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- ART. I.—1. *The English Bible.* A sermon by the Rev. John W. Nevin, of the Western Theological Seminary. Published in the Presbyterian Preacher for Jan. 1836.
2. *The History, Character, and Importance of the received English version of the Bible.* A sermon by the Rev. William Adams, New York. Published in the National Preacher for Oct. 1835.

IT is now three centuries since Miles Coverdale completed his great plan of translating and publishing the entire Bible in the English language. The sermons before us are in commemoration of this interesting event. They are sensible, well written discourses, on an important topic, and richly merit the pains that have been taken to give them an extensive circulation. From the celebration of the first English version, the authors have taken occasion to direct the attention of the public to the history and merits of the one now in use. Though very unlike in their style, they are equally admirers of this noble monument of the learning and piety of our fathers, and have done a valuable service to the cause of truth by presenting in such a forcible manner its claims to the confidence of the community. The ripe scholarship evinced by one of these sermons, the earnestness of the other, and the good sense and piety of both, will cause them, we

trust, to be very generally read, and thus to be the means of correcting the erroneous opinions that are prevalent to some extent on the subject of which they treat.

These sermons are the more acceptable at this time, because a disposition has been manifested of late to disparage the received translation of the scriptures. From a contemporary journal* we learn that the Rev. Dr. Jonathan Homer, of Newton, Massachusetts, has been some forty years "seeking to improve the text of the common version." We are not entirely certain that we understand what is meant by this *improved text*. In the ordinary acceptation of that term, a perfect text of any author is one which gives the ipsissima verba of the original autograph. In no department of letters have more acuteness and industry been displayed than in the collation, for this purpose, of different editions of ancient authors sacred and profane. Labours of this kind are of the utmost importance, especially in sacred literature; and their necessity has by no means ceased since the introduction of the art of printing. The utmost vigilance cannot prevent some misprints from creeping into a work that has gone through so many hundred editions as our common version of the Bible: and each mistake of this kind is not confined, as in transmission by manuscript, to a single copy or to the few which may be transcribed from it, but is perpetuated through many thousands of copies. To remedy this evil, Dr. Blaney undertook near the close of the last century to publish a text which should be perfectly accurate, and might be safely followed, in all future editions, as a standard. This was issued in 1769 under the direction of the Vice-Chancellor, and delegates of the Clarendon press, at Oxford. But notwithstanding the extreme care and labor bestowed upon this edition, there have since been discovered in it no less than one hundred and sixteen errors, some of them of importance. The most perfect edition of our translation is said to be that given in 1806 by Eyre and Strahan, printers to his Majesty. But one erratum has as yet been discovered in it. It is, therefore, probably the nearest approximation that will ever be made to an *immaculate text*.

* In the Biblical Repository for 1835, is an article on the subject of English versions of the scriptures generally, to which is appended an extract of five or six pages with the following notice by the editor, "At the close of this article, we are happy to present the following communication from the Rev. Dr. Jonathan Homer, of Newton, Massachusetts, a gentleman who has given long and indefatigable attention to this subject, and who is more intimately acquainted with it, than any other individual in the country."

If, however, Dr. Homer has authenticated copies of all the principal editions, and has in other respects the means and the abilities for giving a more thorough revision than that of Dr. Blaney, or a more accurate print than that of Eyre and Strahan, we would be the last in the world to discourage him from his long cherished purpose of "improving the text of our common version."

But, if we may judge from the materials which he has collected for his work, this is not precisely what he contemplates. His attention has been directed not to the collecting of different editions of the common version, but of copies of the different versions. Those to which he has had access, as detailed by him through several not very intelligible pages, are Matthew's Bible of 1537, Cranmer's of 1539, the Great Bible of 1541, a New Testament dated 1552, a Coverdale's Tindal of 1551 or 1561, the Bishops' Bible of 1568, and the common version made in 1611. Each of these versions, he says, renders particular passages correctly, and in accordance with the views of *the great modern critics*. His plan, therefore, appears to be, to select from each version those passages which have been rightly translated, and to combine them in one perfect whole which shall throughout express the exact meaning of the original, and be in good English idiom. That this is what he means by "seeking to improve the text of the common version" will be manifest from the concluding paragraph of this remarkable communication.

"Each translation has *its special good renderings, corresponding with the best modern critics*. The Bible of 1537, best agrees with Gesenius, Stuart, and the richest portions [those taken from other authors?] of Rosenmüller. It was executed by the three first Hebrew, Greek, and English scholars, and thorough Germans, ever known among the several translators. The New Testament of Rogers' Bible 1537, and Coverdale's Tindal 1551, and Tindal's first Testament of 1526, are in English idiom, and they are executed most in conformity to the latest and best biblical critics. *From the whole, with the consulted aid of more than two hundred critical works, including the sources of each translation, I have long been seeking to improve the text of the common version.*"

What Dr. Homer proposes, then, is not by a collation of the different editions of our translation to give an improved text of the same, but, by comparing different translations and by various other "consulted aids," to give *a new improved translation*. The ground for this bold attempt, as well as the manner in which it has been conducted, will be evident from the following passages.

"I have employed myself, for a portion of eleven years, in collating and comparing each of these Bibles and Testaments with each other, with the originals, with the principal versions and comments and lexicographers of the three last centuries, to the present date. *I have compared them also with the notes which*

I began to collect, at the age of seventeen, from the books of Harvard College library, and which have been accumulating for fifty-eight years, following my collegiate course. Prompted by the conscientious religious motive of the venerated, learned and indefatigable German, Bengel (obit 1752), for about forty years, I have paid critical attention to various readings in both Testaments, of Hebrew and Greek text, and of ancient respected versions, and have examined the authorities for and against them individually. I have endeavoured, particularly, to mark those in which the old English versions and the orthodox, or those of James's creed among the learned are agreed, with few or no exceptions. I have found as the result, that the Cranmer Bible, the Bishops' Bible, and the King James's Bible were not independently rendered. King James's Bible was under the control of the very arbitrary King James and his Pimote, men of strong prejudice and of no Hebrew, if any Greek learning—mere Latin scholars. **IT IS THROUGHOUT A VERSION DRAWN FROM OTHER VERSIONS AND COMMENTS, NOT EXCEEDING TWENTY.** It was carried on with the felt early loss of their two greatest scholars, Hebrew Professor Lively, and the President Dr. Reynolds. These two Bibles [the Cranmer Bible, and the Great Bible] differing little from each other, I have also collated in all their parts, and traced them successively to their sources—*other than the original.* *So I affirm of King James's Bible, THIS IS IN NO PART A NEW TRANSLATION TAKEN DIRECTLY FROM THE ORIGINALS.* Those parts of King James's Bible, which were drawn from Luther, were not taken by them from the German Bible, but by the early translators, from whom they borrowed the English version. This I have every where traced to the English, French, Latin or German versions, which preceded it. *This circumstance I found proved by a full exploring of the New Testament in 1828.* It has since been confirmed in every book of the Old Testament."

When such statements as these are sent forth to the world as the oracles of wisdom, when Dr. Webster's *expurgated* edition is recommended to the public by the high authority of the Faculty of Yale College, when even the Temperance Society cannot be advocated or the gospel preached without such constant parade of modern criticism and such frequent corrections of the received translation as to shake the confidence of the people in its accuracy, we hail with pleasure the publication of these sermons by Mr. Nevin and Mr. Adams, and hope they will go far to counteract what we cannot but consider erroneous and dangerous opinions.

We had supposed the masterly discussions consequent upon the publication of the extravagant assertions of Mr. John Bellamy in 1818,* and the overwhelming array of

* The sources of information on this subject, and on the subject of English translations generally, are Fuller's Church history of Great Britain; Lewis's history of English Biblical translations, prefixed to his folio edition of Wickliffe's New Testament, 1731; Johnson's historical account of the several English translations of the Bible, originally published in 8vo. 1730, and reprinted in the 3d vol. of Watson's Theological Tracts; Newcombe's View of the English Biblical Translations 1792; Horne's Introduction, vol. 3d; Mr. John Bellamy's new Translation and notes, 1818—21; London Quarterly Review, vols. xix and xxiii: Eclectic Review, vol. 10, N. S.; Antijacobin Review, vol. liv; Todd's Vindication of our authorized Translation, and Translators, 1819;

evidence internal and historical then brought forward by Whittaker, Todd, Lee, Hurwitz and Townley, and by repeated articles in the London Quarterly, Antijacobin, and Eclectic Reviews, had put the question of the competency and fidelity of King James's translators forever at rest. We are not a little surprised then at such an unqualified impeachment of both by one who is introduced to the public as better qualified to speak on the subject than any other individual in the country, and who from his tone and manner evidently would not think the eulogy misplaced. Our translators themselves say of their version that it is "translated out of the original tongues." But, Dr. Homer has discovered that this is a falsehood—that our version was drawn from "sources other than the original"—that it "*is in no part a new translation taken directly from the original.*" He is so certain of this that he has even given the precise date of the discovery, "in a full exploring of the New Testament in 1828." And he not only affirms that their work was not as they say, "translated out of the original tongues," but argues that it is impossible it should be so, they being "under the control of the very arbitrary James and his Primate, men of strong prejudice, and of no Hebrew, if any Greek learning—mere Latin scholars." That is to say, the translators have published a deliberate falsehood on the very title-page of their great work: and either falsehood, or less information concerning them than we now possess, must be charged upon those of their contemporaries who have represented them as the most learned, pious, and venerable company that were ever united in any one great literary undertaking. The more we consider these assertions, the greater is our amazement. There is no fact in history better ascertained than, that the men called upon in 1607 to translate the Holy Scriptures were men eminently qualified for their task, and that they did translate directly from the original Greek and Hebrew. Where they found any passages already correctly translated in any of the existing versions, conveying the exact idea of

Whittaker's Historical and Critical Inquiry into the Interpretation of the Hebrew Scriptures 1819, and supplement, 1820; Prof. Lee's Letter to Mr. Bellamy, 1821; Hymen Hurwitz' *Vindiciae Hebraicae*, 1821. All these between 1818 and 1821 were called forth by the misrepresentations in the Introduction and notes of Mr. Bellamy's translation. For information respecting the particular lives of the different translators, the reader is referred to Townley's *Illustrations of Biblical Literature*, and Chalmers' *Biographical Dictionary*, unless he is disposed to glean for himself from Fuller, Camden, Antony Wood, &c.

the original, and in good English, they did not of course wantonly change the phrase, and thus give unnecessary offence to the people, all whose prejudices would be in favour of that to which their ears had been accustomed. We have always admired the wisdom of that part of the King's instructions relating to this subject. The translation then most commonly in use was to be followed with as little alteration as was consistent with fidelity to the original. When it was found to vary from the original, and the true meaning had been expressed by any one of the earlier translations which were still in use, they were then to adopt its phraseology. Their compliance with this part of their regulations contributed we doubt not in no small degree to that unparalleled popularity which this translation almost immediately received, and has to this day retained; a popularity so great that all the preceding translations, though of acknowledged excellence, have gradually passed into disuse, and are now so rare that the possessor of some four or five of them trumpets it over the land as a literary curiosity. In adopting this course, those men did what any man of sense would now do who should attempt to give a new translation of the Bible. They did precisely what Dr. Homer himself proposes to do. They adopted the "special good renderings" of each existing translation, and where they found none such they made one. This was, in full justness of speech, giving a new translation; and so is what Dr. Homer calls "seeking to improve the text of the common version." The thing aimed at in both cases is precisely the same. The only difference is, that in the present case, it is one, irresponsible, unknown individual who takes upon himself the important office, without any urgent necessity, unsolicited by any public body, and untrammelled by any established rules. In the other case, it was a numerous body of the most illustrious scholars, maintained at the public expense, enjoying the public confidence, and summoned to the work by the Head of a mighty nation hungering for the pure word of God.

The translation of the Scriptures is not a work to be entrusted, except from imperative necessity, to any one man however gigantic may be his attainments or his genius. *Dormitat aliquando Homerus.* Though he may give a "special good rendering" in one place, he may give a special bad one in another. Hence the number of translators employed by King James adds greatly to the authority of their work. What is overlooked or omitted by one, may be ob-

served or supplied by another. Although fifty-four men who knew nothing of Greek or Hebrew might not have the authority of one who did; yet when, as in the case of our translators, all of them were men of learning and ability, and some of them pre-eminently and proverbially so, the largeness of the number does give a security from mistake which nothing else can. Every one has his peculiarities of character and opinion which fit him for some particular duty and disqualify him to a certain extent for every other. The man best suited to translate the Psalms of David would not be the one we should select to translate Paul's Epistles, nor either of these to translate those parts relating to the details of Solomon's temple, or of the Levitical ritual. Great attention was paid to this in allotting to the several translators their respective portions, each receiving that for which he was best qualified. By this means all the advantages, arising from division of labour in the execution of the details, were secured; while by another admirable regulation, by which each man's work when finished had to be submitted to the inspection and judgment of all the rest, individual peculiarities were prevented from running into extravagance, and harmony preserved throughout the whole.

The time in which our translation was made, was peculiarly fitted to secure one which would become, as it has, a common standard. At the first outbreak of the reformation, the errors of the church of Rome were not all immediately dissipated. Like the mists of the morning, one error after another gradually disappeared before the steadily increasing light of day. It was a century at least before the Reformed Churches were fully purified from that polluting superstition which had equally defiled the doctrines, the rites, and the language of religion. The exasperation, likewise, consequent upon the first separation from the Church of Rome, was exceedingly great on both sides, and did not soon subside. Had our version, then, been made at an earlier period it could not so admirably have escaped the opposite dangers, of being in some parts unintentionally tinctured with anti-Papal prejudice, and of savouring in others of the still existing leaven of Mother Church. The agitated waters of the Reformation had subsided, and the pure fountain of truth was left undefiled by the pollutions both of its turbid and its stagnant state.

It was too that precise time when the zeal of Protestants had ceased to be zeal against the Pope, and had not begun to

be zeal against each other. Protestantism was still to a great extent one and homogeneous. The different sects into which it was divided were sufficiently jealous of each other to prevent the improper favouring of any one set of opinions, and yet not so widely apart as to forbid all co-operation or concurrence. The lines of demarcation were not so strong and well defined, nor the barriers so impassable as they have since become. The work, therefore, is not sectarian in its origin or its character. It is in the strictest sense a national translation. It is the acknowledged and established standard of every denomination except the Roman Catholics and some few Unitarians. No translation now made could ever become this. The Presbyterians, the Associate Reformed, the Dutch Reformed, the Lutherans, the Congregationalists, the Methodist Episcopalians, the Protestant Episcopalians, the Baptists, and the Quakers, of this country; the Church of England; the Church of Scotland; and the various bodies of dissenters in Great Britain, and elsewhere, speaking the English language, will assuredly never unite for this purpose; and a new translation put forth by any one denomination will never be adopted by the rest. If Dr. Homer thinks that all these will lay aside their sectarian jealousies, and that more than thirty millions of people will free themselves of their deep-rooted prejudices in favour of Bible phrases to which their ears have been accustomed, out of respect to his select "special good renderings," his opinion differs greatly from ours, as to the attractiveness of an "improved text of the common version." We cannot persuade ourselves that any such improvement would gain the public confidence, even though made from the accumulated "notes" of fifty-eight years "with the consulted aid of more than two hundred critical works," and agreeing "with Gesenius, Stuart, and the richest parts of Rosenmüller."

The age in which our translation was made, was pre-eminently a learned age. In science and the arts, that in which we live is, we admit, greatly beyond its predecessors. But so far as learning and scholarship is concerned, we do affirm there never has been an age equal to it. There never was an age distinguished by so many illustrious scholars in every department of classical and biblical learning. Where do we go for profound original information on Latin, Greek or Oriental Literature? Where are the great storehouses from which our modern bookmakers draw their Lexicons, their Grammars, their Commentaries? Was Melancthon "a mere

Latin scholar?" Did Roger Ascham know nothing of Greek? Were Erpenius, and Golius, and Pococke, unacquainted with Arabic? Was Hebrew a dead letter to such men as Buxtorf, Morinus, Pagninus, Arias Montanus, Tremellius, Junius, Beza, Castell, Walton, and Pool? Where is the public Library three-fourths of whose volumes on sacred philology are not dated in the 16th and 17th centuries? We find in this period among the magnates of Oriental and Classical learning, besides those already mentioned, such names as Budaeus, Erasmus, Turnebus, the Scaligers, P. Manutius, Aldus Manutius, the younger Casaubon, Fagius, the Morels, Gesner, Fabricius, Morus, Glass, Capellus, Grotius, Usher, Lightfoot, Montfaucon, Vossius, Heinsius (father and son), Bochart, Meursius, Robert and Henry Stephens, all of them scholars of the very highest order; to say nothing of the incomparable divines, and illustrious authors of every sort and in every nation who flourished during the same period. Now though all these were not living at the time our translation was made, yet a majority of them were contemporary with the translators; and they show the general character of the age, that it was the age of great men, especially of great scholars. The eighteenth century excelled it in science and works of taste. But for men of profound erudition, beyond all contradiction there never was such a period since the foundation of the world. The turn which the Reformation took, and the great controversies between the Papacy and its opposers, appealing at every step to the original languages of scripture, made Greek and Hebrew what politics is now, the great absorbing topic of the world. Critical editions of the Bible and of Classical authors were published on a scale and in a style utterly unparalleled. The immense Thesaurus of the Greek language by Henry Stephens, the Rabbinical Lexicon of Buxtorf, the Arabic Lexicon of Golius, the Hierozoicon of Bochart, the twelve folio volumes of Meursius on Grecian Antiquities, are but specimens of the thorough-going manner in which the scholars of that day handled every subject which they attempted. It is impossible even to glance at their productions without a profound admiration of their scholarship, only equalled by our amazement at the effrontery which would call it in question. Their very printers were learned men. Even their books of devotion are so crowded with Greek and Hebrew that many a sciolist of these days could not read a page in them without his Lexicon and Grammar, who yet would not blush to call

himself a scholar, or to attempt with some "consulted aids" to make a new translation of the Bible.

In England especially the learned languages became so much a matter of universal concern, that acquaintance with them was considered one of the accomplishments of the drawing-room. Fuller tells us it was one of the elegant pastimes of fashionable ladies, and of the daughters of the principal nobility to translate select passages from the original scriptures for the inspection of their friends. Queen Elizabeth we know spoke familiarly Greek and Latin. And it is said, though we know not on what authority, that some of the old Puritan divines were accustomed to use their Hebrew Bibles and Greek Testaments at their family devotion morning and evening.* Indeed so proverbial were the leading Reformers in Great Britain, whether conformists or non-conformists, for their learning, that the Romanists, when no longer able to compete with them, endeavoured to ridicule them as mere scholars. Dr. George Hakewell, a contemporary, in a work first published in 1627, says "This latter age hath herein so far excelled, that all the great learned scholars, who have of late risen, especially if they adhered to the Reformed Churches, have been by friars and such like people, in a kind of scorn termed *grammarians*. But these grammarians are they who presented us with so many *exact translations out of Hebrew and Greek into Latin*, and

* This was originally the custom in Harvard College. "The President inspected the manners of the students thus entertained in the College, and unto his morning and evening prayers in the hall, joined an exposition upon the chapters which they [the students] read out of Hebrew into Greek from the Old Testament in the morning, and out of English into Greek from the New Testament in the evening." "The Fellows resident on the place became Tutors to the several classes, and after they had instructed them in the Hebrew language, led them through all the liberal arts." "When he [Mr. Nathaniel Mather] was but twelve years old, he was admitted into the College by strict examiners: and many months after this passed not, before he had accurately gone over all the Old Testament in Hebrew, as well as the New in Greek. He commenced bachelor at the age of sixteen, and in the act entertained the auditory with an Hebrew oration, which gave a good account of the academical affairs among the ancient Jews. Indeed the Hebrew language was become so familiar with him, as if (to use the expression which one had in an ingenious elegy upon his death) he had apprehended it should quickly become the only language." When he took his second degree three years afterward, besides more than ordinary attainments in other branches of learning, "he had likewise made no small proficiency in Rabbinick learning; and the questions referring unto the scriptures, which philology is conversant about, came under a very critical notice with him." He died shortly after, aged but nineteen years and some months. See Cotton Mather's Magnalia, Vol. II. pages 9 and 133 of the Hartford Edition.

again out of Latin into other languages. To which may be added the exquisite help of Dictionaries, Lexicons, and Grammars, in this latter age, beyond the precedent, not only for the easier learning of the Western languages, Latin, Italian, Spanish, and French; but especially *the Eastern, the Hebrew, the Chaldee, the Syriac, the Arabic.* Of all the ancient Fathers, but only two (among the Latins, St. Jerome, and Origen among the Grecians) are found to have excelled in the Oriental languages; *this last century having afforded more skilful men in that way than the other fifteen since Christ.*" Now is it probable that, only twenty years before this testimony was written, the monarch of an enlightened nation, himself proud of being thought a learned man, and ambitious to effect a version of the scriptures that might be quoted as the great glory of his reign, should not be able, out of fifty-four of the principal scholars in the kingdom, including the Hebrew and Greek Professors of the Universities and the most distinguished heads and fellows of the several Colleges, to obtain any learned and honest enough to "translate directly from the originals?" But laying aside all probabilities, what are the known facts of the case as recorded by unquestioned contemporary historians? Who were the venerable men called by King James to this celebrated undertaking? Many of them, it is true, with the unobtrusiveness of genuine scholars never pushed themselves much into public notice; and the most we know of their individual history is a mere catalogue of their works, and their preferences, gathered from public records, and from the incidental notices scattered through the authors of that period. But of others we have full and detailed information. And of all, we know enough to be fully borne out in the assertion before made, that a more learned and pious assembly the world never saw united in any one literary undertaking.

Some of the names about to be introduced are so familiar to scholars, that it would seem necessary to apologize for dwelling upon them at all. The extracts, however, which we have given from one "who is more intimately acquainted with the subject than any other individual in the country," show that a somewhat detailed account of these men is not, as we had supposed, entirely a work of supererogation.

WILLIAM BEDWELL, was one of the most eminent orientologists of his time. His fame for Arabic learning was so great that he was resorted to by Erpenius, during his residence in England in 1606, for directions in his oriental stu-

dies. He was Arabic tutor also to the great Dr. Pococke. He commenced the preparation of a general Arabic Lexicon in 3 vols. folio, and having proceeded in the work for several years, he went to Holland for the greater perfection of it by a collation of the papers of Joseph Scaliger who had made a collection of twenty thousand words in that language. In consequence of the vastness of the design, and the slowness with which he proceeded in it, he was anticipated in the publication by the Lexicon of Golius, the completeness of which made his labours abortive. Eight or nine volumes of the manuscripts of this great work were employed by Castell in the compilation of his unrivalled Polyglot Lexicon. Bedwell also commenced a Persian Dictionary which he did not live to complete. He published an edition of all the Epistles of John in Arabic with a Latin translation, which was printed in 4to in 1612 at the press of Raphelengius. In 1615 he published another work entitled "a discovery of the importance of Mahomet and of the Koran;" to which is appended a very curious illustration of oriental etymology and history called "the Arabian Trudgman." He left at his death many Arabic manuscripts to the University of Cambridge with numerous notes upon them, and a fount of types for printing them.

