are fixed by the statute, yet there are other circumstances necessary to the performance of the rite, concerning which the law is silent. For example, it is not said by whom the operation should be performed, which in other ordinances of an analogous kind, is considered of essential importance.

But the requiring of an express precept to determine every question which may arise respecting the proper subjects of a positive rite is repugnant to the practice of the Baptists themselves, in the admission of females to the Lord's supper; for it cannot be said truly, that there is any express command authorising this. It is indeed alleged, that they are included under the term "man," which we do not deny; but we say that this can only be established by exegetical reasoning, reasoning of the very same kind as that by which we undertake to show that infants are included under the comprehensive phrase, "all nations;" or by which we endeavour to prove, that when children are called "holy," they must be considered as baptised persons, or as proper subjects of baptism. After all the evasions of this argument which have been resorted to, it stands as a firm and unanswerable objection to the doctrine of Booth and others, respecting the necessity of an express command to authorise the admission of persons to a participation of positive institutions.

The third treatise, the title of which stands at the head of this article, has been published more recently than either of the others; and although not professedly an answer to the work of Mr. Frey, was probably suggested by that publication, as the author, the Rev. William T. Hamilton, is the pastor of the first Presbyterian church, in Newark, N. J. where the former gentleman resided when he published his *ESSAYS ON CHRISTIAN BAPTISM*. This is a sensible well-argued discourse, and places the subject on its true basis. It is, moreover, written in a good spirit, without the least acrimony, or any recourse to personalities. The plan of the author, who seems to have studied the subject with care, is, to establish the following propositions: 1st, "Before the advent of our Lord, God had a true church on earth; and for many ages that church had subsisted under a regular organization, provided in the Abrahamic covenant.

"2d, The Abrahamic covenant is still in force, and consequently, the Christian church is but a continuation of the Jewish.

"3d, Infant membership in the church, once established of God, never revoked, still remains.

"4th, Under the Gospel dispensation, baptism is substituted in the room of circumcision, as the seal of God's covenant."

These propositions the ingenious author sustains with great



force of argument, and, we think, conclusively, in favour of infant baptism. In some minor statements respecting the Abrahamic covenant, we are disposed to dissent from the opinions of the writer; but upon the whole, we are of opinion, that he has performed his work well, and deserves the thanks of the church, for adding one more to the many able defences of infant baptism, which we have in possession. Mr. Hamilton also discusses the subject of the proper mode of administering baptism; for however indifferent this may appear to many, yet our Anti-pedobaptist brethren consider it an essential point. With them there is no baptism without a complete immersion of the whole body in water. Against this opinion our author argues concisely, but with much force. We cannot, however, agree with him when he says "there is indeed a word in scripture, βαπτω, which properly signifies *to dip*, or immerse, and had that word been used by our Lord, dipping in water would have been the only proper mode of administering the initiatory ordinance of the church. But our Lord uses *baptise*, (βαπτίζω,) which is a different word, the proper meaning of which seems to be, *to wet*, *to cleanse* by wetting, or to wash, &c." Now, in our opinion, this criticism on the words βαπτω and βαπτίζω, is inaccurate, but as we intend to give a dissertation on this subject, in its proper place, we waive all further discussion at the present.

The whole controversy respecting the proper subjects of baptism may be reduced to two questions: the first relates to the interpretation of the law for the baptising of the nations, and the other is a question of fact—what has been the practice of the church ever since the command was given?

All authority for administering this ordinance to any subject, must be derived from the original command of our Lord to his disciples, when he commanded them to "go and teach (disciple) all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things which I command you." If we take the words πάντα ἔθνη, without limitation, they will include all human beings of every age, sex, and condition: for nations consist of all sorts and conditions of men. But all acknowledge, that these words should be considered as limited by what precedes them. And here the interpretation depends very much on the meaning of the word μαθητευσάτε, which in our version is rendered "teach," which certainly is not the precise meaning of the

term. Μαθητεω is derived from the noun μαθητης, a *disciple*, and properly signifies, *to make a disciple*. It is alleged, indeed, that disciples can only be made by teaching, and therefore, it is all the same whether we render the word by "teach" or "disciple;" but this representation is not accurate, for it is one thing to form the relation between a scholar and master, and another to teach the disciple thus constituted. It is true, that the making of disciples always has relation to teaching, and is in order to instruction; but in the order of things the disciple is made before he is taught. And although this may seem to be a trifling distinction, it is of importance in this case, where infants and minors are concerned. There are two methods of making disciples among men, according to the age and condition of the persons discipled. A teacher, who is in search of scholars, either makes an agreement with the persons who are desirous of learning from him, or he contracts with the parents or guardians of such as are under age: and this last is the most common method of obtaining disciples, because most of those who are put under the tuition of teachers, are not competent to enter into engagements for themselves, on account of their tender age. In both cases, however, the disciple is made before lessons are given: the difference is, that in the one case the scholar becomes such by his own act and engagement; but in the other, he becomes a disciple by the act of those, who have the right to engage in his behalf. And the very same thing is true in regard to the church. All persons who are of mature age and capable of judging and acting for themselves, become disciples by their own consent: from reasons which are offered they are persuaded to receive Christ as their master, and to take upon them the badge of discipleship. But in regard to young children, if they are made the disciples of Christ, it must be by the act of their parents and guardians; and there is no good reason why they may not enter their little ones into the school of Christ, as well as into any other school, if this can be shown to be for their benefit. But it is asked, what reason can there be for making those disciples who are incapable of being taught? To which we answer, that if this incapacity were permanent, the thing would be without profit; but children soon become capable of learning some lessons in the school of Christ. If they are capable of going astray from the womb, and speaking lies, they are also capable of being taught to love

and obey their Creator, and if Christ will permit them to come unto him, and reckons them as a part of his kingdom, we ought to be thankful for the privilege of consecrating our children to his service. Moreover, children are called disciples by the apostle Peter in his speech at the council of Jerusalem against Judaizers, for he says, "Now, therefore, why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither we, nor our fathers were able to bear." To return, then, to the interpretation of the commission of Christ, it appears, that although the phrase "all nations" is limited by the foregoing command "to disciple," yet, upon a fair construction, this does not exclude the infants of those who are themselves the disciples of Christ. The command requires that they who are baptized should be "discipled," but as children are capable of being made disciples in the school of Christ, as in other schools, there is no evidence arising from this word for the exclusion of infants from the Church.

But in all cases, the interpretation of laws requires, that we take into view the existing customs and opinions of the people to whom they were given; for, in all legislation, to avoid prolixity, many things are taken for granted, as well understood at the time, and principles long established are recognized as still in force, though not explicitly mentioned. If a command had been issued, to make proselytes to the Jewish community, and to circumcise all the people who applied for admission, the existing laws and long established usages, in regard to this rite, would have rendered it superfluous to specify the precise time, and the persons who were proper subjects of the ordinance; for all were acquainted with these things.

And on supposition, that proselytes were ordered to be made, and instead of circumcising them, the command was to baptise them by way of initiating them into the Church, it would be reasonable to proceed on the same principles as in the former case, unless some change of principle was announced, or some alteration signified. The Baptists attempt to evade the conclusion from their premises, by alleging, that the Christian Church is an entirely new society, and by no means a continuation of the old system; and, therefore, there can be no legitimate reasoning from the one to the other. But the principles here asserted cannot be proved by Scripture. Up to the very time when the commission was given, the Jewish Church existed; and although much had been said re-

specting an enlargement of this body, so as to embrace all nations; yet no intimation was given, that the general principles of membership in the Church thus enlarged, would be essentially different from what they had ever been; and much less was there any intimation given, that the children of believers, who had ever been included with their parents, in the covenants which God made with them, should henceforth be cast off, and no longer form any part of that visible society of which Christ is the King.

But there is a well authenticated fact which adds unspeakable force to these considerations; and which, if it be admitted, renders it almost impossible to interpret the commission in any other way than as including the children of believers. I refer to the practice of baptising proselytes to the Jewish religion, which had long been in use. The invariable custom was, as we are informed by all the Jewish writers who mention the subject, when the master of a family was proselyted, not only to circumcise all the males, agreeably to the law of Moses, but also to baptise the whole family, male and female, adults and infants. This custom, however it came into use, we consider as satisfactorily established by testimony which cannot be resisted, without affecting the general principles of historical credibility: and is opposed by no counter testimony whatever. And, moreover, as baptism was the distinguishing badge of the Christian's profession, against whom the unbelieving Jews entertained the most deadly hatred, it never can be a probable, or even a credible supposition, that they would falsely pretend that baptism was a rite practised from time immemorial by their forefathers, in all cases when proselytes were made, unless this had indeed been the fact. And this will appear still more incredible, when we consider the nature of the testimony which they have given, in which there is a minute and circumstantial account of the whole process; of the kind of trial made of the sincerity of the candidates; of the profession required; and of the ceremonies of administration, both in the case of males and females, of parents and children. Our limits do not admit of the exhibition of the testimonies in favour of Jewish proselyte baptism: the inquisitive reader will find them at large in Maimonides, in Wall's History of Baptism; in Lightfoot's Works; and in Dr. Hammond's Treatise on Baptism. Taking for granted, then, the fact, that proselytes were all baptised when added to the Jewish Church, and that this custom was well known to every

body; for about this period of the Jewish history, proselytism had become very common. Some time before the birth of Christ, the whole nation of the Idumeans had embraced the Jewish religion, rather than leave the country which they had seized; and Josephus informs us of many remarkable facts on this subject; particularly, how Helena, queen of Adiabene, and her son became proselytes to Judaism, and were exceedingly zealous in promoting their adopted religion.

We say then, admitting the existence of such a practice, when Christ issued his command, to "go and disciple, that is, proselyte all nations, baptising them," could the disciples understand his words, in any other way, than as authorising the baptism of the same description of subjects, as were usually baptised when proselytes from the heathen were made? If they had been accustomed to see not only the males circumcised, of whatever age they might be, but also to see females and infants uniformly baptised, as well as males and adults, would they not conclude, that in making proselytes to the Christian religion, as the same rite was prescribed, the same subjects would still be brought under its administration?

The construction of our Saviour's commission for which we plead, is the more remarkable, because it accords with all previous dispensations of God towards believers and their seed; and more especially, with the gracious promises made to Abraham, in which he repeatedly includes his seed; "I will," says he, "be a God to thee and to thy seed after thee." And as a sign and seal to this gracious promise, he gave him the sign of circumcision, which Paul assures us was a seal of the righteousness of his faith. Now, to suppose, that the apostles would not have considered the children of believers as included in this commission, would be to suppose that they had been specially instructed to pursue a course contrary to every thing to which they had been accustomed; but we find no hint of any such instructions in the discourses of Christ: we must, therefore, conclude, that they would think, and that the risen Saviour intended them to believe, that the relation between the children of the faithful and the Church, was not essentially altered; but that, as heretofore, believing parents saw their beloved offspring included in the bonds of the covenant, as well as themselves, so now, they were not cast out of the Gospel covenant, but were still entitled to the same privileges as formerly; and that of course, this endearing relation should still be recognized by administering to them that sacrament,

which marks the connexion of all disciples with the body of Christ. Otherwise, children under the Gospel are not in as favourable a state as under the law; but who can credit this? Surely Christ has not by his Gospel deprived any persons of privileges which they were possessed of before he came. This simple argument we have never heard satisfactorily answered; and our belief is, that it does not admit of such an answer: for if our children are cast entirely out of the Church, under the Christian dispensation, then certainly the believers of the Old Testament enjoyed one privilege, of which we are deprived; for if any should ask "what profit was there of circumcision?" we answer, "much every way."

But Christ did not come to abridge any real privilege, but to enrich and enlarge his Church with much greater advantages, in all respects, than it had ever before enjoyed. When therefore he said, "Go *disciple* all nations, baptising them," we are persuaded that he intended to suffer little children to come unto him as well as others, and that he will still, by the ministers of his Church, condescend to take them into his arms and bless them.

And this view of the subject corresponds with all that we find recorded in the New Testament respecting the Christian Church; for in the epistles to the churches we find children addressed as well as parents; and these children were still in their minority, for the duty of obedience to parents, is expressly enjoined. Besides, the blessing of Abraham has come now on all his spiritual seed; and one part of that blessing was, that God promised to be the God of his seed; and we have no doubt that every true believer is an heir of this gracious promise; so that we may say unto all such, as Peter said to the converts of Jerusalem, "The promise is unto you and to your children."

Again, as under the Gospel dispensation, called by Jeremiah, "the new covenant," all will ultimately "know the Lord from the *least* unto the greatest;" when children will be pious from their earliest years, it would be altogether unsuitable to have such children excluded from the Church, until they were of sufficient age to make a profession for themselves. God has provided that the Church shall be a school for the rising generation, where by their prayers and instructions they may grow up in "the nurture and admonition of the Lord."

It appears to us, that one great end of the institution of the Church was for the sake of communicating the truth of the

gospel to the next generation, that they in their turn might hand it down to other generations which may succeed, until the end of the world. And we cannot but think, that receiving children as bearing this relation to the Church, is not only a comfort to pious parents, but a strong motive to stir them up to faithfulness and diligence in the religious instruction of the rising race. And while we highly esteem the piety and holiness of many of our Baptist brethren, we are persuaded, that they are more deficient in what relates to the careful training of children in the knowledge of God and in habits of devotion, than in any other point; and that this is precisely the effect of their error—as we must esteem it—which is practically most pernicious. But we are conscious that this is delicate ground, and therefore we content ourselves with merely dropping a hint, where we might adduce a multitude of facts. Every thing connected with the baptism of children, when seriously administered, tends to make a salutary impression on the minds of parents; and their early dedication to God in a solemn covenant transaction, is a handle which may advantageously be taken hold of, in dealing with their consciences, and exhorting them to choose the paths of piety.

But the question of fact may be considered independently of all other considerations. Baptism is a visible, public transaction, and is therefore as capable of proof by testimony, as any other fact. If we had no sacred records, we could still prove by the concurrent testimony of all ages, that the Church has existed as a society for 1800 years, and that she has celebrated divine worship during all that period, on the first day of the week. We can prove, by undoubted testimony, because it is altogether uncontradicted, that the eucharist has been observed through the whole period of the Christian Church's existence: and also that the ordinance of baptism has ever been in use in the Church; and that this ordinance has always been administered by the use of water, and in the name of the Holy Trinity. It also admits of the clearest historical testimony, that females, as well as males, have ever been the subjects of Christian baptism. And no fact in ecclesiastical history is more certain, than that, in the beginning of the fifth century, the baptism of infants was so universally practised, that men of learning and extensive travel, in the east and west, had never heard of a sect, even of heretics, who questioned it. So firmly was this practice established, and so universal the belief of its apostolic origin, that when the de-

nial of it would have relieved the Pelagians from much embarrassment, in their controversy with the orthodox, yet they ventured not to call it into question, and rejected with abhorrence the very notion of withholding baptism from children. In regard to the universality of the belief and practice, as far as authentic history goes, there is no room for a difference of opinion. And the same is the fact, without one solitary exception, from this time until the eleventh century, when the Petrobrussians arose in France. Let us then take our stand at the commencement of the fifth century; and finding the whole Church then of one mind, and following one practice, the question occurs, how can this state of things be accounted for? On pedobaptist principles, it is exactly what would be expected; but on the principles of the Baptists, we venture to affirm, that, turn which way they may, it is a fact for which they never can give a satisfactory explanation. It amounts to nothing to adduce the superstitious opinion of Tertullian, and to disparage the testimony of Origen on account of the supposed depravation of his writings; or to produce examples of the adult baptism of a few persons whose parents were Christians; for it is most certain, that this universal prevalence of infant baptism could not have been introduced between the time of Origen and Augustine, without exciting much attention, and creating much controversy; and, in that case, the means of this extraordinary change in the subjects of one of the sacraments of the Church, must have been well known to such men as Augustine, Pelagius, Cœlestius, &c. Infant baptism must have been long the undisputed practice of the Church, to place its origin beyond the knowledge of these learned and inquisitive men. Indeed, it will be found extremely difficult to assign for it an origin sufficiently early, to account for the acknowledged facts, without going up to the very times of the Apostles. For suppose, that early in the second century this corruption had commenced, it would take a long time to bring about a change in the practice of the Church scattered over the whole world. Besides, the bishops of the Churches, in this period, lived so near the times of the Apostles, that they could not but know that this was an innovation; and they were not men of that character who would wilfully corrupt the institutions of the Church. Many of them were martyrs, and sealed their testimony to the religion received from the Apostles, with their blood. But supposing, that the change commenced early in this century, we must



allow a long period before the primitive apostolical practice would be entirely obsolete. In some places, the innovation would have been resisted, and controversy would have arisen, of which some vestige would have been left in the writings of the Fathers of that period; and even if the writings which recorded these facts should have perished, in the lapse of ages, yet they could not have been unknown in the third and fourth, or even the fifth century. It is now above 300 years since the reformation commenced, but who is at a loss to know what the practice of the reformers was on this subject?

But let us ascend higher, and see whether there are not other testimonies which corroborate the fact, that the practice was as universal in the middle of the third as in the beginning of the fifth century. Both Origen and Tertullian were born and educated in the second century; now, it is true, the former dissuades from the practice of baptism under certain circumstances, and for certain reasons, which do not apply exclusively to infants. The whole matter is, that he believed that sins after baptism were rarely remissible; and, therefore, that the safest course for those exposed to many temptations was, to defer their baptism until the danger was over; a practice which unhappily obtained much prevalence after this time, for the very reason which induced him to advocate the postponement of baptism in the case of infants. But we think it must be evident to every impartial mind, that Tertullian does not speak as a man would have done who saw a new and corrupt practice introduced into the Church. Indeed, he himself would not object to baptism in any of the cases specified, if there should be danger of death. The testimony of Tertullian is therefore in favour of the fact of the common practice of infant baptism.

But why is the testimony of Origen rejected; which is as clear and explicit as it could be, not only that this was the custom of the Church, but that it was a practice derived from the Apostles. It is true, the original of many of Origen's works is lost, and we read them in the Latin version of Rufin or Jerome; but what motive could either of these men have had for interpolating passages respecting the baptism of infants? There was no dispute in their day respecting this matter; and although the former has been accused of altering Origen for his own purposes; yet surely he would not have done so without any motive whatever; and as to Jerome, his fidelity as a

translator has never been questioned, and one of the testimonies of Origen is found in a work translated by this father.

But we have in one body, a cloud of witnesses, as early as the middle of the third century, whose testimony ought to set this question at rest. I refer to the Synod of Carthage, when Cyprian, the martyr, attended, and from whom we have an account of the proceedings of the council, in relation to this subject. There existed no dispute respecting the baptism of infants, which induced the council to consider this subject. Such a state of things would show that the practice was not universal. But the case was, that a certain presbyter, whose name was Fidus, consulted the council, whether the baptism of infants should be deferred until the eighth day, as in the case of circumcision, or whether children might rightly be baptised at any age after birth. The Synod, consisting of sixty-six bishops, took up the subject deliberately, and decided without any diversity of opinion, that there was no need to wait until the eighth day; but that baptism might be administered at an earlier period, as properly as on the eighth day. Then every circumstance combines to render the testimony as strong as possible. The council is not called to discuss the point, whether infants ought to be baptised, for even if they had been unanimous, yet their discussion of this point would show, that there were those who doubted it, which rendered such a decision necessary: but the proof is far stronger than it would have been in that case, for no one doubts respecting the practice itself; but one man doubts whether it might be administered before the child was eight days old. And on this point the Synod were unanimous. Certainly, then, no one of these persons had ever entertained a scruple respecting the validity and propriety of infant baptism. Only reflect, then, that sixty-six bishops, with St. Cyprian at their head, called together from a large extent of country, are perfectly unacquainted with any dispute respecting the baptism of children, but all assume it as a thing undisputed; and this in the middle of the third century. If we found it difficult to reconcile the ignorance of Augustine and Pelagius of the origin of infant baptism with the theory which makes it an innovation, what shall we say of Cyprian and his synod, who lived so much nearer the times of the Apostles?

To us it appears, that when we find a universal prevalence of a practice at a period so early, and find no account of any controversy on the subject, and all men acting in regard to it

as a thing undisputed, and some of them expressly referring it to an apostolic origin, the inference is inevitable, that such a practice must have come down from the Apostles. But if our views of the fact of infant baptism are correct, may we not expect to find some vestige of the practice in the sacred writings? doubtless this is not unreasonable. But if the same principle of admission was pursued by the Apostles in planting the Christian Church, which had always been customary in the Jewish Church, there would be found little occasion to mention the subject, unless incidentally, in their writings. But if an entire change was made in regard to this matter, then the most explicit directions ought to be expected. The truth, therefore, is, that instead of calling on the pedobaptist, to produce an express warrant for infant baptism, the call should be on him who rejects infant baptism, to adduce some express command to cast them out of the Church, and deprive them of their former privileges. But while we maintain, that an express precept or example ought not to be required of us for infant baptism; yet, we are of opinion, that the fact may be inferred, with no small probability, from the cases of baptism which are recorded in the New Testament, and from incidental remarks in the epistles of the Apostles.

If our opinion respecting the existence of proselyte baptism is well founded, we may expect to find the Apostles acting in conformity with it, when the head of a family was converted by their preaching. Accordingly, we have several instances of household baptism on record; and while we do not pretend to prove positively that there were young children in all, or any of these families, yet we maintain, that the way in which the sacred historian speaks of these transactions, is exactly such as would have been adopted, supposing it to have been customary to baptise the household of proselytes to the Jewish religion, and accords exactly with the supposition, that all who were in the house, and over whom the head of the family possessed entire control, were baptised: but the mode of relating these transactions is altogether inconsistent with what we should have expected, if the Apostles had acted on the principles of our Baptist brethren, and had baptised none but adult believers, each on the profession of his own faith. In this latter case, there is small probability that every adult member of the family, would, in every instance on record, have become believers; but not to insist on this, if every individual had been baptised on profession of his own faith, why

do we not hear of such profession in the case of the children and domestics, as well as the master and mistress? why should they be spoken of as "households," since, upon this theory, they were not admitted into the Church in this capacity, but as individual believers? But, on the other hand, how exactly does this language comport with what we suppose to have been the true state of the fact? When the Apostles received into the Church men and women who had no families with them, as on the day of Pentecost, when the strangers from many nations were converted to the number of three thousand; or, when the people of Samaria, who went out to hear Philip, believed, and were immediately baptised, we hear nothing of households; but when the Apostles came into private families, and the head was made a convert, in every instance, upon his professing his faith, he and his household were baptised; not a part of them, but all of them; and, yet we read of no profession of faith made by any one but the master or mistress of the family. In the case of the jailor of Philippi, it is said, indeed, in our translation, that "he believed with all his house;" but this is not entirely correct, for *πεπιστευκως* is, literally, "he having believed, rejoiced with all his house," or, as some choose to render it, "through all his house." It was natural for the members of this family to feel sympathy in the joy of the head, who was delivered from so great distress; but there is no evidence in the history, that any one believed but himself. If so, why do we not read of the pungent convictions of the others as well as of the jailor himself?

Again, in the case of Lydia, the Lord opened her heart that she attended to the things spoken by Paul, and straightway she and all her house were baptised. There is not the least hint that any one of her family believed besides herself. If they had been baptised on the profession of their own faith, this important circumstance would scarcely have been omitted; but when we hear, that "her household were baptised," without the least intimation, that any of them had their hearts opened, or believed: what is more natural than to think, that the family was baptised on the faith of its head; and that the very same practice was pursued by the Apostles, as in the case of families proselyted to the Jewish religion?

We read also, that Paul "baptised the household of Stephanas;" now, why mention so constantly "households," if the custom was not to bring persons into the Church by house-

holds? But if the Apostles did receive the household in every case where the head of the family was converted—and so the fact is as far as stated in the record—it is reasonable to think, that whole households were introduced into the Church with the parents, or heads of the family. To give this argument the force of strong probability, it is not necessary to prove that there were infants in these households, though undoubtedly that is more probable than the contrary; but all that is requisite is, to prove, that on the profession of the head of a family his household was baptised; and of course infants were baptised if found in the house. When these facts are considered in connexion with what has been said relative to the custom of Jewish proselyte baptism, we cannot but think, that the argument which they furnish for infant baptism is very strong.

And the probability that the infants of believers were baptised by the Apostles is rendered still stronger, by what Paul says of them, 1 Cor. vii. 14.—“Else were your children unclean, but now are they HOLY.” Baptised persons are constantly in the New Testament called *ἅγιοι*. The true import of this word is not so much, persons inwardly holy, as externally consecrated; whatever, whether animate or inanimate, that was consecrated to the service of God, especially those things dedicated by some solemn ceremony. Now it has never been shown how children could be called “holy,” in any other sense than as being consecrated to God, which must have been by the rite of baptism. To us then it appears, that this text contains as plain an example of infant baptism, as there is in the New Testament for female communion. That it does not signify that the children were *legitimate*, is sufficiently evident from the fact, that this word “holy” never signifies “legitimacy” in the whole Bible; and because the validity of marriage, on which legitimacy depends, has no connexion with faith. The opinion of the ancient expositors was, that by “holy” in this place, we should understand “baptised persons.” It is common with many to represent this as a relative or federal holiness, of which children partake in virtue of their being included in the covenant with their parents: but to us it seems much more simple, and more agreeable to the genuine import of the word, to consider it as designating those persons who were consecrated to God by baptism.

In regard to the *mode* of baptism, or rather what consti-

tutes baptism, as it relates to the external ceremony, the controversy has been as warm as that respecting the proper subjects. For while, on the one side, it is maintained that any application of water to a suitable subject, in the name of the Trinity, is baptism; it is, on the other side, confidently affirmed that immersion alone can with propriety be called baptism; and that any other application of water to a human body is no baptism: so that if, in all other respects, the rite was administered agreeably to the Divine appointment, this essential defect would nullify the whole transaction; and the person thus washed or sprinkled, must be baptised again by immersion, before he can be considered as having complied with his duty.

We beg that it may be kept distinctly in mind, that the question at issue, is not whether baptism may lawfully be administered by immersion; but whether there can be no valid baptism in any other mode.

To aid us in coming to a correct conclusion, we would observe that the whole controversy, as it appears to us, must turn upon two points: first, the true import of the word employed in the command of our Saviour; and secondly, whether the thing intended to be signified by baptism, is essentially connected with the mode of applying water in its administration.

On the first point, almost all Baptist writers have expressed the utmost confidence, maintaining, with one accord, that the primitive, radical, and proper meaning of the word βαπτίζω, is to immerse; and that we have no more right to change the action commanded, than to change the element directed to be used. Now, if the word is never employed with any other signification, the conclusion is sound, and no application of water to the body ought to be considered, or called by the name of baptism. Just as if a man was commanded to *immerse* his whole body in a pool or river, he could not be considered as obeying the order, if he only washed his face and hands, because the meaning of the word *immerse* is definite, and expresses only such a use of water as takes place when the body is surrounded by that element on every side. The abettors of this opinion, however, have failed to prove that the word βαπτίζω, is thus definite and limited in its meaning. Some eminent Pedobaptist writers have indeed conceded the point; and the Baptists have fully availed themselves of these concessions, as appears by the quotations of Mr. Booth from

authors of this description; some of which are brought forward by Mr. Frey, in his *Essay* now under review. While we do not deny that this word often signifies *to dip*, we maintain, that it is also frequently used with much greater latitude, and may mean any application of a body to a liquid, by which any portion of the liquid, however small, is imbibed. In confirmation of this position, we appeal to all the Greek Lexicons of credit: in these βαπτίζω is explained as meaning, not only *to dip*, but *to wash, to stain, to dye, &c.* And we have fully satisfied ourselves, that the primary, radical sense of this word is, not *to immerse*, but *to dye*; that *to dip* is a secondary signification, derived from the circumstance that dying was usually performed by immersing the substance to be coloured, in a vat: that, nevertheless, the word is by no means confined to dying by immersion, but with equal propriety signifies the staining or colouring of a thing, in any other way, even where the idea of dipping is out of the question.

*To Baptise*, therefore, in its primary, literal meaning, is *to dye or stain* any substance, by imbuing it with colouring matter. And as there is an analogy between applying a body to a colouring liquid, and the application of water for cleansing; so the use of water, by dipping, pouring, or sprinkling, came also to be called by the name of baptism.

This view of the meaning of the word accords with the use of it in all the instances in which it is found in sacred or profane authors; whereas, if the meaning of the word is restricted to immersion, there are numerous passages which cannot be rendered intelligible. We cannot, without great constraint, give this signification to the word in many passages of the New Testament. In Mark, vii. 2, 3, 4, *νίπτω* and *βαπτίζω* seem to be used convertibly, to signify the washing of the hands: "For the Pharisees and all the Jews, except they wash (*νίψωνται*) their hands eat not, holding the tradition of the elders: and when they come from the market, except they wash, (*βαπτισωνται*) they eat not. And many other things there be, which they have received to hold, as the washing (*βαπτισμους*) of cups, and pots, and brazen vessels, and tables (*couches*)."  
Now to us it seems clear, that the Evangelist here uses both the verb and the noun to express what is in the context, expressed by the verb *νίπτω*, which signifies *to wash*, in any mode. Dr. George Campbell, it is true, supposes that two distinct actions are signified by these two words; and that

besides washing their hands, when they returned from market, they baptised, or plunged themselves in water: but there is no need of this supposition; and it is altogether improbable in itself, that all the Jews, every time that they returned from the market, dipped their whole bodies in water. Very few of them could have had the convenient means of practising immersions so frequent, and as their visits to the markets might be repeated, the practice must have been very burdensome. Besides, the "Baptism of *pots and cups and tables*" by immersion, must have been inconvenient, and to most persons impracticable; as the tables here mentioned were their beds or couches, which, being large and unwieldy, could not have been immersed even in a commodious bath.

Again, when it is said, 1 Cor. x. that the Israelites "were all baptised unto Moses in the cloud and the sea," it cannot easily be conceived how they were immersed in the cloud and the sea, since the cloud overhung them, and they passed through the sea dry-shod. There might have been a sprinkling on this large host from the cloud, and a spray of water on each side, but there could be no immersion of the whole body in water.

Another clear proof that Baptism does not always signify immersion, is derived from Heb. ix. 10, where we have the phrase *διαφοροις βαπτισμοις*, "divers baptisms;" properly *different kinds of baptism*. Now if baptism might be of different kinds, then certainly all baptism does not consist in immersion; as there would, in this case, be but one kind. That immersion only is not here signified by the word, is evident from the rites to which the Apostle refers in the Mosaic service. These were ablutions with water, and sprinklings of blood; and although bathing was frequent in the sacerdotal ablutions, yet we do not find that, in any of these bathings, total immersion was commanded or practised. Indeed, it is not probable that the laver was deep enough to admit of the immersion of the whole body. These "divers baptisms" appear to us to include all the ceremonial washings and purifications by water and by blood; and therefore the word cannot mean immersion alone. That the word ever signifies, in the New Testament, a complete immersion, is rather taken for granted than proved. John did indeed Baptise at Enon, because there was much water (*πολλα υδατα*) there; but considering the multitudes who attended his ministry, and the distance which many of them must necessarily



have come, there can be no difficulty in conceiving reasons why he should choose a well-watered place for the exercise of his ministry, without supposing that much water was used for baptism. In that hot country, a place abounding with springs would be very desirable for the refreshment of the people and their cattle; and besides the Jordan, it does not appear that there are any waters in that region suitable for the immersion of such a multitude. John, moreover, might baptise in such a manner as to need an abundance of water, without dipping under water all who come. No mode seems to have more probability attached to it, as the one anciently used, than the leading of the person into the stream, and then profusely pouring water on his head: this would be much more convenient than immersion, and much more quickly performed. On this hypothesis, the expressions "going down into the water," and "coming up out of the water," are as significant as if we should suppose the subjects to be totally immersed; and this borrows light from the fact, that the administrator is said to have gone down into the water, and to have come up out of the water; while no one dreams that the minister plunged himself over head in the stream.