MILES SMITH is remarkable as having been the penman of the "Translators' Preface." Such was his profound knowledge, especially of the languages, that he was called "a very walking Library." He applied himself from early youth with great assiduity to the reading of the classics, and was very extensively read in the Greek and Latin Fathers. He was accurately versed also in Hebrew, Chaldee, Syriac, and Arabic; and was well acquainted with Rabbinical literature generally. Having taken successively the several Academic degrees at the University of Oxford, he was finally promoted, as a reward for his eminent services in the translation of the Bible, to the see of Gloucester, which he continued to adorn till his death.

RICHARD BRETT "was," says Anthony Wood, "a person famous in his time for learning as well as piety, skilled and versed to a criticism in the Latin, Greek, Hebrew, Chaldaic, Arabic, and Ethiopic tongues. He was a most vigilant pastor, a diligent preacher of God's word, a liberal benefactor to the poor, a faithful friend, and a good neighbour."

JOHN BOYSE was the son of a clergyman, by whom he was taught the first rudiments of learning, particularly of He-

brew. His mother, whose memory he greatly venerated, appears to have been a woman of piety and information. At the beginning of a Common Prayer Book he wrote: "This was my mother's book; my good mother's book. She had read the Bible over twelve times, and the book of martyrs twice, besides other books not a few." With an excellent capacity, and under such parents, his progress in knowledge was considerable, and before he was five years old he had read the whole of the Bible; and before he was six could write Hebrew in an elegant hand. At fourteen he was admitted of St. John's College, Cambridge, where he distinguished himself by his knowledge of Greek; and applied so diligently to his studies, that we are told he would go to the University Library in summer, at four o'clock in the morning, and remain till eight in the evening without intermission. Happening to have the small-pox when he was elected Fellow, to preserve his seniority he caused himself to be carried, wrapped up in blankets, to be admitted. He was ten years chief Greek lecturer in his College, and read every day. He voluntarily read a Greek lecture for some years at four in the morning in his own chamber, which was frequented by many of the Fellows. Having received several ecclesiastical preferments, he died in 1643 in the 84th year of his age, leaving behind him a great many manuscripts, some of which were afterwards printed.

SIR HENRY SAVILLE was a learned man and a great benefactor of learning. Born to an ample fortune, he spent it all (upon the loss of his only son) in the advancement of knowledge. He founded two Professorships at Oxford which are still called by his name. He published at vast expense many valuable works, among others the splendid edition of Chrysostom's Works of 1613, in 8 vols. folio, which alone cost him no less than eight thousand pounds. His various contributions of money, of rare books and manuscripts, of founts of type to public presses and Libraries, caused him to be considered as the great Maecenas of the age. He was at one time Greek Tutor to Queen Elizabeth; and James had such a regard for him, that he would have given him almost any preferment. Saville however declined, accepting only the honour of knighthood. He was Fellow, and for thirty years Warden of Merton College, in which station he acquired great reputation. He was afterwards chosen Provost of Eton College, and greatly increased its fame by the learned men with which he filled it. The kind of scholarship which

he aimed at and patronized may be judged of from this: "*Give me*" he used to say "*the plodding student. If I would look for wits, I would go to Newgate. There be wits.*"

ANDREW DOWNES was one of the learned men whose notes accompany Sir Henry Saville's famous edition of Chrysostom's works. He was Regius Professor of Greek in Cambridge University, and was accounted one of the best scholars of his time.

LAUNCELOT ANDREWS made such early proficiency in knowledge as secured for him promotion almost immediately after his entrance as a student at Cambridge. When thirty-four years of age he was chosen Master of Pembroke Hall, in which station he continued for sixteen years. After that he was made successively Bishop of Chichester, Ely, and Winchester. He took a conspicuous part in the conference at Hampton Court; and was remarkable for the seriousness of his manner, "his gravity awing King James, who refrained from that mirth and liberty, in the presence of this Prelate, which otherwise he assumed to himself." He was a most indefatigable student. The annual visit which he paid, while at the University, to his parents at Easter, was always spent in the acquisition of some new language or art with which he was previously unacquainted. By his unremitting attention to study he rose to be one of the most distinguished scholars of his age. Fuller says of him: "The world wanted learning to know how learned this man was; so skilled in all (especially the Oriental) languages, that some conceive he might, if then living, almost have served as an interpreter general at the confusion of tongues."

JOHN LAIFIELD. "Being skilled in architecture, his judgment was much relied on for the fabric of the Tabernacle and Temple."*

RICHARD KILBYE was educated in Lincoln College, where he was successively Fellow and Rector, and after some ecclesiastical preferments was appointed Hebrew Professor in the University of Oxford. He was at one time Tutor to the celebrated Bishop Sanderson; and Izaak Walton, in his life of that distinguished Prelate, relates an interesting anecdote of him. "Dr. Kilbye, an excellent critic in the Hebrew tongue and Professor of it in the University, a perfect Grecian, and one of the translators, going into the country, took Mr. San-

* Fuller's Church History.

derson to bear him company. Being at church on Sunday, they found the young preacher to have no more discretion than to waste a great part of the time allotted for his sermon in exceptions against the late translation of several words, (not expecting such a hearer as Dr. Kilbye) and shewed three reasons why a particular word should have been otherwise translated. The preacher in the evening was invited to the Doctor's friend's house, where after some other conference the Doctor told him, he might have preached more useful doctrine, and not have filled his auditors' ears with needless exceptions against the late translation: and, for that word for which he offered that poor congregation three reasons why it ought to have been translated as he said, he and others had considered all of them and found thirteen more considerable reasons why it was translated as now printed."* To how many of this day might it be said, *mutatis mutandis, de te fabula narratur.*

WILLIAM SPENCER, Greek Lecturer in Trinity College, and afterwards chosen to be Professor of Divinity in Gresham College, London, on the recommendation of the Vice Chancellor and several Heads of Colleges at Cambridge, several of the nobility, and of King James himself who thought it a suitable recommendation for one of the translators of the Bible.

JOHN HARMAR was Regius Professor of Greek in the University of Oxford, for nine years Chief Master of Winchester School, and seventeen Warden of the College there. He translated Beza's Sermons into English, and several of Chrysostom's works into Latin. He was well read in the Fathers and Schoolmen, so that he held public disputations with some of the celebrated Catholic Doctors during his travels on the Continent.

THOMAS HOLLAND took his degrees in Exeter College, Oxford, with great applause, at the age of fifty was appointed Regius Professor of Divinity in the same, and three years after elected Master, "being accounted a prodigy in almost all kinds of literature." He appears to have been a man as eminent for his piety as his learning. Towards the close of life he spent a great part of his time in meditation and prayer. "Come, O come, Lord Jesus, thou bright morning Star! Come, Lord Jesus: I desire to be dissolved and to be with thee," was the dying exclamation of this aged servant of God.

* Johnson's Historical Account.

JOHN REYNOLDS. "His memory was little less than miraculous, he himself being the truest table to the multitude of voluminous books he had read over, whereby he could readily turn to all material passages in every leaf, page, volume, paragraph, not to descend lower to lines and letters."* He was originally a Papist, and his brother William a Protestant; but engaging in disputation they mutually converted each other, which gave rise to the following distich.

Quod genus hoc pugnae est? ubi victus gaudet uterque,
Et simul alteruter se superasse dolet.

He was selected for his great abilities as the Protestant Champion in the famous dispute with the Popish controversialist Hart, whom he obliged to quit the field. In 1603 he was nominated one of the Puritan divines to attend the Conference at Hampton-Court; and afterwards, because of his uncommon skill in Greek and Hebrew, one of the translators of the Bible. Before the completion of this laborious undertaking he was siezed with the disease of which he died. He continued his assistance however even to the last. During his sickness, his learned coadjutors in Oxford met at his lodgings regularly once a week to compare notes. As he approached his end his whole time was spent in prayer to God, in hearing persons read, or in conferring with the translators. He died at length in the 68th year of his age, a man greatly venerated for his learning, piety, humility and disinterestedness.

MR. EDWARD LIVELY, Regius Professor of Hebrew in the University, and said to be profoundly learned in the Oriental languages, also died before the completion of the great work.

LAURENCE CHADERTON was of a Popish family, and by turning Protestant so enraged his father, that he not only disinherited him, but "sent him a poke with a groat in it to go a begging." Dr. Chaderton declining from his great modesty the mastership of Emanuel College then about to be founded, Sir Walter Mildmay the donor from his great esteem of the man said, "If you will not be *master* of the College, I will not be its *founder*." He resigned the mastership after having held it with credit thirty-eight years. He was strongly opposed to Arminianism, and was one of the Puritan divines nominated by King James to attend the

* Fuller.

Hampton-Court Conference. Chaderton was noted for his strictness in the observance of the sabbath. He would never allow his servant to be detained from public worship to cook victuals. "I desire as much," said he, "to have my servants know the Lord, as myself." Being once on a visit to his friends in Lancashire, he was invited to preach; and having proceeded in his discourse full *two hours* he paused and said, "I will no longer trespass on your patience," upon which all the congregation cried out, "for God's sake go on, go on." He died at the extraordinary age of 103 years, and could read without spectacles to the last.

Those who wish to follow out this subject will be abundantly gratified by a reference to the works mentioned in a previous note. We had intended to give a similar brief sketch of each of the translators, but are obliged to desist. Suffice it to say, that of the twenty-five employed in translating the Old Testament, it is matter of record that thirteen were men eminently skilled in the Hebrew and Oriental languages, including six who were or had been regular Hebrew Professors in the Universities. Of the translators nearly all had received Fellowships in early life because of their great proficiency in learning. There were among them fifteen who were or had been Heads of Colleges, five Vice Chancellors of the Universities, three regular Greek Professors in the Universities, seven Divinity Professors, one Archbishop and seven Bishops. They were remarkably aged men. One venerable father was 80; others were upwards of 70; and indeed the average age of all of them, so far as ascertained, was considerably more than 60. This fact is worthy of observation as leading us to understand more fully the peculiarly venerable impress which is stamped upon every lineament of their work. This would be still farther explained, could we enter into more full details illustrating their eminent piety and heavenly mindedness. But our limited space will not permit us to dwell longer on this subject. Enough has been said surely to show the egregious mistake of those who call in question the qualifications of those great men, and represent our version as the antiquated relic of an unenlightened age.

The internal evidence that this translation was made directly from the originals, that, namely, resulting from a careful examination of the work itself, is a part of the subject upon which it does not seem necessary now to enter. The fact is so clearly established, and the misrepresentations of

those who have denied it have been so frequently exposed, that it seems hardly worth while to revive objections merely to answer them. Dr. Homer does indeed profess to have made some recent discoveries, having proved the contrary "by a full exploring of the New Testament in 1828." But as he has given no intimation of the proofs which led him to this conclusion, we must decline adopting or even discussing it, although supported by the authority of one "more intimately acquainted with the subject than any other individual in the country."

The history of our version is soon told. The idea was first suggested at the Hampton-Court Conference in 1603. Dr. Reynolds, being of the number opposed to conformity, who were summoned to attend, among other things giving us a high opinion of his piety, said: "May it please your majesty that the Bible be new translated, such as are extant not answering to the original," and he instanced three particulars. Bancroft, Bishop of London, objected. "If every man's humour," said he, "might be followed, there would be no end of translating." The King, however, seemed pleased with the suggestion of Dr. Reynolds, and said, "I profess I could never yet see a Bible well translated in English, but I think, that of all, that of Geneva is the worst. I wish some special pains were taken for an uniform translation; which should be done by the best learned in both Universities, then reviewed by the Bishops, presented to the Privy Council, lastly ratified by royal authority, to be read in the whole Church, and no other."*

James seems to have formed very just notions of the greatness of such an undertaking, and the deliberation and care with which it should be conducted. The first step after the conference was to designate fifty-four learned men upon whom the execution of it should devolve. By whom the selection was made does not clearly appear. The persons thus chosen were divided into six companies, two of which were to meet at Cambridge, two at Oxford, and two at Westminster. The work did not actually commence till 1607, the intervening four years being spent in settling preliminaries and making all the necessary preparations. That they might give themselves wholly to the business, it was necessary that they should be released as far as possible from all other engagements, and that ample means for their support

* Fuller.

should be provided in places affording the greatest facilities for the consultation of men and books. To this end the King wrote to the Archbishop of Canterbury early in 1604, urging him to make every suitable provision for the translators; and requiring that the Prelates should inform themselves of such learned men in their several dioceses as had knowledge of the Hebrew and Greek tongues, and had made the scriptures a special study, and signify to them, the King's pleasure that they should send their observations to one of three persons appointed for that purpose.* He gave similar instructions to the Vice Chancellors and heads of the colleges in the Universities, that if they knew of any other fit translators they should add them to the number; and that the translators should be admitted and entertained without expense, should receive kind usage, and while engaged in the work should be exempt from all academical exercises. On the 31st of July,† of the same year, the Bishop of London was directed to write to that part of the translators who were to assemble at Cambridge, expressing the King's acquiescence in the selection that had been made, and his desire that they should meet and begin their work with all possible speed; that his majesty was not satisfied till it was entered on; and that his royal mind rejoiced more in the good hope which he had for its happy success, than for the peace concluded with Spain. A letter was addressed the same day to the Governors of the University, pressing them in the strongest manner to assemble the translators, and to further the work. Also the Prelates, Deans, and Chapters, were recommended in the King's name to raise money among themselves to defray the expenses of the translators.

As an additional safeguard against mistake, discrepancy or failure, and to secure to this work every advantage which the kingdom afforded, certain rules were prescribed by the King, which were to be very carefully observed.

1. The ordinary Bible read in the Church, commonly called the Bishop's Bible, to be followed, and as little altered as the original will permit.

2. The names of the prophets, and the holy writers, with the other names in the text, to be retained as near as may be according as they are vulgarly used.

3. The old ecclesiastical words to be kept, as the word *Church* not to be translated *congregation*, &c.

* Lewis.

† Lewis.

4. When any word hath divers significations, that to be kept which hath been most commonly used by the most eminent Fathers, being agreeable to the propriety of the place, and the analogy of faith.

5. The divisions of the chapters to be altered either not at all, or as little as may be, if necessity so require.

6. No marginal notes at all to be affixed, but only for the explanation of the Hebrew or Greek words, which cannot without some circumlocution so briefly and fitly be expressed in the text.

7. Such quotations of places to be marginally set down, as shall serve for the fit reference of one scripture to another.

8. Every particular man of each company to take the same chapter or chapters; and having translated or amended them severally by himself where he thinketh good, all to meet together, confer what they have done, and agree for their part what shall stand.

9. As any one company hath despatched any one book in this manner, they shall send it to the rest, to be considered of, seriously and judiciously; for his majesty is careful on this point.

10. If any company, upon the review of the book so sent, shall doubt or differ upon any plans, to send them word thereof, note the plans, and therewithal send their reasons; to which, if they consent not, the difference to be compounded at the general meeting, which is to be of the chief persons of each company at the end of the work.

11. When any place of special obscurity is doubted of, letters to be directed by authority, to send to any learned [man] in the land, for his judgment in such a place.

12. Letters to be sent from every bishop to the rest of his clergy, admonishing them of this translation in hand; and to move and charge as many as, being skilful in the tongues, have taken pains in that kind, to send his particular observations to the company, either at Westminster, Cambridge, or Oxford.

13. The Directors in each company to be, the Deans of Westminster and Chester, for that place; and the King's Professors in the Hebrew and Greek, in each University.

14. These translations to be used when they agree better with the text than the Bishops' Bible; viz. 1. Tindal's; 2. Matthewe's; 3. Coverdale's; 4. Whitchurche's; 5. Geneva.

“ Besides the said directions, three or four of the most

ancient and grave divines in either of the Universities, not employed in translating, to be assigned by the Vice Chancellor, upon conference with the rest of the Heads, to be *Overseers* of the translations, as well Hebrew as Greek, for the better observance of the fourth rule above specified.”*

The portions allotted to the different translators were as follows.

Pentateuch to the end of 2 Kings, to Andrews, Overall, Saravia, Clarke, Layfield, Tighe, Burleigh, King, Thompson, Bedwell; to meet at Westminster.

The rest of the historical books, and the Hagiographa, viz. Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Canticles, Ecclesiastes, to Lively, Richardson, Chaderton, Dillingham, Harrison, Andrews, Spalding, Bing; to meet at Cambridge.

The four Greater Prophets, with the Lamentations, and the Twelve Lesser Prophets, to Harding, Reynolds, Holland, Kilby, Smith, Brett, Fairclowe; to meet at Oxford.

The prayer of Manasses, and the rest of the Apocrypha, to Duport, Branthwaite, Radcliffe, S. Ward, Downes, Boyse, Ward (of King's College); to meet at Cambridge.

The four Gospels, Acts of the Apostles, and the Apocalypse, to Ravis, Abbot, Eedes, Thompson, Saville, Peryn, Ravens, Harmar; to meet at Oxford.

The Epistles of Paul, and the Catholic Epistles, to Barlow, Hutchinson, Spencer, Fenton, Rabbett, Sanderson, Dakins; to meet at Westminster.

The number originally designated was fifty-four. But these forty-seven are those actually engaged in the translation. The other seven either were prevented from some cause not recorded; or, as is likely, included the four overseers before mentioned, and three other persons who assisted in the work, viz. Bishop Bilson who aided in the final revision, and Doctors Aglionby and Hutton who were employed in the latter stage of the business, though in what capacity is not entirely certain.

All things being now ready, in the spring of 1607, the translators set themselves to the work with the zeal and industry of men knowing the importance of the labours in which they were engaged. The premature death of Mr. Lively somewhat retarded their undertaking. “Nevertheless,” says Fuller, “the rest vigorously though slowly proceeded in this hard, heavy, and holy task, nothing offended

* Fuller.

with the censures of impatient people, condemning their delays, though indeed but due consideration, for laziness." They were engaged in the translation nearly three years. Of the manner in which they proceeded they have given the following account in their preface. "Truly, good Christian reader, we never thought from the beginning, that we should need to make an [entirely] new translation; nor yet to make of a bad one a good one but to make a good one better, or out of many good ones, one principal good one, not justly to be excepted against: that hath been our endeavour, that our mark. To that purpose there were many [translators] chosen, *that were greater in other men's eyes than in their own*, and that sought the truth not their own praise. Again, they came or were thought to come to the work, not *exercendi causa* (as one saith) but *exercitati*, that is learned, not to learn Therefore such were thought upon as could say modestly with Saint Jerome: "*Et Hebraeum Sermonem ex parte didicimus, et in Latino pene ab ipsis incunabilis detriti sumus.*" *Both we have learned the Hebrew tongue in part, and in the Latin we have been exercised almost from our very cradle* And in what sort did these assemble? In the trust of their own knowledge, or of their sharpness of wit, or deepness of judgment, as it were in an arm of flesh? At no hand. They trusted in Him that hath the key of David, opening and no man shutting; they prayed to the Lord, the Father of our Lord, to the effect that St. Augustine did: "O let thy Scriptures be my pure delight, let me not be deceived in them, neither let me deceive by them." In this confidence, and with this devotion did they assemble together; not too many, lest one should trouble another; and yet many, lest many things haply might escape them. If you ask what they had before them, truly it was the Hebrew text of the Old Testament, the Greek of the new. These are the two golden pipes, or rather conduits, where-through the olive branches emptied themselves into the gold. Saint Augustine called them precedent, or original tongues; Saint Jerome, fountains. The same Saint Jerome affirmeth, that *as the credit of the old Books* (he meaneth of the Old Testament) *is to be tried by the Hebrew Volumes, so of the new by the Greek tongue*, he meaneth by the original Greek. If *Truth* be to be tried by these tongues, then whence should a *Translation* be made, but out of them? These tongues therefore, the Scriptures we say in these tongues, we set before us to translate, being the

tongues wherein God was pleased to speak to his church by his Prophets and Apostles. Neither did we run over the work with that posting haste that the Septuagint did, if that be true which is reported of them, that they finished it in seventy-two days: neither were we barred or hindered from going over it again, having once done it, like St. Jerome, if that be true which himself reporteth, that he could no sooner write any thing, but presently it was caught from him and published, and he could not have leave to mend it: neither, to be short, were we the first that fell in hand with translating the Scripture into English, and consequently destitute of former helps, as it is written of Origen, that he was the first in a manner, that put his hand to write Commentaries upon the Scriptures, and therefore no marvel that he overshot himself many times. None of these things: the work hath not been huddled up in seventy-two days, but hath cost the workmen, as light as it seemeth, the pains of twice seven times seventy-two days and more: matters of such weight and consequence are to be speeded with maturity; for in a business of moment a man feareth not the blame of convenient slackness. Neither did we think much to consult the Translators or Commentators, Chaldee, Hebrew, Syrian, Greek, or Latin, no, nor the Spanish, French, Italian, or Dutch; neither did we disdain to revise what we had done, and to bring back to the anvil that which we had hammered; but having and using as great helps as were needful, and fearing no reproach for slowness, nor coveting praise for expedition, we have at length, through the good hand of the Lord upon us, brought the work to that pass that you see.”* When the whole was finished, three copies of it were sent to London from the three places of rendezvous, Cambridge, Oxford, and Westminster. Two persons also were chosen from the translators assembled in each of those places, to review and polish it. These six met daily in Stationers’ Hall, London; where in nine months they completed their task, receiving each of them thirty pounds by the week while thus engaged. “Last of all, Bilson, Bishop of Winchester, and Dr. Miles Smith, who from the beginning had been very active in this affair, again reviewed the whole, and prefixed arguments to the several books; and Dr. Smith, who for his indefatigable pains taken in this work was soon after the printing of it made Bishop of Gloucester, was ordered to write the preface.”†

* Translator’s Preface.

† Lewis.

“And now [1611] after long expectation and great desire, came forth the new translation of the Bible (most beautifully printed) by a select and competent number of divines appointed for that purpose, not being too many lest one should trouble another, and yet many lest in any, things might haply escape them. Who neither coveting praise for expedition, nor fearing reproach for slackness (seeing in a business of moment none deserve blame for convenient slowness) had expended almost three years in the work, *not only examining channels by the fountain, translations with the original (which was absolutely necessary); but also comparing channels with channels, (which was abundantly useful) in the Spanish, Italian, French, and Dutch languages.* So that their industry, skilfulness, piety, and discretion hath therein bound the church unto them in a debt of special remembrance and thankfulness. Leave we then these worthy men, now [1655] all of them gathered to their fathers and gone to God, however requited on earth, well rewarded in Heaven for their worthy work. Of whom, as also of that worthy King that employed them, we may say “wheresoever the Bible shall be preached or read in the whole world, there shall also this that they have done be told in memorial of them.”*

Considering the attainments of these men, their high standing, their learning, piety, and indefatigable zeal, and the peculiarly favourable circumstances in which they were called to the work, it is not surprising that they should have been enabled to produce a translation which has received the decided approbation of almost all men of learning and taste from that day to this.

“The last English translation made by divers learned men at the command of King James, though it may justly contend with any now extant in any other language in Europe, was yet carped and cavilled at by divers among ourselves; especially by one,† who being passed by and not

* Fuller.

† This was Hugh Broughton, “a learned man, especially in the Eastern languages, but very opinionative,” says Fuller, with his usual comprehensive brevity. Lightfoot, so pre-eminent for his Hebrew and Rabbinical learning, used to say “that Broughton has more Hebrew in his little finger than I have in my whole loins.” He was greatly chagrined at not being chosen one of the translators. In consequence of his dissatisfaction, and having in vain attempted to shake the credit of the new translation, he went abroad, when it was wittily said of him that “he had gone to teach the Jews Hebrew.” If they could afford to spare such a man, merely because he lacked judgment, learning could not have been such a scarce commodity among them as some people seem to imagine.

employed in the work, as one, though skilled in the Hebrew, yet of little or no *judgment* in that or any other kind of learning, was so highly offended that he would needs undertake to show how many thousand places they had falsely rendered, when as he could hardly make good his undertaking in any one." Walton.

"*The vulgar translation of the Bible is the best standard of our language.*" Lowth.

"When the translators in King James the First's time began their work, they prescribed to themselves some rules, which it may not be amiss for all translators to follow. Their reverence for the sacred Scriptures induced them to be as literal as they could, to avoid obscurity; and it must be acknowledged that they were extremely happy in the simplicity and dignity of their expressions. This adherence to the Hebrew idiom is supposed at once to have enriched and adorned our language; and as they laboured for the general benefit of the learned and the unlearned, they avoided all words of Latin original, when they could find words in their own language; even with the aid of adverbs and prepositions, which would express their meaning." Horsley.

"The style of our present version is incomparably superior to any thing which might be expected from the finical and perverted taste of our own age. It is simple, it is harmonious, it is energetic; and, which is of no small importance, use has made it familiar, and time has rendered it sacred." Middleton.

"The highest eulogiums have been made on the translation of James the First, both by our own writers and by foreigners. And indeed if accuracy, fidelity, and the strictest attention to the letter of the text, be supposed to constitute the qualities of an excellent version, this of all versions must in general be accounted the most excellent. Every sentence, every word, every syllable, every letter and point, seem to have been weighed with the nicest exactitude, and expressed either in the text or margin with the greatest precision. Pagninus himself is hardly more literal; and it was well remarked by Robertson, above a hundred years ago, that it might serve for a Lexicon of the Hebrew language, as well as for a translation." Dr. Geddes.

"The highest value has always been attached to our translation of the Bible. Sciolists it is true have often attempted to raise their own reputation on the ruin of that of others;

and the authors of the English Bible have frequently been calumniated by charlatans of every description: but it may safely be asserted, without fear of contradiction, that the nation at large has always paid our translators the tribute of veneration and gratitude which they so justly merit. Their reputation for learning and piety has not descended with them to the grave, though they are there alike heedless of the voice of calumny, and deaf to the praise which admiring posterity awards to the great and the good. Let us not therefore too hastily conclude that they have fallen on evil days and evil tongues, because it has occasionally happened that **an individual as inferior to them in erudition as in talents and integrity, is found questioning their motives, or denying their qualifications for the task which they so well performed.* Their version has been used, ever since its first appearance, not only by the church, but by all the sects which have forsaken her; and has been justly esteemed by all for its general faithfulness, and the severe beauty of its language. It may be compared with any translation in the world, without fear of inferiority; it has not shrunk from the most vigorous examination; it challenges investigation; and in spite of numerous attempts to supersede it, has hitherto remained unrivalled in the affections of the country." Whitaker.

John Taylor of Norwich, an Arian in sentiment, but a very learned man, and author of an excellent Hebrew and English Concordance, bears a still more striking testimony. "In the space of one [two] hundred years, learning may have received considerable improvements; and by that means some inaccuracies may be found in a translation more than a [two] hundred years old. But you may rest fully satisfied, that *as our translation is in itself by far the most excellent book in our language, so it is a pure and plentiful fountain of divine knowledge, giving a true, clear, and full account of the divine dispensations, and of the gospel of our salvation, insomuch THAT WHOEVER STUDIES THE BIBLE, THE ENGLISH BIBLE, IS SURE OF GAINING THAT KNOWLEDGE AND FAITH, WHICH, IF DULY APPLIED TO THE HEART AND CONVERSATION, WILL INFALLIBLY GUIDE HIM TO ETERNAL LIFE.*"

"That these [Lowth, Blayney, Horsley, and Newcome] and other sound scholars have materially assisted the cause,

* The italics are not ours.

and produced many valuable elucidations of particular passages, is gratefully acknowledged by all who are acquainted with their works. Yet with all the respect which we feel for their labours, we venture to express a doubt whether any new translation of even a single book of Scripture has appeared since the publication of the authorized version, which taken as a whole has come up to its standard, either for the general fidelity and correctness with which it conveys the sense of the original, or the dignity, simplicity, and propriety of language in which that sense is conveyed." London Quarterly.

"Those who have compared most of the European translations with the original, have not scrupled to say that the English translation of the Bible, made under the direction of James I., is the most accurate and faithful of the whole. Nor is this its only praise: the translators have seized the very spirit and soul of the original, and expressed this, almost every where with pathos and energy. Besides, our translators have not only made a standard translation; but they have made their translation the standard of the language. The English tongue in their day was not equal to such a work; but God enabled them to stand as upon Mount Sinai, and *crane* up their country's language to the dignity of the originals, so that after the lapse of two hundred years the English Bible is, with very few exceptions, the standard of the purity and excellence of the English tongue. *The original, from which it was taken, is alone superior to the Bible translated by the authority of King James.*" Adam Clarke.

"It is a striking beauty in our English Bible, that though the language is always elegant and nervous, and for the most part very harmonious, the words are all plain and common; no affectation of learned terms, or of words of Greek and Latin etymology." Dr. James Beattie.

"Equally remarkable for the general fidelity of its construction, and the magnificent simplicity of its language." Dr. Gray.

"We are yet disposed to object to that part [of this classification] which represents the first *introduction of soft, graceful, and idiomatic English as not earlier than the period of the restoration. It is as old at least as Chaucer. The English Bible is full of it;* and it is the most common, as well as the most beautiful, of the many languages spoken

by Shakspeare." *Edinburgh Review, no partial witness surely.**

"General fidelity to its original is hardly more its characteristic than sublimity itself . . . it is still considered the standard of our tongue . . . The English language acquired new dignity by it." Dr. I. White, Regius Professor of Hebrew in the University of Oxford.

"The language of our present version has the full tide of popular opinion strongly in its favour; it exhibits a style appropriately Biblical, and is distinguished by a general simplicity of expression, which the most uncultivated mind may comprehend, and the most cultivated admire."†

To these numerous, but we trust not uninteresting testimonies, we will merely add one of cis-Atlantic growth. It is that of Fisher Ames; than whom a better writer of English has never appeared in this country. In an essay of his, urging the importance of using the Bible as a school book, he says, "In no book is there so good English, so pure and so elegant; and by teaching all the *same* book, they will speak alike, and the Bible will justly remain the standard of language as well as of faith. A barbarous provincial jargon will be banished, and taste, corrupted by pompous Johnsonian affectation, will be restored."

The want of pure English idiom then is still less apparent than the want of fidelity to the original. The Koran has not been a more acknowledged classic among the Arabs, nor Luther's Bible among the Germans, than has the English Bible been in English literature. It has done more for the English language than the whole French Academy, with their incomparable Dictionary, can ever do for the French. "It is impossible," says a sensible writer in *Blackwood's Magazine*,‡ "to reflect upon the incalculable influence which the free use of this noble version by a great nation in an affectionate and thankful spirit for centuries must have had upon the character of both people and literature; and further upon what would have been the diminished value of the boon, even for those who might have enjoyed it, had it been delayed to a much later period; without acknowledging a providence in the choice of the time when, and the instruments

* October, 1835, page 121, American Edition.

† From an exceedingly able Tract in the first volume of the former series of this work, on the subject of a new translation of the Bible.

‡ November, 1835, page 676.

by whose means, this benefit was conferred. As yet the language was in a gradual process of formation. Ductile, various, and manly, confined within no acknowledged rules and checked by no fear of criticism, it was in a state admirably fitted to become the faithful mirror of the national character, which the publication of that great work was calculated so deeply to effect." Indeed when we reflect that it has been regarded as a model of correct expression by the ablest critics, that it has been more read than any other English book, that the nature of its subjects and the character of the people have given it more than any other book a hold upon the imagination and the feelings, we do not wonder at the extent to which its language has become the basis both of prose and verse, and even to some extent of common conversation. The Bible is not subject to the fluctuations of taste. Shakspeare may become unfashionable, as Milton is now except in theory. But the Bible will always be read, and read by the multitude who are the great corrupters of language. Its words will always be those most upon the popular lip. Not only therefore will it remain "a well of English undefiled," but there is a certainty that its pure waters will be resorted to by all the hundreds of millions who shall be born within the reach of British and American influence till the end of time.

Samuel Miller

ART. II.—*Toleration : a Discourse delivered in St. John's Church, Brooklyn, on Thanksgiving day, December 10, 1835. By Evan M. Johnson, Rector. Published by request of the Vestry. New York: Protestant Episcopal Press. 8vo. pp. 16; 1835.*

WE seldom think it proper to take notice of single sermons, unless the subjects of them be peculiarly important, or their execution peculiarly able and happy. No one, however, who reads the discourse before us will imagine that we have been prompted to the present notice by either of these considerations. On the contrary, we have rarely had the misfortune to peruse a sermon more strongly marked by puerility and ignorance. But as it was delivered in a Church connected with a respectable denomination; as it was published by the request of the Vestry of that Church; as it has

received the *imprimatur* of the Protestant Episcopal Press in New York; as we learn that unusual means have been resorted to for extending its circulation; and as it contains a number of statements, which, although both weak and unfounded, are likely to be believed by superficial readers, we think it not improper to offer some remarks on a few of the more striking of its crudities and misrepresentations.

The very title page of Mr. Johnson speaks a man utterly immature in regard to the subject which he undertakes to discuss. Here, as well as in subsequent parts of the pamphlet, he uses the word *toleration* in a sense which is utterly out of place in this country. This word carries with it the idea of something being *allowed* which is not entirely *approved*. Applied to religion, it imports, in all correct use, the *permission* of religious opinions and modes of worship in a state, which are different from those of the established Church. *Toleration* implies a right in the government to *control* men in their opinions and worship. Where no power exists, or is assumed, to establish a creed and a mode of worship, there can be no *toleration*, in the correct sense of the word, for one religious denomination has as good a right as another to the free enjoyment of its belief and its worship. Now every one knows that in our country no Church is established. All denominations, in the eye of the law, are upon a level. Of course, no denomination can be said, by a correct speaker, to enjoy its rights by the *allowance* of the government or of the law, or, in other words, by *toleration*. The government has no power to interfere in the case. It cannot *hinder*, and, by consequence, cannot be said to *permit* or *allow*, the exercise of the rights of conscience. The most shockingly erroneous system of religious belief that exists in our country, has just as good a right, in most of the States of our Union, and certainly so far as the general government is concerned, to the plenary enjoyment of its appropriate privileges, as the most rational and pure system that can be imagined. Mr. Johnson might just as well say that the trade of the carpenter, the shipbuilder, the blacksmith or the glass blower, is *tolerated* in the United States. Has the government the *power* to forbid the pursuit of any of these trades? Does the right to pursue them hang upon the *permission* or the *allowance* of a despotic individual, or a despotic government? Quite as much out of place, is applying the word *toleration* to any sect which belongs to the religious community. In *Holland*, the *Remonstrants* are tolerated; in

France, the *Protestants*; in England, the *Dissenters*; and in Ireland, the *Roman Catholics*. But in our happy country, both the *name* and the *thing* are unknown. No sect holds by *sufferance*; none can, with propriety, be said to be above or below another. Of all this, our author appears to be utterly unaware. And though he substantially states the fact as it is, again and again; still he seems to be incapable of understanding it, and expresses himself, in the next breath, with the strangest crudeness of thoughts and language.

But may not a particular denomination, in spite of the equal legal standing of all, be maltreated, abused, and even hunted down by fierce bigots, in seasons of ungoverned prejudice and passion? Certainly it may; just as the body of *lawyers* or *merchants*, in a season of great excitement, may be attacked with malignity and violence by incensed politicians. There may be great ferocity and wickedness in such attacks; the characters of those whom they assail may be grossly defamed, and their rights temporarily infringed; but would any correct speaker think of representing lawyers or merchants as not *tolerated* in such a community? No; he would refer their maltreatment to the same category with the brutal violence of a *mob*; but the laws, and the courts of justice remaining as before, the violence would, of course, be regarded, not as a governmental act; but as an act of ruthless individuals, in spite of the constitution and the laws. Surely if this popular violence were to fall upon a suspected individual, of either sex, it would not be a just charge to say that, in that community, *men* or *women* were not *tolerated*.

In page sixth of this sermon, Mr. Johnson seems very much disposed to give great credit to the Roman Catholic Colonists of Maryland, for opening the door freely for other denominations of Christians to settle within their limits. Had he known the terms of the *charter* under which these colonists effected the settlement of Maryland, he would have withheld the greater part, if not all his praise. The fact is, the royal charter which gave them all their powers, rendered it impossible for them to exclude Protestants from their colony. So that when their colonial acts presented an aspect of great religious hospitality, they did no more than carry into execution the spirit of the fundamental law which had been prescribed for them by the government in England. Did Mr. J. know this? Did he understand the character of their charter before he undertook to characterize their colony? If he *did*, what must be thought of his candour? If

he did *not*, what must be thought of his good sense and discretion? But, truly, it is with the same half-formed ideas of his subjects that Mr. J. undertakes to discuss almost every matter with which he ventures to intermeddle.

By the way, there is a calumny circulating against Presbyterians, in relation to this very Roman Catholic colony, which we may as well take the present opportunity, over Mr. Johnson's back, to notice and refute. The calumny which has been circulated, is this—That soon after the Popish colony in Maryland published its willingness to receive Protestants into its bosom, a body of Presbyterians availed themselves of the hospitable offer; went and settled in the colony; and, soon afterwards, having prospered and increased, ungratefully entered into a conspiracy to invade and take away the privileges of the original colonists, in which they are represented as having succeeded.

A statement to this amount is made by *James Graham*, Esquire, in his "*History of the Rise and Progress of the United States of North America, prior to the British Revolution in 1688.*"—His account is as follows—

"It had been happy for the credit of the Protestants, whose hostility perhaps enforced the moderation of the Catholics of Maryland, if they had imitated the virtue, which their own apprehended violence may have tended to elicit. But, unfortunately a great proportion, even of those who were constrained to seek refuge among the Catholics, from the persecutions of their own Protestant brethren, carried with them into exile the same intolerance of which they themselves had been the victims; and the *Presbyterians* and other dissenters, who now began to flock in, in considerable numbers, from *Virginia* to *Maryland*, gradually formed a Protestant confederacy against the interests of the original settlers; and with ingratitude still more odious than their injustice, projected the abrogation, not only of the Catholic worship, but of every part of that system of toleration under whose shelter they were enabled to conspire its downfall. But though the Catholics were thus ill requited by their Protestant guests, it would be a mistake to suppose that the calamities that subsequently desolated the Province were produced by the toleration, which her assembly now established, or that the Catholics were really losers by this act of justice and liberality. From the disposition of the prevailing party in England, and the state of the other colonial settlements, the catastrophe that overtook the liberties of the Maryland Catholics, could not possibly have been evaded: and if the virtue they now displayed was unable to avert their fate, it exempted them, at least, from the reproach of deserving it; it redoubled the guilt and scandal incurred by their adversaries; and achieved for themselves a reputation more lasting and honourable than political triumph or temporal elevation. What Christian, however sensible of the errors of Catholic doctrine, would not rather be the descendant of the Catholics who established toleration in Maryland, than of the Protestants who overthrew it?" Vol. i. p. 23, 25.

This passage is quoted at length by the editors of a contemporary Journal,* in a review of Graham's work, without

* *Christian Spectator*, of New Haven, Vol. iv. p. 268.

one apparent doubt of its truth, and mourned over as a mortifying instance of the ingratitude and faithlessness of Presbyterians. Now, what will the reader think when he is assured, that, so far as *that denomination* is concerned, *there is not one word of truth in the statement?* It is a pure fabrication. The facts are these. The charter of Maryland was granted by *Charles I.*, a Protestant king, to *Cecilius Calvert*, a Roman Catholic, in 1632. This charter formally included and expressed the right of any of the liege subjects of Great Britain, who thought proper to “transport themselves and their families to said Province, and therein to settle, dwell and inhabit.” When, therefore, the Proprietor issued his edict of hospitable invitation, it was nothing more, as we have already said, than carrying into effect the express provisions of the charter. In 1636, the Lord Proprietor prescribed an oath to his Governors of the province, of which the following is an extract—“That he would not, by himself or another, directly or indirectly, trouble, molest or discountenance any person professing to believe in Jesus Christ, for or in respect of religion.” In 1647, the following enactment by the colonial legislature, was published—“No person professing to believe in Jesus Christ, shall be molested or disturbed in respect of his religion, nor in the exercise thereof, nor in any way compelled to the belief or exercise of any other religion.”

In 1654, during the Commonwealth, the Proprietor of Maryland was displaced—not because he was a Papist, but because of his real or supposed adherence to the cause of *Charles II.*, then in exile. Ten Commissioners were appointed by the Protector, to administer the government of the province; and an act of the provincial legislature was passed, in the same year, *prohibiting the profession and exercise of the Catholic religion.*

Now, it is not known to us that a single Presbyterian existed in the province of Maryland, from 1632, when the charter was given, till 1654, when the Proprietor was displaced by the existing government of the parent state. We have never heard of a single family or individual of that denomination inhabiting the colony during that period. And it is certain that there was no Presbyterian Church, or worshipping assembly—not even the smallest or weakest, during that period, nor for nearly half a century *after* Cromwell displaced the Proprietor! What becomes, now, of the story of “Presbyterians and other dissenters,” who, after being

kindly received and entertained, ungratefully and treacherously turned against their benefactors, and destroyed the government which had sheltered them? No such guests had ever been received into the province, and none, of course, acted such an ungrateful part. We do not venture, indeed, to affirm, that during the period in question, no sailor, day-labourer, merchants' clerk, or even mechanic or merchant, from *Scotland*, who had been bred a Presbyterian, settled in Maryland; but we can confidently affirm that we have never heard of so much as even this, much less of a worshipping assembly. But it will be asked—Did not Cromwell displace the Proprietor? And was not Cromwell a Presbyterian? The answer is ready, as every intelligent reader knows—Cromwell was *not* a Presbyterian, but an *Independent*, who hated and opposed the Presbyterians, as unfriendly to his usurpation; and during the whole period that was marked by that act, the Independents bore sway. But even if Cromwell and his counsellors had been Presbyterians, is it not well known to all who understand the history of that day, that his treatment of the Proprietor of Maryland was dictated entirely by political, and not by ecclesiastical considerations? Besides, even admitting the whole transaction to have been a *Presbyterian act*, which was, in no sense, the case; had these actors ever been in Maryland? Had they ever enjoyed its hospitality, and ungratefully requited its favours to them? The whole story is a base calumny.

On the restoration of Charles II., in 1660, the act of the Commonwealth, in 1654, displacing the Proprietor, was repealed, and Lord Baltimore regained his province; on which he immediately restored the act of 1647, inviting other denominations to settle in the colony. On the accession of William and Mary in 1688, a revolution took place in the province, called the "Protestant Revolution;" and soon afterwards Sir Lionel Copley, a Protestant, received the appointment of Governor immediately from the crown of England. In 1692, under the administration of Copley, an act was passed, by which the *Church of England* was formally established, and continued to be the established Church of the province, until the American Revolution, in 1776, happily put an end to that as well as to every similar establishment in the United States. Here we see that they were not Presbyterians, but *Episcopalians*, who thus ungratefully returned evil for good, and conspired against the rights

and privileges of the original colonists. And this was so thoroughly done, that, in 1716 and 1718, the colony, then under the most bigotted Episcopal influence, passed severe laws against the Roman Catholics, taking away from them the privilege of voting at elections, and declaring them incapable of holding any office in the province! It was, surely, an ingenious act of generalship to father all this, or, at least, the most prominent share of it, on "Presbyterians and other dissenters." Presbyterians might with quite as much justice have been charged with being the principal actors in the great Papal massacre, in France, on St. Bartholomew's day, in the 17th century. If there was, even at this late period, that is, in 1716, a single small, feeble, worshipping assembly, or at most two, of Presbyterians in the whole colony, it was as much as the bargain. We know not that there were even so many. But that there was ever any movement, or attempt on the part of the handful of Presbyterians in the colony, even then, to seize on the power of the colony, or oppress the Catholics, we never heard the least surmise or suggestion. In Annapolis, the ancient capital of the colony, we never heard, even to this day, of an attempt to found a Presbyterian Church; and even in Baltimore there was only one of that denomination until a very late period. Did Presbyterians conspire to oppress and exclude themselves?

But, to return from this digression. Mr. Johnson seems to be incapable of distinguishing between Independents or Congregationalists, and Presbyterians. He would have us believe that every thing that was done in England, in the time of Cromwell, was done by Presbyterians. He represents that denomination which, in New England, is called Congregational, as the *same* with that which, in the middle and southern states, is called Presbyterian. No intelligent observer was at a loss to distinguish between these two denominations in the days of Cromwell. The line of distinction between them was broad and strongly marked. Nor was any one at a loss to make this distinction during the first hundred years of our puritan fathers in New England. The unwillingness which they constantly manifested to encourage any Presbyterians, who might be so disposed, to settle among them, plainly showed that *they* thought there was a wide, and, to them, an important and interesting difference between the two denominations. We advise Mr. J. to study ecclesiastical history and polity a little more carefully than

he seems to have yet done, before he undertakes, either from the pulpit or the press, to speak of these branches of the Christian Church.

But while we utterly disclaim the imputation of identity with Independents or Congregationalists, as a departure both from ecclesiastical accuracy, and moral justice, we know how to honour and to defend the character of the great and good men who, at different periods, have belonged to those denominations respectively. The Puritans, who adorned the Church of God in England, in the seventeenth century, and some of whom came to this country, were a noble race of men, "of whom the world was not worthy." They were not free from mistakes, either there or here; but their services to the cause of evangelical truth, of piety, of virtue, and of civil and religious liberty, were beyond estimate. The testimony of Mr. Hume, a decided enemy, in their favour, often as it has been repeated, will bear indefinite repetition, as long as there shall be writers so prejudiced or so ignorant as to be capable of holding them up to scorn. "To the Puritans," says this eloquent infidel, "whose principles appear so frivolous, and whose habits so ridiculous, the English owe the whole freedom of their constitution." We would much rather confide in Mr. Hume's estimate of their character in relation to religious liberty, than in Mr. Johnson's.

Our author seems entirely to forget that the principles of religious liberty were understood by very few, of any religious denomination, in the seventeenth century; and that, much as we may deplore the fact, the want of just views on the subject, ceases to be the peculiar reproach of any class of religionists. Many persons can never cease to censure and ridicule the Puritans of Massachusetts for their treatment of the *Quakers*; and we may well weep over it. But let it never be forgotten, by those who ever knew it, that scenes of nearly similar character were enacted in England about the same time. When Charles I. died, he left about *fifteen hundred Quakers in prison*. And so of their melancholy proceedings in relation to *witchcraft*. A degree of the same mania reigned, about the same time, in the mother country. Even the wise and benevolent Lord Chief Justice *Hale* condemned to death two women at Norwich, for the same alleged crime of *witchcraft*. Every enlightened and candid mind will know how to make allowances for the mistakes of such

a man, and for the hallucinations of such an age, in other respects so strongly marked by piety and moral grandeur.