There are some expressions which are thought clearly to teach, that in apostolical times baptism was administered by immersion: such as Rom. vi. 3, 4. Colos. ii. 12, where we read "buried with him in baptism"—which, it is contended, can signify nothing else than immersion. Supposing that there is here an allusion to the mode of baptism, it would only follow that this mode was commonly practised, but by no means that it was the exclusive mode. When, however, we come to consider the usual mode of burial among the Jews, and especially the particular circumstances of the burial of our Lord—which event is supposed to be here referred to—there is so little analogy between such a burial and dipping a person under water, as to make it hard to believe that this was in the mind of the Apostle when he wrote. This leads us to remark, what is the opinion of many judicious men, that there is in these words no allusion whatever to the external mode of baptism, any more than there is to crucifixion; but that as baptism signified and sealed the believer's entire death to sin by the death of Christ, so believers are said not only to be crucified with him, but buried with him in baptism. In support of this opinion, the reader is requested to peruse attentively what Dr. Woods has said on this subject; where he will

also find some important exegetical remarks from the critical pen of Professor Stuart. Upon the whole, we are inclined to adopt this exposition, as best agreeing with the context, and the circumstances of the case.

It cannot be certainly proved from any of the cases of baptism mentioned in the New Testament, that the ordinance was administered by immersion; but it may be conceded, that in some of them this is more probable than the contrary, from the language employed in the description. This probability, however, is more than counterbalanced by the strong improbability that this was the mode in other cases, where the circumstances are recorded. Let it be granted, as probable, that John baptised in Jordan by immersion, and that Philip baptised the Eunuch by immersion; still the impartial reader must acknowledge, that in the baptism of the three thousand, and of the people at Samaria, of the gaoler and his family, of Cornelius and his family, and of Paul, some other mode was used. And let it be remembered, that a demonstration that immersion was sometimes used, does not in the least militate with our opinion, so long as it cannot be proved that this mode was the only one used.

We have already expressed our opinion, that the primary signification of the word βαπτίζω is not *to immerse*, but *to dye*. This opinion, though not new, is acknowledged to be at variance with that of most of our lexicographers, and will therefore demand particular confirmation. We regret that our limits will not admit of a minute and extended investigation of this point; for we feel satisfied that the evidence for our opinion might be made to appear so strong, as to win the assent of all impartial judges. We shall be able only to touch the subject lightly.

We take it for granted that there is no marked difference between βαπτίζω and its root βαπτω, as to their signification. Some have taught that the root signifies *to dip*, but that the derivative should be taken as a diminutive, and consequently should mean something less than *dipping*: while others have held the very reverse, and asserted that βαπτίζω has the force of an augmentative. There is no authority for either of these opinions; and although the Greeks might have perceived a shade of difference in the literal meaning of these words, we are, at this day, unable to discover any. We shall therefore consider them as synonymous. It is, however, worthy of special remark, that βαπτω, in none of its forms, is ever ap-

plied to Baptism; and that the derivative βαπτίζω is never used in the New Testament but with some relation to a religious washing, except when taken figuratively.

There are two methods of ascertaining the radical, primitive signification of a word. The first is to trace it through all its ramifications and compounds, and catch the idea which is common to them all. The other is to examine all the passages where the word can be found, and to consider that as the radical meaning which will suit the connexion in every instance. According to both these methods of investigation, the result will be that the primitive, literal meaning, both of βαπτω and βαπτίζω is *to dye*. For let any scholar turn to the root βαπτω in such a Lexicon as that of Scapula, (where words are etymologically arranged,) and he will there find the following derivations: βαμμα and επιβαμμα, *a tincture or dye*; βαψις, *the act of dying*; βαπτος, *dyed*; βαπτρια, *a female dyer*; βαπτικος, *that which may be dyed*; βαφη, *a colour, a tincture*; βαφικος, *that which relates to dying*; βαφεις, *a dyer*; αβαφος, *not dyed*; αιμοβαφης, *dyed in blood*; ακροβαφης, *dyed on the top*; δρυοβαφης, *dyed with oak*; κισσωοβαφης, *dyed with ivy*; κροκοβαφης, *dyed with crocus*; πολυβαφης, *died much*; διβαφος, *double-dyed*; χολοβαφης, *died with bile*; χρυσοβαφης, *tinged with gold*.

This list might be considerably increased, but we think that no one who is capable of judging in this case, will easily avoid the conclusion to which we ourselves have come. And we believe, the same result would arise from an examination of all the passages in the Greek classics, where this word, in any of its forms or branches, is used. We have time to mention only a few. The first, is the famous passage in the BATTLE OF THE FROGS, v. 212. Where it is said εβαπτετο δ' αιματι λιμνη, *the lake was dyed, or stained with blood*.

Aristophanes, in Pluto, Act II, scene 5, has these words, ουθ' ιματιων βαπτων, *not with dyed garments*.

Again, speaking of the actors colouring, or staining their faces with wine lees, his words are βαπτομενος βατραχειοις; and he also speaks of βαπτος ορνις, *a coloured bird*.

Aristotle, in his book *De Coloribus*, says: "All these things by means of heat and moisture enter the pores των βαπτομενων, *of such things as are dyed in them*:" and *De Animalibus*, speaking of a certain colouring substance, he says, "When it is pressed, βαπτει και ανθιζει την χειρα, *it dyes and stains the hand*."

Plutarch, in his *Life of Lycurgus*, says, "He forbade βαφικην, *the art of dying*:" in another work, "That which is naturally black, is not βαπτον dyed." And speaking of a certain Roman general, who was wounded he says, "He set up a trophy, and βαπτισας, *having tinged* his hand with blood, he wrote an inscription with it."

Plato, *De Republica*, describing the method of dying, says, "They cull out the finest wool, and prepare it with great care, that it may take the grain, then βαπτονσαι, *they dye it*; but" says he, "substances not prepared in this manner, no matter in what dye (βαπτη) they are dyed," &c. Again, "Our aim, with regard to soldiers, is to cause them to receive the laws as the cloth receives βαφην, *the dye*."

And in the first Epistle of Lysis we have, "As οἱ βαφεις, *the dyers* first cleanse and wash *the clothes*, τα βαψιμα των ιματιων, *about to be dyed*, that so they may take a more durable colour βαφην."

Thus also Xenophon, in his *Anabasis*, speaking of the younger Cyrus, says, "εβαπτισεν his sword in blood," that is, he stained his sword with blood.

In fact, there are few instances in which the meaning of this word does not bear some analogy to the art of dying; and therefore the Latin authors commonly translated it by the word *tingo*. And it is not difficult to understand how it acquired the meaning of immersing, as the common method of dying was the dipping of the substance to be coloured, into the liquor impregnated with the dye-stuff.

We should have thought it unnecessary to take so much pains in ascertaining the primary signification of this word, had not so much stress been laid upon it by those who maintain that immersion, is the only proper mode of baptism; and had not the thing been misunderstood by many of our best philologists, who have followed one another in asserting that the radical meaning of βαπτω, is *to dip*.

There still remains one inquiry, before we dismiss the mode of baptism. It is, whether the mode of immersion is necessary to express, or to express forcibly, the thing represented by baptism. The Baptists strenuously maintain the affirmative; asserting, that by this rite is exhibited the burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ, of which the ordinance cannot be an emblem, unless performed by immersion. We object to this representation, and deny that there is any authority in the word of God, for considering baptism as a figure of Christ's burial and resurrection. The principal emblematical

signification of baptism, is undoubtedly the purification of the soul by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost. The being "born of water" is an external sign of being "born of the Spirit." Now the operations of the Holy Spirit, in the regeneration and sanctification of the soul, are often represented by distilling, sprinkling, pouring; &c. but never, that we recollect, by dipping. As far then as the action of baptizing is significative of something internal and spiritual, the argument is greatly in favour of the other usual modes of applying water to the subject, above that of immersion. And let it be observed, that even if it could be proved that immersion was the mode of baptism practised by John, and by the Apostles; yet if there is nothing in this mode connected with the thing intended to be represented in the ordinance, we are under no obligation to follow that particular mode. In other analogous cases, we do not feel ourselves bound to imitate every circumstance in the mode of attending on a divine ordinance, if it is evidently a thing merely indifferent, which may be as well performed in another way. Thus, although, we know that the Lord's Supper was celebrated in the evening; in an upper room; with unleavened bread; in a recumbent posture; yet we feel at liberty to deviate from all these circumstances, because we are persuaded that they enter not at all into the essence of this sacrament: but were circumstances which arose out of the common customs of the country, or from the time and occasion of the institution. So also, if it was customary to administer baptism to men stripped of their clothing, in a country where bathing was customary with all ranks, we should not feel obliged to follow them in this. And if baptism was originally administered by totally immersing the subject in water, in the warm country of Judea, why should we think it needful, scrupulously to imitate this in colder regions, and where habits and customs are different—unless we had reason to believe that something was intended to be taught by the immersion of the subject. If it can be shown that this action was practised, and also that it was not an indifferent circumstance, but significant, we shall then acknowledge that it is important to administer baptism in this way. Otherwise, the manner of applying water in this ordinance, appears to us to be as much a matter of indifference, as the colour of the wine, or the quality of the bread, or the attitude of the participant, in the celebration of the Lord's Supper. It is evident, that there is no greater need of much water, to represent the operations of the

Spirit in regeneration, than of much bread or much wine, to show forth the death of Christ. Besides, if the advocates for dipping are so precise, as to require that the ordinance be performed in this mode only, they should be able to show us how the immersion ought to be performed; whether in a river, or in stagnant water; with the face turned upward or downward; three times, as ecclesiastical history informs us was done in the ancient Church, or only once. In all these respects different modes are practicable, and it does not appear why they are not as important as the circumstance of covering the body entirely with water by immersion.

We therefore, think, that when this matter shall be impartially considered, and well understood, we shall have no further controversy about the mode of baptism; except to insist that it be with water, by an authorized minister, and in the name of the Trinity.

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ART. III.—REPLY OF DR. COX.

*To the Editors of the Biblical Repertory.*

RESPECTED BRETHERN:

AN apology is perhaps due to you and your readers, for attempting a reply, to your review of my sermon, contained in your number for April, 1830, at this late period. I will tell the truth, whether it become my apology or accusation. At that time I was so employed with parochial cares, as well as the general business of the cause in which we are in common engaged, that after a cursory glancing at what it pleased you to say, I laid the number aside, till a less hurried interval might furnish me with the opportunity of doing some justice to it. I was well aware that a matter so interesting, so absorbing indeed in its intrinsic importance as I view it, would not brook to be lightly despatched; and could not be suffered to assert its own gravity, without pressing out certain duties that justly claimed the precedency. Accordingly, I have never read your review till this same month of August, 1831, and am too straitened now for time adequate to the occasion. If this appear strange, the solution is a glorious one: I have been more and more engrossed as a christian pastor in home duties. Souls, literally by hundreds, have, within the year,

been hopefully born again, in the midst of us, by the power of the Spirit of God. I need not say very expansively, that in my public and private ministrations to them, I have had my eyes open to principles and their discrimination; and that those of passivity have had very little to do with the work, except in some remarkable instances to obstruct and embarrass it, and in others to become a foil to its genuineness and to add splendour to its triumphs.

It is also a preliminary duty, respected brethren, to do you a piece of justice; and I can assure you in this, that while I shall speak your eulogium, I will nothing overstrain my convictions. You may expect sincere tributes only—*veras voces ab imo pectore*. I allude to the very christian manner, the general moderation and dignity of temper, as well as style, which you have happily exemplified as christian controvertists: and this in a matter in which you considered yourselves as “aggrieved,” as well as implicated, in no slight degree. This is the general impression, which the recent perusal of your review has left on my mind; and while I am happy to record it here, I devoutly pray for the grace of the Holy Ghost to preside over my motives and words in this reply, so as in that respect, at least, to give you some similar occasion to “glorify God in me.” My esteem for you is unfeigned. God forbid that any partial influences should ever dim the glories, to my vision, of Catholic Christianity; or disparage the ties of eternity and grace that constitute the fellowship, and emphatically the consanguinity, of those whom the blood of Christ hath ransomed, and his Spirit cleansed! With you, personally, I have no controversy. I can see and enjoy many lovely things in the article referred to, apart from any question as to its mental force, or literary worth, or theological respectability; in all which respects, the performance will be viewed as more palpably its own encomium. I believe, too, that it will do good; and that the whole discussion, if managed in a proper manner, will be very beneficial to a great number. My way is to treat persons, with respect; feelings, with tenderness; principles, as if there were no persons in existence; I mean, of course, with perfect freedom and independence of investigation; and in this shall expect neither to offend, nor be offended.

“*Regeneration and the manner of its occurrence*,” is the title of the sermon reviewed. It was founded on those words of Jesus Christ, which are contained in John v. 24, and which I beg leave here to transcribe, for certain reasons, in the *ipsis-*

*sima* of inspiration. Ἄμην ἄμην, λεγὼ ὑμῖν, ὅτι ὁ τὸν λόγον μου ἀκούων, καὶ πιστεύων τῷ πεμφάντι με ἔχει ζωὴν αἰώνιον, καὶ εἰς κρίσιν οὐκ ἔρχεται, ἀλλὰ μεταβέβηκεν ἐκ τοῦ θανάτου εἰς τὴν ζωὴν. I invoke the torchlight of these words, lifted high above my path, as I pursue it in the present article! It is of prime importance to keep in view the great elements of the theme, pending its discussion; the quoted words express, almost with geometrical accuracy, as I think, *the thing* which regeneration properly respects. I say this for two reasons; one is that a correct agreement as to what *the thing* is, will greatly aid the controversy, and the other that a certain respected brother, as I have credibly heard, who honours a theological chair of a sister denomination, once (in substance—the words are my own) remarked, to a number of gentlemen, that his prime exception to the sermon was its questionable connexion with the text: for that, said he, contains not the subject; I find no allusion to regeneration there, and wonder why he should have selected it for the occasion.

At this remark I am much surprised. It were to me invaluable, if I could suppose that his own views of the thing were entirely correct. I selected the text, because to me it seemed to show *exactly the thing* that I mean by regeneration; and because it also seemed to show the thing in its essential connexion with the agency of the subject: he *hears* the word of Christ, *believes, has everlasting life, comes not into condemnation* from what moment he is thus initiated; but, in contradistinction to that possibility, *is passed* (or *hath made* the transition, or walked across the line μεταβέβηκεν), *from death unto life*. Let us look at the facts. Certainly he is a regenerated person; and this eventuated instantaneously—though it were sufficiently absurd to allege that “a habit” *could be* induced, implanted, inserted, created, or in any other way brought about, instantaneously. When did he become such? Is that not shown, or touched on, in the text? Was he regenerated first, passively or physically; and then did he address himself to the process of hearing, believing, and so on? I believe, yet with very great conviction, that he was “a new creature,” at that identical moment in which his soul first yielded to the plastic moulds of truth, and took thence their “image and superscription;” in which he first cordially believed, surrendered his cavils or his diffidence, approved the objective array which, through preaching, solicited his mind, and became conciliated to the salvation of the gospel of God; *at that identical moment*, sirs—and not possibly before, for



then he abides in "death," and on the cursed side of the line; and certainly not after, for now he "*hath* everlasting life." He is also, as we all believe, just as certainly one of the elect of God, whose names are all "written in the Book of Life, from the foundation of the world:" hence, I believe, (*Pelagian*, as I have been "slanderously reported,") that God, THE SPIRIT, infallibly executive of his own glorious purposes, is THE AUTHOR OF THE THING there displayed; "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 having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved." I have not used Scripture for the sake of being indefinite; and certainly love it better than my own words.

As to *the word* regeneration, it occurs in the total Scripture, (our English version,) only twice: (*παλιγγενεσία* :\*) Matt. xix. 28. and Titus iii. 5. and in the latter instance only, respects our subject, unless the improper punctuation of our Bible be allowed in the former; in which case it would certainly prove *the activity* for which we plead. But *the thing*, especially including its necessary implications, occurs there, I had almost said, a million of times. What then, I inquire in turn, could the professor mean, when he said that regeneration is not in the text? That *the word* is not there? Only the *word* is scarcely to be found in the confession of my church or his own. Regeneration occurs, however, in fact and in *act*, wherever and whenever any mortal comes first to love God, to believe in Christ, to humble himself as a sinner, to offer sincere prayer, to worship acceptably, or to do any other spiritual service to which the promise of the covenant extends, and which is found heavenward of the line—palpable to the eye of God—which separates his friends from his enemies. That line exists, certainly; it is drawn metaphysically with such infallible accuracy as to allow no man to stand on it, or to remain long *in transitu*, or to cross it other than instantaneously; although it may be, I think, in some sort approximated for a long time previous to the transition. Perhaps it would be crossed oftener at right angles, with a forward march and a quick step, *ovantibus cœlestibus*, as erst, at midnight, in the

\* We have *αναγενναω* twice, and *γεννωω* much oftener, the verbal forms, in the New Testament.

prison of Philippi, if we all preached and believed together, that the soul is active in regeneration, and that passivity in this relation is utterly absurd and false. This, my brethren, I believe; and whether I can prove it or not, (and to *convince* men is still another thing,) my plain remarks shall have the commendation of transparency of motive and integrity of conviction, a course of action (for this requires activity also) to which I am not, perhaps, supremely influenced by a love of the praise which I see it everywhere elicits; which I know it deserves, wherever incorruptly exemplified; and which it will best receive before a tribunal where practised cunning and double-dealing chicane will be seen in their meanness and deprecated in their doom. I believe that the most candid, upright, honest being in the universe is—God; that without this, his essential glory were an empty name; and that in its infinitely pure manifestations towards us, he is giving us a glorious standard of action, and consequently of character; saying, “be ye therefore followers of God as dear children, and walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour.” Independence of action and of thought results properly from a right sense of individual responsibility.

As this communication purports to be a reply, or rejoinder to your review, so in its process I shall limit my obligations, at least to a vindication, in some sort, of the sermon, without caring, or confessing duty, to meet you in the metaphysical tournament into which you have generalized and amplified your animadversions. Though it might be interesting to some minds of mercurial acuteness, in whom the faculty of consecutive reasoning had been disciplined to excellence, and possibly profitable as it were poetical too, to follow you wherever you have gone;

“Seized in thought,  
On fancy’s wild and airy wings to sail  
From the green borders of the peopled earth,  
And the pale moon her duteous fair attendant,”

to regions of existence without the boundaries of the planetary family to which our globe belongs;

“Far remote,  
To the dim confines of eternal night,  
To habitudes of vast unpeopled space,  
The deserts of creation, wide and wild;  
Where embryo systems and unkindled suns  
Sleep in the womb of chaos;”

or, prosaically spoken, to go back to Eden with our metaphysics and ascertain all about the origination of evil there; the politics of pandemonium, as connected with its primitive irruption; and thence beyond, in space and time unmeasured, ascending to the disquisition of an insurrection more ancient, celestial, tremendous; and show how sin first ruined angels, and the probable connexion of our views respectively with all the known facts of that original and confounding mutiny of seraphic natures against the King eternal; whatever might be the matter, or the mind of such a rise and towering speculation, I shall not lose my proper sphere, or venture "such pernicious height," whoever may lead or urge me, till I feel prepared for it; even

*Ipsa patre meo monstrante viam.*

I would here,

I. Offer some animadversions, perhaps desultory in their kind, that have occurred to me in the perusal of your review, intending to return to the subject of regeneration after I have despatched them.

1. On your 266th page, commencing last line, you say; "This view of the doctrine of regeneration, (that it is the production of a holy principle,) he says, can 'command the confidence of no well disciplined mind,' (rather a bold assertion by the way,) and then adds, 'by holy principle *I* mean love to God, &c.'" According to the style in which you have quoted me, your parenthetical reprehension appears very much in place; and the assertion seems not only "bold," but bald and gratuitous. There is no gall in my pen, nothing but ink and kindness; I hope then you will pardon the pleasantry, as mine, when I assure you that, as I read this part of your review *I had a disposition*, tendency, principle, or call it what you will, to recollect what Junius (who *I think* is Horne Tooke) said to Sir William Draper, about the manner in which he was quoted by that nobleman: in substance thus—"Your lordship has made me ridiculous, simply by making me your own." In page 26 of the sermon, are these words: "Perhaps it will be said that God creates or inserts some *holy principle* in us, which constitutes regeneration, and in which we are entirely passive; but that thereafter we actively do our duty. To this quaint statement, I reply, that it can command the confidence of no well disciplined mind, till we have both a definition of what is meant by *holy principle*, and a demonstration of its existence of more importance

than the mere terms of the theory." I then proceed to show what "I mean by holy principle," OBJECTING NOT TO ITS USE OR REALITY, but only to what I deem its philosophical misconception, as a sign in mystified theology of a certain imaginary *tertium quid*, which exists only by illusion—only to confuse and darken the simplicities of religion. Take then the passage as I have given it, and the assertion "that it can command the confidence of no well disciplined mind, TILL we have, &c." becomes not an absolute and gratuitous, but a conditional assertion—and I still abide by it, by moral necessity! I have looked through the fifty pages (almost) of your review, in vain, for the "definition" and the "demonstration" desired: and though you have said many an ingenious, many a plausible, and many a sound and excellent thing, the condition is, I think, not complied with, and of consequence my confidence is not commanded—though nothing desirous to bring the "discipline" of my own mind into question, or its infirmities into notoriety as well as consciousness.

2. I think you have not well divined the scope and bearing of the publication; as an attack on the old school and its Calvinism in general, and *quasi* on Princeton in particular.

Very careful was I to deal in principles absolutely; to discuss them impersonally; to mention no party name; to make no personal or local allusion; to set the truth in contact with error or absurdity, simply for its commendation to our hearts; and to put the propriety of the *qui capit ille facit* impeachment on any person, who should espouse the controversy, not in an absolute way as right or wrong might seem to dictate, but as a party or personal affair.

What right then, my brethren, had you to feel "aggrieved," because I had even "caricatured" some sentiments which you disown? You charge me with misrepresentation. Of whom? Your indictment cannot lie or sustain itself. I utterly deny the propriety of your *appropriation* of the assault in the first instance, and then your militant rejoinder (though benignly conducted) *in just such a way* as would have been sensible and proper, if I had named you. Certain pugnacious characters, (I do not accuse you as such,) in another direction, have said in my ears *totidem verbis*, "you refer to us, sir, as we are well aware; we regard it too as an insult; and feel much aggrieved that you have represented us and *our* church in such a light." I wonder if such persons, including, my brethren, yourselves, have ever read and *weighed*, remembering the conceded "honesty" or common veracity of the wri-

ter, the second paragraph of the introduction to the sermon? There, if I know them, my motives and aims are recorded: and if that *exposé* be sound and correct, I deny that any mortal has a right to feel aggrieved, or to review me as if it were all a personal or partizan affair. You admit that I had no "one class of theologians exclusively in my eye." Yet you have "no doubt" that most of what I stated in synopsis in the introduction, and which you know to include several diverse references, "was intended as an exhibition of the doctrines of the old Calvinists." You have "no doubt"! Where is the evidence of what I "intended?" Apart from this rather gratuitous assumption, you could hardly have felt "aggrieved?" And you assume it, let me say, very improperly—as the basis of almost the whole forty-five pages nearly that succeed! In all these, the general reader thinks and *feels* that you are defending yourselves, and that I am your personal assailant. This is injustice, though you did not mean it. Why not refer simply to such as is true or false? right or wrong? Must I say to you that *teste Deo* I love you, brethren and fathers? that I have no pleasure at all in dishonouring your name or wounding your feelings? that I did not attack you; and though I might have thought perhaps that you could be grieved, I did not think that you would feel 'aggrieved,' at the performance in question? If I were pleading now before the chancery of heaven, I would move for a decision between us, on the question whether the author or the reviewers had more right to feel aggrieved in the whole case? Hence,

3. I must say a word on *the manner in which you investigate*, or rather review the subject. I think it is very exceptional in one superlative respect.

Your whole learned tractate seems forever engaged to adjust the relations between certain positions on the one hand, and certain systems of divinity, authors of old school eminence, and maxims that have received the stamp of orthodoxy in some established mint, on the other. I have been struck with the learned barrenness of your review in respect to scripture authorities and quotations: a verse very seldom occurs; and when it does, it is such a thread of verdure as to constitute not one oasis, little or great, in the magnificent wilderness of your ratiocinations. It always seems, therefore, as if your eye saw no standard of theological truth, or some other than that recommended fundamentally by the standards of our Church, as **THE WORD OF GOD—THE ONLY RULE TO DIRECT US.** I know not why I may not be bold in

Christ affectionately to ask you, to review your review for ten minutes or so, on purpose to see what justice you have done to the volume that gives us all our light. Since I first read church history, and began to sympathize with the heroic spirit of the reformation, I said—first, the scripture is the armoury of their strength and their victories; and second, this love antique and patristical, these councils oecumenical or provincial, these authorities ecclesiastical or philosophical, these pandects and canons and traditionary usages, are like the eumbrous panoply of Saul, the presages of defeat, concerning which every modest Israelitish champion should say, “I cannot go with these.” Owen, Charnock, Bates, Edwards, Bellamy, Dwight! When the sun is up, these stars of the first magnitude are no longer discernible. What do I care *primarily* and *practically*, in investigation of the revealed doctrines of God, for them? for you? for the standards of the Church themselves? or even for the General Assembly? Not a rush! The passion of my soul is simple—What is truth? What has God said? What does he mean? Nor does this imply any thing worse than the *comparative* insignificance of these uninspired oracles. I care, I say, *in primary practice*, as an investigator in theology, *for the word of God as the only rule*; and *COMPARATIVELY* for nothing else in the universe. “O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day. Thou, through thy commandments, hast made me wiser than mine enemies: for they are ever with me. I have more understanding than all my teachers: for thy testimonies are my meditation. I understand more than the ancients, because I keep thy precepts.” God shield me from the abhorred servility of being kept or constrained, as a student of his word, by any consideration of a nature conventional, earthly, and of course adverse to evidence! “Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.”

On the subject of creeds and confessions, however, I pray to be here understood. I belong not to the small party that think confessions of faith of no use, symbols of doctrine worthless, and written standards hurtful. I can see evil in them—*only in their abuse*; and for their use and existence, an absolute necessity. Even the no-creed advocates would seem to incline to make *it* an article of faith and a term of communion, converting a negative into a positive by practical necessity: thus, *imprimis*; “no creed is necessary and in fact indispensable.” If one should reply to them, why then do you have *one*; they would perhaps, like the ancient

Pyrrhonists, fly logically to the relief of making their *πρωτον ψευδος*, that no certainty exists, include itself, and say they were not certain of no certainty existing: when asked, if they were certainly not certain, they would answer with the Sadducees, "we cannot tell:" and thus ingloriously retreat from an indefensible and ridiculous position—to indifference; loving all creeds and none equally, in their ecclesiastical practice. Besides, the confession of one's faith is necessary to the existence of church fellowship; and this palpably in the very nature of things. The opposite sentiment is absurd, and contradicted virtually in the preaching and the ecclesiastical administration of its advocates. It is also a scriptural and primitive thing, to exact a confession of his faith from every accredited partaker of christian privileges. "If thou believest with all thy heart thou mayest. If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thy heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart, man believeth unto righteousness; (justification;) and with the mouth, confession is made unto salvation." In the original, this last sentence is expressed more abstractly and impersonally, as the law of the house, that meets the visitant *in limine* as the condition of entering; and the word "man" is not there, but simply—it is believed, *πιστευεται*; it is confessed, *ομολογεται*. Still, creeds, like every other lawful and excellent thing, may be abused; and this in many ways; first, by having those that are imperfect, equivocal, wrong; second, by putting too much in them, which is, I think, a fault in ours; third, by making too much of them, implying their apotheosis or the almost image-worship, which idolatrizes in their veneration—a fault that has its exemplification in these days; and fourth, by making too little, or nothing of them. This last fault, I know, is supposed *my*\* vulnerable place. Like that of Achilles, however, it is in no vital part; though the hero, I remember, was slain by an arrow—from a rival and an enemy—that pierced him there. I can, however, say that my estimate of our Books, as extremes beget each other, is often lower in appearance than in fact. This conduct may not be exemplary or defensible possibly; but it has resulted from the fact, that I have been so often disgusted and wounded with the conduct *a parte altera*, as if it had a commission from Christ to take the consciences

\* I should prefer impersonal forms or plural pronouns throughout—but feel bound in this document, to meet an individual responsibility and speak not for others, but myself.

of others, its perfect ecclesiastical and constitutional peers, into its own special custody; as if the fabric of heaven and earth would fall, unless *they* held it up; as if themselves were the chancellors who could *ad libitum* fix upon us, and our house, the attainder of perjury: and all this, without the moral courage and consistency, in honour of the lauded constitution of the Church, of resorting to its ample and righteous prerogatives for the proper correction or the necessary redress. For one, I am ready, *constitutionally, and in no other way*, to be tried at any time, on any point, and at the suit of any competent prosecutor! But precious little respect do I entertain, either for the moral manhood or the conscience of those libellers—*apparent rari*—who covertly, or at a safe distance, throw out their irresponsible charges against the orthodoxy of those, whom they want the virtue to implead where they *can* answer them:

————— quaeque miserrima vidi!

I have hence cared less to advocate our Book, *teste Deo*, in the presence of its officious friends, than its infidel enemies; and the reputation of its champion I have never stooped to some easy methods to acquire—but have rather sincerely despised them. When, therefore, I see any of those symptoms of offence to which I have alluded, I feel calmly as if they ought to be rebuked with decision, or punished with disdain. I forbear to adduce some noted instances of the sort, which I have not unrecently witnessed with ineffable chagrin or ingenuous pity. It is marvellous that politicians should forget that every man has eyes; or that sages do not know at least what is *not* the way to achieve their own cause or commend their sentiments. I could wonder at it, if it were morally possible for my charity always to suppose that their motives were as pure as they vaunt them. Concerning the symbols of our Church, I will say that I absolutely think they contain substantively “the system of doctrine taught in the Holy Scriptures;” that I love to read them, have read them often, and perhaps never, without profit: that I think them in many respects admirable, and even glorious—especially as made two centuries ago, in the troublous reign of the unfortunate first Charles, when the Confession, Catechisms, and Directory, appeared as day-stars auspicious in an age of confusion and storms; and when, from the recent night of popery, the rising exhalations of the morning of the Reformation made the air disastrous and the light equivocal. We must not, however, ac-



cuse them of perfection, or even mistake them for the word of God. This were to contradict themselves—to violate the essential and exemplary modesty of their character: and the idea of the obligation of uniformity, in ALL the details and specifications there laid down, on peril of heresy or schism or perjury—

Is tramontane and stumbles all belief!