But the part of this discourse which has given us the most offence, is that which seems to be its main object, viz. its censure of the efforts which have been made, in various parts of our country, to counteract the influence and the extension of Romanism. So far as Mr. Johnson is scandalized at all the coarseness, indecorum, and violence which have been indulged by any of the public opponents of the Papists, we entirely concur with him both in judgment and feeling. We have groaned in spirit over much that we have read in some vehicles of public intelligence and instruction on this subject. Still more strongly do we abhor the lawless violence of infuriated mobs, in destroying the property of Catholic institutions, and exposing the lives and health of those who are connected with them. Such weapons are never justifiable. They are contrary to the spirit of the gospel. They discredit our common Christianity. And they never fail to do more harm than good to the cause in behalf of which they are employed. The sooner they are banished from all controversy which claims to be decent, the better. But, if we understand Mr. Johnson, he would not stop here. He disapproves, and would discountenance, all united, systematic, public efforts to inform and disabuse the public mind in reference to Popery, and to put the people on their guard against the arts of their propagandists, and especially against the dangers of their public seminaries. He does not blame the opponents of Popery for entertaining very unfavourable opinions of the Papal system. He declares that his own opinions concerning that system are of this character. But he appears to think that all societies and publications, and formal efforts to apprise the public of the evil and danger of their errors, and to prevent their obtaining greater authority and power, are not only unwise, but morally wrong, and contrary to the spirit of religious freedom. No matter how erroneous the doctrines of the Romanists, how subtle their arts, how corrupting their influence, or how unwearied their labours to beguile the unwary, and to poison society in its very fountains; they must not be unitedly and systematically exposed in their true character; they must not be held up distinctly to public view, and the people openly put on their guard against their plausible delusions. These views we consider as both weak and erroneous; and feel constrained to enter our protest against them, for the following reasons.

1. We believe the system of Popery is not at all essentially better *now* than it was three hundred years ago, when the noble-minded Reformers came out from it, and lifted up a standard against its enormous errors. We are aware that some believe and allege, that the Papal system is greatly improved in modern times; that it is in a great measure divested of what were formerly some of its most revolting and dangerous features; and that there is now little that ought to excite the apprehension of sober-minded, candid people. We utterly disbelieve this statement. We are firmly persuaded that it has no solid foundation in fact. We do not doubt, indeed, that in a Protestant country like this, where there is an overwhelming majority of anti-popish population; where the public mind, and the prevailing laws are equally unfriendly to their known claims and practices in other situations; they find it convenient to make disclaimers, to employ glosses, and to pursue a course adapted and intended to turn away the public mind from the most odious parts of their system. But the question is, what aspect does the Papal system wear *at this hour*, in Spain, in Portugal, in Italy, in Austria, where public sentiment fully sustains it, and where it is at full liberty to enforce its claims, and to act out its spirit, without fear or restraint? Does not the Church of Rome, in those countries, still pertinaciously deny the Bible in the vernacular tongue to the common people? Does she not continue to assert the infallibility of the Pope, and his right to pronounce what is the will of Christ, without appeal to the scriptures, because the scriptures themselves are to be interpreted by the Church? Does she not still maintain the doctrine of human merit, as the foundation of hope toward God; of works of supererogation; and of indulgences to sin purchased by the payment of money? Does she not still hold fast to auricular confession, that system which opens a door to almost every species of licentiousness and oppression? Does she not continue to insist as much as ever on the celibacy of the clergy, with all the appalling mass of abominations with which that system has been, if history be true, every where and always connected? Does any one who has risen above the age of babyhood doubt that the monasteries and nunneries of the countries just named, are, generally, sinks of the most awful profligacy and pollution? Can it be believed that all classes of witnesses, both Popish and Protestant, who have borne testimony on this subject, should have conspired to deceive us? Has the Church of Rome ceased to

pay idolatrous worship to the Virgin Mary, and to other saints, as intercessors with God for us? And, finally, can any reflecting man doubt that the mental thralldom under which it is the tendency, the aim, and the manifest effect of this system to hold its votaries, is, in the highest degree, unfriendly to both civil and religious liberty? Can any one who has eyes to see, and ears to hear, hesitate for a moment to admit all these as melancholy *facts*? We do not doubt that there are many pious Romanists. We do not deny that there are many individuals of that denomination who can honestly say, that they do not acknowledge or approve a number of things which are justly imputed to the Papacy as a system. We should consider ourselves as grossly uncandid and unjust to represent *all* the votaries of this system as deliberately receiving and practising all its corruptions. We take for granted that there have been some honest *Jesuits*, although the *system* of their order, as *Robertson* the historian observes, was one of "lax and pliant morality; which accommodated itself to the passions of men, which justified their vices, which tolerated their imperfections, which authorized almost every action that the most audacious or crafty politicians would wish to perpetrate;" and, notwithstanding, it is admitted by Mr. *Hume*, that that far-famed society "were engaged, by the very nature of their institution, to pervert learning, to refine away the plainest dictates of morality, and to erect a regular system of casuistry, by which prevarication, perjury, and every crime, where it served their ghostly purposes, might be justified and defended." We say, notwithstanding this, we are inclined to think there were some honest Jesuits. The truth is, the society *needed* some such for special branches of service. Such were very imperfectly, if at all, aware of the profligate arts which were essentially interwoven with their system. Honest, pious souls, who mean nothing wrong, will be apt to suspect nothing, and to close their eyes against that which, to others, is perfectly visible.

2. When we examine that united opposition to the Papists, which Mr. Johnson condemns, we cannot forbear to ask, what side he would have taken in the days of Luther, Cranmer, &c. in the sixteenth century? Every one who knows any thing of the history, the writings, and the doings of those noble minded men, whom God honoured and employed as the Reformers of his Church, knows that their opposition to the Papacy and its enormous corruptions was

united, systematic, and strongly marked. They were banded together for this purpose; and in conversation, in the pulpit, and from the press, they denounced the tyranny and the superstitions of the "Man of Sin;" tore off the veil from his enormities; warned the people against his dishonesty and profligacy, as well as his errors; and thus, by the grace of God, became instrumental in delivering the Church from the thralldom of ages. Were those good men right in taking this course, and in coming out from a corrupt Church; or were they wrong? The Romanists were the established Church every where, and the Reformers were not even a "tolerated" body in the outset; and yet they took a course, and employed language, which our author would not allow even in these days of liberty. We ask, what would Mr. J., with his present sentiments, have done in that day? Would he have joined with the Reformers; or would he have refused to separate from the corrupt body, and relied on mild, and gentle, and soothing language, instead of that which they employed? If all had been of the mind to take the latter course, there would have been no Reformation; and we might not now have been rejoicing in "that liberty, wherewith Christ hath made us free." Our author's brother, Bishop Smith, of Kentucky, has told us that he would *not* have separated from the Catholic body; but would have contented himself with efforts to effect reformation *within the Church*. The Episcopal succession, it seems, is too precious in his eyes to be jeopardized even for the sake of ecclesiastical purity. We are not surprised that even a pious mind should come to this conclusion. In fact, if we adopted some of the sentiments which enter into the creed of modern high-church prelatists, we could not consistently stop short of taking refuge in the bosom of the "Holy mother Church." We know that more than one minister of the Episcopal body have judged and acted thus within a few years, having actually gone over to the Papists. It has not astonished us to see it. We thought then, and we think still, that they did nothing more than legitimately follow out their own fundamental principles. And if a certain young Episcopal preacher in West Jersey, who has publicly taken ground with regard to the interpretation of the Scriptures, which, in substance, agrees with that of the Papists, does not finally cast in his lot with them, it will certainly not be because consistency does not demand it of him. Nor can we forbear to add, that we are much mistaken if a growing tendency to homologate

with some of the principles of Romanism, has not an influence in directing the spirit and course of some high-church men in regard to the proper treatment of the Roman Catholics at the present day.

3. As a further reason for differing from our author, we ask whether the *facts*, in regard to the Papists, are not really such, and to the full as bad, as the strongest of the representations which he condemns, declares them to be? It is well known to every intelligent reader, that, ever since the era of the Reformation, hundreds of Protestant writers, of different countries, of the soundest reputation for piety and learning, and living in the midst of Roman Catholics, have undertaken, at full length, to unfold their fundamental errors; to describe their moral profligacy; and to delineate those principles of ghostly dominion by which they blind the eyes of men, and hold their consciences in abject slavery. Some of these men have been among the most venerable dignitaries that ever adorned the Church of England, and others, men of equal reputation, in other communions on the continent of Europe. Among all the charges brought against the Papists, as a body, by American Protestant writers, within the last ten years, there is scarcely a specification which has not been found, exhibited in its blackest colours, in the books of those venerable men. Now, did those men speak the truth, or did they malign the Papists? Did Bishop Hall, Bishop Bilson, Dr. Fulke, Bishop Gibson, and his coadjutors in the "Preservative against Popery," Bishop Bull, Archbishop Usher, Archbishop Tillotson, and a host of similar men since their day—really understand "what they said, and whereof they affirmed?" Or were their statements "railing accusations," which "they could not prove?" We have generally supposed that their statements were true history; that they alleged what were really matters of fact. And have not more modern writers, and all late travellers, who had resided in, or passed through, those countries where Papacy holds an uncontrolled reign, substantially confirmed every jot and tittle of their statements? But if this be really so; if, while we acknowledge the honesty and piety of some individual Papists, it be a *fact* that the *system* sustained by the Romanists, as a body, wherever it can act itself out without restraint, is, substantially, the very same which those authors have represented,—ought not our people to know it? Ought not those who read little, and who are peculiarly liable to be deceived, to be faithfully warned? Surely the blacker the

picture that *facts* will warrant us in delineating, the more necessary that a knowledge of it be distinctly imparted to the community. We say again, that we utterly disapprove of all coarseness, indecency and violence in conducting the controversy against the Romanists; and we cordially lament over every thing of this kind that has appeared. But we wish the public fully to understand what the Papacy really is. We wish *facts* to be faithfully disclosed. We are not afraid of *truth*; and we are not aware that any portion of it, the disclosure of which is not contrary to good morals, ought to be kept back.

4. The author of the sermon before us is greatly scandalized at some of the *language* which he finds in some of the late American writers against the Papists. We will not attempt to conceal, we emphatically repeat, that *some* of the language referred to has offended us also. But we cannot join Mr. J. in the whole extent of his condemnatory sentence against *all* the expressions which he quotes. Two, at least, of these expressions are taken from the *word of God*; and one of them is considered, by many sound divines, as applied expressly, by the Holy Spirit, to the Church of Rome. This escaped his recollection; or perhaps he is not well enough read in the Popish controversy even to have known it. But if *precedent* may be admitted as any mitigation of the offence committed by these American writers, we think it would not be difficult to find language in some of the old English divines just referred to, quite as severe, and quite as questionable on the score of *delicacy*, as some of the coarsest quoted by Mr. Johnson. Nay, in the *Homilies* of the Church of England, "appointed to be read in Churches," and expressly ratified and recommended by the Episcopal Church in the United States, will be found language quite as liable to exception as almost any that our author has arrayed and condemned. Whoever will be at the pains to look over the *third* Homily "Against Peril of Idolatry," will find expressions which will convince him that all coarseness is not confined to America, or to Presbyterians. The grave framers of the Homily not only call the Church of Rome "idolatrous," "unchristian," and "antichrist," but take far greater license. Some of their language, indeed, we cannot prevail on ourselves to insert in the body of our page, but have thrown a specimen of it into the retirement of a *note*, which those who think proper

may peruse.* Let it be remembered that the language referred to, was deliberately framed by venerable, pious men, by Episcopal dignitaries, who lived in the midst of the Papacy; who knew it well; and who were willing to have language of this kind publicly read from the sacred desk, for the instruction of the people. Surely Mr. J. forgot that when he was penning some of his severest sentences, he was inflicting a heavy blow on his own Homilies!

5. Is it not manifest that a large part of the population of the United States really need instruction in regard to the true character and tendency of Romanism? Do we not see Protestants of intelligence and wealth contributing largely, almost every day, towards the erection of mass houses for the Papists, not one of whom will ever give a cent in return for bearing forward *our* religious enterprizes? Do we not see, after all the information and warning that have been given to the public on this subject, Protestant parents, and even Protestant parents professing piety, sending their children to Roman Catholic seminaries, thus exposing their tender and inexperienced offspring to all the seductive and proselyting arts, known to be familiar with that denomination? The Papists themselves speak without scruple of their proselyting projects by means of their seminaries. Archbishop Whitefield, of Baltimore, in a late report to an association in Vienna, formed for the express purpose of spreading Romanism in America, says—"I cannot omit mentioning, that in this school, as in *all* the Catholic institutions for education, A LARGE PORTION OF THE CHILDREN ARE PROTESTANTS; a

* "For she (the Church of Rome) being indeed not only an harlot (as the Scripture calleth her) but also a foul, filthy, old withered harlot; (for she is indeed of ancient years) and understanding her lack of natural and true beauty, and great loathsomeness which of herself she hath, doth, after the eustom of such harlots, paint herself, and deck and tire herself with gold, pearl stones, and all kind of precious jewels, that she, shining with the outward beauty and glory of them, may please the foolish fantasy of fond lovers, and so entice them to spiritual fornication with her; who, if they saw her, (I will not say naked) but in simple apparel, would abhor her as the foulest and filthiest harlot that ever was seen, according as appeareth by the description of the garnishing of the great strumpet of all strumpets, the mother of whoredom, set forth by St. John in his Revelation." And again; "It is most evident by their deeds that they make of them no other books nor scriptures than such as teach most filthy and horrible idolatry, as the users of such books daily prove by continual practising of the same. O books and scriptures, in the which the devilish schoolmaster, Satan, hath penned the lewd lessons of wicked idolatry, for his dastardly disciples and scholars, to behold, read, and learn, to God's most high dishonour, and their most horrible damnation." *Homilies*, p. 216. 8vo. Oxford edition, 1802. Large portions of the same Homily are in a similar style.

circumstance which contributes not a little to the spread of our holy doctrine, and the removal of prejudices." Surely, when they themselves boast of their plan, and of its success, there can be no want of charity in supposing that there is danger. And if there be real danger, where is Christian fidelity, if there be no public and explicit warning given?

6. We have only one more remark to offer in the way of protest against the spirit of this discourse. It is, that we never supposed before, that the statement of *facts*, and the array of legitimate *arguments* against any creed or sect, deserved to be called "persecution" or "intolerance," in any warranted sense. Has it come to this, that the friends of truth cannot be permitted to unite in opposing, refuting, and, if possible, discrediting and putting down, in public estimation, any system of gross error which may claim public regard, but which is in the highest degree unfriendly to the best interests of the community? We do not so interpret the principles of that civil and religious liberty which we are so happy as to enjoy. Is it "persecution," or "intolerance," to expose in every possible form the errors, the immoral tendency, and the actual profligacy of infidelity, and to endeavour to induce the people to despise and abhor it, as long as infidelity is left as free to defend itself, as Christianity is to make the attack? Are not Romanists at full liberty to make their counter statements, and to fortify them with the strongest authority they can produce? Besides, Roman Catholics have been, undoubtedly, in some cases, the aggressors in this controversy. In one region of the Church, to our certain knowledge, it was dragged on by their boastful and offensive challenges. Was it wrong for Protestants to defend themselves, and, in doing this, to carry the war into the enemy's country? That honour and fairness, and the strictest Christian principle ought to be regarded, even in war, no one can doubt; and so far as any have transgressed these laws, let them be severely rebuked. But that the shock of battle with the enemies of Christ, should be declined through either timidity, or false delicacy, we cannot for a moment admit. *We* are very sure that neither the inspired apostles, nor the valiant witnesses of the truth in any age, have ever taught such an ignoble doctrine.

We owe an apology to our readers for devoting so many of our pages to a production so little worthy of notice. The truth is, it was the most convenient peg we could think of, on which to hang a few remarks which we felt desirous of

making. We have now accomplished our purpose; and, in bidding adieu to Mr. Johnson, we would only venture to suggest to him, that the next time he meets his flock on a day of "public thanksgiving," he may find topics of instruction and address quite as appropriate, and quite as edifying, as the censure of others for opposing the Romanists.

ART. III.—*On the Atonement and Intercession of Jesus Christ.* By the Rev. William Symington. First American Edition. New York; 1836. pp. 396.

Archibald Alexander

WE are pleased with this volume on the Atonement, because such a work on this cardinal subject was needed; and because we are of opinion that the author has exhibited the true Calvinistic view of the atonement, as to its necessity, nature, and extent. This work is more comprehensive than any work on this subject, with which we are acquainted; it embraces every point which it is proper to have discussed in a popular treatise. We consider it also a high recommendation that it is not written in a controversial spirit. The author attacks no one, but goes straight forward to his object. The style is characterized by vivacity and perspicuity. It would be difficult to find an involved or obscure sentence in the whole book. On every point the discussion is as concise as most readers will desire, and in our opinion, is conducted with admirable judgment and good temper. Where the reader may differ from the sentiments of the author, he will never have occasion to censure him as deficient in Christian candour.

Mr. Symington's plan is also very judicious. He begins by an explication of the principal terms which relate to this subject. He then undertakes to answer the most common and popular objections to the doctrine. This part of his work is executed with great clearness and force. Nothing seems to be omitted which is proper to be said, and yet these objections are answered within a very moderate space. The necessity of an atonement comes next in order, which he argues logically, and conclusively, from the PERFECTIONS OF GOD—FROM THE NATURE OF MORAL GOVERNMENT—FROM THE INEFFICACY OF OTHER MEANS TO OBTAIN PARDON—AND FROM THE EXPRESS TESTIMONY OF SCRIPTURE. The proof

of the reality of the atonement is next exhibited. Under this head he avails himself of the ancient sacrifices, and particularly of those which were appointed in the Levitical law. On this interesting subject he furnishes the reader with a condensed view of all that is most important in the popular works of Magee and John Pye Smith. He then considers the atonement as exhibited in prophecy; especially in the remarkable predictions of Isaiah and Daniel, concerning the vicarious sufferings and death of the Messiah.

The author now comes to the consideration of the sufferings of Christ, as the facts are recorded by the Evangelists; and considers the several conceivable ends of these extraordinary sufferings, and shows that none of these could have been the principal end, but that of making an *atonement*. The principal passages of scripture which speak of *atonement*, *reconciliation*, *redemption*, &c., are taken up and considered.

The *matter* of the atonement is now more particularly brought into view, where the expiatory sufferings of Christ are described. The *value* of the atonement is evinced from a consideration of the DIGNITY OF CHRIST'S PERSON—FROM HIS RELATIONSHIP TO MAN—FROM HIS FREEDOM FROM ALL PERSONAL OBLIGATION TO THE LAW—FROM HIS RIGHT TO DISPOSE OF HIMSELF—FROM THE VOLUNTARINESS OF HIS OFFERING—AND FROM ITS BEING MADE ACCORDING TO THE APPOINTMENT OF GOD. The vexed subject of the EXTENT of the atonement is not omitted by our author. On this point he takes middle ground between the schemes of those who represent the atonement as indefinite and universal, and those who make it so limited as to be sufficient only for the salvation of the elect. He admits and maintains that the atonement, as to its intrinsic merit, is infinite; while, in its application, it is limited to the elect. The true point of dispute is not the intrinsic value of the atonement, but the *design* with which it was offered. And where the parties agree in relation to the doctrine of election, we do not see much room for dissension in regard to the extent of the atonement. Both parties consider it as a sufficient ground of an universal offer of Christ to all who are willing to receive him. The author maintains the definite character of the atonement, and its limitation to the elect in its design, with great force of argument, from the DIVINE PURPOSE—FROM THE RECTITUDE OF GOD—FROM THE NATURE OF THE COVENANT OF GRACE—FROM THE VERY NATURE OF THE ATONEMENT—FROM THE

RESURRECTION AND INTERCESSION OF CHRIST—FROM THE WORK OF THE SPIRIT—FROM THE LIMITED APPLICATION AND REVELATION OF THE ATONEMENT—FROM THE ABSURD CONSEQUENCES OF THE CONTRARY SUPPOSITION—AND FROM EXPRESS TESTIMONIES OF SCRIPTURE. He then considers and answers the objections to this opinion, derived from its being derogatory to the honour of the Saviour—from its supposing a redundancy of merit—from the universal offer of the gospel—from universal terms used in scripture—and from the possibility of some perishing for whom Christ died.

Whether on this much disputed point the arguments in favour of a definite or general atonement preponderate, will be differently decided by readers according to their respective prepossessions. But for ourselves, we are of opinion, that the author has placed the subject on the old Calvinistic ground, as *particular redemption* is known to have been one of the doctrines in which almost all old Calvinists were agreed, and was one of the *five points* disputed between the Calvinists and Arminians, and decided in the synod of Dort. It may, however, be admitted, that where there is an agreement respecting the vicarious nature of the atonement, and in the belief of the doctrine of election, the controversy must be rather verbal than real; for both sides hold the intrinsic sufficiency of the atonement, and both maintain that it was the design of the Father in giving his Son, and the design of the Son in dying, to save only those chosen in him before the world was. Wherein then is the difference, except in the proper mode of expressing our views? But we can see no advantage from representing the atonement to be universal; and when it is said to have been made as much for one man as another, the language is certainly inconsistent with the other parts of the Calvinistic system, and furnishes strong ground on which both the Arminians and Universalists can erect their batteries to subvert it.

After discussing the extent of the atonement pretty fully, Mr. Symington devotes one section to the consideration of its *results*, which he makes to be the following: IT ILLUSTRATES THE CHARACTER OF GOD—VINDICATES HIS MORAL GOVERNMENT—DEMONSTRATES THE EVIL OF SIN—SECURES FOR ITS OBJECTS PERFECT AND ETERNAL SALVATION—OPENS A WAY FOR THE EXERCISE OF DIVINE MERCY, AND ENCOURAGES SINNERS TO RELY ON THE MERCY OF GOD, AND AWAKENS GRATEFUL EMOTIONS IN THE PIOUS—AFFECTS THE DIVINE DISPENSATIONS TO OUR WORLD—and FURNISHES

AN ETERNAL THEME OF CONTEMPLATION TO THE WHOLE UNIVERSE OF MORAL CREATURES.

This concludes what strictly belongs to the atonement, but the author has very judiciously annexed a *Second Part*, containing the fullest and ablest view of the *intercession of Christ*, which we have seen. Indeed the subject of Christ's intercession cannot be separated from his atonement; for while the latter may be represented by the slaying of the sacrifice and laying it on the altar, the former is strikingly typified by the presentation and sprinkling of the blood of the sin-offering in the most Holy Place, accompanied with clouds of precious incense. The offering of Christ's body on the cross would have accomplished nothing, unless he had entered with his precious merit into the highest heavens, there to plead the cause of his people. We would particularly recommend this part of the work to the attentive perusal of the pious; it cannot be read, we think, without pleasure and profit by any sincere Christian. The topics which are introduced under this head are such as these; the *Intercession of Christ displays the love of God, and proves the Divinity of Christ—shows the efficacy of his death—affords security to the people of God.* The discourse is concluded by considering the sin of dishonouring Christ's intercession, and the duty of daily seeking an interest in it.

It is gratifying to learn that the first edition of this work was all sold in a few days, and a second edition called for, before the author had the opportunity of revising the work, or availing himself of the remarks of the reviewers. He promises, however, "if a third edition be required, to supply this deficiency." *The Christian Instructor* of Edinburgh, which has always been ably conducted, and uniformly appears on the side of orthodoxy and evangelical piety, speaks of this work in the following terms, "Mr. S. has accomplished his work in the happiest possible manner. We have not often read a work which does more credit to its author, or is better fitted to edify the Church of God. The divine and the private Christian will alike find their account in giving it a careful perusal, and, we are mistaken, if there be many of its readers who will be satisfied with perusing it only once." The work is also highly commended in the *Presbyterian Review*, published in Edinburgh.

To account for the avidity with which this volume was bought up in Scotland it will be necessary to advert to the

circumstance, that the Christian public there has been considerably agitated with the publication of new and dangerous doctrines on the subject of the atonement. It will be recollected that Thomas Erskine, Esq., who had acquired considerable reputation as a theological writer, by his work on the INTERNAL EVIDENCES OF CHRISTIANITY, published a little work on the ATONEMENT, in which he maintained not only the universality of the atonement, but its universal efficacy in bringing the whole human race into a justified state. In connexion with this he taught that the glad tidings of the gospel, was the annunciation of this fact, and that saving faith consisted in a full persuasion that we are already in a justified state; and that the condemnation of any would be for refusing to believe this merciful testimony of God. This antinomian work of Erskine was mixed up with much that was good and pious; and the author and his followers insisted that nothing so much promoted personal holiness as the persuasion above mentioned; and this they declared to be the effect of the doctrine on their own minds. Several able answers were returned to this publication. Dr. Wardlaw, so favourably and extensively known as a theological writer, took up his pen to counteract the influence of this pernicious publication. His little work has been republished in this country. Dr. Dewar, principal of Mareschall college, Aberdeen, also published a work on the atonement about this time. This subject was also involved in the prosecution carried on in the ecclesiastical courts of the Church of Scotland against Irving, M'Clean, Campbell, &c., which resulted in their deposition from the sacred ministry. The attention of theologians in that country was therefore turned to the subject of atonement; and as these errorists made the universality of the atonement the foundation of their whole system, this will show why this point has received so large a share of attention in the treatise now under review.

In this country, discussions on the atonement have taken a different turn; for while we have too many who reject the whole doctrine with scorn, we have also a large number who have adopted a new theory of the atonement, which they persuade themselves avoids the most prominent difficulties of the old doctrine. We propose therefore to occupy some space in giving our own views of the atonement in relation to the existing state of opinion in this country. And we are induced to undertake this, not only because the subject is of

momentous importance, but because we have never given our views at large on this subject in the pages of the Biblical Repertory.

It is a fact worthy of notice, that in the lapse of time a remarkable change takes place in the language of theology, without any apparent design entertained by any to bring it about. Words once in current use are laid aside, and new terms adopted without any important reason for the change; and without any thing being gained or lost by the substitution. Of this a more striking example cannot be given than in the word *atonement*, to express the expiation made by the sufferings and death of Christ. This word was much used by the translators of the English Bible to signify the efficacy of the sacrifices and other rites of the Levitical service intended to purify from sin and ceremonial defilement: but in the New Testament where the whole work of Christ is fully exhibited, the word is but once read (Rom. v. 11), and seems to be there used to avoid the too frequent use of the word *reconciliation*, which would certainly have been the appropriate term by which to render the Greek word *καταλλαγή*. But as these two words were then used, it was perfectly indifferent which was employed, for they were considered synonymous, as might be shown by a reference to the writers of that period; and as appears, indeed, from the derivation of the word *atonement*, which has a purely English original, and signifies to be *AT ONE*, as all the old English lexicographers inform us. For those who have been at variance to be *at one*, is evidently the same thing as to be reconciled. But as in the Old Testament the Hebrew word *כִּפּוּר* is almost uniformly rendered by the LXX. by the Greek word *ἐξίλασχομαι*, *ιλάσχομαι* or *ιλάομαι* and the noun by *ιλασμός*, which words are in English constantly translated, *to make atonement*, *to atone*, *atonement*, this analogy should have been followed in the New Testament; and then we should have had the word *atonement* in our version, not where the word is used (Rom. v. 11), but in 1 John ii. 2, where we have *καὶ αὐτὸς ἰλασμός ἐστι περὶ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν*; and *he is the atonement for our sins*. And in 1 John iv. 10, where we read, *καὶ ἀπέστειλε τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ ἰλασμὸν περὶ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν*; and *he sent his son an atonement for our sins*. We find the Greek verb which signifies *to make atonement*, in the New Testament, Heb. ii. 17, *εἰς τὸ ἰλάσκεσθαι τὰς ἁμαρτίας τοῦ λαοῦ*; *to make atonement for the sins of the people*. The version of this text furnishes another proof that atone-

ment and reconciliation were considered synonyms by our translators, for as in the former passage they used *atonement* instead of *reconciliation*; here, they use *reconciliation* where *atonement* was the proper word. The word *ἱλαστήριον* is also twice read in the New Testament, and in one of these (Rom. iii. 25) should be translated *atonement*, ὃν πρόθετο ὁ Θεὸς ἱλαστήριον, *whom God hath set forth to be an atonement*. In the other passage (Heb. ix. 5) this word retains the sense in which it is uniformly used by the LXX. for the *mercy-seat* or cover of the ark of the covenant, and would be well rendered by the word *propitiatory*, or *place of atonement*.

As the phrase to *make atonement* as the translation of the Hebrew and Greek words before mentioned occurs nearly eighty times in the Old Testament, it may aid our investigation to endeavour to ascertain its precise meaning; and there is no passage which furnishes us with a better opportunity of accomplishing this object, than the account of the transactions of the *day of atonement* which is recorded in the 16th of Leviticus. It has frequently been asserted that the literal, radical sense of the Hebrew verb is *to cover*; but as the word is seldom used in a literal sense, probably but once, where Noah is commanded to pitch the ark without and within with pitch, we think that there is but slight ground for this opinion. In the figurative use of the word, though often thus employed, there is no clear allusion to this idea of *covering*. If we might infer the literal from the uniform figurative use, we should say, that the radical meaning was *to cleanse* or *to purify*. It appears from the passage referred to, and from other texts, that an atonement, though usually made with blood, consisted sometimes of other things. Thus in Exodus xxx. 15. the half shekel paid by every Israelite, is called *an offering unto the Lord to make atonement for your souls*. And in Lev. xvi. 10, the scape-goat is called an atonement. *But the goat on which the lot fell to be the scape-goat shall be presented alive before the Lord to make an atonement with him, and to let him go for a scape-goat into the wilderness*. But commonly atonements were made with bloody sacrifices; so on the day when the scape-goat was made an atonement by symbolically carrying off the sins of the people which had been confessed over his head, another goat and a bullock were sacrificed as sin-offerings, the one for the whole congregation, the other for the priest and his family. “And Aaron shall bring the bullock of the sin-offering which is for himself and his house, and

shall make atonement for himself and for his house. Then shall he kill the goat of the sin-offering that is for the people, and bring his blood within the veil, and do with that blood as he did with the blood of the bullock, and sprinkle it upon the mercy-seat, and before the mercy-seat, and he shall make an ATONEMENT for the Holy Place, because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel, and because of their transgressions in all their sins. And there shall be no man in the tabernacle of the congregation, when he goeth in TO MAKE ATONEMENT in the Holy Place, until he come out and have MADE AN ATONEMENT for himself and his household, and for all the congregation of Israel. And he shall go in before the altar of the LORD, and make an atonement for it (or on it) and shall take of the blood of the bullock and of the blood of the goat, and put it on the horns of the altar round about. And he shall sprinkle of the blood upon it with his finger seven times and cleanse it and hallow it from the uncleanness of the children of Israel." Here we have as distinct a view as could be desired of the nature of atonement under the Mosaic dispensation; and as these solemn transactions on the day of atonement are in a very eminent degree typical of the great sacrifice of Christ, the atonements of this day will aid us in understanding the true nature of the Christian atonement. That the solemn rites of this day were typical of Christ, we are not only informed, but the apostle expounds at large these significant ceremonies. In the 9th chapter of the epistle to the Hebrews, Paul applies the type to the antitype. "The priests went always into the first tabernacle accomplishing the service of God. But into the second went the high priest alone, every year, not without blood which he offered for himself and for the errors of the people. The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing, which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices which could not make him that did the service perfect as pertaining to the conscience. Which stood in meats and drinks and divers washings, and carnal ordinances imposed on them until the time of reformation. But Christ being come a high priest of good things, by a more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building. Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. For if the blood of bulls and goats and

the ashes of a heifer sprinkling the unclean sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the Eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your souls from dead works to serve the living God."

From this inspired exposition of the sacrifices and ceremonies of the day of atonement, we learn several things, as,

1. That the offerings and transactions of that solemn day were indeed typical of Christ and his atoning sacrifice for the sins of his people. They are called *a figure for the time then present*.

2. That the sacrifices so solemnly offered under the law had in themselves no efficacy to take away the guilt of sin. These *gifts and offerings could not make him that did the service perfect as pertaining to the conscience*. The sprinkling of this blood of bulls and calves could only *sanctify to the purifying of the flesh*; but had no power to purge the conscience from dead works. *For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sin*.

3. That these ceremonies, called here *carnal ordinances*, were not intended to be perpetual but temporary, *imposed until the time of reformation*; that is, until the introduction of the gospel dispensation.

4. That the tabernacle erected by Moses according to the pattern showed him in the holy mount, is a type or figure of that heaven into which Christ has entered.

5. That the entrance of the high priest once in the year into the HOLY OF HOLIES, with the blood of atonement was a lively prefiguration of the entrance of Christ into heaven with his own blood, to obtain eternal redemption for us.

6. That Christ's blood and offering of himself through the ETERNAL SPIRIT is a real and efficacious atonement, by which the conscience is purged from dead works; that is from sin. And by this one offering, he perfects forever those who are sanctified. He who appeared in the end of the world has *put away sin by the sacrifice of himself*.

In this part of holy scripture we have a clear exhibition of the Christian atonement. It is a sin-offering, or a sacrifice for sin. It is a vicarious sacrifice, for as the sins of the people were laid both upon the scape-goat who bore them away, and upon the goat which was sacrificed and his blood carried within the vail, and sprinkled on the mercy-seat; so Christ bore our sins in his own body. He was wounded for our transgressions, and was made sin for us. The atonement of

Christ was an offering made through the Eternal Spirit without spot unto God to render him propitious; to purge the conscience, and to obtain eternal redemption for us. This offering and sacrifice was made by Jesus Christ in the character of HIGH PRIEST. But he infinitely excelled those high priests who ministered in the tabernacle below. These were obliged to offer their atoning sacrifices year by year, because they could not really put away sin, but significantly pointed to the one true and efficacious atonement. *They were not permitted to continue by reason of death.* "But Jesus Christ because he continueth forever hath an unchangeable priesthood, wherefore he is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." It seems to have been on this account that he was declared to be a priest forever after the order of Melchisedek, because the sacred scriptures make no mention of his death, or that there were any others in the succession either before or after him. But again, "other priests were encompassed with infirmity, and had to offer first for their own sins and then for those of the people; but Jesus Christ is holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners." He had, therefore, no need to offer any sacrifice for himself, but only to make the one offering which has in itself, merit enough to make atonement for the sins of the whole world. It is also mentioned, as a remarkable point of distinction, that Christ was made HIGH PRIEST by a solemn oath. He is also styled the SURETY of a better covenant, and the MEDIATOR of the New Testament. And the end of all his sacerdotal acts and offerings was that by his death, *they who are called may receive the promise of eternal inheritance.*

The legal sacrifices had in themselves no intrinsic value; and when the people made a merit and a righteousness of them, so far from being pleasing to a holy God, they were exceedingly offensive. When Christ came, therefore, he said, "Sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not, but a body hast thou prepared me;" intimating that these typical rites were now to be abolished to make way for the only efficacious offering which was his own pure and sacred body which had been miraculously prepared for him in the womb of the virgin. The substance being come, the shadows were now ready to vanish away. "He taketh away the first that he may establish the second." And the Son being come as a priest, and furnished with a spotless sacrifice, cries, "Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. By the which will we are

sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ, once for all." As was before said, this priest had no need to offer more than once, *once for all*. "Other priests stood daily ministering, and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices which can never take away sin, but Jesus Christ, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins, forever sat down at the right hand of God."

No doctrine of the Bible is more clearly and fully expounded than that of atonement, by the apostle Paul in this epistle to the Hebrews. And having now exhibited the leading points in his exposition, nothing more would be necessary, were it not for the pride and perverseness of men, who refuse to receive the simple truth of God's word, and turn themselves every way to evade the force of the divine testimony. It is truly wonderful, after what we have seen, that any should deny that the doctrine of a vicarious atonement is taught in the sacred scriptures. We may ask such persons to tell us what more could have been said, had the apostle intended to inculcate this doctrine? But let us consider some of the arguments by which they attempt to defend their cause. And, in the first place, they object to the doctrine as unreasonable, and derogatory to the character of God. They allege that there can exist no necessity for such a costly sacrifice; that if the creatures of God sin against him he is a merciful sovereign who can forgive them without requiring any atonement; and they assert that reason teaches us that if they repent and reform, God will receive them into favour, and remit all the punishment which was threatened.

Such reasonings might appear plausible enough, if man were a competent judge of what plans it becomes the Ruler of the universe to adopt in the government of the world; or if human reason could decide what terms of reconciliation a holy God ought to adopt for his rebellious creatures. It is a sufficient answer to all such objections, that the same mode of reasoning, applied to the state of things as they actually exist in the physical and moral world, would lead us directly to atheism. We should not find it difficult to frame plausible objections to the structure of the universe, to the constitution of man, to the providence of God, and to every principle of moral government. Why should a God of infinite benevolence bind his creatures by a law; and, especially, why should he annex to it a penalty so tremendous as death? The acts of creatures cannot affect the infinite, Almighty Ruler of the universe.

The doctrines of divine revelation can never be brought with propriety to the bar of human reason: they are as far above reason as the heaven is above the earth. When a revelation is sufficiently attested, it is reasonable to receive every thing which it contains, however repugnant to our preconceived opinions. To act on any other principle is the height of arrogance and impiety. Why do we want a revelation but to teach us what reason does not know? But it is pretended that this doctrine of atonement is not taught in the scriptures; then as we said before, it cannot be taught in words. If this is not a doctrine of scripture nothing is taught in scripture. It would be almost as reasonable to assert that there were neither words nor letters in the Bible. As we have exhibited sufficient scriptural evidence of the doctrine, we might decline any further discussion of the subject. But lest these pretended Rationalists boast that reason is altogether on their side, we will descend into the arena, and contend with them on their own ground, and with their own weapons. The question which we propose first to discuss is, whether a holy God can consistently forgive sin without any satisfaction or atonement. It is agreed that God exercises a moral government over the world, and has given to man a just and good law, which all men have transgressed. That sin exists is not disputed, and it is not to be denied that all sin deserves to be punished, for otherwise it would not be sin—it would have no demerit. And if it did not deserve to be punished, it would not need forgiveness, for forgiveness is the remission of deserved punishment. If then sin deserves to be punished, it cannot be an evil thing, or inconsistent with the divine attributes, to inflict deserved punishment. To assert this would be to say that it was wrong for the Ruler of the universe to do right—unjust to act justly, by giving to every one his due. But this is held by no one. Even Socinians admit, that it is right for God to punish sin, and if right to punish in one instance, it must be right to punish sin in every instance, according to its demerit. Indeed, as the punishment of sin is the act of God as a righteous Governor or just Judge, we do not see how he can do otherwise than impartially punish all sin according to its demerit. How can the Judge of all the earth who must do right, punish one sinner, and permit another equally guilty to go unpunished. Certainly reason can never teach us that he will do so. Reason cannot teach opposite things, and we have seen that it is the dictate of reason that sin

should be punished according to its demerit; the same reason never can teach that in some instances it should not be punished at all. Whatever argument will prove that sin ought not to be punished in one instance, may be applied to any other case; and would go to prove that no sin could be punished in the divine government. But we know that some sins have been and are punished; reason, therefore, cannot assure us, or even render it probable, that in a perfectly righteous moral government, any sin will escape deserved punishment. We know that it is alleged that in those cases, in which the punishment of sin is remitted there is a special reason for this dispensation, namely, the repentance and reformation of the sinner. Unitarians themselves maintain, that if no repentance intervene to turn aside the stroke of justice, transgressors must bear their iniquity. It follows, therefore, upon their own principles, that if none should ever repent, there could be no remission. And it would not be very difficult to show that sinners left to themselves will never repent. But we shall now proceed upon the supposition that a sinner can repent and reform his life at any time. We ask how can it be ascertained that sin will be pardoned upon repentance without any atonement? It cannot be learned from experience, for the natural consequences of intemperance, debauchery, fraud, &c., are not removed by repentance; and yet these consequences of sin are a part of God's moral administration. In civil governments the criminal who has been convicted of murder, treason, perjury, or any other crime, is never released and the punishment remitted as a matter of course, because he repents. However sincerely penitent, he pays the penalty of the law, and a contrary course would be subversive of all law and government. Suppose that God should create two moral agents of similar powers, and place them under the same law, and in the same circumstances; and suppose that one of them should continue perfectly to obey his maker, and that the other should wickedly rebel against his sovereign; can any man persuade himself that he could treat these creatures exactly in the same manner? God cannot look upon sin but with disapprobation proportioned to its malignity; and he cannot but be pleased with obedience. Unless, therefore, he should act contrary to his own views and feelings, he cannot but make a difference between the man who loves and serves him with all his heart, and him who ungratefully cherishes enmity against his Maker. This case is so plain that no man who

has any perception of moral fitness can doubt respecting it. The Socinian, as well as others, feels the necessity of such a course in a moral Governor; and he does not plead for pardon to such as continue obstinate in their rebellion. He only maintains that God may remit the penalty of his law to him who repents and reforms. Let us suppose then that these two creatures had a probation of a hundred years; and that while the first fulfilled his duty to the end of his course, the other having rebelled soon after his creation persists obstinately in iniquity until near the close of the last year of the period of probation; and that he then repents and returns to his duty; how ought an infinitely righteous moral Governor to treat these persons? Would it be right merely on the ground of repentance to admit this penitent to as rich a reward as if he had never offended? And what effect would this have on other free agents, when put on their probation?

If any should still be of opinion, that upon repentance, the Governor of the world may and ought to treat the returning sinner just as if he had never offended, and that this is the dictate of sound reason; it must always be known to creatures put on probation under a moral law. The consequence will be, that God gives an option to every creature whether he will obey perfectly and constantly, or sin and rebel the greater part of the time, and at last repent, for the results will be precisely the same in each case. Such a provision annexed to the divine law would completely annul it. It would in fact be an invitation to creatures to rebel, as they would be assured that they have it in their power to prevent all punishment, and to secure the same reward as if they never transgressed. If it should be said that their punishment might be remitted, and yet they not put on an equality with those who never disobeyed, we answer that this concedes the principle for which we contend, as in this case a part of the punishment would be inflicted; for whatever a man loses in consequence of sin, or whatever mark of disapprobation is set on him by God, makes a part of the punishment of his sin. How is it then an amiable virtue in men, it will be asked, to forgive those who offend them, so that such forgiveness is made a condition of asking for forgiveness? To answer this objection fully would require more space than we can afford in this review. We will therefore merely indicate the principle on which a reply may be made. Creatures have nothing to do in the punishment of sin as a moral evil; God is the only administrator of his

own law. Vengeance belongeth unto him, he will repay. No creature, therefore, can be compared with God in relation to this matter. Again, when men receive injury or offence from their fellow creatures, it is reasonable that they should not undertake to avenge themselves, because this is going beyond their proper sphere, and encroaching on the prerogative of God, who takes cognizance of all offences, and knows their exact demerit. Besides, as we are all offenders against God, and can only be saved from wrath by his mercy, it is reasonable that we should not be rigid in executing punishment on those who trespass against us.

But it may be objected that according to this view of the divine character and government, he has the attribute of justice but not of mercy, whereas all men who entertain correct opinions of the divine attributes believe that mercy is the most amiable perfection of his character. To which we reply, that it is even so, that reason knows nothing of the attribute of mercy. Reason clearly indicates that God is good to the obedient, but it cannot inform us that he will remit the punishment of any sin. Indeed it is by reason that we conclude that God will render to every man according to his deeds, and it never can teach, therefore, that in some instances he will not render to every one his due. The idea of divine mercy so prevalent among men is derived from revelation, and is intimately connected with the atonement. The very design of the atonement is to enable the righteous Governor of the universe to exercise mercy, not at the expense of justice, which is impossible, but by a complete satisfaction to justice, "that God might be just and the justifier of him who believeth in Jesus." It is a radical mistake in theology to suppose that mercy is exercised irrespective of the demands of justice. God cannot divest himself of his justice any more than of his being; and if his retributive justice have claims on any one on account of sin, these claims can never be set aside. Erroneous ideas on this point have been the source of many errors; the ramifications from this root are very extensive; but we cannot trace them now through all their windings.

It may be again objected, that on these principles mercy is not an essential attribute of God. If by essential be meant that which belongs to his nature, mercy is essential; all divine attributes are essential. But we admit that there was no necessity for the exercise of mercy. To suppose that there was, is to destroy its very nature. Mercy must depend on

mere will. It is grace, but grace might be withheld, or it ceases to be grace, and becomes justice. As God showed no mercy to apostate angels, he might have proceeded on the same principles of rectitude towards fallen men. The very idea of mercy is derived from the doctrine of atonement, and yet an argument is derived from mercy to overthrow the atonement. Take away the atonement, and mercy and grace are blotted out with it.

We have hitherto been arguing the necessity of atonement from the holiness and justice of God; the truth and faithfulness of God furnish an argument corroborative of the same thing.

When the Ruler of the universe promulges a law, it is not only a rule to guide the obedience of the creature, but a solemn declaration of the principles on which he means to administer his government. And when he annexes a certain penalty to his law, his veracity is pledged to execute it; for a penalty is nothing else than a public intimation to the creature what the consequence of transgression will be. Some theologians, however, to answer a particular purpose, have maintained, that although God is bound by his faithfulness to fulfil his promises, he is not in the same manner obliged to execute his threatenings. And they assign this reason of the difference, that as the interests of creatures are involved in the fulfilment of a promise, this gives them a kind of right which cannot be violated, whereas no one is injured by an omission to execute threatenings; but the contrary. The doctrine is, that God may act contrary to his own public and solemn declaration, provided no one is injured by his doing so. But if the penalty of the law was annexed to prevent evil to the public, from its neglect will not the public interest suffer? And if it does not, will such a course be for the honour of God? Shall we attribute to the God of truth a disregard to his word, which all must acknowledge would be a great moral defect in man? Certainly this ought not to be received as a settled principle in the divine administration without the most manifest proof. We believe, that at the first hearing of such a proposition every unsophisticated mind would be revolted. The great and glorious God has claimed for himself truth and faithfulness as attributes essential to his character; and he has manifested his detestation of all falsehood in creatures by the strongest expressions. We ought therefore to be cautious of ascribing to him what would have the most distant tendency to dero-

gate from his veracity. "Hath he spoken, and will he not do it?" It ought to be considered also, that this principle would go far to render all divine threatnings nugatory. The certainty of punishment is found to have more effect than its severity. But this doctrine renders it altogether uncertain, when a penalty is denounced, whether it will ever be executed. It spreads uncertainty over the future punishment of the guilty. Who knows but that the Judge of all the earth will at the day of judgment remit the penalty incurred by all sinners, men and angels? This principle is eminently calculated to subserve the cause of the Universalists, but we do not know that they have had the boldness to avail themselves of it. And it does away at once all necessity of atonement; for if the penalty of the law may be remitted, and is often remitted, there can be no absolute need that any one, much less a divine person, should suffer a cruel and ignominious death, to open a way for pardon.