If any mortal in a deliberative body, would peril himself by taking that position in regular debate, I should like to be there, (and this in general is what I dislike,) for the purpose of empaling him with a hundred questions, which *I* could answer: but which, answered on his principle, would rive all parties *inter se*; dissipate any ecclesiastical organization that ever existed; and if I mistake not, rend into shreds the unity of ANY LEARNED TRIUMVIRATE of old school worthies, of which our Church can boast, or who make their boast of her. Many other things might be said in the premises; but this episode is already too protracted.

The excellent authors previously named, I revere with you: but think them marvellously preferred to Luke, John, and Paul, in your review. I have read them all, possess them, love them, Charnock, in nine noble octavos, has been a valued companion of my study for fourteen years: and of him and the others, I remark—that they are of no authority at all in the question, *what is the truth about regeneration?* and that if they were, I could *prove both sides* of the question of activity, just as well as either, from their writings—any one of them! Take a specimen; one on either side of the Atlantic, and from modern, as well as more ancient days, or rather from the seventeenth, as well as the eighteenth, century: though what you have quoted so liberally proves for me that every now and then *they believed that the subject was active in regeneration*; just as every other man of sense occasionally does! There are few excellent sentences, in any practical sermon extant, that are not based upon this principle, or that do not fairly imply it. Charnock says the divine agency extends “to good actions, not by compelling, but sweetly inclining, and determining the will; so that it doth that willingly, which, by an unknown and unseen necessity, cannot be omitted. It constrains not a man to good against his will, but powerfully moves the will to do that by consent which God hath determined shall be done.” This is what we all believe—New Haven and Auburn! His *tertium quid* is well forgot just here; and orthodoxy does not appear detruncated of her

virtues or her charms. List Edwards:—who deals in *substratum* sometimes in a style far different; and in which (vide what you have quoted) he does not, as here, state *the very doctrine* of my sermon: I could adduce many other and similar quotations from him; “In efficacious grace we are not merely passive, nor yet does God do some, and we do the rest. But God does all, and we do all. God produces all, and we act all. For that is what he produces, viz. our own acts. God is the only proper author and fountain; we only are the proper actors. We are, in different respects, wholly passive and wholly active.” In what respects we are, (namely, relative or subjective,) I have shown in the introduction to the sermon, p. 4. It matters nothing that elsewhere he teaches what I think metaphysically a different doctrine. I take my choice, and use excerpts, where the *genera diversa* bestrew the fields of uninspired divinity. But ten thousand such quotations would convince no one; indeed not even approximate the settling of the question. “Thy word is truth”; and what “well disciplined mind” can rest short of its ascertained sense and sanction? This, I judge, is much *the criterion* of a mind well disciplined in theology, and in the doctrine of evidence.

But you are afraid that the “shreds of Calvinism” will diverge in thin air, if my views obtain: well! let them go. “Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away. The word of the Lord endureth forever.” But truly I do not sympathize in the principle of your fears. What! are the “things unseen and eternal,” which are the great archetypes of the system, about to fall to pieces or rush from their celestial fastnesses? Are the things, as I believe them, *inter se pugnancia*, incompatible with their common existence? Is their doctrine in my hand self-destructive? Or have I taken away the *nexus* of their unity? Look at Edwards, who has done it just as much in the quotation adduced, and in numerous other places. But in truth I have done no such thing. Your *nexus* is that ineffable SOMETHING, by retaining which, I confess, I can understand comparatively NOTHING either of the glory or the strength of the system: and as a preacher, I should be perpetually hampered, candidly confounded, conscientiously silenced,

“When sent with God’s commission to the heart.”

Impossibilities exclude degrees, except in their evidence. I can more evidently not reach a fixed star with my finger than

the ceiling of my apartment: but really both are impossible, and equally so. Now propose to a man what he knows he cannot do, and let him believe it, and will he do it or attempt it? or will you urge him, very\* earnestly, if you latently think it impossible, or beyond all promise of probability? No. Just let him know or suspect the fact of its impossibility, and he cares not for degrees or modes: as long, as he thinks he cannot, he will never try, never do it, never feel his obligation. Yet when we speak as preachers to men—who knows or should assume the fact of any one of them that the next moment he will not give his heart to Christ, as millions have done before him? Not a mortal, nor perhaps an angel! No doctrine of the Bible ascertains it at all. Why not urge him then, directly, luminously, importunately, and in hope, to do it, and that according to God's order—NOW? How does this scriptural simple view spoil the *nexus* of Calvinism? Not at all, as I can see. But it removes it entirely, and the parts fall asunder, you say. Why? Because God holds them in his hand! The man who can see this fact, (and the mode is not to be seen by us,) will have no use for the nameless demi-deified SOMETHING which works in the system such miracles of connection and elucidation. God is the infinite *nexust* of all the things, the beings and the events, in the universe. If I did not see this, in the light of his own word, I might feel the force of your metaphysical argumentation in favour of the mediate importance of an occult "principle." Now it is only in my way; superfluous, intrusive, and injurious to the simplicity of the gospel. Thus you have (1) the mind with its faculties; (2) its controlling principle or proneness to sin; (3) its regeneration by substituting another principle, and an opposite one, by the power of the Spirit; and then, (4) all piety in its streams supplied from the new principle! I cannot see then that we are very dependent on the Spirit, *after* we have got our *vade mecum* of a principle from him! That same principle is the stationary supplier of the streams and usher of the Spirit—and where is the Spirit himself? The *tertium quid* has superseded him. The lieuten-

\* We more and more want *revival preaching*; earnest, sincere, luminous, masterly, bold, and faithful. And without corresponding *principle*, as the *stamina* of these, how can we realize permanently that incomparable good?

† Till this is seen and believed, philosophers will probably dispute in darkness, on the relations of cause and effect, antecedent and consequent; "each claiming truth, and truth disclaiming all;" *in honorem tou τα παντα ενεργουντος, αορατου.*

ant has displaced the captain. And where are his credentials? Are the history and the commission of this visionary officer contained in the *Magna Charta*? I think not, after much examination of his claims, and a patient hearing of his counsel. But admit his validity and jurisdiction—*cui bono*? Where is the advantage to the war? to the system of divine moral government? to the demonstrated glory of the reigning God? Why—in eventual inability in all the machines he reigns over to do his will; an inability absolute and known confoundingly; physical and fatal in effect, if not in nature! just the same in rational anticipation, as the hope of swimming with a millstone hanging invincibly around our neck! Here are we by nature in the keeping of the occult principle of sin: till regenerated, *omnibus testibus*, we are nothing, and do nothing, in religion: in regeneration, or the change of our keeping principle, we are perfectly, and rather pluperfectly, passive: our tutelary guard is relieved without our agency; and without an ability, and why not also without all responsibility, of ours! Here is, in effect, pure fatalism! Let these wrong headed views, as I call them; gorgon terrors not so formidable; let them become only as rife throughout our happy land, as they *are now* in some half-ruined congregations that I could name; and it requires no prophetic inspiration to predict the mischiefs: infidelity, and reckless irresponsible action, will overspread our territories like an inundation: the gospel will have lost its charm over the spirits of moral consciousness: the preaching of the gospel, if the phrase be not then ridiculous, will be wholly suppressed, or little attended, or totally—I had almost said—denuded of its potency and glory: and nothing but miracles, never to be expected or wrought, will stop us, “and our offspring with us,” from perdition!

4. I proceed now to tell in fairness why I wrote and published the sermon; what its specific purpose was; and where I yet hope its use may be: how personal, or local, or invasive of the honours of illustrious Calvinistic antiquity, i. e. “the traditions of the elders,” it was, you may judge. The evils which occasioned it, and which it was designed in some degree to reach and remedy, I can state. The real fatalism of sentiment which I found in conversing as a pastor with individuals, and many not of my own charge, whom the whole gospel was poor to teach or to touch on the topic of their perfect and awful accountability, and their imperative duty to

seek salvation according to the gospel; persons these who pretended or really thought, that their organized apathy or voluntary stupidity—as Dr. Beecher calls it—or waiting for conversion, i. e. tempting God by abominable disobedience and presumption, was all they could do, all that orthodoxy prescribed, all that some of the best preachers expected of them; and persons therefore whom, I saw clearly and in some distinguished examples demonstrated, nothing could ever arouse, or reclaim to their senses on this supreme article of *obeying the gospel*, but a storming of their intrenchments, and an abstraction *en masse* of the very bastions on which they stood and smiled in calm defiance of the artillery of God. I was not so weak as to change my theology, or to modify its nature, for their accommodation—*sit fiducia verbo!* Not a particle of this! But I was led to adapt my public and private demonstrations of the truth so as to banish and to brand the hateful libel, as it merited. Nor am I sure that I said or wrote any thing, that is more or other than a just expression of *many principles*, plainly laid down in the written symbols of the Presbyterian Church—which, in their system generic, I love; and in adopting which I have never practised artifice, or deception, or sworn with the *exceptis excipiendis* qualifier of a Jesuit oath; and which, as I adopted, so I will repudiate with a good conscience whenever I see (I do not mean through the eyes of others) sufficient cause; (a consummation never expected;) as I now honour them, not because I am afraid to do otherwise, or because authority, in its bigness and its state, requires and denounces this often contemptibly; but because I have examined the subject, am a friend to independent investigation, and think truth best supported by its own evidence, and the conscientious *piety towards Christ* of all its friends. I think myself indeed a great deal better friend to our symbols, and even a stronger supporter than some few prominent ones whom it were easy to name, but safer to style as busy, clamorous, and I must say, narrow minded persons, who mistake themselves for pillars. The principles to which I refer are such as these: “the word of God—is the only rule to direct us. God hath endued the will of man with that natural liberty, that it is neither forced, nor by any absolute necessity of nature, determined to good or evil. Although in relation to the foreknowledge and decree of God, the first cause, all things come to pass immutably and infallibly, yet, by the same providence, he ordereth them to fall out according to

the nature of second causes, either necessarily, freely, or contingently. All the elect, and they only, are effectually called; although others may be and often are outwardly called by the ministry of the word, and have some common operations of the Spirit; who, FOR THEIR WILFUL NEGLECT AND CONTEMPT OF THE GRACE OFFERED TO THEM, being justly left in their unbelief, do never truly come to Jesus Christ." *Sic credo, credo equidem et gaudens.* I should love here to digress in the just expansion of some principles necessarily involved in the last sentences above cited; but I forbear—not however from the fear of a trial before any Presbyters, either with or without a responsible accuser, on the charge of heresy for holding them.

This popular fatalism that I found, and still find, in astonishing abundance near me; which I knew would forever preclude as far as it went, "according to the nature of second causes," the influence of the gospel; and which I therefore felt it, (as one whose ordination engagements bound him to *nothing more than this,*) my duty to assault and demolish with the weapons of God, as obligated "to be zealous and faithful in maintaining the truths of the gospel, and the purity and peace of the Church, WHATEVER persecution or opposition might arise unto me on that account:" this popular fatalism, I say, though mostly latent, I could often distinctly trace, as it was often boldly fathered, to certain forms and names of preaching, *not exclusively* of the Old School—as you rightly "presume," p. 257 of your Review. Consequently my sermon was written and published not under party feelings at all. See first paragraph of the Introduction. It seemed duty to turn the thoughts of ministerial brethren to a stumbling-block that lay near or on the very sill of the door of the kingdom; and to the crowding thousands of 'impotent folk' in squalid contentment around it, pleading *their sanction* for perishing or waiting there till some miracle was wrought for their passive *μετοικεσία* into it. Perhaps you will say—that my people must be remarkably stupid, supine, and fond of excuses, *arguens degeneres animos*, thus to pervert the ministry of orthodox instruction. I answer—do not assume too much, in your solution. The sermon was dedicated to my people, and published at their request; but not intended for them, or ever preached to them! My people generally know better:—and for intelligence and piety, for usefulness and union in thought and action, I know not why

I might not "boast" of them, as Paul did of his Achaians "to them of Macedonia; for I know the forwardness (*προθυμια*) of their mind" in goodness, and am not ashamed of them, as my people whom God hath given me, and whose feet, for Christ's sake, I would consider it an honour as their servant to wash. I know of no people whom I would prefer to serve in the ministry and have no ambition to move from them to any pulpit, or chair, or throne in the world! I would rather be a pastor than a professor or a prince; and much prefer the see of Laight-street to that of any other *street* in the city, unless my people move with me to a preferred location. I am sure I prefer it to the see of any diocess, whether of New York, or Canterbury, or Rome. I say this to show you that it was not restlessness, or partyism, or any other motive of the sort, by which I was influenced in preaching to the Synod.

But as a pastor in New York, and mingling, as my people also do, with strangers, numerous and diverse, I hear and feel what sentiments are rife; and also see their influence. The preaching of many different ministers is necessarily compared; its effects on the people and society at large, by reflection and refraction—especially the latter, are discernible and worthy of animadversion. Let me tell you, then, that I have witnessed many souls encased in obduracy, by the *abuse* of bad and unskilful preaching; which, I fear, is often the *direct* instrument of making more instances of reprobation than conversion; though perhaps it takes the census only of the latter—a common error! I will venture then another synopsis of *dogmas of desolation*, as I would call them; and would, if no *ism* had ever an existence, and if no party of *Triangular* or *Hopkinsian* designation had been known in our Church or existed in our day: I would so term them as a minister of Jesus Christ! I shall state these dogmas mainly in my own words, and dress them rather\* uncouthly it may be:—for in general I hate them, and love to hate them, and make it a part of my piety to hate them; *non obstante* the shreds of truth disguised and intermingled in their constitution.

1. The regeneration of the soul is a miracle; every conver-

\* It would not hurt my conscience much to "caricature them intentionally: but only by representing them as they are, and making the reality govern the appearance." For the substance, and facts involved in the dogmas, I pledge myself that they are *real*, not *fictitious*.

sion is a miracle; one of the greatest of all miracles is the conversion of the soul to God. Beware of heresy; beware of Hopkinsianism!

I think so too; under such preaching, it were a miracle. Effect on the unconverted: "we are not to blame because God chooses not to work a miracle; what a relief; this is sound preaching, masterly; our chance for a miracle is as good here at least as elsewhere."

2. The soul is entirely passive in regeneration. A logical result from other dogmas!

3. We are all dead by nature, and can do nothing good. Like Lazarus in the grave exactly—whom it required a miracle to revive.

That it did. But miracles are one thing; rebellion is another; moral government is a third; and stupid preaching a fourth. A miracle demonstrates the divinity of a mission from God; and has *other uses* than to symbolize the moral glory or the nature of conversion. *Lazarus* would not (and who would?) have been to blame, if he had *not* "come forth."

4. The means of grace have this greatest use—to demonstrate their own nothingness and the omnipotence of God in subduing the sinner and breaking his heart. They are adapted not to convert, but only to harden the wicked and make them worse and worse.

In miracle-working, there were some sense and little mischief in such a statement. In conciliating men "the law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the word of God is quick and powerful: the gospel is the power of God to salvation." Why not call them then *the means of wrath*? Have they no appropriate nature, from which to be characterized and named? or does the wanton wickedness of sinners change their nature? or is wickedness no longer wanton, but only a calamity? Are we passive also in it? Is it any thing like a strain for omnipotence, (under such edification,) to convert a soul or mature a saint?

5. It were shocking heresy for me, my hearers, to tell you to repent this instant, and be converted before you left the house! You know that this is wholly out of your power. You have no ability at all.

Quere. (1) *When exactly* will their obligation to repent and believe the gospel become absolute and instant on them? When a miracle is wrought? (2) Where is the warrant for



such a mode of avoiding shocking heresy? Is it in Mark i. 15. or Luke ix. 57-62. or Acts xvii. 30. or 2. Cor. vi. 1 and 2. or Heb. iii. 7. or Rev. iii. 13-20. or ☞ Jonah iii. 2.

6. You must wait God's time, "in the laborious use of the means;" for you can do nothing of yourselves.

How does the preacher know that God has any special time for the conversion of his hearers? Does he know their election of God, antecedent to their piety? Or are they converted, of course, because they are *his* hearers?

To do justice to the analysis of that unscriptural absurdity, "you can do nothing of yourselves," I have no time or space, I will say that it is a hypocrite's reason of sinning against God. Can he sin "of himself?" or is sinning "nothing?" or is "a laborious use of the means" nothing? or how *can they* use the means at all?

7. These revivals are of very doubtful character. They are often merely "got up" things, proceeding from "a heated imagination;" more of the spirit of man than of God in them; the ministrations that induce them are very Pelagian; their great secret is to "strike while the iron is hot," and urge converts to the communion table immediately; and so they make a revival whenever they please. Some have one hundred and twenty converts added to their Church at once! if they would only wait a few months, they would not have twenty of them to apply, and of these not more than ten sound ones!"\*

If a man is the enemy of revivals, were it not more noble to say so; and not cover envy, or sweeten gall, or disguise antipathy, in this way? When ought we to strike—when the iron is cold? waiting while it is hot for the opportunity? Would iron ever get hot, under such preaching? Were not the prime offenders against orthodoxy, those fanatics who baptized three thousand in one day, the fiftieth after the passion? Is their example coming up again; like an ancient heresy, "once decently buried, now raised in its putrid anatomy from the grave of centuries, dressed in a new shroud, and set awalking about the streets?" Shall we not know them by their fruits? Do the Christians made in these revivals disgrace them generally? If a man should happen to turn and be turned from sin to holiness, in one lucid moment, upon the

\* I refer here to ultra examples, with few parallels, and chargeable I hope upon no party; they are however no fictions.

principles of revival piety; and should he veer at once one hundred and eighty degrees of the circle; and after that, honour the attraction that first saved him, and keep his celestial polarity with little variation through all the changes of the voyage of life; what traducer of God and his cause is it that should dare to oppose or degrade the revival in which he was converted, or allege that orthodoxy would have kept him longer quarantined in sin, in order to a more sound conversion? How long may a man *innocently* continue in sin, "using the means?"

It was the *virus* of that poisoned orthodoxy, shedding its influences afar and its *miasmata* on the pinions of every breeze, that led me to the course I took: an orthodoxy, falsely so called, that is itself nothing but a caricature of the gospel, and the effects of which are entirely at one with a more honourable infidelity—for both meet here, IRRESPONSIBILITY! Such orthodoxy, however, affords more peace and less hope in sin. On the other hand, among the general *criteria* of doctrines, I would name *the relation they bear to the demonstrated perfection of our accountability to God*, as cardinal and paramount. It is a touch-stone of what is true, only second in regard to the immediate *dicta* of the oracles of God. In light of this, I say that passivity is false, with all its doctrinal brood of darkness and inaction: that I know not to spare it for the sake of its friends; and that to be leavened with it, is a greater misery for a preacher of the gospel in the nineteenth century than — but I forbear the comparison: "as of God in the sight of God speak we in Christ!" You may here take a glance *what I mean* by "the moral history" of passivity doctrines.

II. In what remains, I would remark on the nature of regeneration. The importance of seeing the truth, just here, rise in my estimate *toto animo et indies!*

Perhaps I should say—the relations of regeneration, as they affect the doctrines of truth and the practice of religion: for, of *the thing itself* I have said enough in this article already; the text contains a portrait of it, which seems to me a good likeness; and the nature of the thing is less in dispute, possibly, than its moral relations.

There is a divine influence, "apart from the power of the truth," concerning which my general proposition is, that it is not contrary to the truth or embarrassing to duty; that its legitimate influence, on the mind of the preacher and the

hearer, is—that alone of encouragement in goodness; and this for the following reasons: *First*, About the *mode* of it, we know nothing, and believe no more. *Second*, The fact of it consists in the purpose of election and its execution. *Third*, As to the developed nature of it, all we know is, that *it secures the event* of our obedience, edification, perseverance, and beatification. *Fourth*, It is a *matter* or a *thing* to which, as such, absolutely we have no moral relation—since it is the province of God, and not ours, to order events with reference to his own purposes; though, *Fifth*, To the *doctrine* of it, as an article of faith, we have a moral relation, and a duty in the discharge of which we ought not to delay or feel passively inclined for one moment; but believe it cordially and promptly, to the glory of God, who has plainly revealed it: when believed, *Sixth*, It becomes a principle of action, not of passive doctrine; it becomes a point of illumination, a constituent and a *stamen* of heroic Christian character; it comforts, corroborates, and qualifies us, in God; it is “not our rule, but our resource,” as Mr. Jay of Bath, beautifully says. *Seventh*, It becomes thus doctrinally an element of discrimination or a test of character. To believe it is virtue, a “fruit of the Spirit:” to deny it, to neglect or disparage it, is impiety. It is also the criterion of Arminianism. Conversion, when genuine, consists much in believing it cordially and promptly to the glory of God: so to believe it—too suddenly or soon, is impossible. *Eighth*, The principle of this influence is universal, and extends to our daily and constant actions: if, therefore it makes us passive in any, or embarrasses us, so does it in all. “Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence?” The universe is a *plenum*, for God is there: immensity is full of Him. Truly, “we can do nothing of ourselves!” verily *nothing!* “In him we live, and move, and have our being.” And what is the providence of God, and how great its extent? The province of invisible indelible agency, as defined admirably *et mihi cordi* in our Catechism. In view of these premises then, is this influence in our way at all? No more than in natural actions, secular ones, all of them! Not half as much in our way when we obey, as when we transgress! In the former—all gloriously in our favour; in the latter all horribly against us! It subserves efficiently the execution of the whole scheme of grace, in the regeneration of the elect, in their sanctification, conservation, and eternal blessedness. It maintains, not in-

fringes, the perfect moral agency of all. "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." If we can do nothing of ourselves, we can do all things of God: and we must excuse ourselves from every thing theocratically or pantheistically, and we might as well do it atheistically too; or excuse ourselves from nothing that is "true, honest, just, pure, lovely, and of good report." Our dependence does not destroy our nature or the moral nature of our actions: it ascertains and establishes them. If God has "foreordained whatsoever comes to pass"—and true and glorious is it that he has—yet *what* has come to pass, in these lofty and sublime relations? Why—a moral agent; an active conscious being, equally dependent and accountable; one whose actions are properly compared with law, and their moral qualities are absolutely and metaphysically his own; and one, concerning whom to suppose that the purpose of God, and the rule of his providence, and the necessary condition of created existence, impair his perfect accountability—is to suppose (the greatest absurdity possible) the divine purposes frustrated of their noblest object; adverse to their own most august and meditated achievements; at conflict with themselves, as ordaining what has *not* "come to pass;" and that infinite creative and providential wisdom, so "wonderful in counsel and excellent in working," has failed of its master-piece, the establishment of a complete moral agency, and the glory of a perfect moral government. This may involve the mystery of "a wheel within a wheel;" but this is, I think, no solecism in mechanics, and no very abstruse proposition in divinity.

*Ninth*, An enlightened view of this influence, by faith in the testimonies of God respecting it, leading to its legitimate effects on the mind and the conduct, is INFINITELY AND INDISPENSABLY ENCOURAGING IN DUTY, AND THAT ALWAYS AND UNIVERSALLY. It discourages as well—only from sin! It ascertains to us the fact that God is the *nexus* of events: it is the most terrible and persuasive dehortation from sin, in appeal to our interests and our fears, conceivable; and it is quite superlative *ut calcar ad pietatem perpetuum* as a prescription or recipe, stimulating to universal goodness; imparting unequalled constancy to principle, conviction to faith, facility to prayer, resource to piety, vigour to thought, contentment to privation, courage to exposure, steadiness to purpose, and action to usefulness. "And who is he that shall harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good?" Such a worship-

per “shall not be afraid of evil tidings; his heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord. And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are the called according to his purpose.” What a motive to repentance! Is it any wonder, “according to the nature of second causes,” that revivals of religion follow, where these gigantic glories of the truth are preached with wisdom and faithfulness? *Tenth*, This influence, though wrought executively by the Omnicif Spirit, that “made me,” and that “garnished the heavens,” and did not he make one “partner for the first occupant of Paradise?”—this influence is not exactly identical with the influence of the Spirit, as generally respected in Scripture. See Gal. v. 16—26. The latter may be resisted, striven against, opposed, suffocated in the conscience, or kept mouldering in an agonized bosom for months: this then I would call *the moral\* or scriptural*, that *the providential or physical*; and, in this sense, I believe *ex animo* in the *physical* influence, in every thing, in religion and out of it, and more specially, in its important aspects and relations, in regeneration, and onward forever in the process of “holiness to the Lord.” Charnock, in his admirable sermons on Providence, holds the same doctrine, and goes as far as I do in honouring its ubiquity: yet not further than the blessed Paul; “In whom (sc. Christ) also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.” *Eleventh*. This influence, in the hands of the ALL PERFECT, gloriously coincides with the other, and both with the holiness and happiness of those who desire to please God and serve him: viewed together as they are, they present perhaps the highest possible incentive and solace to universal piety, which faith ever uses, or God reveals and owns. Hence, *Twelfth*. It is of the greatest importance that both should be preached; purely, skilfully, with calm dignity, unaffected zeal, in their symmetry and relative harmony, according to the rule of *their scriptural connections and uses*, in a way of demonstration and evidence; and to the end that men may do their duty, be actuated in goodness, steady in principle, occupied in “glory and virtue,” prompt in service, “steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord; for

\* By *moral*, I mean that which has immediate relation to law, as right or wrong; by *physical*, every other influence or relation, in mind (as the physiology of mind) as well as matter.

as much as we know that our labour is not in vain in the Lord.”

Among Calvinistic preachers, it is perhaps a pervading fault, as it is also a dreadful, and yet a corrigible one, to mistake and so mis-state *the moral relation of this influence*. A skilful interpreter of the word of God—“one among a thousand,” as Elihu styles him—observes, I think, always these two rules: first, to ascertain *the meaning of the passage*; and second, to determine as carefully *its moral relation to us*. This latter must be done mainly in light of a principle admirably premised in our standards; where we are told that “the word of God” teaches “principally”\* two great departments of instruction; distinct, though related; either sometimes implying the other, but never clashing with its scope; addressing faith with information and duty with command; called, technically and well, the *credenda* and the *agenda* of religion; having priority as stated there, the articles of faith and the rules of practice; embodying ‘the whole duty of man,’ or ‘what man is to believe concerning God, and what duty God requires of man.’ What miserable confusion, what perverse theology, what hopeless edification, when an article of faith is treated as a rule of conduct! That divine influence, “which is apart from the power of the truth,” is it a rule of action? or an article of faith *only*? undoubtedly the latter; and this is *its moral relation to us*! It is one of the things that we are to *believe concerning God*; without which we have no right conceptions of HIM, break offensively the second precept of the decalogue, and rase the foundations of duty done. Here is what I deem in element the cardinal blunder of ten thousand preachers, including perhaps often—for I fear not to say *peccavi* when *consciuis facinoris*—myself. IT IS A BLUNDER NEVER MADE IN THE BIBLE! Its effect is to confuse, obtund, and ruin the minds of our catechumens and hearers. It is *the fault*, in relation to regeneration or the source of the fault, which the sermon was intended, to expose. Is not a Christian active in all his moral relations? In believing and obeying God? Certainly active in the total progress of religion, in the soul and the life: then why not also in its rise? If active progressively, then why not initially too? If active in the work

\* I would say *totally*—for *what* of its contents is not included in the classification?

of sanctification, why not in the whole of it, in its commencement as well as its continuance; in regeneration, as well as sanctification? How is a man regenerated, but as he believes and obeys the gospel? Is he regenerated *before* he does this? Is he more dependent in regeneration one whit than in sanctification? THE TIME WILL COME, AND THAT SOON, WHEN NOT AN INDIVIDUAL (*exceptio firmet regulam*) OF STANDING IN THE MINISTRY CAN BE FOUND THAT WILL NOT WONDER TO LEARN THAT WISE AND LEARNED WORTHIES OF OUR CHURCH, IN 1831, COULD HAVE DOUBTED FOR A MOMENT THAT MAN IS ACTIVE IN REGENERATION; AND THAT UNIVERSALLY, NECESSARILY, AND ABSOLUTELY. The sentiment is as important as it is true!

The glorious doctrine of election, in all its noble branches and legitimate fruits, is related morally to our faith, as what we are "to believe concerning God." We are *not* to believe it, (because it is not revealed, personally and absolutely) concerning man! Who are, and who are not, elected, is not revealed. But that God, is such a God as election manifests, is a fact revealed to faith, and obligatory in its proper moral relation instantly, and on all of us. How long ought a man to be going about, in "the laborious use of the means," to believe this? Just as long as God allows in his word, and no longer. Prov. xxvii. 1. So long then, and no longer, requires it to be regenerated; for the moment he cordially believes, he is "born of the Spirit;" and till he thus believes, he transgresses, in his very prayers, *or sermons*,\* at the communion-table, or whatever other means he may prefer in the pride of his folly laboriously to use. If he says, what shall I do? God says—not man, but God; "Repent therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out." If he replies; "Sir, I cannot;" rejoins the same authority, "then you can—perish! this is your *necessary* doom, except you repent; for it is the alternative, and the only one, revealed. God does not wish you to perish; far from that. Still, perish you must, and that eternally, except you repent, and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ." Repentance, faith, love, and all the graces, are morally homogeneous and substantially the same. It is THIS VIEW IDENTICALLY of the means of grace, prosecuted with intelligence and affection, and faithfulness, and perseverance, and "the soft tongue that breaketh the bone," that

\* The judgment day will probably reveal more orthodox ministers who *never* were converted than any one now apprehends!

God is wont habitually to bless, in the revival and flourishing life of his work:—while passivity districts are left without a miracle or a mystery, arid and moistureless as the sterile summits of Gilboa; and their destitution OFTEN shamefully charged upon the sovereignty of God. How comfortable to indolence, false orthodoxy, and Antinomian presumption, thus to pervert the articles of faith, and transgress the best, plainest, and most practicable rules of action!

But do you not believe that God is the giver of the increase? Yes, I *believe* it; for it is an article of faith, inasmuch as it is a subject of revelation: I believe, love, admire, adore, preach, and praise it! I trust it too; and thus it becomes an infinite strengthener to all my efforts for God. But—must I make it a rule of action, and myself a fool of action to honour the perversion and stupidity I have shown in doing it? I ought to have said—ought I to infer passivity, and practice stagnation, and come to pure fatalism, in honour of it? But still, says the objector, “Paul may plant, Apollos may water, God only CAN give the increase.” I answer—this is what I do not believe, because there is no such text in the Bible. When you take it from its proper *historical* form, as an article of faith and a glorious fact; and throw it into the *potential* form, where it becomes, in the common perverted parlance of millions, a mischievous and deceitful paralysis of action, with its *can* and its *cannot*—a corrupt rule of action, or rather of inaction, I demur, I protest, and I preach on the soul’s activity in regeneration! See the passage, according to the rule of *how readest thou?* and this—*its Scriptural connection and use.* 1 Cor. iii. 6. 13. 15. But it is very hard, says one, to know *just how far* we are to depend on God! Is it? I think quite otherwise. Depend ALL on him, and do your duty! and he will work in you, and by you, and accept your praise. Obey his orders, trusting in his prosperous government and infinite all-sufficiency. You have nothing in the world to do but—obey! If any thing else is to be done, it is not your duty, province, or concern. “Have faith in God.” Read the thirty-seventh Psalm, with the forty-sixth—Luther’s Viaticum; Zech. iv. 6—10, and just do YOUR DUTY, world without end.