As one consequence of this doctrine, referred to above, is, that God may, for aught we know, omit to inflict the penalty now threatened upon any transgressor, and as this is a very grave objection, we have understood that the advocates of the tenet endeavour to evade it, by making a distinction between a threatening and a prediction, that while the former may be changed for good reason, the latter must be verified, for the prophecies must be fulfilled. To us there appears no difference, except that threatenings are not absolute but conditional. In a prophecy an event is usually foretold as certain; in a threatening it is made to depend on the disobedience of the creature. A penalty is only incurred where there is transgression; but on the supposition that the law is broken, it is a prediction of what will be done with the sinner. If it is not, it has no force, and cannot be even a terror to evil doers. Besides, the reason assigned why God may omit to execute a threatening when incurred, will equally apply to a prediction. If the thing predicted be an evil, no one will be injured by omitting to bring it about.

The cases from Scripture which have been adduced to support this hypothesis will not sustain it. The threatenings against Nineveh were obviously conditional. Within forty days this great city would have been destroyed had not the inhabitants repented. That it should be thus understood is evident from commissioning a prophet to go and preach to them. If the prediction had been absolute there would have

been no object to be answered by preaching. And thus the king of Nineveh and his people understood it; for in the hope of averting the heavy judgment which impended, they humbled themselves with fasting and sackcloth, and God was pleased to spare the city. In all this there is nothing to favour the opinion that God will not certainly execute his threatenings. If the Ninevites had not repented, and God had omitted to destroy the city, then the case would have been in point. But as it is, it furnishes no example of God's failing to execute his threatenings.

But another case of much greater importance, and to suit which it is probable the doctrine in question was invented, is that of Adam in Paradise. It is alleged and confidently asserted, that the penalty was not executed on him in conformity to the threatening, "in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Adam ate the forbidden fruit but did not die on that very day, nor for centuries afterwards. If God could not consistently with his truth deviate from a threatened penalty, Adam must have died on that very day, as is evident. If it be so that God said one thing and did another, it is a serious case, not as it relates to this or that theory of Christianity, but to divine revelation. I do not know any objection which a deist could more plausibly and forcibly urge against the Bible; for it would be difficult to persuade a sensible deist that there was nothing derogatory to the truth of God in failing to do what he solemnly declared should be done. But may not the abettors of this opinion be mistaken when they assert that the threatening was in no sense executed on the very day on which Adam sinned? The word death has other significations besides the extinction of animal life. Our first parents were equally strangers to every species of death. As death is the opposite of life, they would expect the loss of life; but the noblest and most precious life which they enjoyed consisted in the image of God, and in communion with him. The mere separation of the soul and body is a trifle compared with a separation from God as the source of life. Undoubtedly by death in the threatening we should understand all penal evils of every kind and degree; for no punishment is ever inflicted on creatures which is not a part of the penalty of the law. Every bodily pain and mental pang help to make up this death. And as temporal death comes on gradually, man may be said to be dying from the moment when

he became mortal. He was now also dead in law; the eternal life which God promised as the reward of obedience was forfeited, and the law instead of a blessing denounced death. The whole of that threatened death could not be endured in one day; it extends through eternity. It is sufficient to save the divine veracity if the commencement of death was experienced on that day. The execution of the penalty is supposed to have been suspended by the interposition of a scheme of mercy. This might have modified the circumstances of our first parents, and no doubt did, but could not prevent the execution of the sentence threatened. The Saviour finds those whom he came to save, *lost*, dead in trespasses and sin, children of wrath, under the curse. From this death he undertakes to redeem them, by dying for them. The sentence of the law was therefore executed upon our first parents on the very day of their sinning, and virtually on all their posterity, for we are all born under the sentence of that death which fell on them. We are therefore under no necessity of having recourse to this opinion so derogatory to the divine attributes, to explain the facts in the case of Adam.

Let us next proceed to inquire, since the penalty of the law cannot be set aside, whether the punishment of sin can be transferred from the actual transgressor to a surety or substitute. This is a vital question in Christian theology. The whole gospel system of salvation turns upon this point: all our hopes and dearest interests are suspended on it.

This doctrine of substitution and satisfaction by the obedience and sufferings of another is one of pure revelation. Reason never could have discovered that such a relaxation of the law as admits one to die in the place of another was possible consistently with the moral government of God. Indeed, if the principle of substitution could have been reasoned out by some mighty intellect, it would have answered no purpose, as certainly no created wisdom could have found a person so qualified as to accomplish the work. We need not be surprised, therefore that the pride of human reason is offended with this doctrine, and sets itself in opposition to the plan of infinite wisdom—a plan which may be called the great mystery of the Gospel, which was hidden from eternity in the deep counsels of God, until after the fall of man it began to be developed, and by the incarnation and death of the son of God for us sinners, the divine economy was revealed in a blaze of light. As the whole Bible is a

revelation of this method of salvation by the merit of another, who has been pleased to stand in our place and make atonement for us, to produce all the proofs of the doctrine would be to expound the whole Bible. That the punishment due to the guilty can consistently with justice be inflicted on an innocent substitute capable of enduring it, and who voluntarily takes the place of the transgressor, is the grand characteristic of the gospel system. It is a device of infinite wisdom to open a way for divine mercy, while justice receives a perfect satisfaction. Such a principle could scarcely find a place among men. It would not be proper to permit a virtuous citizen to sacrifice himself for the guilty, for by this course the public would receive a double detriment; first from the loss of a good citizen, and secondly from having the guilty person retained in the bosom of society. If a case could be found in which no evil of any kind could arise from such a substitution, all objections would cease. The case of Zaleucus, king of the Locrians, has often been mentioned with great applause. The story is related by Diodorus Siculus and Ælian; and by Plutarch and Valerius Maximus is considered a most remarkable display of justice. This king having made a law that whoever should be convicted of the crime of adultery should have both his eyes put out; when his own son was found guilty, the whole state besought him to remit the threatened punishment. This he refused. But that the law might substantially have its demand and justice be done, and a salutary example given, he consented to participate in the punishment himself, and while one of his son's eyes was put out, he substituted one of his own for the other. This case so much celebrated by the ancients, Socinus speaks of contemptuously, and says that this prince ought to be classed with those rulers who deserve to be denominated *weak* and *rash*. While the rigour of the law and the inflexibility of justice were maintained, still the case is liable to some strong objections. But none of these apply to the substitution of Christ. For while the law is maintained and honoured, no injury is sustained by the public, nor eventually by the substitute. The sinner is not only pardoned but purified, and made a good citizen. The divine Mediator, though he dies, lives again, and receives an ample compensation for his humiliation and sufferings. Here then is a transaction which gloriously displays the divine justice and mercy; which maintains the honour of the divine law, and at the same time rescues a great mul-

titude of lost souls from eternal misery. Why should we complain of injustice when no one is injured? The case stands thus: the justice of God leads him necessarily to punish sin, the law denounces a penalty according to justice, the sinner is found guilty and deserves to suffer. But God feels love and compassion towards him, enters into covenant with his own son to redeem a great multitude of fallen men. The plan is, that the son become incarnate, place himself under the law, bear its curse by dying for us, and thus render a complete satisfaction to divine justice. By such an atonement a way is opened for the exercise of mercy to the guilty; and provision is made for their regeneration and sanctification.

But the objection to an innocent person's suffering for the guilty is as strong against the Socinian scheme as against the orthodox; for they admit that Christ an innocent person did suffer for the benefit of men. It matters not whether you call it punishment or not. It is suffering inflicted on the innocent. Its being considered the punishment of our sins cannot add to the injustice of the transaction. If an innocent person may consistently with justice suffer for our benefit, he may endure the same sufferings as the penalty due to sin. That *guilt*, or liableness to a penalty, may be transferred from the actual transgressor to others connected with him, may be shewn from the case of Canaan and Ham, of David and the people of Israel, seventy thousand of whom died for his sin; of Jeroboam and his descendants; of Achan and his children. But we will confine our attention to the remarkable case of Saul and the Gibeonites, where we have, with the approbation of God, seven of the descendants of Saul executed on account of a sin committed by him. When David inquired of the Lord respecting the cause of a three years' famine, by which Israel was afflicted, he received for answer, that it was for Saul and his bloody house, because he slew the Gibeonites.—“Wherefore David said unto the Gibeonites, what shall I do for you? and wherewith shall I make THE ATONEMENT, that ye may bless the inheritance of the Lord?” “And they said—“let seven men of his sons be delivered unto us, and we will hang them up unto the LORD in Gibeah of Saul.”—“And he delivered them into the hands of the Gibeonites, and they hanged them in the hill before the Lord.” Now there is no evidence that these men died for their own sin; the judgments of God had fallen upon all Israel on account of Saul's breach of covenant and

cruelty. But even supposing that some of them had participated in his crime; yet these seven were not the whole of his descendants, and yet they suffered for the whole house. Here an atonement was made to the Gibeonites by the death of seven men. These men bore the punishment of the sin of their ancestor, and the offended party was satisfied, and the divine judgments were withdrawn. Here then is a clear case of guilt being transferred from the father to his offspring, and of an atonement being made which reconciled the offended party, and turned away the wrath of God from the people. And this was in exact accordance with what is said in the second commandment, "visiting the iniquities of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me."

As then sin cannot go unpunished, as law and justice require the execution of the deserved penalty, there can be no salvation for any sinner, unless vicarious sufferings are admitted. There was no obligation on the Ruler of the universe to relax the strict demands of the law upon the individual transgressor; he might have held him to endure the penalty in his own person. But when a divine SUBSTITUTE appears, and offers his body to be wounded and bruised for our iniquities, and his soul to be poured out unto death to make an atonement for our sins—when THE LAMB OF GOD presents himself to the stroke of divine justice, and offers to bear our iniquities in his own body on the tree—to die the just for the unjust—to give his life a ransom for our redemption, and God is well pleased with his sacrifice and accepts it as sweet smelling savour, a full satisfaction and complete atonement—who has any right to object to the gracious transaction? Surely there is no injury sustained, and consequently no injustice.

But on this subject we have to contend not only with those who deny the atonement altogether, but with brethren who have invented a new scheme of atonement, which if it does not subvert the doctrine, greatly obscures and endangers it. And as this theory is much more current in this country than in Great Britain, Symington has not particularly considered it; although, indeed, the principles which he has established do virtually overthrow it. But as this new theory is in our opinion exceedingly dangerous, and is defended and zealously propagated by many among ourselves, we shall be pardoned for spending some time in examining its principles. And we here make the avowal that we charge the opinions

which we endeavour to refute only on those who acknowledge them. Some have thought that between the old and new theology respecting the nature of the atonement there was a mere verbal difference, and that the controversy was a logomachy of no manner of use. It is not so, as we shall sufficiently make appear, before we are done. It is a difference so great and radical, that we candidly believe, that the new theory of atonement approaches much nearer to the Socinian than to the old Calvinistic view of the nature and end of Christ's death. We do not say this invidiously to prejudice the reader, but simply with the view of calling his serious attention to the subject. We know there are many who have acquired a sickly sensibility in regard to all controversies between those who belong to the same communion; but whatever such may say or think, we must as far as we are able, defend the truth of God, and give faithful warning of such errors as appear to us to be dangerous in their consequences; or we should be traitors to our divine Master. And as to the disturbance and contention which arise from the discussion of theological subjects, they should be attributed to those who bring in new opinions. If all who are ministers in our church did sincerely receive the doctrines laid down in our standards, in the obvious sense in which they have from the beginning been understood, there would be no contention, except with those without. But certainly it is important that all new opinions on a subject so vital as the atonement, should be thoroughly canvassed before they are received. It is scarcely credible that all theologians until very lately should have mistaken the true nature of the atonement.

Until very recently, as far as we know, all who believed that Christ made an atonement by his death, were agreed that he endured substantially the penalty of the law which we had broken; and that his sufferings and death were a complete satisfaction to the retributive or vindicatory justice of God; so that the word *satisfaction* was in universal use to express what is now signified by the word atonement. But of late a new theory has been invented, and is believed by many to be a real improvement in theology. They ask, why should not the science of theology be progressive as well as other sciences? According to the new theory, Christ our Mediator neither suffered the penalty of the law, nor made any satisfaction to distributive justice. His death was designed to be merely an exhibition of God's displeasure

at sin, and to convince the universe that he would not suffer it to go unpunished. When we first noticed this opinion, we were inclined to hope that the objection was not to the substance of the old doctrine of atonement, but to some supposed inaccuracy of the language commonly employed to represent it. We were disposed in charity to put this construction upon their doctrine, because they were accustomed to say, that Christ did not *literally* bear the penalty of the law, which they alleged to be an impossible thing, because that penalty included remorse and despair, and required the sinner to suffer eternal death. That Christ thus suffered the penalty of the law, not one of the orthodox ever held. If, therefore, it was only meant to deny this, there was no difference of opinion, but what was verbal. And when they denied that Christ offered a satisfaction to retributive justice, they were careful to add, that his death was a satisfaction to general justice; because, according to their account of distributive justice none could satisfy it but the sinner who had broken the law. We were, also, for a while misled by their still using the terms *vicarious, substitution, &c.* But since we have become better acquainted with the new divinity, we are convinced that these technical phrases are used by its advocates in an entirely different sense from what they bear in the theology of the old school. By *vicarious*, they do not mean obedience or suffering in our stead as strictly answering the demands of a violated law, but something done or suffered which is intended to answer the same end as the fulfilment of the law. And *substitution* is that which is admitted in the place of the execution of the penalty of the law. Whether this use of these theological phrases is consistent with perfect candour, we shall not stop to inquire. It is sufficient for our purpose, that we know in what sense they are now employed by the teachers of the new theory.

We do not apprehend that we shall be charged with misrepresenting the new theory of the atonement, by any who are familiarly acquainted with it. We have charged upon the system nothing but what its abettors avow and strenuously plead for. But for the sake of others we will exhibit some of its leading features in the very words of popular writers, who have appeared in print as its defenders. It is no part of our business to reconcile these theologians, with one another, or even with themselves; nor do we attribute every sentiment of each to all who belong to that school. Let every man, in this case, bear his own burden, and be only

answerable for his own words. A late English writer* says, "The execution of the penalty, on the principles of distributive justice, is inconsistent with the present administration of moral government, as it is a state of probation and trial. The exercise of what is called vindictive justice in the administration of the law ill accords with the present connexion between God and man." Again, "The providential government which God exercises over the world shows that threatenings can be honourably suspended, when the ends of good government can be secured by it." And, as a proof that the penalty of the law of God may be set aside, he alleges the fact that the penalty threatened to our first parents was not inflicted; "for," says the writer, "had it been literally executed, there would have been no human race now existing. The penalty was, 'in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.' Adam did eat of the forbidden fruit and was spared. He did not die. The penalty was suspended and his punishment was remitted." It would be difficult to crowd a greater number of errors into the same space than are contained in the preceding citations. If God no longer governs the world on the principles of distributive justice what sort of moral government do we live under? If vindictory justice is entirely excluded from the administration of the law, how can God judge and punish the wicked? If God can at pleasure suspend his most positive and solemn threatenings, and that without limit, what truth was there in uttering these threatenings? If the penalty of the law was in no sense executed on Adam after he fell, then he suffered no injury by the fall, and we his posterity suffer no inconvenience from our connexion with him. If Adam would have been annihilated, had the penalty been inflicted, then eternal misery was not the penalty of the original law, and that so many are exposed to this dreadful punishment is entirely owing to the interposition of a Saviour. If men were not liable under the law to the sentence of eternal death, then Christ has not redeemed any from that curse. Upon these principles is it clear that the world has been essentially benefitted by the coming of a Saviour?

A popular writer of our own country† has explicitly informed us what they mean by satisfying the demands of public justice. "In this acceptance" says he, "it has no direct

* Jenkyn on the Atonement.

† Dr. Beman, Sermons on the Atonement.

reference to law, but embraces those principles of virtue or benevolence by which we are bound to govern our conduct, and by which God governs the universe." "This atonement was required that God might be just or righteous; that he might do the thing which was fit and proper, and best, and most expedient to be done, and at the same time be at perfect liberty to justify him who believeth in Jesus." "The legal obstacle to man's salvation," he informs us, "was removed by the sacrifice of Christ." But how could a legal obstacle be removed by a transaction which left the penalty of the law in full force, and which had no direct relation to law? That the death of Christ had no effect in removing the penalty of the law, or in satisfying distributive justice, this writer teaches expressly. It was therefore incumbent on him to show how such an atonement as he pleads for could remove any legal obstacle to the sinner's salvation. But lest we should be suspected of misunderstanding or misrepresenting him, we will cite his own words. Speaking of the design of Christ's death he says: "The penalty of the law strictly speaking was not inflicted at all, for this penalty in which was embodied the principles of distributive justice, required the death of the sinner, and did not require the death of Christ." "THE RELATION OF THE SINNER TO THE CURSE WHICH THIS LAW PRONOUNCES AGAINST THE TRANSGRESSOR IS JUST THE SAME THAT IT WAS WITHOUT THE ATONEMENT." How then, we ask again, could such an atonement remove the legal obstacles to the sinner's salvation? But he goes on to make the sentiment expressed above still stronger, by saying, "He is the same guilty creature he was before satisfaction was made. The law has the same demand upon him. The law and justice—that is distributive justice—as expressed in the law—have received no satisfaction at all." "The whole legal system has been suspended, at least for the present, to make way for one of a different character." If a doctrine which subverts or suspends the law of God is antinomian, we have antinomianism here in perfection. There is no law now in force, *the whole legal system is suspended, at least for the present.* How long this lawless state is to continue we are not informed. In another part of the same work, this writer asks: "How did the atonement made by Jesus Christ, prepare the way for the exercise of mercy to sinners?" After telling us what purposes it did not answer, in stating which he sets aside all the usual ends which have been assigned by the orthodox, he concludes by

declaring, "that it is a sovereign act of God as moral Governor." "Should it be asked," says he, "if the arm of distributive justice can be arrested, and if the law that threatened is not in this instance to inflict the curse, why was not this special, sovereign interposition so arranged, as not to involve the sufferings and death of Christ?" The very question which we wish to have answered; and until it is answered, we shall consider the new theory as essentially defective. Here was the point which called for all the ingenuity and reasoning powers of the author; but instead of meeting the difficulty, or attempting a full answer, he merely says, "We must recur to the doctrine before advanced and defended." Where that defence is made we know not. We believe, however, that the advocate of this new doctrine could not have better served his cause here than by observing a profound silence. The fact is that the question which he suggests is not susceptible of a satisfactory answer, on his principles. But what he adds in the next sentence is so strangely inconsistent with his own principles, that we were at first inclined to think that there must be an error of the press. The words are, "that the penalty of the law is essential to the existence and happiness of a moral government." It would, we believe, be impossible in a single sentence to express a sentiment more repugnant to the principles laid down by this writer in other parts of his work, which we have already cited. If the penalty of the law is essential to the existence and happiness of a moral government, then it must be maintained—it must be inflicted—it cannot be set aside. But in the passages quoted before, he declares, that the penalty of the law is not inflicted, that the whole legal system is suspended, and that the law has the same demand upon the pardoned sinner as though no atonement had been made. But we are furnished with the following explanation. "The only method in which the execution of this penalty can be suspended is to furnish an adequate, and practical, and public substitute in its place. For the end of distributive justice *must be secured*, and the substitute by which these are effectually accomplished is to be found in that atonement which is made in the gospel." This sounds so much like the orthodox opinion, that we are sorry to be obliged to think that the sense is very remote from that which we would give them, if the author had not opened to our view so fully his whole theory. The meaning is, that while the law receives no fulfilment, and its penalty is not inflicted, some-

thing else of a different character is done, which serves as a substitute for the execution of the penalty of the law. This use of the term substitution we before noticed. But the supposition of a substitute for law and justice is absurd. There can be no substitute for doing what is right, as there is no substitute for truth or honesty. If the death of Christ has no relation to the penalty of the law it can never be a substitute for the infliction of that penalty; and if the penalty remains in full force, and yet is suspended, the law is dishonoured. And that opinion which derogates from the honour of the law, reflects dishonour upon the Lawgiver; for the law is the clearest expression of the holiness and righteousness of his nature. And to set aside the law would be to deny himself. Christ came not to destroy the law but to magnify it and make it honourable. The exercise of mercy which is alleged to be provided for by this scheme, is mercy at the expense of justice. By the whole theory these two attributes are exhibited as at variance, and the result is that mercy triumphs over law and justice.

Another American author,* who perhaps has brought out the features of the new theory more distinctly than any other, seems to find some difficulty in reconciling the atonement with the justice of God; but he relieves himself by adopting explicitly the idea, that the atonement is nothing more than a public exhibition, or symbolical representation of the evil of sin, intended to produce a moral effect upon the universe. His words are, "the only difficulty is to understand how this exhibition was a display of the righteousness of God. To solve it some have resorted to the supposition that the Son of God became our SPONSOR, and satisfied the demands of the law on us, by suffering in our stead. But to this hypothesis there are strong objections."—"This hypothesis, like all others which suppose the Son of God to have entered into a close legal connexion with sinful men, and afterwards to have redeemed them, would make the atonement a legal satisfaction for sin; and then the acquittal would be no pardon at all, but would follow in the regular course of law." What else we would ask can an atonement for sin be than a legal satisfaction to the law which has been broken? and as to the absurd consequence supposed to follow on this supposition, it is merely imaginary. Remission and redemption, by a full price are no how incompatible.

* Dr. Murdock.

If a mediator delivers a criminal by satisfying the law; what is justice to him, is mercy to the offender. The greater the price paid, or the sufferings endured to obtain forgiveness, the more indebted is the condemned person to his deliverer, but the pardon to him is perfectly free. And whether liberation shall be conditional or unconditional, immediate or deferred, will depend upon the agreement between the judge who holds the prisoner in confinement, and the mediator. But this author having without much ceremony rejected all idea of a *Sponsor*, a legal satisfaction, and a legal connexion between Christ and his people, brings out his own scheme of the atonement. "We must, therefore," says he, "resort to some other hypothesis. And what is more simple, and at the same time more satisfactory than that the atonement was an *exhibition* or *display*—that is, it was a symbolical transaction." "The impression to he made was that God is a holy and righteous God; that while inclined to mercy he cannot forget the demands of justice."

Now this theory has no colour of proof from Holy Scripture. According to this view every idea of any thing like an *atonement* is excluded: an exhibition or display may teach something or make an impression, but it is an abuse of language to call it an *atonement*. And as to this scheme illustrating the justice or righteousness of God, nothing could be further from the truth. According to this theory the demands of both law and justice are entirely disregarded. To remove this difficulty he says, "The justification of believers is not a justification founded on the principles of law and distributive justice." Did any one before ever hear of a sentence of justification which had no relation to the law? The very notion of justification is the sentence of a judge pronouncing a person who has been arraigned, acquitted according to law. Such a sentence may by an unjust judge be contrary to the law, but that it should have no respect to the principles of law, is a solecism. "For," says he, "the operation of Christ's sacrifice, was not, it appears, in the regular course of distributive justice in regard to individual transgressors. Neither did it satisfy the demands of the violated law upon him. It did not cancel any of the claims of the law on us. The atonement was not a legal or forensic transaction. It was altogether extra judicial. It was in its nature simply an exhibition, intended to impress on all creatures a deep sense of the righteousness of God as a

moral Governor." How a transaction which proceeds upon the principle of setting aside the demands of the law and distributive justice, can serve as an impressive exhibition of the righteousness of God as moral Governor, is a thing utterly beyond our conception. Certainly the difference between the old and new theory is radical. The one holds that vindicatory justice is essential to God, and that sin can only be pardoned by an adequate satisfaction being made; the other, that God may by a sovereign act pardon sin without any satisfaction to distributive justice. The one maintains that the threatenings of God against sin must be executed substantially; that to omit to execute the penalty of the law would be a departure from truth and faithfulness which cannot without impiety be charged on the infinite God. They believe that Christ did actually suffer, in substance, and as literally as was possible, the penalty which we had incurred; that there existed no other reason why he should suffer at all, than because law and justice demanded that the sinner should be punished. They believe that he suffered death, because death is the wages of sin; that he endured such sufferings, as considering the dignity of his person, fully exhausted the penalty of the law, and fully satisfied divine justice for all the sins of those whom he had undertaken to redeem. They do not think that in bearing the penalty of the law, it was necessary for such a *SUBSTITUTE*, to suffer the very same sort of pains, or for as long a duration as would have been experienced by the sinner, if the penalty had been inflicted on himself. It was essential that the Mediator should die, and that his death should be accursed, and that he should endure inconceivable agonies of soul, arising from the pressure of divine wrath, and from the hiding of his fathers face, as well as from the cruelty and reproaches of those, who by wicked hands crucified and slew him. The new theory maintains, that the death and sufferings of Christ was merely a display or exhibition of God's disapprobation of sin, but by no means a satisfaction to the law and justice of God. That this law remains unsatisfied, its claims being suspended by the introduction of another system of measures. The atonement, therefore, if it may be so called, is a device adopted to supply the place of the execution of the law. And even justification is not a justification according to the law, but an extra judicial act, not founded upon the view of a righteousness commensurate to the demands of the law, but a sovereign act in which no regard is paid to the demands of

the law. These demands remain, and will remain unsatisfied in the case of believers to all eternity. The law pronounces him guilty, but the atonement as thus understood, receives the guilty sinner out of the hands of the law, and obtains his pardon, while the justice of God condemns him to death. If these two theories are not radically different, we confess that we have no judgment in such matters. The one insists upon a real efficacious *atonement* or expiation; the other retains the name of atonement, but rejects the thing. We ask the abettors of this new scheme if neither God's justice nor law required to be satisfied, where was the necessity of a Mediator? On these principles we are persuaded, such a necessity never can be shown. We ask again, how God can be just and holy and suffer sin to go unpunished; for, according to this theory, it is not punished in the sinner, nor in the surety. We ask what conceivable purpose Christ's sufferings and death could have answered? They tell us, indeed, that they were intended to be an impressive exhibition of the righteousness of God and of the evil of sin, and God's determination not to suffer it to pass with impunity. But it is impossible upon their principles, that it can answer any of these ends. Instead of illustrating the justice of God it violates it in several respects. First, it is the punishment of an innocent person to whom no guilt is imputed. Secondly, the sinner is rescued from the demands of justice without satisfaction. And thirdly, the culprit justly condemned by the law is justified in despite of the sentence of the law. When we see a person suffering a cruel death by the appointment of some government, we learn nothing from the event until we know why he suffers. If for crimes which have merited such a punishment, we are impressed with a sense of the just severity of the government; or if we are informed that with the consent of the government he voluntarily suffers in the place of others who had rebelled against the laws, whatever we may think of the policy of the measure, we are still impressed with the inflexibility of the demands of justice, which refuses to let the guilty go free, unless some responsible person undergoes the penalty in their stead. But if we were assured that the person who suffered was neither punished for his own crime, nor as a substitute for the guilty, we should instantly pronounce the proceeding to be unjust. But what if we should be told that the government meant to make an exhibition of the righteousness of its laws, and the evil of rebellion by such an infliction?

Every one would pronounce it to be perfectly absurd. The king of Moab when he saw that his city was likely to be taken, took his own son and hung him on a gibbet from the wall in the sight of the enemy. But what did it effect? It might indeed teach his own desperation and folly, but nothing more. Such a transaction cannot prove that the wicked will be certainly punished. As far as actions speak it will make the impression, that under this government the innocent may suffer. And in the case of our Saviour, while the innocent suffer, the guilty are exempt. Though deserving to die, they are pardoned; and instead of their being punished, an innocent person suffers a cruel death. Surely this can never make the impression that the guilty will in time to come be punished. The suspension of a just penalty never can have the effect of convincing the universe that God is determined to execute it. The infliction of undeserved punishment upon an innocent person never can make the impression that God is righteous, or that the innocent are safe. If it be alleged, that an innocent person did suffer, and the guilty escape as all acknowledge; we reply that according to our theory the innocent suffered the penalty due to the guilty; the just for the unjust. In this transaction the law, instead of being disregarded and its penalty set aside, was gloriously honoured. It received a perfect obedience from one such as never in any other case was subject to its authority. Christ was made under the law to redeem them that were under the law. And he fully bore its tremendous penalty. The cup of wrath due for sin could not pass away from him. He therefore submitted to drink it, bitter as it was. "The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" Truly he did magnify the law and make it honourable. "Christ," says Paul, "hath redeemed us from the curse of the law being made a curse for us." Was there no enduring of the penalty here? What is a curse, but the awful penalty which the law denounces? It is a remarkable fact that the defenders of this scheme scarcely ever appeal to scripture in support of their views. They depend on their own reason to prove that the death of Christ was no satisfaction to law and justice, and in examining the objections we were struck with the fact that the advocates of the new theory make use of the same arguments and resort to the same evasions which were employed by Faustus Socinus and his coadjutors in opposing the doctrine of atonement, in the sixteenth century. Indeed, we see not why he might not have called the death of Christ

an atonement for similar reasons with those which are alleged by the abettors of this scheme. Accordingly, John Taylor of Norwich, has written a book against the orthodox doctrine, and yet he retains the word, and says, "Our Lord's death took its value not from *pain* or *suffering*, *imputation* or *punishment*, but from *obedience* and *goodness*, or the most complete character of all virtue and righteousness, the noblest of all principles and the highest perfection of intellectual nature." On account of this exhibition of moral excellence, he thinks that God is pleased to pardon the sinner upon his repentance. And Dr. Sykes who rejects all the orthodox views on this subject, yet maintains what he calls the doctrine of atonement which is simply, that Christ died to convince men that God was not angry with them but really loved them. If the new theory may properly be called an atonement, why may not the schemes of Taylor and Sykes?

All that we plead for is that what is plainly expressed or clearly implied in hundreds of texts of scripture, be admitted to be a doctrine of divine revelation. As this is the grand peculiarity of the Christian system we are bound to guard it from perversion, and to maintain this cardinal truth in unadulterated purity. This is our apology for occupying so many pages with our own views of the necessity and nature of the atonement.

Edwin Keall

The Life of Harlan Page. By William A. Hallock.
New York, 1835.

There seems to be no greater impediment to the triumph of religion than the looseness of the array of the forces to whom the Lord of Hosts has committed the warfare. Not to speak of their divisions into parties, with but little of the union which is the bond both of charity and strength, there is a lamentable deficiency in that part of the tactics which allots to each individual his place and function, and makes at least each corps completely marshalled in itself for the holy war.

To escape from our metaphor, not only is the Christian cause weakened by the various divisions of the Church labouring independently and alone, for the diffusion of the

gospel, but each denomination suffers a diminution of strength, for want of a complete organization of its members. The burden of labour and responsibility is thrown almost exclusively upon the ministry. It is true that laymen are active in the temporal concerns of the Church and in the secular operations of the religious institutions. But there is a common feeling that all direct control of the modes of benevolence, and all that is connected in spiritual good, must in some way be identified with the clergy.

This opinion is corroborated by the course that is taken at the present day for increasing the number of ministers. Great as the wants of the world are in regard to a well-qualified ministry, we cannot assent to the doctrine that every pious young man should be a candidate for license. We look with apprehension upon any idea that would reduce the standard of qualification for the holy office, and a caution may be opportunely dropped to education societies especially, against specious arguments for an indefinite extension of their patronage. That society will eventually accomplish most for the church which employs the greatest discrimination in its selection of beneficiaries, and grounds its claims for public support, on the qualifications, instead of the number of its probationers.

It is in many cases a positive evil to transfer pious young men from their mechanical, mercantile, or professional apprenticeships to the classical school and theological seminary. Even supposing that they had the indispensable intellectual fitness for such pursuits, who would desire to see all the Christian men in the various walks of life, drawn from the spheres of their influence and transplanted to the ministry? If such an intermixture of the leaven were withdrawn from the world, all the increased force it might add to the pulpit, either in number or talents, would not compensate for the loss *in its place*. It is to bring this Christian character into more decided and extensive influence in its present sphere, that is required. The problem is to give the laity their place as laity, and to produce the development of their action in as positive a manner as the clerical action is developed. This is what the times call for. Let this be accomplished, and the power of the gospel will be ramified into all the departments of society, into all the negotiations, intercourse and friendships of men. Let each layman, whether he spend his days in a work-shop, a counting-room, a store, the courts, or in sick-chambers; be imbued with the spirit of his Christian

profession, and we should see a more powerful religious influence exerted on the mass, than if each were the pastor of a congregation. We may here adopt the language of Mr. Abbott, which occurs to us at the moment. "Suppose," he says in one of his celebrated works, "suppose every Christian were to come up at once to his duty as a follower of Christ, renounce the world entirely, search his heart, and cultivate, by every means in his power, his own spiritual progress, and then devote himself to the work of doing good in the narrow sphere of his own personal influence. There would be no splendid conquests achieved by any one; but by the united efforts of all, the work would go on with universal and almost inconceivable power. No one who knows the effect of holiness, when it appears in living and acting reality, in arresting the attention and alarming the conscience, and in winning those who witness it, to penitence and faith, can doubt, that each individual who should thus live might hope to be the means of bringing one, two, three, or four, every year, to the service of his Master: and to double or treble or quadruple the church in a year, would be progress which would soon change the face of things in such a world as this. This is the way undoubtedly, that the principles of the gospel are ultimately to spread in the world; through the influence of the lives and efforts of private Christians. I speak of course, now, of those countries where Christianity has nominal possession. Private Christians look far too much away from themselves, to ministers and missionaries and bibles and tracts, and imagine that their business is merely to sustain the efforts made through these means. The far more valuable and powerful influences which might be brought to bear upon a world lying in sin, from the light of religion in the hearts and lives of the great mass of believers, is lost sight of and forgotten."

A recent exemplification of the power of such an influence has been given in the history of Mr. Harlan Page. A carpenter by trade, of common education and no remarkable natural talents, he did not excuse himself on these accounts from personal and constant labours to do good. By direct conversation, or letters, or tracts, he strove to gain access to every impenitent person whom he encountered. The example of his holy and devoted life made way for the exercise of his influence wherever he was known. His letters were "powerful," but their power was only that which any plain and honest heart could indite that felt the same devotedness.

The same may be declared of his conversations, yet such a man could humbly say at the close of his course, at the early age of forty-three: "I know it is all God's grace—nothing that I have done; but I think that I have had evidence that more than one hundred souls have been converted to God through my direct and personal instrumentality."*

Mr. Page belonged to the very class of which the least is expected in the church, and who are the most readily excused for not participating in active duty. Such an one must possess uncommon zeal, as well as piety, to lead them into a course where they are scarcely invited and where they find so little feeling and aid. It was his laical character that gave Page access to so many hearts. Had he been persuaded to enter the ministry, his ordinary abilities would probably have kept him from much regard as a mere preacher. His personal efforts would have been neutralized by his office.

It is very evident that whatever may be the adaptedness of that we call the *preaching* of the gospel to mankind at large, as the means of communicating saving knowledge, it is not the mode by which the multitude is or can be reached. The gospel must be *proclaimed* to them in some manner, and perhaps we have to take some steps backward to reach primitive examples. The apostles were sent to be teachers as well as heralds. Both before and after the death of the Lord Jesus, (and in imitation of his example too,) their ministrations combined more private employment with their public discourses, than is the modern custom of their successors. Preaching, in our sense of the term, was not then so paramount a mode of discharging their commission as to be almost the exclusive one.†

* Referring to a period in his life when he was working at his trade for seventy cents a day, his biographer remarks: "Here was a mechanic, performing his daily task on hire, establishing and sustaining a religious meeting at the boarding-house, on Wednesday evenings; a meeting of the people of God for prayer on Sabbath mornings at sunrise; and though he went about three miles to attend public worship, throwing his efforts into a Sabbath-school at 5 P. M. and instructing a class; devoting Sabbath evenings to meetings and family visitation; conversing with the sick, the careless, the anxious, and those indulging a hope; distributing tracts; endeavouring to awaken an interest in the benevolent operations of the day; keeping a brief diary; abounding in prayer; and adopting, with others, incipient measures (which proved successful) for the formation of a church and the settlement of an evangelical pastor."

† Whilst we write we find some coincident remarks on this topic in reference to ministerial labours abroad, in the last annual report of the mission at the Sandwich Islands, "We are led," the missionaries observe, "to doubt more and more, whether the message of mercy, as preached after the common mode

If, however, the change of public sentiment towards Christianity has rendered this modification necessary, there is evidently a great amount of duties which has devolved, for the same reason, upon the private members of the church. Not to enter upon the disputed question of the boundary line of lay-preaching, or to define the precise limit which separates the clerical and laical functions, we shall be satisfied with calling the unordained portion of the household of faith to a consideration of some of their unquestionable but neglected privileges.

Let the Christian layman survey our country and observe what multitudes do not come within the reach of the ordinary means of grace. There has always been a race, who forsake the sanctuary, despise the Bible, and pass the Sabbath according to their own pleasure; and there are not wanting those of the highest rank of intelligence to advocate the libertinism. But in the last ten years this spirit has increased in an appalling degree. Popular modes of pleasure-taking have been multiplied. Every allurements has been thrown out to the classes who are kept laboriously employed during the week, to spend the sacred day in recreation, and every specious argument circulated to appease the consciences of the timorous. Whole families and neighbourhoods have been thus gradually weaned from the house of the Lord: their example extends as far and wide as their excursions, and the national voice has given sanction to the vulgar profanation.

In sections where these facilities and temptations do not exist, the same course is encouraged by a different cause. The native and foreign emigrants to the territories beyond the mountains find but few memorials to recall them to the observance of the Sabbath of their homes. Without churches, or at such distance from them and with such uncertain opportunities of service as to put their duties out of the routine of the week, the accustomed occupations of the day are easily forgotten; and the generation whom they shall train

of sermonizing to assembled thousands, and putting the Scriptures into the hands of all, are the principal labours which are called for in order to enable us to say, 'we are clear of their blood; if they perish, the fault is theirs, not ours.' They need much familiar instruction in the first principles of the gospel, and in the first principles of all that is lovely and of good report. They need line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little, by the way and in the house, as they go out and come in, as they lie down and rise up. They need at present an increase of books for schools, and of instructors." *Missionary Herald*, March 1836.

(if not saved by means of the Sabbath School) will easily discard what little may descend to them of hereditary prejudices in favour of religious respect.

All the while there are toils laid to make sure that neither of these classes shall escape from the more direct designs of the adversary. The infidelity of "Free Inquiry" is artfully connected with the system of combination by which a powerful effort is making to unite the mechanics of the whole seaboard in a league for the use of unlawful force and the refuge of mutual protection. These "Trades Unions," as they are called, patronise journals and disseminate tracts and handbills, which not only teach the most revolutionary doctrines of Agrarianism, but echo the paganism of the reign of terror. They appeal in the most artful manner to the rude ideas of the uneducated, and whilst they argue that to hold a deed of property however honestly and laboriously acquired, is an unnatural and intolerable monopoly, that no man should be permitted to live more comfortably than another, fail not to represent the institutions of religion as part of the tyranny by which "the people" are oppressed.

How shall this class, whose consequence is becoming more portentous every day, be reached by the means of grace? No one can have influence with them who goes as an official religious adviser. And to obtain a hearing at all, the person who desires to do them good must either be one of their own rank, or must approach them in some way which shall not arouse their most cherished antipathies. Here is an opportunity for a prudent layman to exert his influence. Let the believing men who are surrounded by this deluded class allow their light to be seen among them. Let them be known, not only as the public professors of religion, but its exemplification, and the advocates of order and law. Instead of excluding themselves from all participation in the counsels of the disaffected, they should be among them, and manifest on proper occasions the energy and the charity of a true follower of Christ. It is not always by withdrawing from the society of men of their own class, when they find them in the wrong, that pious men give the best evidence of their conscientiousness. What might not the honest and evident piety of a few master mechanics, or journeymen, or apprentices, effect in their respective circles? What so much contributes to the conservative principles of integrity in the commercial ranks of our country, as the weight of the character of godly merchants? And what is it that—all uncon-

sciously as it works—is holding the balance still on the side of virtue and of the Bible, but the leaven of the Church diffused through the whole community? It is by the subdivision of this influence and its developement into more decided action, in the various ranks and combinations of society, that the designs of the party demagogue, the civil disorganizer, and the religious infidel shall best be counteracted and defeated. By kind, persuasive reasoning, appealing to the common sense and the love of happiness and moral principle of those who have been involved in an absurd theory of faith and right, the sophistries by which they have been ensnared can easily be dispelled. But what is doing, or is ever attempted, to correct the notions of a deceived multitude? Who goes to their fire-sides, and mingles in their circles, and kindly shows them their mistakes? The more usual course has been for those who have this power to stand aloof from such intervention while the mischief is concocting, and when it becomes mature and formidable to meet it by denunciation, if not compelled to yield to its force.

See the recent history of our country for sadly numerous confirmations of this statement. Since the outrage upon the convent in Massachusetts, what has been done to disseminate instruction among the people, to correct those uncivilized ideas of justice, that have since spread like wild-fire from Charlestown to Vicksburgh? On such occasions the military are put under arms, proclamations are issued, the law snatches a few luckless victims from the host; the rabble have meanwhile accomplished their purpose and dispersed, and so it ends. The materials and the spirit of the mob are still unreached, and the same rabble only await a new signal for a repetition of the scene. Where are the philanthropists who are ever ready to supply asylums and relief for the bodily infirmities and accidents of the poor? Where are the Christians who talk of the Education and Home Missionary Societies furnishing a Church and a pastor for every thousand souls? Whilst they sleep and dream, what is doing for the mass, except that the bounty of the public schools and the better bounty of the Sabbath schools, are doing what they can to serve the children of the riotous from being the mob-makers of the next generation? What has been devised for the moral illumination of these people?

The nearest approach to the best system of meliorating the people that we know of, is the plan of the Union Benevolent Society, established in Philadelphia, upon Dr. Chalmers'

theory. The poor in that city were formerly consigned to the Alms House, or relieved according to their emergency from time to time, by private benevolence. The idle and intemperate made their calculations to live on charity in the winter and provided nothing for themselves. The public and private tax for the support of this mendicancy at length became so onerous that the good people cast about to ascertain whether it were not possible to devise a plan by which the wilfully and ignorantly poor might not be induced to be industrious and provident. They accordingly organized a society on the principle that the poor should be visited in the summer as well as the winter; that they should be advised to be frugal, and assisted in their attempts to prepare for the season of want. Committees assisted them at their homes, and showed them the advantages of sobriety and diligence; persuaded them to lay by the overplus of their earnings, however small, in the Fuel Saving Society, or in the Saving Fund; they encouraged them to send their children to school, and found schools for them; directed them to employment; advised them to attend public worship and supplied them with bibles and tracts. This plan, though but partially pursued, has already done more to alleviate the miseries of the poor, and to check the worst evils of pauperism, than all the poor-laws that were ever enacted by the commonwealth. Were the system completely effected according to the scheme, it is evident that good morals and honest industry would be greatly promoted. So let the whole circle of Christian duties be performed to the community and the best means will be adopted for the suppression of those civil evils which spring from the seat of Christian knowledge and principle.

The modes by which laymen may operate in the kind of agency we have been referring to are as various as the talents and qualifications of those who will engage in it. Among them is the communication of useful knowledge and right opinions by means of books and pamphlets expressly prepared for the purpose by libraries, and reading rooms, and public lectures. The mind and heart must be cultivated together, or at least the latter reached through the former. Set religious tracts will be rejected as the work of priestcraft, and so would any volume fare which is strictly one of practical religion. If these should be read, perhaps they are the best that could be supplied; but, in general, they will be shunned as earnestly as the Bible itself. The common mind,

both morally and intellectually, requires the diet of childhood. We might say the universal mind delights in receiving knowledge in the forms in which it is first imbibed. This explains the popularity of the Sabbath School Library, and points out its volumes as among the very best for general distribution. But with these, and, in many cases, before these, should be employed such volumes as Miss Martineau has devised for the British operatives; or Hannah Moore, for the cottagers round Cowslip Green; or as Dr. Franklin's proverbs and parables, and the temperance tales in our own land. The arts of design afford another conductor to the homes of the people, and it is time that something more was attempted in this way, if it were only to check the outrages on public decency which are becoming more and more barefaced in our cities and are spreading to the villages.*

But our space will not allow us to detail the methods by which laymen can employ themselves in the direct and collateral means of reforming the world, and advancing Christianity. It is said that in Russian villages where it is

* We are pleased to find such a fact and comment on the subject of our remarks as are given in the following paragraph from a foreign paper :

"Those who have reflected on the best means of giving instruction to the great mass of the people, are convinced that it is not sufficient to address to them sermons or lectures filled with exhortations, to give them books of history or moral tales to read, but that it is good also to place before their eyes pictures representing, in forcible and interesting scenes, the infallible consequences of good and bad conduct; demonstrating how essential it is to the happiness of the man that he should contract, in his youth, habits of virtue, order and economy. Hogarth was the first who embodied this idea, and produced his two series of paintings representing the different eras of the lives of the diligent and the idle apprentices: the first, arriving to the dignity of Lord Mayor of London, and the second, ending his career at the gallows. Northcote has since published another series, representing the effects of industry and idleness in the history of two young women—one of whom ends her days in a hospital, and the other contracts an advantageous marriage. It is to be desired that engravings of this character be multiplied, and that in all manufactories, workshops, and other public places, prints should be exhibited of a nature to strike the imagination of youth, in the form of examples, teaching them that idleness naturally and inevitably leads to misery, while industry and good conduct as infallibly lead to prosperity. A philanthropist, whose name is concealed, has just placed in the hands of Baron Benjamin Delessert, the President of the Savings' Bank of Paris, a sum of three thousand five hundred francs, to be divided in three prizes—one of two thousand francs, a second of one thousand francs, and a third of five hundred francs—to be awarded to the three Artists who shall produce the first, second and third best series of Engravings, Designs, or Lithographs, calculated, by being published at a very cheap rate, to attain the object proposed. The series (which will remain the property of the Artist) are to consist of ten or twelve pictures. They are to be deposited by the first of June next, accompanied by a note containing the name of the Artist, in the hands of Baron Delessert, No. 175 Rue Montmartre, who will give any further information required."

necessary to be very prompt in subduing the smallest conflagration, each house has marked upon it a figure designating the kind of assistance the inhabitant is to furnish in case of an alarm. On one is a ladder, on another an axe, on a third a bucket, and so on. Thus all are made to contribute in a specific way to the common safety. Mr. Knill, the well known missionary at St. Petersburg, applies this ingenious plan as an example to distant churches. "It is said," he remarks, "that the great secret of methodism is very much like this, whereby our brethren of that denomination swell their ranks and fill their spacious chapels. No man is permitted to remain unoccupied; he must be doing something for the good of the whole. If he have half a talent, he must work with that; or if he have a whole talent, then he must work with that; if he have two talents they must be employed, and so if he have five. There is so much good common-sense in this that one cannot but admire it, and it seems so well adapted to the wants of the world that I shall not rest satisfied until I see all denominations of Christians adopting it." So we say, let the church know the ground it has to occupy, observe the inadequacy of the means it now employs, and supply the deficiency from the dormant strength of its laity. The suburbs of every city and town, aye, and the very heart of cities and town, may disclose moral destitutions and mental darkness, as gross and ruinous as can be discovered beyond the seas and mountains. In every lane and court some housekeeper can be found who for good-will or money will open a room once a week for a neighbourhood-meeting for serious conversation and devotion. Scarcely a door will be closed against the man who will go through the obscure parts of his own vicinity, with a child's book (such as he may get at a Sabbath School depository for half a dollar by the groce) and offer them to the children with kind inquiries to themselves and parents, opening the way to acquaintance and usefulness. How easily might a multitude of laymen find little parishes of this kind, the people of which should know him as their friend in difficulties, and whom he could direct to or supply with means of instruction and spiritual blessing.