Still, it is important to teach men the secret of their dependence; to make them know it, the whole of it, and confess and feel it to his praise. In this position, all Christians are agreed; with all my heart, I grant it. The means, the style,



the manner in which we shall attempt to bring them to a *proper* sense of it—*this is the question that possibly divides us!* One way is—to stop them (at least negatively) from doing their duty, till they feel and own aright their dependence! to admonish, and doubt, and embarrass, and warn, and hamper them—till they are incapable of confidence in God; and become afraid to do any thing; and then they learn to give *all the glory* to God. The glory—of what? Of passivity, of dependence that prevents obedience, and of devoutly doing nothing in an orthodox style. So does not God! The sense of dependence, and the only one, that he cares to foster in us, results from a cultivated and practical sense of our obligation to love and serve him: and this he inspires in all his word, as the only legitimate mode of arriving at the other! Let a man feel, as he ought, his accountability; let him see its absolute perfectness; let him be stimulated through the truth to avoid sin with an ingenuous antipathy, because he cordially approves of the law of God and affects holiness:—that is the man, and the only man, whose acclaim of glory to God, as the author of all his religion, will be steady, intelligent, sincere, unaffected, undrugged, and worth observing. Such homage will be acceptable to God. I have often *mecum* characterized or classed preachers in a two-fold *σχέσις*, in reference to the inculcation of religion, as those who think it best to subserve the piety of their hearers, by constantly insisting on dependence; and those who think it best to subserve the same end by constantly insisting on obligation. Now, of the latter class, thus generalized, I say, in the fear of God, the following things: 1. That *theirs is the way of the Bible*. That the Bible inculcates both, is certainly true. But who can doubt that all its influence natively tends, and that with a prodigious and a momentous persuasion, to beget and to mature a perfect sense of perfect accountability? Let any man who doubts it, keep the problem in his thoughts and read the Bible (systems of divinity and technicalities of thought forgot) with it in his eye, that he may be able to know “what saith the Scripture” on this qualifying and controlling question of questions. 2. *Exceptions apart, God blesses them with the revivals*. As this is a question of fact, I leave it for individual observation; remarking, that some illustrious exceptions are—no exceptions at all! the reason:—they preach obligation, and offer the gospel so simply, fully, honestly, powerfully, and constantly, (I do not say quite *uniformly*),

that in effect (when not in name) they belong to New School and not Old; *sit venia verbo!* They are no passivity men in their example; and very little such in the engrossed scope of their ministrations. I add, 3. That *where very passive, very dependence inculcating views, have distinguished the preaching*, my observation is utterly wrong, if the rebuke of Gilboa has not been just as manifest! 4. The inculcators of dependence first, and of obligation second or never, have not, I think, been distinguished for the miracles of Omnipotence with them, which they seemed to expect: and when I have read or heard their arguments, telling of the glorious ground of *hope* for success, affected myself with the encroaching paralysis, I have said—show me your facts! I have glanced at the official history of the sermonizer himself, and have *not* been malignant in supposing that certain influences of a personal nature *might* have had an unconscious action on his mind, in discolouring and passivizing its theology, seemingly with an angel hue of superior devotion, and a flame of more empyreal piety! It may look modest, and work withal a great lustration of character, to say—divine sovereignty has denied me the great favour of a revival, and I am resigned to it! God is a sovereign—amen! 5. *The man who is willing to do his duty, and who actually and habitually does it, is the only one who does not make his dependence an excuse for his sin!*—I observe this, as a characteristic of those Christians who are made under the high-pressure influence of the preaching of obligation first, and dependence next, and both in musical accord, to the glory of God. I subjoin, that it follows, 6. That *the only legitimate and safe way of urging dependence*, is by urging (of course with a rich and varied enlargement) obligation, in its full and absolute and perfect finish in the constitution of God. I do not mean that we should legalize, be rigorous, and irony; or keep out of view God forbid! the other pole from that!—the infinitely rich and melting mercy of God in Christ Jesus, or fail to exhibit all the touching notes and tones of the history of our redemption: but so to preach, as to produce, and vindicate, and continually to deepen, the impression of perfect accountability. In this way we may give light and force to the idea of superabounding grace. There are preachers, indeed, of the New School, who seem to make moral government (and what is the definition of this cardinal matter but the administration of law—not gospel necessarily, but law—over accountable creatures?)

a succedaneum for the gospel; some who inculcate obligation, as if they had never read John iii. 14—18, or as if obligation merely, were the only idea in revelation, or as if there was “a law given that could give life!” These hammer cold iron, or blow the embers that will not ignite, in a style that forcibly reminds one of the poetical clatter of the subterranean Cyclops, at work spondaically on the anvil, very regularly and monotonously industrious in their vocation! A tune that suits the forging of thunderbolts—

Olli inter sese magna vi brachia tollunt.

On this account perhaps—as a specimen—BELLAMY'S TRUE RELIGION DELINEATED ought to be called THE DOCTRINE OF OBLIGATION HAMMERED IN AND CLINCHED! for, excellent as the book is, and I love it, as a treatise on accountability and a vindication of the preceptive perfection of law, I think it wrongly named, as not a good *delineation* of true religion! The tree of life is scarce found in it, and then not “in the midst of the garden.” It might suit hypocrites, to unmask them; and old Christians, to search and chasten them; and ministers and students of divinity, to acuminate their views of the subjects of which it treats; but I would keep it ordinarily from young Christians:—for, ONE\* I lament, these twice seven winters, whom I suppose it first palsied in mind, and then literally killed in body; and from the unconverted, for it is very questionable if it would not harden them alone; it preaches as the gospel, or the Bible, does not. It exemplifies little of *the revealed connection and use* of the truth—though far is my heart from wishing to disparage so excellent a treatise! I give it as an example of the style in which obligation is truly, but not well, preached; “being alone:” and add, that such is not the way to convert souls, especially when it pervades the preaching. “Because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, there is no transgression. Therefore it (salvation) is of faith, that it might be by grace, to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed.” The direct rays of mercy should always pour upon the path of the preacher, and make for the hearer the day of legitimate hope in Jesus Christ, our glorious propitiation. But what I mean is—that obligation, as such, should be shown in its perfection, so that grace

\* C. G. An accomplished son of Nassau-Hall, and I doubt not, a son of heaven too!

—*dulce decus meum!*

may be appreciated in its true nature; that obligation, as such, like the steady law of attraction among the spheres of our astronomy, should never be affected by the variations common to subordinate and terrene locations—by darkness or day, summer or winter, sunshine or storm, tornado or inundation, good or evil, of partial and personal experience.

I was surprised to read the parenthesis in the paragraph with which you concluded; “with the exception of the mere extent of the atonement, a point of very subordinate importance to that of its nature.” A true view of its nature, will, I think, lead to a just view of its extent. But truly its extent appears to me of VERY GREAT and daily of more and more importance; and that it is not so seemingly in your estimation is the occasion of surprise. Of course I cannot now take up that other world: yet well am I aware of the connection between limited atonement and passive regeneration; and of the growing disconnection of revivals of religion with both!

I shall not subjoin any asseveration of pure motives, &c., in this communication. What my motives are, God knoweth; and this is enough, certainly for my responsibility, possibly for my consolation. But one grand desire of my soul, congenial exquisitely with the ὁ γέγραφα preceding, I will yet inscribe. Let its seeming audacity be forgiven and its exhortation suffered; for this world will soon contain us no more. Its apology may be read in Leviticus, xix. 15—18. Possibly there is little in it of party or earth; possibly something of “glory to God in the highest; on earth peace, and good will to men.” It respects that peerless circle of promise and probability, in the government of God, whose lucid centre is—  
THE DOCTRINAL AND PRACTICAL ECLAIRCISSEMENT OF THE PRESBYTERIAN MINISTRY IN THIS COUNTRY! I believe they are now *incomparably* the first for intelligence, piety, and usefulness: that they preach the gospel with more sense, force, and efficiency, than any other description of the ministry in this nation; and that they are better suited to the times, places, and manners of the country, than any other. Were they all more discriminating; more disabused of passivity forms and stumbling-blocks of doctrine; more addicted to a direct and clear and complete *offer of the gospel* with importunity of zeal “to every creature,” and an unfettered cordiality in urging their hearers *immediately* to accept of it; more like Paul in the versatility of their address, in the free, open, unembarrassed style of their ministrations; (see 1 Cor. ix. 19—

27, et passim;) more invulnerable to just impeachment of *contradictory* statements in the pulpit and even in the same sermon, nay, of dealing in contradictions and paradoxes—and it is no proof at all that a thing is false or contemptible in the way of censure that a sinner says it, *fas est et ab hoste doceri*; more devoted, prayerful, and united; more one in sentiment, in soul, and in action, as nothing but *the Scripture* ever will instrumentally make us:—what might our\* thousands of preachers not achieve, in extending the reign of the heavens over our total population? By the ungrudged and ready blessing of God Almighty, our own God, HE WOULD DO ALL, AND WE COULD DO ALL! and this nation would be revolutioned to “truth and soberness,” grace and salvation. “One should chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight.” The centres of influence would be touched, and their dependent circles moved, in homage to the name of JESUS; and the influences of conversion to the world would radiate in ten thousand forms from the American continent! With all the faults of Presbyterians, and with all my faults, I am a Presbyterian. The common enemy honours us as one with his indiscriminate hatred. He accuses us of doing all the good; and Providence may yet use him to convince us of the necessity of union! But this union, to be lasting or desirable, must be in truth and for the holy ends of “the kingdom of heaven” alone. Partyism must be viewed as sin; ambition as treason against the Holy Ghost; and human authority every where postponed to the supremacy of the word of God. The Bible must be more studied, honoured, expounded. Interpretation must be the monarch of theological reasoning; evidence the light of his throne; demonstration the medium of his sway; and divine legitimacy, ununsurped, the strength and stability of his government, forbearance must be mutually exercised, and that to the farthest limit of ability or endurance; “Jesus Christ became a human God, that we might become divine men.” We must learn to garner up only the virtues of others and the faults that are our own. Denunciations, suspicions, manœuvrings, must be religiously foregone. Liberality of feeling and sentiment, fulness and freedom of discussion, courtesy and gentleness of manners, must mark our reciprocal intercourse. No man, however old or conspicuous or venerable, must set up himself for a judge, a standard, or a sentinel. There must be no

\* I speak of Presbyterian ministers generically, as not confined to our denomination.

heresy-hunters, no disorganizers, no innovators. There must be sound Catholicism, latitude of thought, interchange of views. The discipline of the Church must not be handled with officiousness, or brandished in menace, or despised with impunity. Union must be desired, kindness manifested, and A UNIVERSAL REVIVAL OF RELIGION prayerfully and practically sought. Prayer must be more practised in secret by the ministry themselves, and its fruits more exemplified in all their deportment. Youth must abstain from forwardness, and age from usurpation. Ignorance must not be positive, nor learning dictatorial. Goodness must become more the criterion of worth than greatness or station; and HOLINESS TO THE LORD must be written—and ours is the responsibility to write it, each for one—on the principles and the actions of every individual.

SAMUEL H. COX.

*New York, August, 1831.*

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ART. IV.—REMARKS ON DR. COX'S COMMUNICATION.

WE have departed from the established usage of periodical works in admitting the communication of Dr. Cox. For this departure, as well as on account of the character of the article in question, we owe some explanation to our readers. This is the more necessary, as we are not willing to be considered as now setting a precedent, which shall render it in any degree incumbent on us, to publish the rejoinders of all who may wish to appeal from the decisions of this Review, to the judgment of the public. There is an evident propriety in those who feel constrained to make such an appeal, choosing some other vehicle for the purpose. We have already been requested to give up a large part of a number of the *Repertory* to a vehement attack on the validity of our own ordination. Our Baptist brethren may think it reasonable to request us to assail infant baptism, in their behalf; and in short any man, no matter what his sentiments, might, on this principle, employ us as the means of advocating his cause before the public. There was the less ground for the present application, as Dr. Cox does not pretend that he has been unfairly dealt with. He has no wrongs to redress. By his own admission, his doctrines were fairly presented and kindly discussed.

If it be asked, why then we have inserted the Dr's. communication, in violation of a general and salutary usage? we have only to say, we were desirous of manifesting to him the sincerity of the kind feelings and confidence, which we had expressed; and that we really wished ourselves to know, and let our readers know more fully what views were entertained by the Dr. and others, on the subject to which the sermon and review relate. It was mainly on these grounds, in the exercise of the responsible sovereignty which all editors possess over their own pages, that we informed Dr. Cox of our willingness to admit his reply to our review, provided its contents should present no insuperable objection. We confess, however, when we came to read the expected article, we were a good deal staggered. Instead of a calm and instructive discussion of an important doctrinal subject, we found a series of the most extraordinary subsultations it has ever been our lot to witness. Under some of the more violent paroxysms, we saw that he was carried, at times, beyond our comprehension, and at others beyond the limits of becoming reverence for his subject. We found he had availed himself of this opportunity of setting himself right with the public, on an indefinite variety of points; of answering way-side remarks of critics on his sermon; of counteracting all rumours of his desire to leave "the See of Laight Street;" of giving side-hints to all classes of dissentients from his views and measures; of drawing the portraiture of men and parties, and in short, of careering, in the joyous consciousness of freedom from all logical trammels, over the whole field of things actual or possible. Still, as the victims of the *Chorea Sancti Viti*, in the multitude of their movements, do sometimes hit on those which are graceful and forcible, so, Dr. Cox, under the influence of the singular mental chorea to which he is subject, is not unfrequently interesting and striking. It is for the sake of these instances of the excellent in his address, and for the opportunity which it affords of remarks on several topics, that we concluded to give our readers the mingled pleasure and pain, the perusal of the article referred to must occasion.

Our opinion of its manner is perhaps already sufficiently indicated. We would only remark further on this point, that Dr. Cox seems in this matter very unfortunately circumstanced. For him to cast aside all that is out of the ordinary way as to style and method, would be to renounce his individuality as a writer or speaker, and to divest himself of the

very thing, which now excites attention and secures notoriety. And yet, it is obvious that the peculiarities of his manner may, and in fact have already, become so prominent as to constitute almost its whole character. Hence it is rare that his readers trouble themselves with what he says; their attention is engrossed in witnessing his feats at diction. This is a serious evil; but it is one which might be corrected. Dr. Cox, when filled with his subject and anxious to carry a point in a deliberative assembly, is capable of speaking after the manner of men, and that too, with great force and directness. What magic influence there is in a pen that it should send him off like a rocket, whizzing, scintillating and exploding in thin air, we do not know, and very much lament. The fact is, however, that there is as great a difference between Dr. Cox in debate and Dr. Cox with a pen in his hand, as between a piece of artillery and a piece of fire-works. There is danger, too, of constantly carrying the peculiarities to which we have referred to greater lengths; because there is pleasure in the exercise of almost all kinds of power; and it is evidently a source of much gratification to Dr. Cox to be able to execute sentences, which no other performer on the language would think of attempting. His friends, therefore, see with regret his fondness for the wonderful in style growing upon him. However much some other productions of his pen may have been admired, we think the one before us must, in many of its parts, be regarded as his *chef d'œuvre*, in its way.

There is another prominent feature of the Dr.'s manner as a writer, his profuse use of Latin phrases. We are not disposed to refer this to pedantry, but to that fondness for aptness, and taste for the unusual, which govern him. With a tenacious memory such phrases adhere to the mind, and without effort suggest themselves as the fittest vehicles for its ideas. But though it is easy for such a man to retire from "the feast of languages" well laden "with the scraps," he should remember that scraps are poor fare for other people, especially when they constitute so large a portion of all they get. As Dr. Cox loves frankness we trust he will not be offended with the foregoing exhibition of it.

With regard to the spirit of his communication, we have no complaint to make. On the contrary, we thank him for the kind feelings which he expresses towards the conductors of this work, which it gives us sincere pleasure cordially to reciprocate. We readily make this acknowledgment as to



the general spirit of the piece, although we think there is a grievous *ad invidiam* tendency pervading the greater part of it. What there is of argument in it, is entirely of this character. This offensive and mischievous characteristic, however, does not appear to arise from a deliberate, much less a malignant desire to cover those who differ from him with odium, but from an overweening complacency in his own peculiar opinions and measures, which to a lamentable extent perverts and narrows his views. The justice of these remarks, we fear, will too clearly appear in the sequel.

It is not our purpose to enter anew on the consideration of "regeneration and the manner of its occurrence." For this, the piece under remark, furnishes no apology. No one of our positions has been presented, much less discussed; Dr. Cox leaves the matter just where he found it; and there we shall leave it. Nor do we intend to follow the writer through the various mazes of his course, but simply to select a few from the numerous subjects around which he has corruscated, as the topics of a few remarks.

I. The first point to which we wish to refer for a moment, is the complaint, that we had no right to consider his discourse as an attack on Old School Calvinism. This, he says, is a gratuitous assumption, and asks, "What right, brethren, had you to feel aggrieved?" In the subsequent part of the piece, he tells us candidly, that his object in the preparation and publication of his discourse, was to destroy at one stroke, the very foundation of the objection of sinners to the duty of immediate repentance, and to stop the mouths of those who encouraged them in their cavils and delay. If, therefore, we did not justify the ground taken by sinners, we did not come within the scope of his remarks; and, consequently, as he was not acting the part of a partizan, we had no business to assume a foreign quarrel, and, by appearing to act on the defensive, to secure an undue advantage before the public. He seems to labour under a misapprehension, however, in supposing that we regarded him as acting as a party man in this affair. We distinctly stated, "Dr. Cox pins his faith to no man's sleeve, and is the follower of no party," p. 267. What more could he wish on this point. His avowed and laudable object in publishing his sermon, is perfectly consistent with every thing we have said of it. In prosecuting this object, however, he was led, as we believe, to commit great injustice. He stated, that to maintain that men are passive in

regeneration, or that the result of the Spirit's influence on the heart, is the production of a holy principle, is to teach the doctrine of physical regeneration, to maintain that the substance of the soul is changed, "the connatural diseases of its texture" healed; is to make man a machine, a stone, to destroy his responsibility, harden his conscience, and ruin his soul. Surely these are grave charges. And against whom are they directed? Not against A, B and C, by name, but against all who hold the theory of regeneration which the Doctor denounces; that is, against all Old Calvinists in a body, against the whole mass of the Reformed Churches, against the Puritans of England and America; against Edwards, Bellamy, and Dwight, among the dead; against Woods, Nettleton, and hundreds of others among the living. Now, we ask, how could we avoid feeling not only grieved, but aggrieved by such an assault, not on men indeed, but on principles; but still on our principles? It is a strange idea, that in caricaturing, misrepresenting, and holding up to contempt and reprobation the avowed opinions of men, you give them no ground to complain, and no provocation to explain and defend their views. Dr. Cox's position is unequivocal. He denounces as absurd and destructive, the opinion that moral principles can exist in the order of nature, or any other order, prior to moral action. And he does this, although he knew the opinion was and is held by all classes of Calvinists, except those who have adopted the "exercise scheme," and the advocates of the (yet im Werden) theory of our New Haven brethren. Though we fully approve, therefore, of the object which Dr. Cox had in view in his discourse, we must be permitted to think that he took a very unfortunate method of attaining it, and one which fully justified our assuming a defensive attitude, while we attempted to prove, first—that those who adopted the principle just stated, did not hold the opinions on regeneration which Dr. Cox ascribed to them; and, secondly, that these opinions are not fairly deducible from the principle in question. These are the two points laboured in our review. We undertook to show that those who believe in the existence of moral principles as distinct from all acts, constantly assert that they regard the change effected in regeneration as moral, in opposition to a physical change, involving neither the creation of a new faculty, nor any change of essence; that the mode of its occurrence is perfectly congruous to our nature, offering no violence to any of our powers; and that the influ-

ence by which it is effected, although immediate and certainly efficacious, is still a rational influence, employing truth as its instrument, and doing the soul no more violence than demonstration does the intellect, or persuasion the heart. We, therefore, complained that men, who constantly avow these views, are grievously misrepresented and defamed, when exhibited as teaching that regeneration is the creation of a new essence, a healing of the diseased texture of the soul; that it is effected, "by the prodigious efforts and labours of Omnipotence," in a way "to paralyze the soul, or strike it through with a moral panic." This, we say, is defamation, grievous and injurious. It may, and in Dr. Cox's case, doubtless, did proceed from a conviction of the truth of his accusations, arising from his confounding two very different things, philosophical and practical passivity, as we presume he would term them. But this, though it relieves him from all suspicion of malignity, does not render the charges less unjust or less mischievous; and the fact of their having been made, affords a full justification of the defensive attitude assumed in the review.

II. Another point on which Dr. Cox remarks, is the manner in which we conducted the discussion. He says, we seemed forever engaged in adjusting the relations between certain positions on the one hand, and certain systems of divinity on the other; that, instead of referring to the Bible, we quoted Owen, Charnock, Edwards, Dwight, &c. And he takes occasion heroically to assert his utter disregard for such authorities, and his independence on every thing but the Scriptures, in doctrinal matters. His remarks on this subject, are very good, although rather common place, for him, and not at all to the point. Who has questioned the supremacy of the Scriptures? Who pretended that the authority of men is worth a straw in comparison with that of God? What wonderful singularity is there in asserting that the Bible is the only infallible rule of faith and practice? The effect (we do not say the intention) of all this, however, is to place himself and us in contrast; to represent himself as walking in the broad light of the sun, and us as groping in the dark, with a farthing-light in our hand. This, we say, is the effect of his display of his regard for the Bible, and his lamentation over the sparseness of Scripture texts, found, oasis-like, (as he has it) in the desert of our review. Now, let us ask, what ground there is for such a complaint, and for this disadvantageous contrast. Dr. Cox had asserted, that all who held a certain

principle, represented regeneration as a change in the "entity" of the soul, produced by Almighty power in a way utterly destructive of the nature of the mind, and inconsistent with responsibility. We undertook to show that these men constantly disclaim the opinions thus injuriously ascribed to them. How was this to be done? By appealing to the Bible? Hardly. When the question of fact was presented, what did a certain class of men teach? we considered it the plain course to go to their writings to ascertain the point. And this, accordingly, we did. Dr. Cox, therefore, has suffered himself to indulge in a declamation about dependence on human authority, for which the review did not give the least apology.

We are indebted, however, to his zeal on this subject, (which led him to express his utter disregard for the standards of our church when placed in contrast with the Bible,) for an episode on creeds and confessions, which we consider the most valuable and sober-minded portion of the whole communication. The sentiments of Dr. Cox on this point we think are excellent, equally removed from the cavils of mere declaimers against all creeds, and from the mistaken zeal which would exalt them above the ground on which their object and their framers place them. The truth is, as Dr. Cox states, they are absolutely necessary as the bond of conventional agreement among those associated in the same ecclesiastical connexion; and, therefore, in one form or another, are employed by every religious society which ever existed or can exist. There does not appear, in fact, to be any diversity of opinion of consequence on this subject in our church. The great majority of ministers and private Christians are evidently of one mind as to the necessity of creeds. The great dividing question is, how is the subscription or assent to our standards to be interpreted? Or, with what degree of strictness is the phrase "system of doctrines," as it occurs in the ordination service, to be explained? On this subject, which is one of vital importance, there are, if we do not mistake, two extremes equally to be lamented. On the one hand, there are some, who seem inclined to give the phrase in question, such a latitude that any one, who holds the great fundamental doctrines of the Gospel, as they are recognised by all evangelical denominations, might adopt it; while on the other, some are disposed to interpret it so strictly as to make it not only involve the adoption of all the doctrines contained in the Confession, but to preclude all diversity in the manner of conceiv-

ing and explaining them. They are therefore disposed to regard those, who do not in this sense adopt the Confession of Faith and yet remain in the Church, as guilty of a great departure from moral honesty. This we think an extreme, and a mischievous one. Because, it tends to the impeachment of the character of many upright men, and because its application would split the Church into innumerable fragments. These are among its most prominent evil tendencies. That it is an extreme, we think obvious, from the following considerations. It is making the terms of subscription imply more than they literally import. Two men may, with equal sincerity, profess to believe a doctrine, or system of doctrines, and differ in their mode of understanding and explaining them. 2. Such a degree of uniformity never was exacted, and never has existed. The Confession, as framed by the Westminster Divines, was an acknowledged compromise between different classes of theologians. When adopted by the Presbyterian Church in this country, it was with the distinct understanding that the mode of subscription did not imply strict uniformity of views. And from that time to this, there has been an open and avowed diversity of opinion on many points, among those who adopted the Confession of Faith, without leading to the suspicion of insincerity or dishonesty. 3. It is clearly impossible, that any considerable number of men can be brought to conform so exactly in their views, as to be able to adopt such an extended formula of doctrine precisely in the same sense.

But if, as we think, nine-tenths of the ministers of the Presbyterian Church, will be ready to admit, there is some diversity of opinion admissible among those, who, with a clear conscience, can say they adopt the Confession of Faith as containing the system of doctrine taught in the sacred Scriptures, where is the line to be drawn? What departure from the strict historical sense is allowable? This is confessedly a very delicate and difficult question, one on which we shall express our views with candour, though with deference to those who may differ from them. It has been said by some of the most prominent and zealous defenders of our standards, that they are willing to allow the same latitude of interpretation, which the old Synod which adopted the Confession would have done. This might be a very safe and excellent rule, could it now be clearly ascertained and authenticated to the Churches. As this, however, seems impossible, it may be stated in other words, although, perhaps, much to the same effect. The very

terms "system of doctrines," conveys a definite idea—the idea of a regular series of connected opinions, having a mutual relation and constituting one whole. In professing to adopt the Confession of Faith as containing the system of doctrines taught in the sacred Scriptures, a man professes to believe the whole series of doctrines constituting that system, in opposition to every other. That is, he professes to believe the whole series of doctrines which go to make up the Calvinistic system, in opposition to the Socinian, Pelagian, Semi-Pelagian, Arminian, or any other opposite and inconsistent view of Christianity. These doctrines are clearly expressed; such as the doctrine of the trinity, the incarnation and supreme deity of Christ, the fall and original sin, atonement, justification by faith, unconditional personal election, effectual calling, perseverance of the saints, eternal punishment of the wicked, &c. &c. &c. Now, every man who, *ex animo* and *bona fide*, believes, all these doctrines, does, according to the correct interpretation of language, hold the "system of doctrines" contained in the Confession of Faith. And, we think, so long as this is done, we are safe. With respect to each of these several points, there are, and safely may be, various modes of statement and explanation consistent with their sincere reception. Thus, with regard to the Trinity, some may be able to adopt every expression found in the Nicene creed, or in Bishop Bull's exposition of it, while others may feel a strong repugnance to many of its phrases, and yet adopt every idea essential to the doctrine. And thus, too, in relation to the vicarious atonement of Jesus Christ, some may adopt the strict *quid pro quo* system; others the infinite value theory; others that of its universal applicability; and yet all hold the doctrine itself. And thus, in reference to effectual calling, some may have one, and some another theory as to the mode or order of divine influence; some supposing divine illumination to precede the sanctification of the heart; and others regarding the former rather as the result of the latter; and yet, all believe that the effect is infallibly secured by the immediate agency of the Holy Ghost. In short, there are, with regard to every doctrine, certain constituent formal ideas which enter into its very nature, and the rejection of which is the rejection of the doctrine, and there are certain others, which are merely accessory and explanatory. About the latter, men may and will differ, though they agree as to the former. Such diversity always has and always must exist, where any considera-

ble number of men unite in adopting the same extended formula of faith. If it be asked, what latitude of explanation is to be allowed? we should answer, any which does not really affect the essentials of a doctrine. But who is to judge whether an explanation does or does not interfere with what is essential to a particular doctrine? We answer, in the first place, this is a question for every man to answer in the sight of God. It is to him a matter of the greatest interest and responsibility, to determine whether he really rejects the doctrines which he professes to receive. But secondly, the Presbytery has a right of judgment in all such cases. To enable them to do this intelligently, is one great object of the examination to which every candidate for ordination is subjected. It is their business to decide this very point, whether the candidate believes or not the doctrines of our standards, and they are under the most solemn engagements to God and their brethren, to do this honestly. And here the matter must be left. There can be no rule which does not place the responsibility of deciding on its application somewhere. There can, however, be no serious difficulty on this subject, so long as the determination is conscientiously adhered to, of admitting no one who rejects or explains away any of the doctrines constituting the system contained in the Confession.

The advantages of adopting this rule, which seems to us sufficiently definite, are obvious. It would put a stop to a multitude of difficulties—to much general crimination on the one hand, and much loose declamation on the other. It would furnish ground on which, it is believed, the strictest friends of the standards might safely leave the cause of truth, and where they would be joined by the great mass of all consistent and sincere Presbyterians. It would prevent the thousand evils which must arise from having a constantly varying rule on this subject—or from having one principle in theory and another in practice—or from attempting to enforce a degree of uniformity, impossible in the present state of human nature. While, however, such unauthorized strictness would ruin any Church on earth, it is no less obvious that the other extreme would lead to the same or still more disastrous results. There is, in the first place, a departure from strict moral principle in professing to receive a system of doctrines and yet rejecting one or more of its constituent parts; that is, in giving to the phrase “system of doctrine,” such a latitude of construction as is inconsistent with all just rules of

interpretation. If the question, what do these words, "system of doctrines" as they occur in the ordination service, mean? were submitted to a thousand impartial men—nine hundred and ninety-nine would no doubt answer, they mean the Calvinistic system distinctively as exhibited in our standards; and consequently that no man, who denied original sin, efficacious grace, personal election, decrees, or perseverance of the saints, or any other of its characteristic parts, could, with a good conscience, profess to receive it. The demoralizing tendency of a mere *pro forma* subscription, therefore, is one of the greatest of all objections to latitudinarianism on this subject. It is morally wrong. It is a violation of truth, in the estimation of all impartial men, and in the eye of the world. Better a thousand times to alter or discard the Confession than to sanction such a principle. But, secondly, it would effectually destroy the very intent of a creed. For if the principle be once admitted that one of the doctrines of the system may be rejected, there is an end to all meaning in the profession to adopt. One may reject one doctrine, and another another; one the doctrine of original sin, another that of election, and a third, both. It is no longer the system of the Confession, but one which an Arminian, Pelagian, Socinian or Deist might, on this principle, adopt. It is clearly absurd to have a rule of interpretation which defeats the very object of an instrument. Thirdly, such a rule would obviously lead to the prostration of the cause of truth, to a great extent. For although we do not maintain that creeds are able to uphold the truth in times of general defection, yet we think it obvious, that much of their want of efficacy in this respect is to be ascribed to lax views as to the terms of subscription, prevailing during the incipient stages of such defection, which opens the door to all manner of heresies, and takes from the Church the power of discipline for matters of opinion. There seems to be no more obvious principle, than that while a body professes to hold certain doctrines, it should really hold them. If the doctrines are discovered to be erroneous, let the profession of them be discarded.

These are the principles, which, if we mistake not, the great mass of Presbyterians are ready to adopt. They are ready to say that no man can consistently be a minister in our Church, who rejects any one of the constituent doctrines of the Calvinistic system contained in the Confession of Faith; while, from necessity and from principle, they are willing to



allow any diversity of view and explanation not destructive of their nature, that is, not amounting to their rejection. We fear, however, that this is not the ground always acted upon with impartial fidelity. While some may be disposed to resort to the discipline of the Church to correct mere diversity of explanation; others seem disposed to wink at the rejection of acknowledged constituent doctrines of the Calvinistic system. Evidence of this latter point may, we think, be found in the fact, that in more than one of the religious journals published in the heart of the Presbyterian Church, and under the supposed patronage of some of its clergy, every constituent idea of original sin has been openly renounced and even ridiculed. This is not mere difference in explanation, but the renunciation of a doctrine in all the forms in which it has been held by the Reformed Churches. For it is an undeniable, and, we suppose, an admitted fact, that this doctrine forms a part of every evangelical system adopted at the period of the reformation. Thus too the doctrine of unconditional, (i. e. not founded on the foresight of faith and good works,) personal election has in one or more of these journals, been with equal explicitness discarded. We do not say that these papers speak the sentiments of any of the clergy in our Church, but we think such is the presumption; and if this is the case, we are not able to reconcile such a course with the sound principles of morals.

In the present agitated state of our Church, we are persuaded that this, of all others, is the subject of the most practical importance. If it could be once clearly ascertained and agreed upon, where the line was to be drawn, there would be an end to a great part of the contention and anxiety which now unhappily exists. It is in this view, and on the principle that it is the privilege and duty of every member of a body to contribute his mite to its prosperity, that we have ventured to express our views on this important subject.

III. We come now to a third point in this article, in the consideration of which, we shall be obliged to expose the great injustice of which Dr. Cox has been guilty. A great part of his communication is taken up in a vague and indiscriminate declamation against what he calls "passivity," or "passivity doctrine." What he means by this, is not easy to determine; we presume it is, the idea that men must sit still and do nothing, when called upon to obey the gospel, but patiently wait God's time to make them holy, without any ef-

fort of their own. This is absurd and mischievous doctrine enough, and we are perfectly willing to abandon it and its advocates to the lash of Dr. Cox's sarcastic ridicule. But who are the men, whom he represents as holding such doctrines and pursuing such a course? Why those who teach that regeneration is not man's own act—that it consists in the production, by the power of the Holy Spirit, of a holy disposition. By what means does he connect these two things together? By what authority does he denounce those who entertain this view of regeneration as teaching that men must sit still and do nothing to effect their salvation—thus deluding their souls? The only ground which we can discover for this, is the right he has assumed of drawing inferences from other men's doctrines and then charging these conclusions on them as their practical opinions. He considers the one doctrine as leading to the other—if men cannot regenerate themselves—they are not to blame for not being regenerated, and consequently have nothing to do but wait patiently until the work is done for them. The principle on which this inference is founded, is that obligation cannot extend beyond the possession of adequate ability—that is, that men cannot be justly required to do any thing for which they have not the full requisite ability. We wish to say a word as to the soundness of this principle, in the first place—and then consider with what show of justice Dr. C's. charges are sustained.

First, as to the principle, that men are under no obligation to do any thing which they have not full ability to perform. In our last number we endeavoured to show, that this maxim which is self-evidently true when applied “to actions consequent on volition,” is the reverse of true, “when applied to dispositions, habits, and affections.” On this subject, however, Dr. Cox says, that impossibilities exclude degrees—that if the sinner suspects the impossibility of what is required of him, “he cares not for degrees or *modes*, as long as he thinks he cannot, he will never try, never feel his obligation, never do it.” Matters certainly have greatly altered. Once the fact of the sinners inability was admitted, and its nature was considered a point of primary importance. Now, the question about “*modes*” is declared to be insignificant. The mere fact that he is unable—“that he cannot,” is declared to be enough to produce “passivity,” and to prevent the performance of duty. This change in the manner of preaching seems to be an evidence of change of views on this subject, of the

adoption of a new theory of agency—one which we think ought to be more fully developed by its advocates. Of this, however, we shall say no more at present. We profess to belong so far to the old school, as to think that the question about modes is a matter of importance—that the nature of the inability under which a sinner labours is a matter of great consequence, and that the two propositions that he is unable—and yet responsible, are perfectly consistent. This inability we maintain is a moral inability, that is, arising from his own sinfulness—and that it is consistent with responsibility we think, may be shown, (without entering into a metaphysical discussion, which Dr. Cox so poetically eschews,) by a few simple considerations.

In the first place, the Bible every where recognises man's obligation to obey the whole law of God perfectly, and yet teaches that he is unable to do it. Neither of these points we think can be disputed. Paul says, "The carnal mind is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." By carnal mind is doubtless to be understood, such a state of mind as is to be found in every one, not under the influence of the Spirit of God. In another place, he says of the natural man—that he cannot know the things of the Spirit of God. Christ twice in the sixth chapter of John, says to the unbelieving Jews, "No man can come to me except the Father draw him;" and he tells his own disciples, that without Him they can do nothing, i. e. bring forth no good fruit. The same truth is taught in a multitude of other passages directly or by implication. Every thing good in man is ascribed, not to himself, but to the Holy Ghost, to God, "who works in us both to will and to do." Regeneration is never referred to the will of man, but to the "mighty power of God, which wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead." The fact is, the impotency of man is so clearly taught in the Bible, that few doctrines have been so universally received. If it be true, that in any one instance, God requires of man any thing which he declares he is unable to perform, two things are plain, first, that there is an inability consistent with responsibility, and secondly, that such must be the inability under which the sinner actually labours. But secondly, if universal experience does not prove that man is unable perfectly to keep the law of God, we know no fact which experience is competent to establish. What idea of inability can we have more definite, than that a cause never has and (as every man is intimately

persuaded) never will produce a given effect? Here is man's power to comply with the law of God—tried during thousands of years and under every variety of circumstances, and never, in any one instance, has it secured the result of perfect obedience. Surely that is a very inadequate power, which never has in a single case out of thousands of millions, produced the effect required. The declaration that any man has full adequate power to live from infancy to old age without sinning in thought, word, or deed—having his affections uniformly in a right state—being perfectly conformed to all God's requirements, strikes every one as absurd, and yet it is duty. Every one feels that perfection is a moral impossibility for man in this world, and yet every one feels that the want of it, is sin. These two facts, therefore, of inability, and obligation, so far from being inconsistent, are united in every man's consciousness. Besides, the assertion that a man sunk in sin, can in a moment change his own heart, every such man feels to be untrue. How is he to go about it? Will a simple volition effect it? Will the presentation of any motives, turning the mind towards the objects which he is bound to love, (the only ability which he possesses,) accomplish the work? Daily experience proves the reverse. Though the sinner knew he should inherit a kingdom, or be happy for eternity, if he should call into exercise holy affections for a single moment, he could not do it, however much, *from such motives*, he might desire it. How often would the dying sinner give worlds, really to possess the power so confidently attributed to him? But thirdly, the experience of Christians, as well as that of sinners, proves that men are unable to do what they still feel to be in the highest degree incumbent on them. Let any Christian ask himself, if he is not conscious of being unable perfectly to keep the law of God, and whether this sense of inability destroys his sense of obligation? Is he not conscious of his entire dependence on God—unable to do any thing as of himself; and yet so far from being disposed to plead this as an excuse, or extenuation, it is the most humiliating of all considerations. We have no doubt, Dr. Cox is conscious of his inability to be absolutely perfect. Nay more, that in seasons of coldness and languor of affection, he would give the world to have his heart filled with the love of God, and yet is fully aware that no efforts of his own can secure the result. His dependence is not on himself, but on the grace of God. Then why should a sin-

ner be told he can do what no saint can do? Why should he be prohibited from dependence on that grace, which the child of God feels to be his only hope? The fact is, the position that men are under no obligation to do what they have not full power to do, or that they are able to change the state of their affections at will—is contradicted by the Bible, by general, as well as all christian, experience. And the assertion that this inability destroys the sense of obligation, is equally inconsistent with the Bible, and the universal consciousness of men. That it leads to inactivity is no less contrary to fact and experience. So far from its being true, as Dr. Cox asserts, that the sinner so long as he thinks he cannot come up to God's requirements, will never feel his obligation, never try, never do it—the very reverse is the case. He never makes any approach to acceptable obedience, until penetrated with a sense of his helplessness. While his spiritual teachers may be endeavouring to persuade him of his full ability to do every thing, the Holy Spirit is striving to convince him of his dependence. And true conversion, we are persuaded, never takes place, until, in despite of such teaching of men, the soul is brought to feel that no efforts of its own can suffice for its recovery from the dominion of sin. If it be said, this doctrine will lead men to inactivity, we would reply, that sinners may wrest this as they do other truths to their own destruction; but that such is its tendency, we deny. Does a sense of his dependence lead the Christian to inactivity? Is the man who is most deeply sensible that he cannot make himself holy—that his only hope is in the grace of God—is this the man, who is most backward in his efforts to become holy? Just the reverse. He makes his efforts in dependence on divine aid, and because of his hope of that aid, and not because he feels himself able to do all that God requires. And this is the sinner's only hope. What a miserable substitute is his own fancied power, for the arm of God!

Besides, what right has Dr. Cox, of all men in the world, to start such an objection; a man, who in one breath tells us that it matters not about "modes" of inability, as long as the sinner thinks he cannot, he will not, and in the next, teaches the doctrine of absolute dependence on "the physical influence of God," for every act. If he cannot act without this physical influence, why may he not tell Dr. Cox he must wait for it, as well as tell others, he must wait for the influence of the Spirit? Dr. Cox would reply, perhaps, that the

influence for which he contends, sustains and secures our agency. But so say the others. If the sinner demand how this is? Dr. Cox answers "Ignoramus." And surely others may say as much. But the sinner may say to Dr. Cox, what he cannot say to others, 'you maintain that it matters not about modes: if I cannot act without God, I am not, according to your doctrine, responsible. Mere inability is a valid excuse; and according to your own showing, I am at liberty to sit still and wait God's time.' We do not say that such cavils of the sinner against Dr. Cox's doctrine are either candid or well founded, but we do say they are quite as much so, as his against the doctrine he so much derides. It will not do for him to say, that the nature of the inability under which those, who teach the common doctrine of regeneration, represent the sinner as labouring, destroys responsibility, for two reasons. First, he says it is inability, without regard to modes, that produces the evil; and secondly, because such persons acknowledge no inability which is not sinful, and which does not admit of being pressed on the conscience and consciousness of men, as inexcusable and worthy of condemnation; and they believe in no divine influence, which does not sustain the faculties of the soul in all their rights. And Dr. Cox has not even attempted to prove the reverse. He has therefore, no apology for charging those who hold the common doctrine, with either destroying the sinner's obligation to obedience, or leading him to listless inactivity.

Now, as to the second point, the injustice of Dr. Cox in making these charges. It needs no other proof than the perusal of his article, to show that he denounces all the holders of the common doctrine as passivity-men. The point of attack is that men are passive in regeneration; that this change consists in the implantation of a certain kind of holy principle. These are the dogmas which are declared "to solace the sinner in his distance from Christ, which excuse his disobedience to the gospel, and which ought to be rejected as false and ruinous." This is what he calls "passivity doctrine;" the places where such sentiments prevail, are stigmatised as "passivity districts," "arid as the mountains of Gilboa." These are doctrines which inculcate "a dependence which prevents obedience, and which leads to devoutly doing nothing in an orthodox way." Now, gentle readers, who, think ye, are the men who have held, or do now hold, these soul-destroying doctrines, doctrines which prevent obedience, lead to fatalism

and blast the whole face of the Church? Why, all the Reformers, all the Puritans, all the Pilgrim Fathers, all such men as the Blairs, the Tenants, Whitefield, Elliot, Brainerd, Edwards, Bellamy, Dwight, Woods, Nettleton. These, readers, are the men whom Dr. Samuel H. Cox, in effect, overwhelms with his obloquy; theirs was, or is, the passivity preaching; theirs the passivity districts, arid and blasted by the curse of heaven. We say, these are the men whom, *in effect*, he thus reviles, for we of course acquit him of the preposterous presumption of doing it with his eyes open. But here is the gross and cruel, though unintentional injustice (and absurdity too) of his declamation. Having in his eye we know not what class of antinomian drones, in his zeal to denounce them, and get at the very philosophy of their error, (and thus, as he has it, blow up the bastion of their strength,) he was led to take ground and decry doctrines which render all those whom we have mentioned, and the great majority of the best and most successful ministers of our country, the objects of his denunciations. Had he let the metaphysics of the matter alone, and contented himself with denouncing practical errors, with condemning the course (if such prevails) of telling men to sit still and wait in listless idleness God's time, he would have spared himself the guilt of condemning the innocent, and saved himself from the unenviable position which he now occupies, as the accuser of men who hold a given opinion, as teachers of passivity doctrines and destroyers of souls, while, in the same breath, he admits that Edwards and others like him, are of the number.

The direction which Dr. Cox gives his censures, is sufficiently pointed. On p. 509 he admits that it is proper to make men feel their dependence, but asks, how is this to be done? This, he adds, "is possibly the point which divides us," addressing himself to the conductors of this work. "One way is," he says, "to stop men from doing their duty, until they feel their dependence, hamper them, &c. &c. till they give God the glory, of what? of passivity, of dependence which prevents obedience, of devoutly doing nothing in an orthodox way." The other is by preaching obligation. The former is, of course, ours; the latter is his own. We now ask, what authority has Dr. Cox for ascribing to us, as individuals, or as members of a class, such opinions, or such conduct? This is a grave accusation. The assertion (or aspersion, for as such we view it) is entirely unfounded. We neither

believe nor preach that the sinner should do nothing when called to obey the gospel. We firmly believe that immediate repentance, faith, and universal obedience, is the duty of every sinner; that he is under no inability to perform those duties which is not inexcusable; that he should address himself at once, with all his powers, to the business of complying with the requisitions of the gospel, depending not on himself, but the grace of God for aid. Thus, however imperfectly, we have always preached as well as believed. We ask again, what authority has Dr. Cox for making the injurious assertion referred to? Had he been satisfied with saying that there were men who thus believed and thus taught, we should not have called the accuracy of his information in question, nor felt much concerned about the matter. But when he tells us so intelligibly, ye are the men, and so openly declares that this is true of all who do not belong to the new school, (for the exceptions, he says, are no exceptions at all,) the accusation assumes an injustice and injuriousness which we do not like to characterise as we think it deserves. He cannot pretend to have the authority of personal knowledge, that such is the style of preaching of the men whom he denounces. Here, as before, his accusation rests on his own metaphysics, and if on this ground it is just, it is just as directed against the various classes of theologians to whom we have already referred. It is an easy thing, instead of attempting to refute the opinions of any set of men, to range them off, and then cry them down as miracle-waiters, mere nothing-doers, rebuked of heaven, and condemned of men, while we arrogate to ourselves all good qualities and results. There is much of injustice, much of an *ad invidiam* character in all this. Let it be confidently asserted and reasserted that one set of men have all goodness and effect all good, and another have nothing and do nothing, and it needs no prophet to tell us, that the mass even of good men, will not stop to inquire whether this is really so, much less will they impartially examine the Bible, for a decision of the doctrinal opinions which distinguish the two classes. It really seems as though the time were coming, in which the mere fact, that some men dissent from certain views or measures, whatever other claims they may have to confidence and respect, will be enough to subject them to the scourge of cruel mockings, and to expose them to unmeasured denunciation. It is to be hoped, should this become general, (its commencement is already seen and felt,) such men will be able to possess



their souls in patience, avoiding all recrimination; examining anew their opinions in the light of God's word, and while they determine to hold fast the truth, endeavour by zeal, fidelity, activity and meekness to commend themselves to every man's conscience, in the sight of God.

IV. We come now to another point; to the consideration of a principle, the application of which, Dr. Cox seems to think, covers himself with glory and his opponents with shame; it is, that success is the test of truth—God's seal of approbation to doctrines, men and measures. This principle, we think fallacious and dangerous. And the rather, because there is much of truth involved in it. That is, it is true in some of its applications and bearings, and untrue in others, and those the most obvious and frequent. We readily admit, that where the effects of truth are produced, there truth must have been exhibited; and consequently, that where the conversion of sinners and the promotion of holiness is secured, the inference is fair to the truth of the doctrines through which the Holy Spirit has produced these results. But the fallacy lies here. Men neglect the consideration, that with all truth as presented by men, there is more or less of error, and in the most erroneous exhibitions of the Gospel, there is always more or less of truth. The consequence is, that the results which are produced, under God, by the truth which a man presents, is claimed as God's seal in behalf of his error. Hence we find this argument used by all classes of theologians, and in behalf of all systems of measures. God blesses the preaching of Arminians, of Moravians, of Lutherans, of Calvinists of all schools. He has blessed the system of measures pursued by Whitefield, by Mr. Nettleton, and Mr. Finney. Does this prove that these conflicting views of doctrine, and these inconsistent systems of measures, are all, in their distinctive features, true and wise? Has God decided affirmatively on both sides of the same question? The fact is, there is truth in all these doctrines, and wisdom in all these measures, and God, notwithstanding the attendant errors or folly, mercifully renders them effectual to his own glory. This, therefore, is one source of fallacy in the application of the principle in question—men do not discriminate—nor can they always tell, what it is God blesses, and by his blessing approves. It may be something very different from what they, in their self-complacency, imagine.

There is another ground of deception. It is difficult to trace

results to their immediate instrumental causes. When men are converted in great numbers, there are probably thousands of causes made to co-operate in the production of the effect. The preacher may think it is all to be referred to the skill and directness of his exhibition of the truth. Or, what happily is more frequently the case, he is constrained to give God the glory, from the fact, that he sees nothing peculiar in his mode of preaching, either as to the truth, or the manner of presenting it, which distinguishes his successful from his apparently fruitless efforts. He cannot tell what it is that God renders effectual, nor why this rather than that discourse has been blessed. This remark we have heard often and pointedly made, and that too, (to allay Dr. Cox's misgivings,) by new school men. The fact is, revivals have followed, most remarkably, from styles and modes of preaching strikingly diverse; from the strictly didactic, and loosely declamatory; from the terrifying exhibitions of the law, and the persuasive presentations of the Gospel. How vain would it be for the didactic man, to infer, that because God had blessed his mode therefore all others were wrong? But further, men are very apt to refer every thing to what appears to them to be the immediately exciting cause. They look to the truth presented, and the mode of its exhibition at the moment, and leave out of view the influence of all previous culture and instruction. An enlightened examination of facts, would go to show that the success of preaching depends much more on the previous religious instruction of the audience, than upon the minor diversities in the modes of stating truth which distinguish schools or even denominations. Dr. Cox, however, gathers up for himself and associates all the glory of these results as attributable to their felicitous exhibitions of truth; never considering that, in the first place, revivals are most frequent, the world over, where the ground is best prepared; and in the second, that during these seasons of refreshing, the subjects of divine influence are mainly those who have enjoyed most of previous religious culture; members of sabbath-schools and bible-classes. Those portions of the Church, and that class of preachers to whose lot most of these well prepared hearers have fallen—have been the most signally blessed in this way. It would be strange indeed if this were not the case; if religious instruction, parental prayers and counsels, were all to pass for nothing, and obligation-preaching to be all in all. If this be so, where is the necessity of all our efforts to diffuse the means of the

early communication of knowledge? Can Dr. Cox imagine there is no difference, as to the prospect of success, between preaching to a congregation in New England, and to one in Paris, Rome or Jerusalem? Or is he prepared to overwhelm with reproach, as passivity preachers and miracle-waiters, such men as Martyn, Carey, Fisk or Parsons, because their success was not equal to his own? How much in the shade would such men as Elijah, Isaiah and Jeremiah be thrown in comparison with Dr. Cox, if mere success were the criterion of skill and fidelity? Much of the effect therefore of this popular argument, (which we are sorry to see Dr. Cox use so much *ad captandum*, and *ad invidiam*,) is derived from not attending to the difference which circumstances make in cases; from attributing every thing to the immediate apparent exciting cause, and leaving out of view the numerous predisposing and concurrent causes which co-operate in the result. Besides, it is not even true, that under similar circumstances, success is always in exact proportion to the skill and fidelity in the exhibition of the truth. Is the idea of divine sovereignty to be left entirely out of view? Are we to infer that Dr. Cox is less orthodox, or less wise this summer than he was last winter? Is it a fact that the effect of every sermon is in proportion to its excellence? Every candid man must acknowledge that such is not the case; that the most extraordinary results at one time flow from discourses, which at others fall powerless on the ears of the people. Again, it is obvious, that it is not any one style of preaching which is uniformly followed with these striking results. The style of Davies, the Tenants, of Whitefield and others, in our own country, was very different from that which Dr. Cox thinks the only one which God blesses. And if we extend our view to other lands, we shall find this remark still more strikingly true. Gosner, the celebrated Bavarian Catholic Priest,\* who has probably been the means of the immediate conversion of more persons than any individual now living, never preached what Dr. Cox would call an obligation-sermon, in his life. His manner seldom varies; the love of Christ is almost his constant theme—law and obligation seem scarcely to be alluded to. And this is very much the characteristic manner of his country. The law is rarely urged; the fears, or even sense of duty, of men seldom addressed; the doctrines of the Bible seldom formally discuss-

\* At present a Protestant Clergyman in Berlin.

ed. Preaching is more a pouring out of the warm effusions of the heart on the love of God, the preciousness of Christ, the desirableness of heaven, &c. Yet a degree of success has attended such preaching, which would fill Dr. Cox's heart with joy to contemplate. We do not mention this fact in order to express our approbation of this style of preaching, but merely to show how improper it is to argue from success in favour of the correctness of any peculiarity of this kind. Success, it is obvious, depends on a great variety of circumstances. Much is to be referred to the sovereignty of God. This is clear from the Bible and constant experience. Much depends on the circumstances, previous culture, &c. of the people; much on the frame of mind of the preacher, and much doubtless on the skill and fidelity employed in the exhibition of the truth. We have no disposition to deny that *other things being equal*, the success of men in winning souls to Christ is, *as a general rule*, very much in proportion to the zeal, spirituality, fidelity, and wisdom employed in the exhibition of the Gospel. This rule is so general, that when a man finds his labours unsuccessful, he has much reason to inquire, with great anxiety, whether the fault be not in himself; and yet the exceptions are so numerous, they should effectually prevent censoriousness. There are doubtless characteristic excellencies and defects to be discovered in every class of ministers. And we are very far from denying that those whom Dr. Cox calls new school men, have very desirable qualities as public instructors. We are not disposed to seek these however, in their novel doctrines, but rather in their forming it as their definite purpose to bring men to Christ, labouring for that object, urging the point with earnestness on the hearts and consciences of men. Whereas, *some* of a different class, may keep that object less steadily in view, be more disposed to promote the edification of believers, preaching more frequently to professing Christians. It may be, that a characteristic defect of the former class is, that they attend too little to the injunction of Christ "to feed his sheep;" and of the other, that they abound too little in urgent pressing appeals to the sinner's conscience to make him feel his guilt, and the necessity of immediate exertion to escape the wrath of God. All that we have in view, however, under this head, is to expose the fallacy of arguing so generally and confidently from the success of men as preachers, to the truth of their peculiar opinions. This strikes us as especially unbe-

coming in Dr. Cox, as some of the opinions against which he so strongly inveighs are still cherished by some of his quondam associates; and others are entertained by those whose success has been more remarkable than that of any other men at the present day. Besides, those who consider themselves new school men are divided into several classes, separated by strongly marked diversity of theological opinion, and yet each having, in their own view, the right to claim the testimony of success in their behalf. But the absurdity of the attempt to cry down the doctrines which Dr. Cox denounces, on the ground of their practical effect, is glaringly exhibited by the single consideration, that the most extensive and pure revivals, which this country has ever witnessed, were produced under the preaching of these very doctrines. What were the sentiments of the Dickersons, Davies, Tenants, and Whitefields, and Edwards of the last century? The passivity doctrines, the physical depravity, and physical regeneration, as they are calumniously called by men who, we do them the justice to believe, would willingly sit as children at the feet of these patriarchs of the American Church. We have not said a word, nor do we intend to do so, in reference either to the correctness or incorrectness of Dr. Cox's assertion, that revivals are the peculiar and almost exclusive enjoyment of new school men. We have no disposition to enter into any such discussion. Let the glory of them be given where it belongs. We only wish further to remark on this subject, that the idea that not only the truth of doctrines, but the wisdom and zeal of preachers, are to be decided and measured by their success, has a tendency to produce self-complacency and censoriousness; and affords the greatest temptation "to get up revivals," and to swell unduly their results. This is too obvious to need illustration. The spirit which leads men to say—stand by, we are the men, we are the favourites of heaven, we have revivals, we do all the good in the land—does not seem to be the spirit of Christ. Every pious mind must revolt at the exhibitions of this temper which are sometimes witnessed. We have heard, on good authority, of a minister saying, 'If he could not convert more souls in so many months, than such a man had, in so many years, he would give up his office.' We deeply regret the whole tendency of Dr. Cox's remarks founded on the principle which we have been considering. His glorification of himself and party (if that hateful word must be used) and his unkind and

injurious insinuations against all others, are adapted only to alienate and exasperate. They may cover with odium, but they can neither convince nor benefit any set of men.

Though we have spoken thus freely, from a sense of duty, of the objectionable features of his communication, we are very far from having any unkind feeling towards Dr. Cox, personally. The injustice which he has committed, has been done heedlessly, from confounding principles and practices, which have no relation to each other. We not only readily acknowledge, but rejoice in his excellence and usefulness. Notwithstanding this, and notwithstanding we have never been ambitious of the character of zealous partizans, and have in fact little zeal about party questions, as such, we still feel bound to endeavour to repel what we deem unjust and injurious charges against those who hold what we believe to be truth of God. Let every man form his own opinions and pursue his own course, in the fear of God, endeavouring to commend himself more by good works, than by either boasting or censoriousness.

V. The fifth and last point to which we would direct the attention of our readers, is Dr. Cox's view of Divine influence and agency. It may be remembered that, in the review of his sermon, we distinctly stated our ignorance of his opinions any further than they were exhibited in that discourse. We were, therefore, careful to avoid attributing to him any sentiment which he had not clearly avowed. We saw indeed that he had adopted the idea that morality could be predicated of acts only; that he eschewed the notion of there being any thing distinguishable from voluntary action which could deserve the name of "principle of nature," in the language of Edwards, or, "moral disposition" in that of Dr. Dwight. But on what ground he did this, whether on the "exercise scheme," or on the theory of the liberty of indifference, (or as Dr. Dwight calls it, "casualty") or on some other theory, we did not pretend to know. In one portion of this communication a ray is shot across the darkness, and we have a formal, and, as far as it goes, somewhat distinct statement of his views on this point. We would request our readers to revert to what he has said on the subject, and compare for themselves his language with the following exhibition of our understanding of his meaning.

That there is a Divine influence apart from the truth, exerted in the regeneration and sanctification of men, he had

admitted in his sermon, and here reasserts with equal distinctness. In characterizing the nature of this influence, he remarks, 1. That we are entirely ignorant of the mode of its operation; 2. "The fact of it consists in the purpose of election and the execution of it;"\* 3. It secures the event of our obedience, sanctification, and salvation; 4. It is a matter to which we have no moral relation, though, 5. To the doctrine of it we have: 6. It becomes a principle of action, not of passivity or passive doctrines! 7. It becomes a test of character, since to acknowledge it is a fruit of the Spirit, to disparage it is wrong: 8. "The principle of this influence is *universal*, and extends to our daily and constant actions. If, therefore, it makes us passive in any of them [passive in action?] it does in *all*." 9. In view of these premises, is this influence, he asks, in our way? "*no more than in our natural actions, secular ones, ALL OF THEM.*" It maintains, not infringes the perfect moral agency of all. 10. This influence is not identical with that which is often mentioned in Scripture, as in Gal. vi. 16—26—[where the Apostle speaks of the conflicts between the flesh and Spirit, and enumerates the fruits of the Spirit,] which may be opposed, smothered, resisted, &c. The latter is moral, the former providential or physical. I believe, he adds, *ex animo* in this physical influence in religion and out of it. Charnock, he thinks, goes as far, in his discourse on Providence, in asserting its ubiquity, as he does. 11. This influence in the hands of God gloriously coincides with the other. 12. It is of the greatest importance that both be preached in their harmony.

We shall now state what we take to be the amount of this exhibition. Dr. Cox distinguishes two kinds of influences. The one he calls moral, which may be effectually resisted, and which, we presume, operates by suasion, or the presentation of motives. The other, he says, operates apart from the truth, is providential or physical, is universal, extending to all our actions, of course bad as well as good; it is effectual, always securing its object, as seems plainly implied by its being placed in contrast with the moral influence which may be resisted, and from the direct assertions contained in remarks 3 and 9 just quoted. Regeneration is effected by the latter. This is expressly asserted. After stating, with much formality, that there is an influence which secures our obe-

\* Where we are at a loss for his meaning we give his own words.

dience, he tells us, this is not identical with that mentioned in Galatians, which is a moral influence, whereas, the other is providential or physical. Regeneration, then, according to Dr. Cox, is effected by a physical influence of God, which is certainly efficacious and universal, i. e. operative in all our acts, "common, secular, all of them." It would seem, therefore, that Dr. Cox believes in the Divine efficiency in the production of sin: so we understand the assertion of a physical, effectual influence, in religion and out of it, extending to *all* our actions. Whether this is said on the ground that man is not an efficient agent, that is, not endowed with the power of originating his own acts; that all his exercises are created in him, and that "it is agreeable to the nature of virtue [and sin,] to be created;" or whether, he holds the shadowy distinction between an act and its moral quality, referring the former to Divine efficiency, and the latter, when evil, to man; or, what is still more obviously a distinction without a difference, making morality a mere relation, and therefore not an object of production, he ascribes the act to God's power, but not the morality of it, is not so easy to determine. Either theory, that of Dr. Emmons, or that of some of the old Scholastics, is consistent with most of what he says. Although we do not pretend to be wise on this subject, above what he has written, we think it will be tolerably clear from what follows, that the former is his theory. We regret, however, his not having spoken more intelligibly on the subject. For his readers and hearers must be anxious to know precisely what he means, when he speaks of a physical influence of God engaged in the production of all their actions.

Secondly, we not only understand Dr. Cox as teaching that there is a divine influence in the production of evil, but also as denying that there is any other influence in the production of holiness, than is exerted in all our actions. He tells us that the influence by which regeneration is effected is the providential or physical influence which extends to all our actions in religion and out of it. And he hence infers, that if it renders men passive in one case, it must in all. It seems, therefore, to be plainly implied that the same efficiency and no more is employed in producing our holy acts, as is engaged in the production of all others, sinful or natural. If this is a correct view of his meaning, it decides the question in favour of the theory of Dr. Emmons and against that of the School-men. For the latter make a broad distinction between these two



cases, which Dr. Cox does not. They cry out against, what they consider, the blasphemy of making God the author, or efficient cause of sin. It is opposed too to the whole drift and spirit of the Bible. There, a clear line is drawn between the relation of the sins of men, and that of their holiness to the divine agency. The Holy Spirit is there presented and promised as the author of all good, in a manner utterly inconsistent with the idea that he has no more agency in the production of holy acts, than in our "natural and secular ones." Dr. Cox, however, seems to throw us back on the mere providential agency of God, which has as much to do with the one class as the other. Has he been led to such a conclusion, by his supreme and lofty devotedness to scripture authority, or has he bowed his mind to the deluding influence of the wandering light of philosophy, falsely so called? What a bereavement for the Christian, to find that he has no more reason to bless God for his good deeds, than the wicked have to ascribe to him their evil ones. Whatever may be Dr. Cox's real opinions, the modes of expression, which he has adopted, are highly objectionable. They tend to produce the impression that man is not in truth an agent at all; that he is not invested with the power of originating his own acts. If all his exercises are produced by a divine physical influence, you may split hairs forever, without making men understand how acts thus produced are their acts. God, (according to the only theory to which Dr. Cox's language seems suited,) is the only agent in the universe. And if the only agent, why not the only essence; he is certainly the only essence of whose existence we have any evidence, and thus we are on the verge of what has been called by one, who had long felt its horrors, "the hell of Pantheism." It is wonderful, that an opinion which makes our whole constitution a riddle and a lie; which requires us to disbelieve the plainest dictate of consciousness; and which thus destroys the foundations of all knowledge, and launches us on the ocean of boundless and hopeless scepticism, should ever have found an advocate among men of sane understanding or Christian feeling. If we are not to render credence to the testimony of our own nature to the fact that we are the efficient of our own acts, or to that of our senses to existence of things without us,\* what can we

\* The ideas that the soul is but a continuous series of exercises created by the divine power, and that the external world has no real existence, are so intimately related, that they are in fact very frequently united.

believe? What foundation is there for any knowledge? We can be sure of nothing, if deceived on points apparently so plain and certain as these. Besides opening the way to general scepticism, this theory, tends to destroy all sense of responsibility. Men will be slow to believe that they are justly chargeable with the acts of God, or acts which he calls into existence by an almighty physical influence. They will rather feel that an inexorable fate decides the exercises, which by a strange contradiction they may continue to call their own. There is no plainer principle in morals, than that responsibility for acts, rests on their real author, and consequently, if we believe that God is the efficient cause and producer of all our moral exercises, the responsibility of them must rest with him. In thus tending to destroy the sense of responsibility, it tends also to pervert the moral sense, to deaden the moral sensibilities, to blind the mind to the distinction between right and wrong. When men think they see the Best of beings, constantly engaged in exerting his almighty power in the production of evil, how can they view that evil with abhorrence, or think that to be wrong which is the immediate production of his hand? And if they consider it right in God to produce evil that good may come, why may it not be right in man?

It is surely a singular exhibition for a man who uses the language which Dr. Cox employs on this subject, and who seems to entertain the opinions which that language naturally expresses, finding fault with those, whose views, even according to his own erroneous interpretation of them, would confine, to an inappreciable moment of a man's existence, the kind of influence which he extends to every act of his life. All the evils in a thousand fold increase, which he attributes to the opinion which he misrepresents and rejects, press on his own. An appeal to experience would bear out our remarks as to the tendency of the doctrine in question. We are indeed well aware, that men's character is not formed by the influence of any one doctrine which they may hold. There are commonly innumerable such influences at work, and some of them may be so powerful as to counteract, in a greater or less degree, the natural tendencies of their speculative opinions. Just in proportion, however, as such opinions enter into the practical faith of men, as they occupy their minds and engage their feelings, does their influence become visible. Dr. Cox can doubtless call to mind, instances in which the evils to

which we have alluded, have strikingly resulted from the opinions which his language seems to countenance. Skeleton-Christians, dry bundles of metaphysical abstractions, with no moral emotions and no pious affections, are the legitimate creations of the theory of the divine efficiency in the production of evil. The advocates of this opinion, as we fondly believe, are much fewer now, than they once promised to become. A theory by which the moral beauty of Jehovah is eclipsed, moral distinctions and feelings confounded or effaced, the consciousness and moral sense of men outraged, has indeed so much to oppose its progress, that its entire banishment from a Christian land, may be confidently expected. Whatever may have once been the views of Dr. Cox, on this subject, we are not without our hopes, that his language conveys more than he really meant to express; that an opinion against which the pious feelings of Christians so instinctively revolt, is not a settled portion of his creed. However this may now be, we trust he will exemplify his principle of adherence to the Scriptures, as the only rule of faith, and allow the theories and fantasies of Hume, Berkley and Emmons, (a strange though natural association,) to be driven away, as the phantoms of night on the return of day. Let him tread the path marked by the Prophets and Apostles, Christ himself, being the glorious leader. In that path would we gladly attend or follow him, until we all arrive at the happy place, where diversity of opinion is lost in the fullness and certainty of knowledge.

And now, as we cordially forgive, what we deem, the injustice of Dr. Cox, so we hope to be forgiven, if in any thing we have misapprehended his meaning, or written a sentence which Christian fidelity cannot justify at the bar of Christian love.

## ART. V.—REVIEW.

*The Christian Ministry, with an inquiry into the causes of its inefficiency, and with an especial reference to the Ministry of the Establishment. By the Rev. Charles Bridges, B. A., Vicar of Old Newton, Suffolk, and author of "Exposition of Psalm cxix." Second edition, corrected and enlarged.*

THERE is scarcely a chapter of modern ecclesiastical history which the Christian contemplates with deeper interest, than that which records the gradual, but most delightful change, which has of late years taken place in the spiritual condition of the established Church of England. She has, indeed, always been able to number among her sons men of splendid talents, and extensive and profound erudition; some of whom, in former as well as latter days, have poured floods of intellectual light upon the world, and will be hailed in this respect as benefactors to the latest posterity. Many of them have even rendered good service to the cause of Christ, by carrying on a successful warfare with infidelity: they have exhibited the argument for the truth of Christianity in a great variety of forms, and with prodigious force and effect; inso-much that some of their productions on this subject are regarded as standard works, and probably will be so regarded in all coming ages of the Church.

But while many of these men have been distinguished by their talents and acquisitions, and have even laid the Church under lasting obligations by their well directed efforts in defending the out works of Christianity, it is well known that there has been among them a most melancholy deficiency, both as it respects evangelical doctrine and true piety. The excellent William Romaine is said to have remarked that, at the commencement of his ministry, in the former part of the last century, there were but three or four ministers of the Established Church, who preached the gospel faithfully in the whole kingdom; and it is well known that, at a much later period, there were comparatively few of their Churches in which an evangelical ministry was enjoyed, or would even have been tolerated. It is no secret, and with us no wonder, when we consider the national Establishment, that their clergy have generally been lovers of pleasure more than lovers of the

sacred office; and that that office has been shamefully perverted to purposes of indolence, oppression, and even, in some cases, of the most flagrant vice.

Within the last thirty years, however, the state of things has been undergoing a rapid change; and it is now no matter of reasonable doubt that there is a leaven of evangelical doctrine and piety at work, which is destined to diffuse itself through the whole lump. The work of reform has begun in public opinion; and where public opinion is enlightened and correct, it possesses an energy and a majesty, which inconsistency, and error, and even vice, cannot easily withstand. What proportion of the clergy may now be considered as decidedly evangelical, we are unable accurately to state, having heard various estimates from different individuals; but we can say, without the fear of contradiction, even from those who would be most interested to contradict us, that an evangelical influence is rapidly increasing, and that it has already become so great as to hold in check many who have no principle to restrain them even from gross excesses. No doubt a man may still hold the clerical office in the Established Church, and preach nothing but dry and prosing essays on general morality; but, in all ordinary cases, he must make up his mind to have not only a listless but lean congregation. Or he may incur no hazard of having his gown taken from him, if he sits down regularly every evening at a gaming table, or dashes through the forests as a fox-hunter, or even makes a profane use of the awful name of God; but he cannot do this without being marked as a traitor; he cannot do it, without holding himself up, even to the world, as an object of pity or contempt. It augurs well for the interests of the Church that it is so. It marks the progress of a change, in the event of which, that part of Zion which, amidst all her external glory, has so long suffered a depression of her spiritual interests, is to rise up in her beauty and strength.

That we are not mistaken in the views which we have now expressed in respect to the Established Church of England, we have gratifying evidence in the work whose title we have placed at the head of this article. It is the production of one of her own sons, and, as we should judge from the character of the work, one who ought to be among her favourite sons. The author is zealously devoted to her interests as an Episcopalian; and to this, though our views differ widely from his, we are not disposed to make any objection. We admire the

honest boldness, the dignified authority, with which he speaks out against existing abuses, and calls for a reformation. The fact that such a book is popular in the Established Church, and that it almost immediately passed into at least a second edition, shows that the work of clerical reform is upon the advance, and that the days of a horse-racing and fox-hunting ministry are well nigh passed away. We cannot doubt that the cordial welcome which this excellent work seems to have met, where it was especially designed to exert an influence, may be regarded as a pledge that the benevolent wishes of its author will be gratified in its extensive and long continued usefulness.

But the work before us is not to be regarded solely or chiefly in its connection with a particular branch of the Church: it is a valuable gift to the Christian ministry at large. It is written in a direct and perspicuous style, and apparently with a deep sense of the importance of the subjects of which it treats. The various topics are selected with good judgment and taste, and are treated in a deeply practical and impressive manner. That a book on such a subject should contain much that is strictly new, were not now to be expected; and it is one of the excellencies of the present work, that instead of aspiring to be original, it aims simply to be useful. There is a spirituality of mind, a deep and holy unction, that seems to pervade every page; and we can hardly conceive that any minister or theological student can rise from the perusal of it, without being more deeply impressed with the holy nature of his office, as well as instructed and admonished in respect to its duties. We are glad that an edition of it has appeared in this country; and we cordially recommend it, especially to every candidate for the ministry, as containing, on the whole, the best outline of ministerial duty, and the most powerful persuasives to ministerial fidelity, to be found in any work of the same extent within our knowledge.

The Christian ministry is the chief living instrument in the hand of God, by which he accomplishes the great purposes of his love in the salvation of men. It is an institution of his own appointment—an institution which he has pledged himself to bless; which borrows dignity, not only from the divinity of its author, but from his whole mediatorial work; and which is destined to operate by a benign and infinitely varied influence to the end of the world. If we look through the past, we shall find that though God has not limited himself to this instrumentality in the conversion and sanctification of

men, and the extension of his Church, yet that little has been done for these objects where the ministry has not been enjoyed; and that most has been accomplished where it has been enjoyed in its greatest purity. Indeed, it may be set down as a rule which admits of no exceptions, that just in proportion as the ministry has been characterized by "the simplicity that is in Christ," by intelligence, piety, prudence, and zeal, the interests of religion have flourished; and on the other hand, in the same degree that the ministry has degenerated in respect to any of these qualities, the Church has suffered both in respect to its faith and piety. Hence some of the best days of the Church, so far as respects spirituality and true devotedness to Christ, have been days of persecution; for ministers are never asleep over the interests of religion when they are ready to follow their master "to prison and to death."

That we do not claim too much for the influence of the ministry, must be manifest to any person who is at all acquainted with the history of the Church; especially to those who have been accustomed to compare its state during the dark ages, while it was under the spiritual domination of a corrupt and degraded priesthood, with what it had been in the ages of apostolic and primitive purity, and with what it has been since under the genial influence of the reformation. Nay, the same thing is perfectly obvious on a comparison of the state of any particular Church; which has enjoyed an able and faithful ministry for a considerable period, with that of another Church which, during the same period, has had no ministry at all, or only an ignorant and unfaithful one. In the former case, we behold a well watered garden, and "plants of righteousness" springing up in every part of it: in the latter, there is nothing to gladden the eye or to cheer the heart; little else indeed than an unsightly field of desolation. Nor is there any mystery in this, when we consider by what varied and powerful influences an enlightened and devoted ministry must operate. The ambassador of Christ has his congregation before him on the Sabbath, and many of them perhaps once or twice in the week; and here he has the opportunity of using all his powers of persuasion and eloquence to bring God's truth in contact with their understandings and consciences: the weapon which he wields is not of his own devising, but it is made by God himself, and through him who made it, is "mighty to the pulling down of strong holds." And then those whom he addresses under such advantages in public, he meets in private: he

meets them in the unreserved intimacy of pastoral intercourse, and often in scenes of affliction, in circumstances which give him the best opportunity to commune with their hearts, and to impart counsel and instruction adapted to their peculiar wants. It is for him, too, to set forward and to direct good enterprises of more extended and public bearing, and to concentrate the energies, it may be, of a large part of the surrounding population with reference to some object that may tell, in its results, on the destinies of many generations. In short, the good minister of Jesus Christ, from the very nature of his office, and the circumstances in which he is placed, must exert a mighty influence. If he is faithful, we had almost said he speaks not, he moves not, but he is helping forward with a strong hand the interests of Christ's Kingdom.

If it be so then, that a well directed ministry is an engine of such mighty power, and that the influence which it exerts is according to the character which it assumes, it becomes a matter of great moment that it should possess such a character as to secure to it, not only the kind, but the degree of influence which God designed it should have. As the sacred office is committed to fallible men, it is not to be expected but that it will be exercised with a greater or less degree of imperfection; and it cannot be concealed that there is great danger that human frailty and error will exceedingly abridge its legitimate influence. It always has been so, ever since the ministry had an existence; and we have reason to believe that it always will be so, in a degree, to the end of time; though it is a grateful consideration that in the progress of truth and holiness in coming years, the character of the ministry is to become more consistent and elevated, and ultimately to cast off in a great measure the dross of human imperfection and error.

Not a small part of the volume under review is devoted to a consideration of the hinderances to the efficiency of the ministry; as well to the ministry in general, as to that of the Established Church of England in particular. The author's remarks, under this head particularly, have great point and force, and deserve to be engraven on the memory of every minister and every candidate for the sacred office. Some of the obstacles to ministerial success are of so general a character that they may, and do exist every where; while there are others which are, to a great extent, local; which have their origin in some feverish state of public feeling; which exist for a while and then pass away. If we are not greatly deceived,



some of the features and tendencies of the ministry in our own country at this moment, are not the most favorable to its ultimate efficiency. There is, indeed, much to justify and encourage hope on this subject; there is a spirit of intelligence combining itself with a spirit of action, and promising, if properly regulated, glorious results; but it cannot be concealed that, along with all that is good, and wise, and we may say great, in the character of our ministry, there are some things that need to be corrected. We trust that we shall not be considered as indulging a censorious spirit, or as overlooking any of the favorable signs of the times, while we proceed to state our views of some things more or less nearly connected with the ministry in this country, especially in the Presbyterian Church, which we are constrained to regard as hostile to the interests of evangelical order, truth, and piety.

One of the evils to which we refer, is a disposition, which indeed is not new in the Church, but which we understand is rapidly increasing in some parts of the country; a disposition to rush into the sacred office without the adequate preparation. This is a theme upon which our ablest divines, and especially the professors in some of our theological seminaries, have been ringing their monitory peals for years past; and it is evidence, not of good judgment, or modesty, or well directed zeal, but, as we think, of mistaken views of duty, if not of the power of a wayward inclination, that they have been so little heeded. That there should be young men found who should refuse to listen to the counsels of the aged and the wise, and who should be ready to gratify an indolent spirit by taking refuge in what they may call a conscientious conviction that they ought immediately to be labouring in the ministry, this were no matter of surprise; but we confess ourselves deeply surprised that such a course should in many instances have received the sanction of those who have for years held the sacred office, and have had an opportunity of learning by experience the importance of ample ministerial furniture. We have heard that there have even been cases in which young men, without any thing like a classical education, have been received as theological students; and even during the few months in which they have professed to be reading theology, have been encouraged to exercise, in most respects, the public functions of a minister. We do not know to what extent this evil now prevails; but we have much reason to fear that the tendencies of the

public mind are becoming more favorable to lowering down the standard of ministerial qualification.

Far be it from us to question that there are instances in which it may be perfectly safe to dispense, in some measure, with the forms of a classical and theological education. There is now and then a man of rare powers, and of uncommon adaptedness to the sacred office, who may be admitted to it, without having seen a college, or as the case may be, even a theological seminary, though in no case without having been a student of theology; but we fully believe that such cases are of less frequent occurrence than is commonly imagined; and it admits of no doubt, that even the most gifted mind would do far better with a regular education than without one; and that, in such case, though an education may not be necessary to secure even a high degree of usefulness, yet it *is* necessary to secure the greatest amount of it.

One very common argument in favor of dispensing with a thorough course of classical or theological study, is derived from the want of pecuniary resources. In reply to this we say, that, in all ordinary cases, it is wiser for a young man to encounter this obstacle than to yield to it; wiser for him to bring his powers into vigorous action, to procure for himself the means of a regular course of intellectual discipline, than to hazard the evils of going into the ministry without it. He may indeed be somewhat later at the work; but when he comes, he will bring to it far more strength and efficiency; and will prosecute it with much more pleasure and success. If his age be such as to constitute an objection to this course, that is, to his procuring, by his own efforts, the means of an education, then we think that he ought seriously to consider the question, whether God has not indicated to him by his providence the propriety of his remaining in a more private station. The qualifications for the ministry God has explicitly marked out in his word; and if, in respect to any individual, he has opposed insurmountable obstacles by his providence to his gaining those qualifications, it surely were not rash to conclude that he has not a divine call to the sacred office.

It is also frequently urged against the necessity of a thorough preparation for the ministry, that different stations require men of different attainments; and that while men of high intellectual culture are wanted for some places, others may be advantageously filled by those of humbler endowments. Be it so: but then there is that in the very nature of the office

which requires that there should be, in every case, a considerable amount of intellectual improvement, and especially of theological acquisition. A man who is once regularly introduced into the ministry is recognized as a minister wherever he is; and though in the immediate sphere of his labour he should have none around him but the uncultivated; yet he will, of course, sometimes be brought in contact with the more enlightened, and not improbably too with those who, with intellectual power and refinement unite a deadly scepticism; and whether it devolve upon him to guide the intelligent and docile Christian, or to encounter the wary and perverse gainsayer of the truth, he certainly needs to be a scribe well instructed. It were hazardous for any man to enter the ministry with slender furniture, on the presumption that he shall escape all those occasions which require the ability promptly and skilfully to defend every part of evangelical truth against the attacks of its enemies; for they are so scattered up and down the world, that a man "must needs go out of the world" in order to avoid them. But leaving out of view the demand for a good degree of intelligence in a Christian minister, on the ground that he must sometimes be brought in contact with enlightened men, and with enlightened men who are hostile to the truth, we maintain that it is a wretched mistake to suppose that the evil effect of an ignorant ministry is not deeply felt even by the most illiterate people. Indeed it may reasonably be questioned, whether it is not in some respects as arduous an office, and whether it does not even require as high qualifications, to imbue the minds of the most ignorant with a knowledge of Christianity, and form them to a habit of virtue and piety, as to accomplish the same end in respect to those who have been trained to a habit of reflection and intelligence. There formerly prevailed, to a great extent in the Christian community, the notion that men who had not talents or acquirements enough to preach the gospel at home, might, nevertheless, be advantageously employed as missionaries abroad; and the Church acted upon that principle, in some degree, until she learned better by experience. Different stations, no doubt, require different ministerial talents; but we insist upon it, that there is no station which a Christian Minister ought to occupy, which does not require a respectable amount of ministerial furniture.

It is urged, moreover, against a thorough education for the ministry, that the demand for labourers is greater than the

Church has the ability to meet, provided we require that they should have a regular course of preparation. This we confidently believe is a mistake. The real resources of the Church are by no means fully known; and we doubt not that there is in her a spirit of more enlarged benevolence than even she herself is yet aware of; a spirit which has only begun to be awakened, and which is destined to glow with a more genial warmth, and a more extended influence, as her exigencies increase. Yes, we feel assured that as an increased number of ministers is constantly demanded, God will bless the effort that is made to stir up his people to the hallowed enterprise of bringing our youth, who are unable to educate themselves, forward to the work: we cannot believe that when he has himself marked out the qualifications for the sacred office, he will subject us to the necessity of disregarding those qualifications, or of seeing our Zion languish for lack of labourers.

But admitting the fact, that a competent number of educated ministers cannot immediately be furnished to meet the wants of the Church, and that uneducated men must be sent forth to the work, or the deficiency cannot be supplied, we cannot believe, even then, that, to dispense with an education would be the best side of the alternative. Admit that good might be done in individual cases; yet the general evil that would result, would far more than counterbalance it; for in the train of such a ministry as this measure contemplates, would follow enthusiasm, and error, and self-deception, and a contempt of religious order, and much more, that would give occasion to the Church to put on sackcloth. There is a sphere in which that class of persons who, in this case, are supposed to enter the sacred office, may labour, and labour to advantage: they may act as *religious laymen*; and in this capacity they may do all the good of which they are capable; whereas, by becoming preachers they will, in all probability, not only fail of exerting much of the good influence which is within their power, but will do positive harm, at least by impairing the general influence of the ministry.

We are perfectly aware with what impatience many young men look forward to the active duties of the sacred office, and how long the months and years of their preparation appear to them; but after having watched with some attention the results of different courses on this subject, we would earnestly counsel them highly to prize, and faithfully to improve, the opportunity of a protracted course of study. The three years which

are allotted in our seminaries to theology and its kindred branches, if improved ever so assiduously, will not be found to be too long a period of preparation for an advantageous introduction to the ministerial office. On the other hand, we have often heard those who have taken a regular course in our seminaries lament in after life that their course was so limited; and we have heard some, who were by no means drones during their education, express a wish that they might break away for a season from the active duties of the ministry, to increase their stock of theological knowledge, and their means of ministerial usefulness. We earnestly hope that all candidates for the ministry will weigh this subject well, and will not suffer themselves on any slight ground to abridge the usual period of study; and that those who are actually in the ministry, and especially such as have authority and influence in the Church, will do their utmost to discourage a superficial and inadequate preparation:

Another feature in the character of the ministry, which seems to us unfavourable to its best and highest influence, and which belongs perhaps in an equal degree, to the Church, is a *spirit of innovation*—a restless desire of change. Far be it from us to object to any change which is obviously for the better; or to wish to see a stereotype edition of every thing that relates to ministerial or church policy; unless indeed it were so corrected and improved as to be exactly accordant with God's word. We are willing to walk in new light, provided it be the light of truth and wisdom; but we would not follow every "wandering star," lest it should lead us into "the blackness of darkness." We are willing to leave the "old path," provided it can be shown to be unsafe, or any other can be proposed in which we can walk with more security or advantage; but we are not willing to leave it, merely because it is old; on the contrary we confess that this is a reason why we choose still to be found in it, provided it be on the whole as good as any other. Now that spirit of which we complain, is not a desire to lay aside old things because they have been proved bad, or because others have been discovered that are better; but merely because we have inherited them from our fathers, and they perhaps from their's, so that we can claim no credit in respect to them on the score of invention. True it is that the world is somewhat older than when they were on the stage; and the plan of God's providence is in some respects more fully developed; and there may be cor-

responding changes from time to time actually called for by the exigencies of the Church; but, if we do not mistake, it is becoming too much the order of the day to regard measures which have been adopted, and adopted with success, by Christians and ministers who have gone before us, as good enough in their place, but as far too tame and frigid for this period of light; and it is to be feared that many have their minds so full of the idea that they are living in a sort of new dispensation, that they have scarcely room remaining for the more trite idea, that the Bible is our only Directory, both as it respects faith and practice. Any great change of policy in the Church can never be a matter of small moment, and ought never to be adopted without much deliberation. If it relates, in the first instance, only to a single particular, it is sure ultimately to affect all the interests of the Church; for one member cannot suffer, but the other members will suffer with it.

While upon the subject of innovations, we cannot forbear to remark that, so far as our knowledge extends, their most zealous and active advocates are found in the younger class of ministers. Men who have lived long in the world, and have had the opportunity of watching the influence of great, and especially sudden changes, are almost of course, slow to assent to them; and hence, with their inexperienced and ardent brethren, they not unfrequently acquire the character of being behind the spirit of the age. But those who have but just entered on their work, are usually the persons to discover that it is drudgery to walk in any thing like a beaten path, and to invent bold and singular projects for doing good, which, however well intended, are exceedingly apt to bring in after them disaster and mortification. We rejoice to see the warmth and vigor of the youthful mind, consecrated to the service of Christ; and we do not care how fruitful may be the invention of the youngest of our brethren, in forming rational and scriptural plans, to advance the interests of the Church; and, provided they are of this character, we trust they will meet the cordial co-operation of men of grey hairs; but we would affectionately admonish them, that as *they* are not now so wise as they have reason to expect that advanced life will make them; so perhaps they are not so wise as advanced life, in some instances at least, actually *has made others*; and that they ought at least to weigh well any project which should go to break up "the foundations of many generations."

It is often said, and justly said, that the present is pre-cmi-

nently an age of action; and that no minister can in any way meet the claims of the age, who does not possess active habits. But if we do not greatly mistake, this truth, the importance of which no one can doubt, is often urged to the exclusion of another, which is really not less important:—viz. that the exigencies of the age require that ministers should possess *studious habits*. We would not at all lower the standard of pastoral duty, or unreasonably lower the standard of public enterprise, as connected with the ministry; nevertheless, it is manifest that the highest exercise of the ministerial function is that of preaching the Gospel, and dispensing its ordinances; but if we do not greatly mistake, the tendency of the spirit of the times is to depress the standard of preaching, by diminishing the opportunities for study. There may, indeed, be some uncommonly gifted minds, which can produce at least a few respectable sermons, with comparatively little intellectual labour; but we confidently assert, that no preacher can make the best of his powers, or can preach habitually in an instructive and edifying manner, who has little or nothing to do with his study. Whatever there is, then, in the spirit of the age, which leads a minister to neglect the general culture of his mind, and especially his particular preparation for the pulpit, must be wrong; because it interferes with the successful discharge of the most important part of his office; that of a public religious instructor.

If we should mention some of the prominent faults in preaching, which seem to us to be gaining ground at the present day, we should notice as one of the most important, the substitution of mere exhortatory and impassioned address for a sober view of Christian doctrine. Not that we object to exhortation in its place; we do not even object to its making part of every sermon; but where the introduction, and the body of the discourse, and the peroration, are all made up of a succession of appeals to the feelings, (no matter how earnest,) we do not expect in ordinary cases, any very desirable result. Men are sanctified by truth and not by sound; and this truth consists in the genuine doctrines of the Bible. As an example of what we mean to object to, we have sometimes heard sermons, the whole of which was made up of a succession of changes, rung upon the word *repent*; when there was no effort made to show the sinner the *nature* of repentance, or to bring his understanding in contact with those truths, in view of which repentance, if it exist at all, must be exercised. The

sinner has been told, that he had nothing to do previously to repentance, and that it is wicked for him either to read the Bible or pray; and has gone away impressed, perhaps, with the conviction that repentance is a duty, but, unhappily, with an accompanying conviction that that which repentance necessarily involves,—*viz.* a contemplation of God's truth, is a sin. There may have been earnestness in the exhortation to rouse his fears, and seize hold of his feelings; but no light to guide him in the path of duty, and to the cross of Christ.

And this leads us to mention another feature in the character of our preaching, which we fear is becoming more prominent, we mean *a partial exhibition of the truth*. As a striking example of this, we would refer to the subject of divine and human agency, in the work of man's salvation. We doubt not, that there has prevailed in former years, and perhaps there still prevails, to some extent, a disposition to magnify God's grace, at the expense of reducing man to a mere passive recipient of impressions; and that many ministers have held up the doctrine of divine influence, as so disconnected with man's activity, that their hearers have perverted it to excuse their neglect of religion. We regard it as essential to the faithful preaching of the Gospel, that man's obligation to love and obey God should always be kept in view; and we believe that experience proves that the omission of this in any course of religious instruction, must neutralize its good influence; but if we do not greatly mistake, the tendency of many ministers, at this day, is toward the opposite error; to exhibit man's obligation to the exclusion, in a great degree, of the divine agency. We have known, for instance, of cases in which sinners have been directly told, that it was easier for them to repent than not to repent; easier to be converted than to leave the seat which they occupied; and though we do not think such language can be justified in any connexion, or accompanied by any explanation; yet when left, as it was, without even any attempt at explanation, we could not but regard it as fearfully adapted to mislead and destroy. We have heard of such language coming from men who profess to believe, and who we doubt not do believe, the doctrine of the influence of the Holy Spirit; but they think it prudent to say little about it in their addresses to sinners, lest it should serve to weaken their sense of obligation. It seems to us, that the effect of such preaching must be, either to induce a spirit of scepticism in sinners, as it respects the whole Gospel, finding



the view which is given of one feature of it at least, contradicted by their experience; or else to lead them to defer repentance to a future day, on the ground that it is so small a matter, that it may be attended to at any time; or else to mistake a momentary impression for true conversion, and go out into the world flaming enthusiasts, and miserable self-deceivers. We confidently expect the greatest and best results from the preaching of the Gospel, when it is preached just as it is found in the inspired oracles—in all the extent of man's obligation on the one hand, and in all the glory of a divine influence on the other.

There is yet another point, in respect to which it seems to us, that at least a bad taste in regard to preaching, is gaining ground in this country. We refer to the frequent use of extravagant, and ludicrous, and even vulgar expressions. We do not mean to condemn the use of great plainness of speech: on the contrary, we regard this as, in all ordinary cases, essential to secure the great end of preaching. The more directly a preacher deals with the consciences of his hearers, the more skilfully he portrays their own character and the character of God, the more urgently he enforces their obligations, and the more successfully he uncovers the realities of the eternal world, so much the greater power do we expect to find in his ministrations. But all this is perfectly consistent with the most dignified style of address; with a due regard at least to all the dictates of propriety, if not to all the rules of rhetoric. All this a preacher may do, and yet not utter a single expression, at which a correct taste would revolt. But it cannot be concealed, that there are preachers even in the Presbyterian Church, who seem fond of a studied coarseness, (we fear we should not go too far to say, vulgarity) of expression; who in their zeal to accommodate themselves to the comprehension of the most illiterate, actually insult even the understandings of those whose benefit they profess to have especially in view. At one moment, perhaps, they will appear deeply solemn, and will say things which, taken out of their connexion, are fitted to produce a solemn impression; but the transition is almost instantaneous to some ludicrous anecdote or train of remark, which completely neutralizes the impression of what had gone before, and not improbably, nearly convulses the audience with laughter. It seems to us, that this is an evil which can scarcely require to be exposed to any person, who respects the dignity of the ministerial office, or the apostolic

injunction, that "all things should be done decently and in order."

We are aware that, on this subject, we shall be referred to the wonderful success that attended the ministry of Whitefield, and, in our own day, of Rowland Hill, and perhaps a few others; men who never said any thing according to rule, and yet who scarcely ever spoke without mighty effect. To this we reply, that these men are to be regarded as exceptions from the rest of the world, in respect to their original constitution: they were gifted not only with an uncommon amount of intellect, but with powers of a peculiar character; so that they could actually do with an audience what their imitators could only attempt to do. The same anecdote or expression, which from the lips of Whitefield, would electrify all within the sound of his voice, if told by a common man, might produce no impression at all, or even an impression of disgust. Now, if we do not mistake, the great error into which many ministers are falling at this day, is that of adopting the peculiarities of other men whose minds are of an uncommon structure—(peculiarities it may be, which in any case are faults rather than excellencies)—when there is nothing in the character of their own minds with which the eccentricities can amalgamate. We have known some men of naturally a very quiet spirit, who with some eccentric model in their eye, have made an attempt to be exceedingly boisterous; and others who had no wit, who have tried to be witty; and others who had no originality, who have attempted to say things which no body ever said before them, and sometimes, unfortunately, have actually said things, which nobody ought to say after them; and when we have listened to these exhibitions, sometimes ludicrous, and sometimes boisterous, and sometimes, we had almost said, impious; we have said within ourselves, "that is certainly a copy, but a miserable copy;" here is indeed all that is awkward and exceptionable in the original, but nothing of the strength, or life or nature, that belongs to it. It is never safe for one man to attempt to assume another's peculiarities, of whatever kind they may be; but for a man, and especially for a minister, who has nothing peculiar in his constitution, to assume the gross eccentricities of another, is to lower his character and lessen his usefulness; for even the most ignorant, though they may be unable to analyze their impressions, are capable of feeling the influence of this most unpardonable kind of affectation.

The importance of a right standard of preaching, is manifest from the consideration, that the prevailing character of the preaching in any community, gives a complexion to the character of its piety. The Christian character, as it is exhibited in the Gospel, is consistent; it is made up of a variety of virtues and graces, which exist in harmonious combination; and this is the character which it ought to be the design of the ministry to form. But just in proportion as there is any thing materially wrong, either in the matter or the manner of preaching the Gospel, the Christian character will either not be formed at all, or it will rise in unseemly proportions. If a minister urge the duty of repentance, without explaining its nature, there is a great probability that some who hear him, will become fatally self-deceived. Or if he urge the obligation and ability of man, keeping out of view, to a great extent, the doctrine of a divine influence, here again there will probably be self-deception, and certainly presumption and self-confidence. If this preaching is characterized by enthusiasm or extravagance, a portion of his hearers will probably become fanatics, and will be "unstable in all their ways;" and there is reason to fear that another portion of them will turn off in disgust into the paths of skepticism or infidelity. But if he preach all the truths of the Gospel, in their due proportion, and preach them with the simplicity, and dignity, and earnestness which such truths, in connexion with the relation that he bears to his hearers, demand; then, and only then, may he expect that he will fully gain the purpose of his ministry; that his preaching will be instrumental of producing sound conversions, and of forming a consistent, and well balanced, and efficient Christian character.

There is no one subject to which evangelical ministers of this country sustain a more important relation, or in respect to which they have a more fearful responsibility, and perhaps, we may add, are more in danger of being misled, than that of *revivals of religion*. These revivals are indeed no new thing in the Church. They have existed both in former and latter years; and they have brought with them some of the richest blessings which the Church has ever experienced. We have perhaps a right to presume, from the present aspect of God's providence, that in this country at least, the Church is to gain her extension and triumph principally by means of these special effusions of the Holy Spirit; and if there be any subject at this moment, which is fitted to waken up all the energies

of the Christian, both as it respects prayer and effort, we cannot doubt that *this* is it. But the very same considerations which ought to lead him earnestly to pray and labour for revivals of religion, ought to lead him to give all diligence that these revivals do not become corrupted; for while genuine revivals are a mighty engine for the advancement of Christ's cause, spurious revivals will inevitably shed mildew upon the best interests of the Church. We would not decide that any thing which we have known, purporting to be a revival, is *entirely* spurious; for we doubt not that some cases of genuine conversion occur, even where there is the most that is irregular and exceptionable; where human passion becomes even boisterous; and it would seem that the moral world, within a small space at least, were fast verging toward a state of chaos; even in such scenes, we are willing to acknowledge that there may be instances in which the Holy Spirit performs an effectual work; but we say, unhesitatingly, that just in proportion as revivals assume this character, they lose the blessed energy which legitimately belongs to them, and become fearfully subservient to the work of self-deception.

Now we do not desire to conceal our apprehensions, that there are some things in the signs of the times, that look inauspicious to the genuineness, and, of course, to the best influence of revivals. There is, if we mistake not, a disposition to connect with them, too much machinery; to speak of them with too little of a spirit of dependance on God, as if they were to be got up by a course of measures; and to adopt in respect to them, a species of policy, which is built on the dangerous maxim, that "the end justifies the means." There is, moreover, in too many instances, an ostentatious manner of conducting them, which certainly appears badly in the sight of men, and which we cannot think appears well in the sight of God. There is a habit of speaking abruptly to impenitent sinners, concerning their salvation, and in a manner not only adapted, but designed, to irritate them. There is a habit of praying for people by name, and sometimes even telling the Most High of their prominent faults, and saying things which would scarcely bear to be repeated in decent society. There is a habit of urging sinners to leave their seats and walk into the aisle, that they may there have the prayers of Christians, and even of denouncing those who will not go, and of speaking in a manner which is fitted to leave the impression, that their refusal is itself a rejection of the Gospel, and will probably

be the means of sealing their damnation. As to this last measure, even when adopted in its most unexceptionable form, we cannot perceive any advantage that it has over what seems to us a much less ostentatious procedure, while we see, or think we see, positive evils resulting from it. If the purpose to be gained by calling upon anxious sinners to rise, or change their seats in the presence of the congregation, be to commit them to a course which shall be some security for cherishing their serious impressions, this purpose, we think, can be gained, at least as well, by bringing them together at the close of the public service into an inquiring meeting. Besides, there is something in this course, which seems to us, fitted to produce a positively bad effect; though it will of course be different upon different minds. The more timid and delicate will probably shrink from such a proposal, because they have not courage enough to yield to it; or if they actually do yield, will do it in such perturbation of feeling, that they will be ill prepared to join in the prayers which are offered for them. Those of a bold and self-confident temperament, may find in it but a small sacrifice, and possibly none at all; and with the expectation that they are to become Christians while taking up this cross, as it is called, how natural is it for them to suppose that they actually do become such; and then there is all the joy and peace, which results from this self-confident conversion, though there is reason to fear that it is quite a different thing from the peace and joy that accompanies a true faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. We cannot repress our apprehension, that this measure which has recently become very popular in some parts of the Church, is warranted neither by the letter nor the spirit of the Bible, and is eminently fitted to bring in its train, enthusiasm, self-confidence, and hypocrisy.

There is also, what seems to us an injudicious mode of treating those who indulge a hope that they have experienced the power of religion. It is common for Christians, and we regret to say, too common for ministers, to speak of them immediately, and apparently with entire confidence, under the name of *converts*; as if there were no possibility of their being deceived. The effect of this upon those who are thus spoken of, is to discourage self-examination; and to lead them to repose quietly in the good opinion which their minister has expressed of them. They regard him as far more experienced in these matters than themselves; and though they know that he "sees only as man seeth," yet they scarcely think it

possible, that he should mistake in respect to their character. Under such an influence there is manifestly great danger that they will think themselves Christians, when they are not; and even if they are, that they will, from the beginning, be lamentably deficient in a spirit of humility. The effect of this mode of treating them is bad also upon others; for it conveys an erroneous idea of the evidence of Christian character, and is fitted to form a false and arbitrary standard of judgment.

In connection with the preceding, there is another kindred evil, which ought to be mentioned; that of admitting persons, and especially young persons, with little or no opportunity for trial, to the communion of the Church. This is a course which Presbyterians have been accustomed to reprobate in some other denominations; but we fear that they are themselves becoming, in no small degree, partakers of the evil. Every one knows that the heart is deceitful above all things, and that nothing is more easy than for persons to mistake a momentary impression of rapture, for a saving work of the Holy Spirit. Probably every Church, even those which are most cautious in the admission of members, has sometimes been disappointed to find that those who have given the fairest promise of an active and devoted Christian life, could not stand before the power of temptation, and have finally gone back and followed no more after Christ. As every case of this kind brings great dishonour upon the cause, to say nothing of the influence on the individual who is the subject of it; it is manifestly the duty of Churches to guard the entrance into the sacred enclosure with great vigilance; and after they have done their utmost, they must expect to find tares mingling with the wheat. We regard it, then, as a circumstance exceedingly unfavourable to the purity and strength of the Church, that so many of our ministers are receiving young persons, the supposed fruit of revivals, to communion, before they have had any opportunity to test the genuineness of their experience. We shall be greatly disappointed if the course which has already been adopted in this respect, in some of our Churches, is not followed by consequences, which will convince even the most incredulous, that it has been wrong. We do not suppose that any rule can be laid down on this subject, which will apply to every variety of cases: there is the age, the natural temperament, and many other circumstances, which must needs come into the account in deciding upon each particular case; though we think, that must be an extraordinary case, which would

justify an admission to the Church within less than five or six weeks, after the period of a supposed conversion; and even then, the minister ought to regard it as an important part of his duty to impress the individual with the danger of self-deception, and the importance of self-examination. It ought indeed to be the desire of every minister to see the borders of the Church enlarged; but nothing ought to be considered as enlargement, which is inconsistent with its purity. The real strength of a Church will always be found to be rather in proportion to its purity than its numbers.

While upon the subject of the treatment due to young converts, or those who are professedly so, we intended to have offered a remark, (and it may not be much out of place here,) in respect to the danger of assigning places to them in the share of religious action, which should be considered as belonging to more experienced Christians. We are far from wishing to see them set out in the religious life, with a low standard of feeling or effort; and we would encourage them to be active and zealous from the beginning; and we would gradually bring them forward to stations in which their influence may be extensively felt: but we regard it as a matter in which their Christian character and usefulness are most deeply concerned, that nothing should be done to lead them "to think more highly of themselves than they ought to think." Even if there is grace in the heart, it is generally, at the time of its first implantation, an exceedingly feeble principle; and it requires but little in such circumstances, to bring into vigorous operation a principle of spiritual pride. Let a young person at such a time, (admitting him to have been renewed,) be treated as if he were an experienced Christian; let him hear his case much spoken of as that of a remarkable conversion; let him be encouraged to take the lead in religious meetings, at which persons of all characters are present; and if he has not uncommon strength of character, or an uncommon share of grace, he will feel almost at once the bad influence of this treatment. We have known cases in which young men, who have supposed themselves converted from profligacy, have seemed to forget "the hole of the pit from which they were digged," the moment they imagined themselves brought out of it; and have forthwith assumed the air of censors on the Christian character of those around them; and have talked loudly and harshly of the coldness of the Church, and especially of aged Christians; and have discovered that the minister

was asleep, or was deficient in zeal, or did not come up to the spirit of the times in his measures, unless indeed he happened to be too much under the influence of the same spirit with themselves. We expect in all cases of this kind that there will soon be a melancholy reaction; and we do not remember a case that is of long standing enough to have been put to the test, in respect to which we have been disappointed.

We think that the cause of religion has suffered not a little, and in connection with that, the influence of the Christian ministry, from the premature and sometimes ostentatious accounts of revivals, which have been given to the world. Amid the excitement which usually attends such a scene, there is a great probability that the person who attempts to make a statement of facts will be himself too much excited to be satisfied with an unvarnished story; but even if he were ever so favorably disposed, the circumstances of the case render it impracticable that he should attain to any thing certain or definite. And yet it is not uncommon to see it stated in some religious newspapers, that so many were "converted" in a week, or so many in a night, or so many at a meeting, or even so many during a prayer, with as much confidence as if the writer had, in each case, looked directly at the heart, and beheld the regenerating act take place. Hence, it turns out that a large part of these accounts are not a little exaggerated; and Christians are often pained to learn that the newspaper statement has more in it of prediction, and of false prediction too, (though most unintentionally so,) than of sober and authentic narrative. This has a bad effect in every point of view; and especially as giving occasion to the enemies of revivals not only to call in question their reality, but to impugn the Christian integrity of those by whom these statements are furnished. We are not opposed to publishing accounts of revivals at a proper time, and in a proper manner. If it be any thing more than a very general account, we think the proper time is not till the excitement of the revival is over, and its fruits at least ready to be gathered in. And as to the manner of doing it, we think there should be as little of parade—as little of the appearance of ostentation, as possible. It should come, in all ordinary cases, from the minister with whose labours the revivals was immediately connected, and should be confined to facts, in respect to which there is no question. If we state the number that attend an inquiring meeting, or the number that are admitted to the Church, or



the number who have commenced family worship, we may speak with confidence, because here we are dealing in matters which are visible and palpable; but if we undertake to say how many have been converted, or how many are likely to be converted, we are evidently, at least seeming to assume the province of Him who searches the heart.

There is another thing in connection with this general subject, which we regard as an evil; it is the disposition which prevails on the part of a certain class of ministers to claim for themselves and for each other, the exclusive honour of being *revival men*, and this title is awarded to them, by not a small part of the Christian community. The first thing that strikes us in respect to this is, that it does not indicate, on the part of those by whom it is claimed, an excess of modesty or humility. For any minister to set himself up as "a revival man," in distinction from his brethren, who, perhaps, value revivals as highly, and labour for them as truly as himself, though not in precisely the same manner, (possibly, however, in a much more judicious one,) we regard as indicating a censurable spirit of arrogance. It is fitted to alienate Christian ministers from each other, and to prevent a cordial co-operation for the common good. It is fitted to sow the seeds of discord in the Church; to counteract the influence of the labours of good men; and to introduce a spirit of jealousy and crimination among brethren, than which nothing is more hostile to the spirit of genuine revivals. Every Christian minister ought to be a revival man; and it is fair to suppose that he is so, until he has been proved otherwise; and it is slander to declare that he is not so, merely because he does not adopt measures which particular men have laboured to identify with all success in carrying forward God's work. We have heard it said of some of the most able and devoted ministers in this country, that they were no doubt good men, but that they were so far behind the spirit of the age, and so far from having the revival spirit, that they were living to little purpose. We are certainly prepared to be charitable towards those who give evidence of being sincerely devoted to the cause of Christ, though they may adopt measures from which our feelings would even revolt; but nothing, we think, can justify that self-confident and arrogant spirit, which assumes the right to prescribe measures, which the Bible does not prescribe, for other men, and if they are not adopted, to denounce them as the enemies of revivals.

We believe, further, that the influence of the ministry is in danger of being counteracted by the prevalence of some wrong views on the subject of *evangelism*. It is becoming a popular notion, and we already see it to some extent reduced to practice, that there should be a set of men trained up for the special purpose of conducting revivals of religion; and that wherever there is a revival, they should be invited to labour; and that, for the time being, the stated pastor should feel himself to be nothing more than a curate. Our first objection to this is, that it takes for granted that not all ministers are to be revival men; and that there is something connected with the management of a revival, which requires more wisdom or knowledge than falls to the lot of a stated pastor; whereas, we insist, that no man is qualified for the pastoral office, who is not capable of guiding and superintending his flock, during a season of the special effusion of the Holy Spirit. We do not object to there being some ministers in the Church, who have no stated charge, and who shall stand ready to lend their aid in seasons of revival, or any cases of extraordinary exigency; but we object to their being regarded as a distinct set of men, with somewhat higher powers than other ministers; and we insist that they should always hold themselves subject to the advice and direction of the stated pastor in whose congregation they labour. We have nothing to say against the office of an evangelist; and we are aware that there are many in our country, and in our Church, holding this office, who are in every respect prudent and judicious, and whose labours have been followed by most blessed effects; but we have known, too, of instances in which the pastoral office has been for the time assumed, and the regular pastor has scarcely been consulted, and the result of the whole has been, that the congregation have become discontented with their minister, and have turned him away as not being a revival man. We do not say that in every case where these unhappy effects, or any thing like them, have been experienced, they have been the result of design on the part of the man who has come in to labour as an evangelist; but they have, to say the least, very often resulted from his indiscretion and insubordination.

There are some reasons and circumstances, no doubt, in which a minister who has a stated charge, and especially a large one, is well nigh compelled to invite some ministerial brother to his aid. But in all ordinary cases, even in seasons

of revival, he had better, so far as he can, do his own work. If he is ordinarily a faithful minister, he may be expected to know more of the wants of his people, and know better how to approach them, especially as individuals, than any other person; and in most cases his ministrations, though they may have less novelty, will be likely to have more weight, and to be attended with greater success. But when an exigency really seems to demand such a measure, there is nothing in respect to which a minister ought to act with more rigid caution and forethought; for if he introduce a labourer among his people at random, without knowing much of his character except his general reputation as an active promoter of revivals, he need not be disappointed if he should find discord and alienation coming in the train of this fellow-helper. We speak that we do know on this subject, and testify that we have seen; and we earnestly entreat every minister of a congregation, as he values his own peace or their prosperity, never to bring among them, as a stated labourer, one in whose judgment, as well as piety, he can not repose entire confidence.

The only remaining picture which we shall notice, as having an unfavourable bearing on the influence of the ministry in our own Church, at the present day, is the ill-directed activity and zeal of some *laymen*. We rejoice that so many intelligent laymen are now found in the ranks of those who are willing to labour for Christ; and that some are devoting themselves to his cause with an assiduity and singleness of purpose, and we may add, with a degree of discretion and efficiency, which we do not find exceeded in our most devoted and useful ministers. This is as it should be; and we cordially bid every layman God speed, who, in the right spirit, has put his hands to this noble work; and we invite every other, who will, to come and share the honour of carrying forward the noble enterprise of regenerating and saving the world. Nevertheless, we are constrained to say, that some laymen have done more harm by their indiscretion, than they have done good by their activity. They have not seemed contented to labour in their own sphere. They have virtually assumed the office of preachers, and have done that which every body would have called preaching, if they had not seen the face and heard the voice of a layman. Moreover, they have, in some instances, been too ready to dictate to ministers in respect to the course they should pursue; and to form plans, without even consulting them, which should take for

granted their co-operation; and to denounce them as cold and dead, provided their views of policy or duty happened to be discordant with their own. We believe there are some laymen who make it nearly a *sine qua non*, that every plan of benevolent action which they encourage, should either have originated with themselves, or should have received their sanction as soon as it was proposed; and we know there are some, (we scarcely know whether we may use the plural,) who stand up in public assemblies and denounce the ministry by wholesale, as if there were only here and there, one who was not a mere drone in the sacred office.

Now this is a spirit which ought to be uniformly and firmly, though prudently, resisted. Not that ministers ought to shrink from receiving, or even asking, the judicious counsel of intelligent laymen: on many subjects connected with the interests of the Church, their judgment may be more likely to be sound and unbiassed, than if they were actually in the clerical profession. But as ministers value their character or influence, they must not submit to lay-dictation, in performing their own appropriate work. If they begin to give up their rights, they will find that the same spirit that requires that they should yield at all, will not be satisfied till they have yielded every thing; and the effect of this will be, that they will possess no official influence, and will forfeit the respect even of those to whose wishes they are subservient. It becomes ministers never to forget that they have certain rights, in virtue of their office, which they are bound to regard as sacred; and that either the surrender of these rights, or the indiscreet use of them, must greatly abridge their usefulness, if it does not completely nullify their official character.

We have dwelt at much greater length than we intended, on the prominent evils which seem to us to be connected with the ministry, especially of our Church, but, we think, not at greater length than is justified by the importance of the subject. Of these evils we have spoken plainly, because we regard them as contributing, in no small degree, either directly or indirectly, to prevent the best influence of the sacred office. We trust that we have not spoken in a tone of unchristian rebuke, or said any thing which ought to wound the feelings of those who are sincerely devoted to the cause of Christ. We would encourage, so far as we can, a spirit of mutual good will and affection among the followers, and especially the ministers, of our common Lord; but we do feel ourselves

bound to lift up the voice of warning, when we see, what seems to us, great abuses in the Church, even though they may be practised under the sanction of those whom we love and venerate. There is every thing in the present aspect of Providence to indicate that the American Church is destined to exert a leading influence in the renovation of the world; and that influence is to be so intimately connected with the character of its ministry, that whatever affects that, even remotely, cannot, in our estimation, be an unimportant matter. But though we have dwelt in this article, chiefly on the dark side of the picture, we must again remind our readers, that there is a bright side too, which ought to strengthen our faith and animate us to higher and holier efforts. Though there are certainly some things to deplore in respect to the ministry of our country, there is much also to admire—much for which to give God thanks. There is much deep and earnest piety, much active zeal, and much sound discretion; much excellent preaching, and much fervent prayer, in various parts of our land; and we do not believe that God designs that in any of these respects we should be left to fall back. Rather may we not hope, that each successive year will find us upon the advance, will record more works of faith and labours of love, more harmony among brethren, and more faithfulness to ministerial obligation, than the year which preceded it. We cannot but regard the numerous and powerful revivals of religion, reported to us from almost every part of our country, with intense interest, and with cordial thankfulness. Surely these precious effusions of the Holy Spirit, after making all that allowance for the spurious admixtures to which we have before alluded, must be considered as the pledge of rich blessings to the Church and to the world. Nay, we hesitate not to say, that in the extension and continuance of the blessed displays of the power of the Gospel, we recognize the best and only solid hope of our country, for the enlargement of Zion; for correcting the abuses, and obviating the dangers to which we have referred; for supplying the ranks of the Christian ministry with an adequate number of sanctified candidates; and for preserving and transmitting our national privileges to the latest posterity. Let every minister, and every Christian, feel a personal responsibility, by holy example, by unceasing instruction, and by fervent prayer, to secure this glorious result; and then, by God's blessing, we may hope it *will be secured*.

## ART. VI.—LETTERS ON MISSIONS.

*Letters on Missions*, by William Swan, *Missionary in Siberia*. With an *Introductory Preface* by the late William Orme, *Foreign Secretary of the London Missionary Society*. Boston, Perkins & Marvin; New York, J. Leavitt, 12mo. p. 288.

WE rejoice in the belief that the cause of foreign missions is daily taking a firmer hold on the public mind, and becoming more and more identified with a Christian profession. If there be one fact, in the annals of Christian delinquency, more humiliating and wonderful than most others, it is the tardiness, not to say negligence, of a great majority of those who bear the name of Christ, in sending the glorious gospel to the benighted and perishing heathen. How it is, that those who call themselves Christians, and yet live in the allowed neglect of this duty, are still able to “patch up a peace” with their consciences in reference to this matter, we will not attempt to explain. It certainly cannot be a safe peace, or one which will stand the test of that Divine scrutiny which is before us all. Whether we consider the nature or the objects, the authority or the motives, the glory or the encouragements of the missionary enterprize, the only wonder is, that every Christian Church on earth is not formed on the avowed principle of its being A MISSIONARY SOCIETY; and every one who seeks admission to its communion, considered as entering himself a LIFE MEMBER of such a society. Such, undoubtedly, is the spirit of the Christian religion; and such, unless we greatly misinterpret the promises of God, will be the prevailing spirit of Christendom long before the arrival of that day when the “knowledge and glory of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters fill the sea.”

If we were asked the reason of that strange phenomenon, that so many who call themselves the disciples of Christ, and cherish a hope in his atoning blood, yet appear to feel so little, and disposed to do so little for bringing others to the knowledge and love of the Saviour; we should reply—after a proper reference to our *native depravity*, which forms a sad clog to every “work of faith and labour of love” in which we engage—that one great reason why the missionary spirit does not occupy a more prominent place among the Christian cha-

racteristics and doings of the present day—is, that the *leaders* and *guides* of the Church are not more frequent, abundant, and zealous in explaining, recommending and urging this radical Christian duty. Were the ministers and elders of the Churches to do their duty in this thing; were they to hold up before the people, constantly and powerfully, the obligation lying upon all Christians to send the gospel to “every creature” who has it not; were they to insist upon this duty as unremittingly and perseveringly as they insist upon some others, and urge it, with proper elucidation and earnestness, as incumbent, not upon ministers alone, but upon all Christians; we cannot help believing that happy effects would follow. In short, were the pastors and rulers of the Churches to perform with fidelity their *whole duty* in reference to this matter, we are persuaded that the discharge of the duty in question, on the part of the body of the Church, would, in some measure, keep pace with that of others; or, at any rate, that we should not have occasion to mark so great a disparity between the prevalence of Christian zeal as manifested in the cause of missions, and as manifested in other departments of evangelical effort. We are verily persuaded that, if the great body of the communicants and stated hearers, in all those Churches which are in the habit of observing the Monthly Concert in prayer, were properly instructed and exhorted on this subject; and if the collections taken up at the close of each meeting, were sacredly devoted to the support of foreign missions; it would be found, in a little while, that from this source alone, funds might be obtained amply sufficient to meet all the ordinary demands of the foreign service without the trouble of organizing auxiliary societies, or the expense of employing agents to do that which unsolicited Christian benevolence ought, by its monthly contribution, cheerfully to accomplish. It is just as really and obviously the duty of Christians to bring their offerings, from time to time, to help in sending the Gospel to the heathen, as it is to attend stately on the ordinances of the sanctuary. And why should they not be as ready to attend to the former; spontaneously, and without incessant dunning and entreaty, as to the latter? The time, we trust, is not far distant, when this will be, in some good degree, literally and generally the case. When this hope shall be realized, it will be a signal for the approach of that blessed period when “the name of the Redeemer shall be one, and his praise one from the rising of the sun to the going down of the same.”

The little volume, the title of which stands at the head of this article, is one of the most judicious and valuable that we have lately seen on the subject of which it treats. Mr. *Swan*, the author of the "Letters," which compose the principal part of it, has been, for a number of years, employed in missionary labour in *Siberia* under the direction of the London Missionary Society. He is already known to many American readers as the author of an interesting work, entitled "Memoir of the late Mrs. *Paterson*, wife of the Rev. Dr. *Paterson*, of *St. Petersburg*," which has been republished in the United States. He spent a part of the year 1818 and 1819, in the family of Dr. *Paterson*, at *St. Petersburg*, acquiring the Russian language. He then proceeded with his associate, Mr. *Yuille*, to the field of their missionary labour in *Siberia*, where he has been ever since employed, and where, it is believed, he still remains. In 1829, he sent to London, for publication, the Letters here presented to the American public. They were carried through the press by the late Rev. *William Orme*, the intelligent, pious, and devoted foreign secretary of the London Missionary Society, who introduced them to the public by an extended and interesting preface.

This preface makes a very valuable part of the volume. The principal objects of its worthy and lamented writer are two. *First*, to show that there is no reason for *discouragement* at the result of the missionary efforts which have been made for a number of years past; but that, on the contrary, as great a degree of success has attended them as could reasonably have been expected. And, *secondly*, to impugn some of the opinions expressed by the author of an anonymous work, entitled, "A new model of Christian Missions to Popish, Mohammedan, and Pagan nations." In doing this he manifests much good sense, piety, and practical acquaintance with the subject on which he writes. His decease, since the date of this publication, was a loss severely felt by the missionary society of which he was the invaluable secretary, and lamented by the friends of missions wherever he was known.

The "Letters" of Mr. *Swan* are twenty-one in number, and relate to the following subjects: Letter I. On the choice of a missionary life. Letter II. The same subject continued. Letter III. On missionary qualifications. Letter IV. The same subject continued. Letter V. Difficulties arising from diversity of temper among missionaries. Letter VI. The



office of the missionary compared with the ministry at home. Letter VII. On low views of the missionary office. Letter VIII. On the quantity of means to be employed. Letter IX. On different modes of missionary operation. Letter X. On the preference due to the missionary service. Letter XI. On ministerial faithfulness to candidates for missionary service. Letter XII. On Apathy to the extent of the claims of the heathen world. Letter XIII. On the best means of convincing the heathen of the truth of Christianity. Letter XIV. On the reasons which may justify qualified individuals in declining the missionary service. Letter XV. On the influence of success on missionary operations. Letter XVI. Defects in the mode of advocating the cause of missions. Letter XVII. Objections to engaging in missionary service. Letter XVIII. Remarks on a sentiment of Dr. *Buchanan*. Letter XIX. On the means to be used in raising up missionaries. Letter XX. On the spirit of the missionary enterprise. Letter XXI. Some of the causes of indifference to missionary exertions.

The following brief character of the work is found in the Preface to the American edition, and presents a view of it by no means more favourable than is just.

“Mr. *Swan's* style is simple, perspicuous and earnest; and he has performed a work which was greatly needed, in a very satisfactory manner. Native good sense, enlightened by experience, reflection and piety, is seen in every one of his pages, and his work is commended to the serious perusal of students in theology, of preachers of the Gospel, and indeed of all the professed disciples of Jesus Christ. If read with a proper spirit, it will not fail to throw new light on the path of their duty; and it is one of the few books, concerning which we may venture to say, that aspirants for the sacred ministry ought by all means to read it, before they determine to spend their lives among the churches, or even the waste-places, of their own country.”

It will be seen, from the titles of the several Letters just detailed, that it is not so much the object of the writer to stir up private Christians to the great duty of promoting and sustaining missions among the heathen—although this part of the great subject is not neglected—as to enlarge the views of ministers and people respecting the nature of Christian missions—to settle the comparative claims of the missionary service—to correct mistakes—to dissipate illusions—to inspire caution

against dangers and difficulties—to give counsel respecting the choice of a missionary life; to offer the dictates of experience as to the different modes of missionary operation—to suggest the best means of convincing the heathen of the truth of Christianity, &c. On all these subjects the author writes like a man of piety, of good sense, and of practical experience. He seems himself to have drunk deep into the spirit of missions; and yet not to have been at all excited to enthusiasm or extravagance by the draught. He is every where discriminating, sober-minded, and on his guard against the mistakes to which the spirit of carnal ease, on the one hand, or the spirit of evangelical ambition—if the expression may be allowed—on the other, are so apt to betray those who believe themselves to be guided by Christian principle. In truth, we have seldom seen a book better adapted to enlarge the views, correct the misapprehensions, guide the inquiries, and stimulate the zeal of those who are examining the questions, whether they ought to become missionaries, and where they are best fitted to labour—than the volume here presented to our readers. It is fitted to benefit all classes of readers; but it is peculiarly fitted to instruct the conductors of missionary enterprise, and especially, candidates for the sacred office, who wish to decide, in the spirit of the Gospel in what sphere of evangelical labour they can best serve “the Lord that bought them.”

Such remarks as those which are found in the first Letter, on the “choice of a missionary life,” when we recollect that they come not from a theorist, but from the pen of a man who has made the trial, and who has, of course, experimental acquaintance with the subject on which he writes, cannot be perused without the deepest interest.

In treating of the different modes of conducting missionary operations, Mr. *Swan* speaks of whole Churches, with their pastors, removing from their residence in Christian lands, and planting themselves in the midst of a dark and destitute population, with the hope of not only carrying with them “the light of life,” but also of lifting up by their example, the people to whom they go, in civilization, and the arts of life. It is manifest that, in conducting missions, in some parts of the world, this method of proceeding may be made to answer admirably. While it is quite as evident, that in other portions of the globe, the state of things is such as to forbid having recourse to this plan of propagating the Gospel. Such a scheme of evangelical colonizing might answer very well for *Greece*,

for *Armenia*, for some parts of *South America*, or for the most remote and destitute regions in "the valley of the *Mississippi*." But certainly would not be admissible at all, for the present, at least, in such a country, as *Ceylon*, *Madagascar*, *Java*, and others similarly situated as to climate and population. For, wherever families of children could not be carried without endangering both their bodies and souls; wherever missionaries are so situated, that they feel obliged to send their own offspring home, to be educated among their friends;—both because training them up with themselves is impracticable, and because they would be entirely without suitable employment; after their education should be completed; surely to such countries, whole Churches, or groupes of families ought not to migrate. The children of pious parents, in such circumstances, would be more apt to grow up lawless and profligate than amidst the restraints of Christian society; and just in proportion as the children, or any other members of such evangelical settlements should be manifestly graceless and immoral, they would be a most serious hinderance, instead of a help, in all attempts to benefit the native inhabitants. Still, however, although to countries thus peculiarly situated, whole Churches, or large assemblages of families, could not consider it as their duty to form a colonial migration; yet even to such countries, many families including no young children, and the members of which were all pious, might go with a comparatively small amount of sacrifice, and with every prospect of rich and permanent usefulness to the cause of the Redeemer.

But that there are remote and destitute parts of our own country, and some portions of the heathen world, to which families, and even whole Churches might with eminent advantage migrate, and where they might settle down, not merely for the purpose of carrying with them the light of truth, but also the habits and characteristics of Christian society, and instruct the people by social and domestic example, as well as by official teaching; cannot, for a moment, be doubted, and we should cordially rejoice, now and then, to witness such a great evangelical enterprize. With the following sentiments of Mr. *Swan*, therefore, understood with the limitations above suggested, we cordially concur.

"It would be a noble project if whole churches, pastors, and flocks were to emigrate to other lands, and become at once examples of the power of the Gospel and promulgators of its blessed

truths to the heathen nations. Were fifty or a hundred British churches thus "to give themselves to the Lord," and establish themselves in well chosen spots in Pagan countries, what might not be expected, with the blessing of God, from such a measure? Themselves strangers and pilgrims upon earth, true Christians would thus exhibit more of their own real character, and would enjoy, it might be confidently expected, in spiritual prosperity an ample compensation for some worldly disadvantages; were the little leaven thus to mingle itself through the whole mass, how soon might not the whole lump be leavened! Surely there are many churches, which, as bodies, have zeal and love and devotedness enough, if the scheme itself were at all practicable. And why is it not? The practicability of it will appear in different lights according to the state of mind in which it is contemplated. Perhaps if it had been proposed to the members of the church in Jerusalem to spread themselves through the surrounding region, testifying to all, repentance towards God and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ, there might have been many plausible objections started; but the providence of God soon made them glad to adopt the measures which before might seem impracticable. When obliged to flee for their lives, they found other places of abode, and, scattered among unbelievers, had the finest opportunities of spreading the Gospel, and were no doubt enabled to say in reference to the persecutions that drove them from Jerusalem, "It is good for us that we have been afflicted." There may be no present appearances that threaten the British churches with a similar fate; they may not be driven into exile: but were persecution for conscience' sake to arise, what would be thought of the *practicability* of colonizing heathen countries? And would not this plan afford the best conceivable means of cherishing and bringing into notice promising talents for the higher departments of missionary labour? Would not the younger members of churches be trained up, and excited to regard the service of God among the heathen, as a great and most important work; and, seeing with their own eyes the fields white unto harvest, would they not *desire* to become labourers?

"I will not anticipate objections; but to prevent being misunderstood, I would only add, that it is not necessarily supposed, according to this plan, that every individual member of a church, without exception, should embark in such an emigration; some from age, state of health, &c. might be improper persons to join their brethren; but with all necessary deductions the great body of a church might, I am persuaded, with the prospect of doing incalculable good, thus go forth in the name of the Lord, devoted as one man to the promotion of his glory.

"Do not tell me that the example of the churches planted by the apostles, and the exhortations addressed to them to abide every

man in his own calling, &c. make against the scheme now suggested. It is true, the apostles do not enjoin upon the churches the duty of changing their abode, in order to fix their residence among a heathen population. But why? *They were planted* in the midst of the heathen, they were themselves societies gathered from the Pagan and Jewish world, and were on every hand surrounded by those who still continued in the state of darkness from which they had been translated. There was in those days no such thing as a *Christendom*, a portion of the earth distinguished by the general profession of the religion of Christ. The whole world was then, what many parts of it are still, inhabited by unbelievers, with here and there a church of Christ gathered out of the nations. The aim of this, or any other plan of missionary enterprize, is to bring the whole world under the denomination of Christendom." pp. 144-6.

The twelfth Letter, "on apathy to the extent of the claims of the heathen world"—is excellent throughout. The following specimen will be read with interest by every one who, in any measure, appreciates the deplorable delinquency of Christendom, in reference to the great duty to which it refers.

"There can be no question as to the claims of our immediate neighbours, our countrymen, upon our compassion; but their claims are not exclusive of those of our "brethren" the Hindoos, or the Caffres, or the cannibals of New Zealand; and surely the man incurs an awful responsibility who takes upon him, by presenting to his hearers partial views of duty, to absolve them from the obligation to listen to the command of Christ to go into ALL THE WORLD and preach the Gospel to every creature. For such in effect is the doctrine of the sermon before us.

"You know too well the present state of things in many religious circles, in various parts of our native country, to reckon this an obsolete discussion. Would that the evil had been confined to the date of the sermon, or had at least terminated with the eighteenth century! But I am afraid that many ministers, who we may hope, know and love the truth, treat the subject of evangelizing the world (at least as to any practical purpose) as a subject which may very consistently be let alone. When they do allude to it, they will own that they ought to give it their "good wishes and prayers;" but it is rather by their silence upon the subject—by their allowing it to be lost sight of and forgotten, that they tacitly authorize their people (so far as their authority may go) to view it as a matter they may safely leave alone—as, in short, no concern of theirs.

"I cannot account, upon any principle more favourable to the parties concerned, for the state of dormancy in which many con-

gregations and churches still remain, in regard to a cause which, to all Christians, ought to be so dear and important. I know that there are many noble exceptions to this evangelical apathy (shall I call it?); and were all the churches, were all Christians to do as some of them do, that is, to the utmost stretch of their means, this censure would be without an object. But alas! it is not so. The capabilities of the Christian public are matter of numerical calculation, and, much as some do, the amount of all that is done, is but a small fraction of what, according to a very moderate computation, might be effected. I have now in my eye their pecuniary capabilities; but what shall we think, or what shall we say, of their ability to furnish men? How many fit *men* do all the churches of Great Britain and Ireland furnish *annually* to go out as missionaries to the heathen? Is it the fact that not one church in a hundred, actually sends out a single missionary? Is it a fact that thousands of Christian churches meet week after week, and year after year, for the observance of the ordinances of Christ, and that it never occurs to one of all these multitudes of professing Christians, and is never once suggested to them by their pastors, that there may be some individuals among them who should go as messengers of mercy to their heathen brethren? If this is the fact, I leave you to draw the inference. Guilt lies somewhere. Is there not ground for addressing such bodies of professing Christians, in words originally spoken in reference to another subject, 'Now, therefore, there is utterly a fault among you.'

"On this I shall not now enlarge, but I would ask, If such has been, and is the state of things in many Christian churches, ought they to remain so? It is high time for all whom it concerns to consider this question. And unless they can justify their neglect of the heathen, let them repent, pray for forgiveness, and seek grace to 'walk henceforth in *all* the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless.'

"Within the period that has elapsed since the publication of the sermon now commented on, the greater number of the existing missionary societies date their commencement. Many foreign missions have been undertaken, and a degree of business-like activity and system characterizes the operations of most of them; and their exertions God has been pleased to honour in many instances with an encouraging measure of success.

"But it should be observed, that while Christian benevolence has taken a wider range of exertion, and is now travelling to the ends of the earth, it has not been absorbed by these foreign operations. Christian zeal and benevolence have opened new channels for themselves at home also, and are flowing in various directions through the length and breadth of the land. Conse-

quently the Christian world is not now pursuing, with undivided attention either to the propagation of the Gospel among the heathen nations, or the enlightening of the dark and long neglected corners of our own country. Both have a share of attention. And these two great classes of objects, the foreign and the domestic, are again subdivided into various minor classes, so that there is a great variety of benevolent objects now demanding the support of the Christian public.

“But in this state of things, there is more need than ever to sound the alarm in the ears of professors, lest, deceived by this appearance of multiplied and diversified activity in doing good, they become deaf and callous to the cries and miseries of those to whom they have yet afforded no relief;—lest, thinking only of what they are doing, they forget that there is something they are not doing, and which nevertheless ought to be done.

“Is it not matter of notoriety, that many, when the claims of the missionary cause are pressed upon them, crave to be excused lending their aid, on the ground that they assist some other benevolent and religious institution? This, to say the least of it, is surely making the performance of one duty the reason for neglecting another. To propagate the Gospel wherever there are human beings to receive its glad tidings, is either the duty of Christians or it is not. If it be the duty of one, it is the duty of all, according to their ability. But in the ease supposed, the plea in effect is *inability*. I grant that a poor man who may give his mite to one object, may not be able to give to two or more, and in his ease the plea is valid. But I am supposing the plea of inability to be urged upon insufficient grounds, and the pittance of charity bestowed on one beggar, made a pretence to send away twenty, unpitied and unhelped.

“Let me suppose, for the sake of illustration, that in time of war, it were put to the patriotism of the people to furnish voluntarily the necessary contingent for prosecuting the war with vigour; there is good ground to conclude that in multitudes of instances there would be the attempt to evade altogether the payment of the smallest fraction towards the expenses of the war, and in another immense number of instances there would be the attempt to answer the demand made upon their generosity and public spirit, by the payment of a sum far below the due proportion to be expected from persons in their respective circumstances. But all the while these persons would wish to be thought lovers of their country, and contributors to its defence and aggrandizement, *as far as they were able*. Suppose now, that instead of leaving the matter to the optional contributions of the people, a levy were imposed upon all, proportioned, as far as could be ascertained, to

their means, would not this tax, in thousands of cases, fall much heavier than the people, when left to their own view of the duty, thought they were able to sustain? I may here repeat a text quoted before: "The children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light." Human governments do not leave it to their subjects to determine how much each shall contribute to the purposes of the state; for if they did, imbecility, inaction, and derangement of the whole political machine would soon be the consequence.

"We would not have the expenses necessary for carrying on the war against the empire of darkness, to be imposed in the shape of a tax upon the subjects of the kingdom of Christ; but till they are generally roused to more adequate conceptions of the amount of means requisite, and become more conscientious in doing and sacrificing *what they can*, it is easy to see that, so far as human agency is concerned, the contest may be indefinitely protracted, and the enemy continue to laugh at the irresolute measures, unwise counsels, languid zeal, cowardice, and imbecility of the confederated, or rather divided, Christian world.

"Turn now to the matter of fact. To subdue the whole heathen world to the obedience of Christ, the combined energies of all the Christians in the world are equal to the maintenance of an army of five or six hundred men.\* No wonder that they are ready to sink under the burden of supporting this immense body of forces. It is some comfort to think, however, that the enemy must soon be overpowered by such a host, and therefore the oppressive duty of maintaining it is but for a short season! I feel that this is not a subject for irony, but I know not in what way I can better express the feeling of shame and sorrow which the contemplation of this subject excites. It is indeed mortifying to think that the Christian world can do so little, if it *can do no more* than has been done; and it is not less mortifying, if it can do more, *that it does it not*."—pp. 170—5.

In the eighteenth Letter, Mr. *Swan* contends for the importance of rich and various knowledge in the missionary service. He combats, with great zeal and force, the opinion, that men of inferior talents and learning may answer very well for this office. We fully concur with him when he says,—

\* It is true that the separate societies which devote their funds to the translating, printing, and distributing of the Scriptures, and other societies, not strictly *missionary*, are supported by the Christian public. These furnish the missionary (to carry on the figure) with arms and ammunition—and may be supposed included in the view we are taking of the hostile operations now going on against the prince of this world. Let, therefore, the whole accumulation of means be kept in view. There is, alas, no need to hide some part of the means used, in order to make the amount appear small.



“But I think that knowledge of every kind, as much as may be procured, is always *advantageous*—and never injurious. Hence I infer that the friends of missions should give to every man they send out, the means of acquiring as much learning and knowledge as circumstances will admit. And my quarrel is with those who, inconsistently, as I conceive, admit the advantages of learning, yet do not use the means to make missionaries learned; and shift off the duty of procuring learned men by pretending that they cannot be obtained, and then comfort themselves that “inferior men may do as well, if not better.” This, I repeat, is lowering the claims and character of the missionary cause, and injuring its interests not merely in the eyes of the world, but by rendering its operations less effective and successful than otherwise, there is reason to conclude they would have been.”—p. 251.

But we forbear to make further extracts. We wish the whole to be perused by every professing Christian in the United States. And we have no hesitation in saying, that, in the present day of missionary enterprize, that minister of the Gospel, and especially that candidate for the sacred office, who neglects to read this volume, does a degree of injustice to himself, and to the great cause of Christian benevolence, which no conscientious Christian, we should think, would be willing to incur.

One suggestion more, and we shall have done. We are every day told, and we have no doubt with perfect truth, that the great difficulty which now attends the missionary enterprize, is, not to obtain sufficient *funds*, but to find *suitable men* for carrying on the work. Not only are *preachers*—well instructed and warm hearted preachers—wanted, in much greater numbers than have been as yet to be found; but pious *physicians*, pious *school masters*, pious *catechists*, pious *mechanics*, pious *agriculturists*, &c. are all greatly needed, and whoever is qualified to serve the missionary cause in any one of these capacities, may be a permanent benefactor to the Redeemer’s kingdom.

Now, among the thousands in our land who profess to love the missionary cause, and to be willing to make sacrifices for its advancement—cannot *some*, cannot *many* be found, without children, or near relatives dependent on them, who have but little *property* to dispose of, and, therefore, cannot give much *money* for sustaining the great cause of evangelizing the heathen; but who can give *themselves* to this cause: who can go to the foreign field, and contrive to *support themselves*, in whole or in part, while there, and then, when they

die, leave their funds to the precious cause to which their persons and services have been devoted? Such persons, if such there be, ought not, indeed, to go forth under the guidance of their own caprice or fancy alone, which might lead to endless disorder and confusion; but to put themselves under the direction of some Missionary Board, and thus give to the public the best pledge that their views were neither selfish nor visionary; that they were willing to be "subject to their brethren in the Lord," and to "do all things decently and in order." That a few such examples would have a mighty influence, none can doubt; and that such examples will be multiplied, greatly multiplied, before the dawn of the Millennium,—we can no more question, than we can question that the heathen world is to be converted by the instrumentality of man.

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ART. VII.—SHORT NOTICES OF RECENT PUBLICATIONS.

I.—*Letters to the Rev. Nathaniel W. Taylor, D. D.*  
By Leonard Woods, D. D. Andover, Mark Newman,  
8vo. pp. 114. 1830.

OUR readers do not need to be informed either of the appearance or the character of this publication. If we mistake not, it has been extensively read; and we cannot doubt that every intelligent reader has risen from the perusal of it with a deep impression of the truly Christian spirit, and the talent for profound investigation which it manifests in every page.

These Letters, however, undertake to discuss, with any particularity, only a single point in Dr. *Taylor's* system. We cannot forbear to express our hope that the able author will be induced to pursue his animadversions, and to examine more at large some other opinions broached by his brother at *New Haven*, and at which he has given a cursory glance in his last Letter.

Dr. *Taylor* has not, so far as we know, replied to these "Letters." The "Review" of them, published in the *Christian Spectator*, a number of months since, as it cannot, of course, be deemed a reply, in the appropriate and manly form which Dr. *Woods* has adopted, by prefixing his name to his strictures; so we imagine no intelligent and candid reader ever considered that review as really grappling with the difficulties

which Dr. *Woods* presents, or as giving any satisfactory answer to the queries which, with so much Christian dignity, and fraternal respect, he urges, in reference to the Pelagian and Arminian aspect of some of Dr. *Taylor's* speculations. We do wish the latter gentleman could be persuaded to forget, for a moment, his complaints of being misapprehended, misrepresented, uncivilly treated, &c., &c., in which we presume no impartial reader sympathizes with him; and to answer, frankly and categorically, (he might do it in a single page,) two or three of the pretty interrogatories which Dr. *Woods* has addressed to him. He can, surely, have no wish to conceal any article of his creed; and the most of those concerning which the learned and venerable author of the "Letters" before us has solicited information, admit of being stated with perfect explicitness in a very short compass. Such explicitness would greatly shorten controversy, and seems to be peculiarly appropriate to the present day, of which directness of speech, and vigour of action may be regarded as distinguishing characteristics.

We hope to have an opportunity, at some future period, of resuming the subject, or rather the subjects, of these Letters. But we feel disposed to wait a little for Dr. *Taylor's* reply.

II.—*Views in Theology*, No. VIII. Vol. II. *New York*, *John P. Haven*, 8vo. pp. 343—496.

Although the author of this publication has not thought proper to connect his name with it, yet he is well understood to be a gentleman (a layman) of the city of *New York*, who, though engaged in secular business, has much addicted himself, for a number of years, to theological inquiries. The work is published semi-annually, in May and November, and is intended to be continued.

The present number contains two articles, of nearly seventy pages each; both having a respect to certain discussions which have occupied a conspicuous place in the *Christian Spectator*, published at *New Haven*, and which relate to the theological opinions of the Rev. Dr. *Nathaniel W. Taylor*, Professor in the Theological Seminary of that city.

The author of these "Views," is, undoubtedly, a writer of no small talent. He has assailed Dr. *Taylor's* speculations with force, with skill, and, we must think, with much effect. We have no intention of interposing, at present, between our

assailant, and the object of his attack; but, if we do not mistake, the public will naturally expect some answer from Dr. *Taylor*, if any can be given; and if he should continue to maintain silence, we are greatly deceived if impartial readers will not consider it as arising from a consciousness of inability to reply, without avowing opinions for which the religious community is not *yet prepared*.

III.—*The Christian Preachers' Commission: A Sermon delivered before the General Association of Connecticut, at Saybrook, June 22, 1831.* By *Jeremiah Day*, D. D. President of Yale College. 8vo. pp. 20.

This is an able and excellent discourse. The plan of our publication forbids our noticing single sermons, unless there be something special in their character, either as advocates of error, or as uncommonly valuable for the defence of the truth. The latter consideration weighs with us in the present case. The discourse before us contains sound, scriptural principles, exhibited with much clearness and vigour. The occasion on which it was delivered, and the audience to which it was addressed, were both highly interesting; and the author has acquitted himself in a manner worthy of his responsible station, as a minister of Christ, and the head of an important Christian seminary.

President Day does not tell us that, in this discourse, he had in view any particular class of theologians. Neither is it for *us* to make any particular application of his sound and reasonable doctrine. We will only venture to say, that when the principle is once adopted, that the truths of revelation are to be tried and judged at the bar of philosophy, the fatal wooden horse, big with the potentiality of destruction, is again admitted within the walls of *Troy*. The radical principle of Socinianism, or rather, (if there be any material difference,) of Deism, is, undoubtedly, adopted, and will, with unerring certainty, in due time, bring forth its appropriate fruits.

Art. X.—*The Shorter Catechism of the Presbyterian Church, briefly explained.* By *Robert M. Laird*, Minister of the Gospel. 12mo. pp. 149. *Princess Anne, Maryland*, 1831.

There is much to be said in favour of pastors preparing judicious manuals of religious instruction, to be circulated

among the people of their charge. If, indeed, they can find that which they entirely approve, already prepared to their hand, there are strong reasons for its adoption, because the multiplication of books, merely for the sake of multiplying them, cannot be considered as desirable. Yet there can be little doubt, that a minister, who is much respected and beloved among his parishioners, will be able to introduce a production which bears his own name, into almost every family in his parish, when, perhaps, a work of superior value, from a stranger, long since deceased, would not be purchased by one individual in ten, among his whole flock. We were, therefore, glad to see Mr. *Laird's* manual. Having confidence in his piety, good sense, and solid information, we expected to find him acquitting himself honourably in the field of authorship. We have not been disappointed.

Mr. *Laird* has comprised within a small compass, a large and valuable amount of instruction, concerning the faith and order of the Christian Church: instruction which we think, cannot fail of being useful to those young people into whose hands it may come. We hope it will be circulated far beyond the bounds of the author's pastoral charge.

We have very little to say concerning this manual in the way of stricture. Here and there a turn of expression occurs, which, we think, might be altered for the better. But this may be said concerning most human productions that we read. There is one subject, however, which Mr. L's mode of treating by no means satisfies us. We refer to what he says on the subject of *human ability*, and of the distinction between *natural and moral inability*, in explaining the answer to the 82d question of the Catechism. We cannot here enter on the discussion of this subject. We will only say, that if Mr. L. will take the trouble to read what we have said in relation to it, in the last number of this miscellany, he will see our views of that delicate and difficult point in polemic theology, and, of course, what animadversions we should probably be disposed to make on his statement, if we had time or space to offer them at length.

We hope he will correct the 97th page, in conformity with this suggestion, when he revises the work for a second impression; and then we shall be glad to hear of as many successive editions being called for and read, as the Christian enterprise of the author and his friends, can throw into circulation.

V.—*A Tribute to the Memory of the late Jeremiah Evarts, Esquire, Secretary of the American Board of Commissioners of Foreign Missions, delivered and published at the request of the Executive Committee of the Auxiliary Foreign Missionary Society of New York and Brooklyn.* By Gardiner Spring, D. D. Pastor of the Brick Presbyterian Church in the city of New York. New York, Slight & Robinson. 8vo. pp. 32. 1832.

To say that *Jeremiah Evarts* was a great and good man, is to express the truth with the strictest moderation. There was, indeed, in his character, both intellectual and moral, much of the real sublime. The longer and the more intimately we knew him, and the more closely we have scrutinized his history and his end, the more deeply have we been impressed with the vigour and comprehensiveness of his mind; the largeness of his views; the solidity of his judgment; the simplicity and depth of his piety; and the peculiar devotedness of his consecration to God. The loss of such a man to the missionary cause, is indeed, great—incalculably great—we should say, irreparable—did we not recollect, that He who sits as King upon the holy hill of Zion, is able, even of the stones of the streets, to raise up instruments to accomplish his work; and did we not also recollect, that even this servant of God, though dead, *yet speaketh*, in a manner which may be eminently blessed to thousands; nay, did we not know that he may yet be made, by the circumstances and manner of his death, like *Sampson* of old, the means of carrying into the camp of the enemy, a degree of dismay, and unto the armies of the living God, a hallowed impulse, greater than was accomplished by all the eminent and persevering services of his life.

In selecting Dr. *Spring* to offer a “Tribute to the Memory” of such a man, the choice was happy. The early and intimate acquaintance of the eulogist with the subject of his eulogy; his connection with the Board of which Mr. *Evarts* was the devoted organ; and his large participation in that missionary spirit which shone with so much lustre in the faithful and able secretary; rendered him a very proper representative of those by whom the melancholy task was assigned him. And worthily, we think, has he acquitted himself of that task. The pamphlet before us does honour to his taste as a writer, to his heart as a Christian, to his zeal in the mis-

sionary cause, and to his fidelity to all the claims of friendship for departed worth.

The decease of Mr. *Evarts* ought to be regarded, and to prove, an *era* in the history of foreign missions. In the view of such a bereavement, every friend of this precious cause ought to consider himself as called to the exercise of greatly augmented zeal, prayer, and effort; to feel that there is now more to be done by *himself* than ever before; and to resolve, that, whatever others may do, *he* will, from this hour, gird himself to new devotedness and resolution in the work; give with new liberality; plead with all his neighbours, and especially his fellow Christians, for their aid in the work with new importunity; and redouble all the means by which he may have hitherto contributed to the conversion of the world to Christ.

VI.—*A Sermon preached on occasion of the death of Jeremiah Evarts, esquire, Corresponding Secretary of the American Board of Commissioners of Foreign Missions. By Leonard Woods, D. D. Andover, Massachusetts.*

This discourse forms the number of the "National Preacher," for August, 1831. The venerable author, after an appropriate introduction, proceeds immediately to the consideration of the character of the excellent and lamented secretary: and in executing this task, he dwells less on the *history of Mr. Evarts*, than *Dr. Spring*, and rather more in detail on some points connected with his intellectual, moral and official portrait. *Dr. Woods* has exhibited the subject of his eulogy in a just, clear, instructive, and truly Christian light. We think no one who has the least portion of spiritual life and feeling can read it without impression and profit.

It ought not to escape the notice of those who peruse this discourse, that its excellent author is, and has long been, a member of the "Prudential Committee" of the American Board of Commissioners, and, of course, placed in a situation which called him to much intimate intercourse with Mr. *Evarts*, and gave him the best of all opportunities to make an adequate estimate of his talents, piety, zeal, and untiring official fidelity. He is a competent witness, and very unequivocally has he given his testimony.

VII.—*Letters on Practical Subjects, to a Daughter.*  
By *William Buell Sprague, D. D.* 12mo. New York,  
1831.

This is a new and improved edition of a work first published in the year 1822, without the author's name. It consists of a series of Letters, actually addressed to an amiable and promising daughter, whom a distressing bereavement, at an early period of her youth, had rendered motherless. These Letters were originally intended to remain in manuscript, as a private legacy to the beloved child to whom they were addressed. Unexpected circumstances, however, led to their publication. And such is the public estimation of their value, that the author has been induced to yield to the demand of the religious community for a second edition, with which he has, very properly, we think, connected his name.

Dr. *Sprague*, in this publication, has made to his young female readers a present of sterling value. He judged well in guarding against too great an enlargement of the volume, which would have very much contracted the sphere of its circulation; and, at the same time, he has made it sufficiently comprehensive to embrace most of the topics which it was desirable to have discussed in such a work, and has treated them at as great length as was adapted to answer his purpose. The whole is remarkably smooth, attractive, and beautiful in style; rich and weighty in thought; and abounds in counsels which we can safely recommend to our daughters, and to all with whom our opinion may have any weight.

In reviewing a large work, by the same truly respectable writer, in our last number, we offered some remarks on the importance of every thing which has a bearing on the intellectual and moral character of the rising generation. We hardly need say, that our impression of the vital importance of this whole subject is by no means diminished by further reflection. On the contrary, the longer we contemplate the subject of the education of youth, and especially of the *female* part of the community, the more clearly we see involved in it the most precious interests of society. It has often been said, and said truly, in reference to the mighty influence of the clerical character on any given population, "Like priests, like people." In the same spirit, we should say, without hesitation, "Like *woman*, like people." Where FEMALE EDUCATION is wisely conducted (and without the prevalence of the knowledge and spirit of EVANGELICAL CHRISTIANITY,



without, in a word, making the BIBLE the basis of the whole, it cannot be so conducted) society will be comparatively pure; the principles and institutions of benevolence will flourish; the Church of Christ will prosper; efforts for spreading the glorious Gospel will multiply and triumph; and all the interests of civil and religious society will be lifted up. We feel not a little indebted to Dr. *Sprague* for his truly valuable contributions to this result. We hope the "Letters" before us, as well as his "Lectures to Young People," will be extensively read, and produce benefits corresponding with their high excellence.

VIII.—*Advice to a Young Christian, on the importance of aiming at an elevated standard of Piety.* By a *Village Pastor; with an Introductory Essay, by the Rev. Dr. Alexander, of Princeton, New Jersey.* 18mo. pp. 196, second edition, New York, G. C. & H. Carvill, 1830.

The excellent advices contained in this volume, are introduced to the reader by the Reverend Professor *Alexander*, in an instructive, and highly interesting essay—"On the nature of Vital Piety; its sameness in all ages and countries; and its various aspects in different circumstances." Had the "Village Pastor" done nothing more than draw forth this "Introductory Essay," he would have conferred a favour on the religious public. But while he has done this, he has also added a truly acceptable and valuable favour from his own pen, contained in thirty "Letters," which treat on a variety of subjects, corresponding with the general title, and well adapted to instruct and edify.

XI.—1. *The Constitution and Laws of the Board of Education of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States.*

2. *Circular Letter of the Board of Education of the Presbyterian Church.*

We hail the appearance of these publications. They announce the re-organization of the Assembly's Board of Education, under an improved system of rules, and a new plan of agency, which promise, we think, with the Divine blessing, entire success, and eminent usefulness. The principles on which this Board has resolved to conduct its operations in future, appear to us decisively preferable to those of any other

similar Board, with which we are acquainted. Its *funds*, drawn from the pockets of Presbyterians, are not to be expended in training young men for the ministry for all Protestant denominations indiscriminately; but are devoted to sustaining candidates for the Presbyterian Church. The system of *unqualified loans* is rejected, and in its place the following happy medium is adopted. Every applicant for aid is taught to consider himself as standing in a relation to the Board, acting as the organ and representative of the Church, similar to that of a *son* to a *parent*. The aid furnished him is not considered either, strictly, as a *pecuniary loan*, nor yet as an *elemosynary donation*. But yet, if the son, in the course of Providence, should ever be *able* to make a return in kind, and the parent should *need* such return, the son will be bound, not in form of law, but in *conscience*, and on *Christian principle*, to make the return; in other words, he will be morally bound to do all in his power to extend to others, in equal need, that aid which was extended to himself. Nevertheless, if any young man should *prefer* receiving an appropriation *as a loan*, and to give his written obligation therefor, he may be accommodated agreeably to his wishes. All returns of appropriations are to be made to the auxiliary Presbyteries, from which they were received: thus a large accumulation of funds by any one Board or Body is effectually prevented. Each Presbytery is at perfect liberty to send its own students to such academies, colleges and seminaries, as it pleases, without any control, by the Executive Committee of the Board. The *maximum* of annual appropriations to beneficiaries under the care of this Board is, in no case, to exceed one hundred dollars. The *minimum* is to be limited by the discretion of the Executive Committee. The Board, moreover, has felt itself warranted in giving notice that *it will refuse no applicant for want of funds*; in other words, it engages to receive and sustain every youth who makes application for assistance, and who comes adequately recommended. And we are happy to add, the Board assures the public in its "Circular Letter," that the "principles of the constitution under which it acts, as well as the pledge given at its re-organization," render it impossible that the Board should become the organ of any exclusive party in the Church. "Our field," say they, "is the *Presbyterian Church*, in reference to *the world*. Our desire and our aim shall steadily be, to unite in this common cause the real

friends of the Church and her institutions, amidst those shades of party which exist among us, *so far as they consist with a support of our venerable standards, and the essential order of the Church.* We say from the heart, "in things necessary, unity; in things not necessary, liberty; in all things, charity." This is a noble recommencement; and we cannot doubt that the intelligence and piety of the Presbyterian Church will sustain the enterprize.

## Select List of Recent Publications.

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