In short, all may find employment, if they have the heart to engage in it, and there is a state of things existing in the midst of us that should stir every one who confesses any obligations to live as the salt of the earth. The neglected condition of our native and emigrant population; their scanty instruction; their irreligion and practical exclusion from the

place of worship and social influence by the pretensions of *caste*; the tendency of the spirit of the ties to insubordination and violence; the dissemination of agrarian doctrine; the designs of atheists and of anarchists to explode the authority of the Bible—these are some of the sources of disorder and ruin that threaten the secure enjoyment of all that is dear to an American Christian. The evils cannot be reached from the pulpit. With the laity rests most of the responsibility of meeting the danger in its inception and scattering the materials of the projected ruin. They can reach the springs that move the mass. They have the ear of those whom it is necessary to affect.

But the clergy have much to do in inciting and aiding in the work. They can arouse the members of the church to their personal duty and echo the exhortation of the apostle that each should be found in the diligent exercise of his peculiar gift, that the whole body may be energetic and united in its toils and rejoice together in their promised triumph. The church needs, for its own sake, such a rousing of its power. Thousands of its members are inactive because they have none to lead them into useful enterprise. They have energy that lies torpid from year to year for the want of fit excitement and direction to bring it into use. The overseers must make this a great object in the case of their flocks, and not only declaim on the evils of Christian idleness, but show the labourers a field.

Samuel Miller

ART. V.—*The Practical Church Member: being a Guide to the Principles and Practice of the Congregational Churches of New England.* By John Mitchell, Pastor of the Congregational Church, Fair-Haven, Connecticut. 12mo. pp. 252—New Haven—Nathan Whiting, 1835.

WE are glad to see discussions on the nature and importance of ecclesiastical order becoming more frequent, and engaging more of the attention of intelligent Christians than formerly. Not that we by any means consider the form of Church government as a fundamental matter in religion. Our doctrine is, that he who is the subject of "repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ," will be

saved, even though, either through honest mistake or necessity, he never sustained any formal relation to the external Church, nor ever saw the face of a Church officer in his life. In this opinion, if we understand the author of the volume before us, we entirely concur with him. Yet we also agree with him in the opinion, that it is very far from being an unimportant subject; that it is more closely connected than is commonly imagined with the purity and edification of the Church; and that it is worthy of the serious attention of all those who wish to be able to "give a reason of the hope that is in them," and of the standing which they occupy.

Mr. Mitchell is a zealous Congregationalist, and takes great pains to unfold the *rationale*, and support the claims, of this form of Church government. He begins by giving its history; and represents the celebrated John Robinson, of Leyden, as "the founder of the Congregational plan." To this historical statement we are constrained to demur, as not sufficiently full and satisfactory. We think he ought to have gone a little further back, and to have begun with *Robert Brown*, the real father of the system out of which Congregationalism immediately arose.

ROBERT BROWN was an Englishman, of respectable, and indeed honourable family; educated in the University of Cambridge, and a minister in regular orders in the established Church of England. He was a man of lively talents; and, in consequence of the vivacity, and even vehemence of his delivery, he obtained much popular reputation as a preacher. After a while, however, his popularity declining, he became a schoolmaster; and having embraced the principles of the Puritans, he resolved to refine upon them, and to produce something new and more perfect of his own. Accordingly, about the year 1580, he began to inveigh openly against the government and ceremonies of the Church of England, which he denounced as unchristian. In 1581, he settled at Norwich, in England, where the Dutch having a numerous congregation, many of them imbibed his principles. Growing confident of success, he called in the assistance of one Richard Harrison, a country schoolmaster, and planted Churches in different places. But, being arrested by the Bishop of the diocese, he was thrown into prison, and his followers scattered. After his release, he left England, and settled at Middleburgh, in Holland, where, with the leave of the magistrates, he formed a Church on his own plan. Here he resided but a short time. His church members quarrelled

with one another, and with him. He left them in disgust; returned to England; re-entered the established Church, which he had left and denounced with so much violence; and obtained the rectory of a Church in Northamptonshire. In a word, Fuller tells us, that, though he was a man of talents and learning, his temper was imperious and ungovernable: that he was so far from the strictness espoused by his followers, that he was rather a libertine than otherwise; that he had a wife with whom he never lived; and a Church in which he never preached; and that, as all the former scenes of his life were stormy and turbulent, so was his end. During the rest of his life he remained in connection with the Episcopal Church; but was restless, turbulent, poor, often in trouble, and, at length, died miserably in prison, in 1630, in the eighty-first year of his age.*

Brown taught that the form of Church government ought to be purely democratical; that every distinct worshipping assembly was a body vested with complete power, within itself, to perform every ecclesiastical act; that the Church was to be governed by the whole body of the male communicants; that they had plenary power to admit, try, and excommunicate members; to elect, ordain, and depose their own ministers at pleasure, without being accountable to any other jurisdiction, or having recourse to any aid out of their own body. He taught also that a minister had no ministerial power or authority out of the congregation, which elected or ordained him; and that, if a minister should be chosen the pastor of half a dozen different churches in succession, he must be, in each case, ordained anew. Hence the *Brownists* (as his followers were called) rejected all Synods or Councils, as having any authoritative jurisdiction over a number of churches; and considered every church as entirely free from the supervision or control of every other.

Though the desertion of Brown led to the dissolution of his Church in Holland, yet it by no means destroyed the sect in England. About the year 1592, Sir Walter Raleigh asserted in Parliament, that there were no less than twenty thousand Brownists in Norfolk, Essex, and the parts adjacent to London. At this time, and a few years afterwards, several men of learning and talents joined this body, and became its counsellors and guides. Among these, the

* See WILSON'S *Dissenting Churches*; Vol. I. p. 14-16. FULLER'S *Church History*, Book 9. p. 168. NEAL'S *History of the Puritans, &c.*

learned Henry Ainsworth and John Robinson were the most conspicuous. Robinson was a truly respectable man; had received a regular education in the University of Cambridge; and was ordained and held a benefice in the established Church of England. In 1602 he left the establishment, united himself with the Brownists, and took charge of one of their congregations in the north of England. In consequence of severe persecution, he left England, and retired, with a part of his flock, to Holland, about the year 1608. He planted his Church first at Amsterdam; but, after a short residence there, removed to Leyden, where he spent the remainder of his life.

Mr. Robinson and his people seem to have been, in the outset, thorough Brownists; that is, not only to have borne the name, but also to have adopted *all* the principles of that sect. But after he had been awhile in Holland, and had conversed with some of the learned men there, with whom he became intimate, particularly with the eminent Dr. *Ames*, author of the well known *Medulla Theologica*, who had gone from England a few years before, and had settled at *Franegar*, he abated somewhat, as to two points, of the rigour of his old opinions; and struck out a plan less extravagant, and more practicable. Brown had unchurched and denounced, as antichristian, all other denominations, and refused utterly to acknowledge as true Churches of Christ, even those of Holland, among whom he had been kindly and hospitably received. Robinson's opinion and practice in regard to this point were somewhat mitigated. For although he always maintained the *lawfulness* and the *necessity* of separating from the Reformed Churches among whom he resided; yet he did not deny that they were true Churches of Christ. He even went so far as to admit such of their members as he thought well of, to occasional communion in his Church; and allowed the members of his own flock to join the Dutch Churches in prayer and hearing the word, though not in the participation of sacraments. This procured him the title of a "*Semi-separatist*." And although he still agreed with Brown in maintaining the right of the communicants of each Church to choose, ordain, and depose their own ministers at pleasure, and rejected, as thoroughly as Brown, all authoritative power of Synods and Councils; yet he seems, towards the latter part of his course, to have differed from him in allowing the *expediency*, and even the *importance* of convening those grave and venerable assemblies, when they

might be specially needed, for reconciling differences among Churches, and giving friendly advice.

Soon after Mr. Robinson took the headship of the Brownists in Holland, he made a publication of his opinions, in a work, in Latin, with the following title—*Apologia pro Exulibus Anglis qui Brownistæ vulgo appellantur*. In this work he advised his followers to lay aside the title of *Brownists*, the disreputable individual from whom it was derived being no longer one of their number; and, having, in the course of his remarks, often used the title of “Independents,” that term became the title by which his denomination was thenceforward distinguished. In 1620, a portion of Mr. Robinson's Church came to Massachusetts. They came as *Independents*; and for a number of years, if we mistake not, after their arrival in this country, retained all the principles and practices which characterized their sect in Holland. That is, they held and practised ordination by the lay members of the Church. They considered ministers as vested with official power only within the bounds of the Church choosing and ordaining them. And they considered a minister who left one Church and went to another, as having no official character in his new station, until the Church which had sought his translation, not only elected him as their pastor, but also ordained him to the work of the ministry anew. These Independents, also, when they first came to New England, maintained the divine authority of the office of *Ruling Elder*, and considered it as indispensable to have such an officer in all their Churches.

Twenty-eight years after the arrival of the first settlers in Massachusetts, the colonists, finding the importance of some ecclesiastical directory and bond of union, beyond what their original system, or rather want of system, afforded, drew up and adopted, in 1648, the “Cambridge Platform.” This “Platform of Discipline” left every thing very much as before, excepting that it strongly recommended the use of *Synods* and *Councils*, when they should become necessary. Yet it prescribed no law or regulation for the stated meeting of such bodies. It only recommended that they be resorted to when needed or wished for; and that their directions and determinations be received with reverence and submission, “so far as consonant to the word of God,” of which each Church was to be the sovereign judge. Of course, they were to be called only when the Churches, or any particular Church chose to call them; and when they *were* called, their awards were to be respected only just so far as the people

chose to respect them. The whole business of the lawfulness of *lay ordination* was left by this Platform, as before; and no regulation was made respecting the licensing of candidates for the holy ministry.

The Churches of New England went on for sixty years under this "Platform." Towards the end of that time, the ministers of *Connecticut* became dissatisfied with the provisions of that Platform, and convinced that something more definite, and carrying with it more authority and energy, was essential both to the unity and purity of the Church. It was generally conceded, that the state of the Churches was lamentable, with respect to their general order, government and discipline. For want of a more general and energetic government, many Churches ran into confusion; and councils did not prove sufficient to relieve the aggrieved, and restore peace. As there was no precise rule for the calling of councils, council was called against council, and opposite results were given upon the same cases, to the reproach of councils, and the dishonour of religion. Aggrieved Churches and individuals were discouraged; as the existing system of regulation seemed incapable, in difficult cases, of bringing any matter to a final issue. Such meetings of ministers as had taken place, were mere conventions, countenanced by no ecclesiastical constitution; attended only by such as felt inclined to give them countenance; and binding none but those who chose to be bound by them. The neighbouring Churches might ask their advice, or neglect it at pleasure; and after the advice was given, might comply with it, or not, at pleasure. There was no regular method of introducing candidates to the pulpit. When they had finished their collegiate course, if they imagined themselves qualified to preach, and could prevail on some clerical friend to invite them to his pulpit, they began to exercise their gifts, without examination or permission from any ecclesiastical body. Controversies of the most distressing kind arose in several of the most important Churches in Connecticut, which their existing system was found wholly incapable of issuing. In these circumstances, it became apparent to many that, unless some new system of regulation should be adopted, anarchy, and great dishonour to religion must ensue. Such was Congregationalism, as the venerable John Robinson left it.*

* See TRUMBULL'S *History of Connecticut*, Vol. I. Chapter 19th, in which statements quite as strong as we have here given, are presented by that learned and zealous Congregationalist. In fact, we have employed much of his language.

In this state of things, the Legislature of Connecticut called a Synod or Council of ministers and messengers of the Churches, to meet at *Saybrook*, in 1708, to deliberate on the ecclesiastical state of the colony, and, if possible, to frame a more efficient and adequate plan of Church government. That Synod drew up and adopted what has been ever since called the "Saybrook Platform." This Platform, besides providing more definitely for the regular ordination of ministers, and the licensure of candidates for the ministry, introduced a new and authoritative judicatory, styled a *Consociation*, made up of ministers and lay delegates, and vested with powers not differing materially from those of the Presbytery in the Presbyterian Church. It is evident, however, that the author of the volume before us is averse to every thing that looks like an approximation to Presbyterianism; and seems very desirous of considering the Consociation as divested of all *judicial* power; although he acknowledges that the most obvious construction of the language of the Platform in regard to this matter is in favour of judicial authority. We are much deceived, however, if this Presbyterian feature in the Saybrook Platform has not been one reason, under God, why Connecticut has been so remarkably free from the contagion of Unitarianism as she has. When that soul-destroying heresy gradually and insidiously crept into Massachusetts, the ecclesiastical bodies in that state had no power to interpose or arrest it. It, therefore, went on "eating as a canker," until nearly a third part of the Churches in the commonwealth become infected with this deplorable poison. In Connecticut, however, peopled, originally by the same class of men, whenever a case appeared in the ministry of alleged friendship to Unitarianism, which has occurred in repeated instances, the Consociation immediately interposed; examined into the case, and, finding the charge well-founded, excluded the delinquent from his pastoral charge, and from their communion; and thus, by the divine blessing, have kept their Churches in a great measure free from that contamination to the present hour. When we ask ourselves, what is the reason of this striking difference between Massachusetts and Connecticut, we can think of no one fact which has probably exerted so great an influence in the protection and confirmation of orthodoxy as that which we have stated.

The opinions of the venerable President Dwight, respecting the Consociational system of Connecticut, are in very

striking contrast with those of his junior brother, the author of this volume. *He* was so far from objecting to the Presbyterian feature of that system, that he earnestly wished it to be *extended* and *confirmed*. His language is as follows:*

“*There are many cases, in which individuals are dissatisfied, on reasonable grounds, with the judgment of a Church.* It is perfectly obvious, that in a debate between two members of the same Church, the parties may, in many respects, stand on unequal ground. One of them may be ignorant; without family connexions; in humble circumstances; and possessed of little or no personal influence. The other may be a person of distinction; opulent; powerfully connected; of superior understanding; and of great personal influence, not only in the Church, but also in the country at large. As things are in this world, it is impossible, that these persons should possess, in any controversy between them, equal advantages. Beyond all this, the Church itself may be one party, and a poor and powerless member the other. In this case also, it is unnecessary to observe, the individual must labor under every supposable disadvantage, to which a righteous cause can be subjected. To bring the parties in these, or any similar circumstances, as near to a state of equality as human affairs will permit, it seems absolutely necessary, that *every Ecclesiastical Body should have its tribunal of Appeals*; a superior Judicature, established by common consent, and vested with authority to issue finally all those causes, which, before a single Church, are obviously liable to a partial decision.

“Such a tribunal in all the *New England States*, except this, is formed, by what is called, a *Select Council*, that is, a Council mutually chosen by the contending parties. This has long appeared to me a Judicatory most unhappily constituted. The parties choose, of course, such persons, as they suppose most likely to favour themselves. If, therefore, they commit no mistakes in the choice; the Council may be considered as divided in opinion, before it assembles; and as furnishing every reason to believe, that it will not be less divided afterwards. Its proceedings will frequently be marked with strong partialities; and its decisions, if made at all, will not unfrequently be those of a bare majority. Coming from different parts of the country, it will have no common rules of proceeding. After its decisions, its existence ceases.

* See Dwight's Theology, Vol. IV. Sermon 162.

Its responsibility vanishes with its existence; as does, also, the sense of its authority. As the members frequently come from a distance; it can have no knowledge concerning those numerous particulars, which respect the transactions to be judged of; and the characters, interests, views, and contrivances of those who are immediately concerned. As individuals, these members may, in some instances, have much weight; and in certain circumstances may, by their wisdom and piety, do much good. But all this must arise solely from their personal character. As a Council, as a Judicatory, they can have scarcely any weight at all; for, as they disappear when the trial is ended, they are forgotten in their united character; and, having no permanent existence, are regarded with no habitual respect, and even with no prejudice in their favour. Very often also, as they were chosen on partial principles, they are led of course to partial decisions; and leave behind them very unhappy opinions concerning Ecclesiastical Government at large.

“*In this State*, a much happier mode has been resorted to, for the accomplishment of this object. The Tribunal of Appeal is here a *Consociation*; a standing body, composed of the settled ministers within an associational district, and delegates from the Churches in the same district: a body always existing; of acknowledged authority; of great weight; possessed of all the impartiality, incident to human affairs; feeling its responsibility as a thing of course; a Court of Record, having a regular system of precedents; and, from being frequently called to business of this nature, skilled, to a good degree, in the proper modes of proceeding.

“The greatest defect in this system, as it seems to me, is *the want of a still superior tribunal to receive appeals, in cases where they are obviously necessary*. These it is unnecessary for me to particularize. Every person, extensively acquainted with Ecclesiastical affairs, knows that such cases exist. The only remedy, provided by the system of Discipline established in this State, for those, who feel aggrieved by a Consociational judgment, is to *introduce a neighbouring Consociation as assessors with that, which has given the judgment, at a new hearing of the cause*. The provision of this partial, imperfect, tribunal of appeals, is clear proof, that those, who formed the system, perceived the absolute necessity of some appellate jurisdiction. The Judicatory, which they have furnished of this nature, is, perhaps, the best, which the Churches of the State would at that, or any

succeeding period, have consented to establish. Yet it is easy to see, that, were they disposed, they might easily institute one, which would be incomparably better.

“The only instance found in the Scriptures of an appeal, actually made for the decision of an Ecclesiastical debate, is that recorded in the fifteenth chapter of the Acts, and mentioned for another purpose in a former discourse. A number of the *Jews*, in the Church at *Antioch*, insisted, that the Gentile converts should be circumcised, and be obliged to keep the law of Moses. *Paul* and *Barnabas* strenuously controverted this point with them. As no harmonious termination of the debate could be had at *Antioch*; an appeal was made to the Apostles and Elders, at *Jerusalem*. But, as I observed in the discourse mentioned, *it was heard, and determined, by the Apostles, Elders and Brethren*. As this Judicatory was formed under the direction of the Apostles themselves; it must be admitted as a precedent for succeeding Churches; and teaches us, on the one hand, that an appellate Jurisdiction is both lawful and necessary in the Church; and, on the other, that it is to be composed of both ministers and brethren, necessarily acting, at the present time, by delegation.”

We are told by the editors of a contemporary journal,* that sentiments such as these, were, not many years ago, very common, especially among the younger clergy of Connecticut. But they assure us, that it is not so now. We knew this before; and we regretted to know it. But we are not aware that it can be helped. Of one thing, however, we are perfectly persuaded; and that is, that the growing repugnance to Presbyterianism which exists in many minds in Connecticut, is entirely the result of a want of acquaintance with its real spirit and provisions. We do not mean want of acquaintance with our *books*; but with the practical *character* and *working* of our system *on the spot*. Had not this been the case, the journalists in question would not have intimated to us that they were sometimes almost ready to say, of this system of Church Government, that it is “a yoke upon the necks of the disciples which neither their fathers nor they are able to bear.” The fact is, when properly understood, instead of being regarded as “a yoke of bondage,” it will undoubtedly, when wisely and faithfully administered, be regarded as the only form of church polity which is

* *Christian Spectator*, of New Haven, Vol. VII. p. 570.

equally and at once friendly to the rights both of the clergy and of the people; and which furnishes the most perfect safeguard against anarchy on the one hand, and tyranny on the other. Without Presbyterianism, or something similar to it, we know not how a number of difficulties which are apt every where to arise in churches, can ever be quietly and speedily settled. When difficulties arise between a Church, and an aggrieved or oppressed member; between a minister and his congregation; or between two or more neighbouring congregations belonging to the same communion; we know of no efficient or adequate tribunal which pure congregationalism affords for meeting and disposing of them. Let the history of many painful conflicts in churches in Massachusetts, from the famous case of *Worcester*, with all its complicated perplexities, down to the present day, at once exemplify and confirm our meaning. The Consociation of Connecticut, however its *judicial* character may be eschewed, or even despised, we cannot doubt, has been instrumental in saving her churches from many a similar conflict. And if the time should ever come when the *juridical* feature in the consociational system shall be abandoned by the Churches of Connecticut, we hazard nothing in predicting, that it will be an unfortunate decision both for their purity and peace.

Presbyterianism, it is true, boasts of no magical power to annihilate the imperfections of men. Restless, intriguing, artful, wicked men may give trouble in all stations, and may perplex the administration of the wisest and most wholesome government in the world. Have we not seen, even in those States which are blest with the wisest and happiest system of laws, and of judicial administration, any where to be found; have we not seen artful, selfish men perplex judges, embarrass judicial proceedings, entrap parties, and spin out contests to a most distressing length; and that under the presiding wisdom of the ablest judicial officers? Would it be wise to say, in such a case, that the judiciary is in fault, and ought to be discarded? No; if the laws were all dictated by heavenly wisdom, and the judges were all inspired men, we should still have disgraceful lawsuits; distressing conflicts of infuriated parties; protracted litigations; and, after all, complaints of partiality and injustice. Under the eyes of inspired apostles, there were ecclesiastical disorders, strifes, and protracted difficulties; in the synod of Jerusalem (Acts xv.) there was "much disputing;" and no man will ever see the churches of any denomination, on this side of

the Millennium, entirely free, for many months together, of mournful evidence, that they are made up of frail, imperfect human beings.

A large portion of the contents of this volume we heartily approve. Most of what is said in relation to the character and duties of Church members we consider as excellent; equally applicable, and equally wise in all religious denominations. Concerning all this, we have, of course, nothing to say, but in the way of praise. Another portion of the work is intended to plead the cause of *Congregationalism*, as a distinctive system, and especially in opposition to Presbyterianism. In regard to this portion, we have only to remark, that, as we cannot fall in with it, so we do not intend to enter the field of argument against it. We do not wish to diminish our author's partiality for the congregational form of government. Let him enjoy it with the fondest affection, and see it transmitted, unimpaired, to his children's children! We would not lift a hand to interrupt his comfort.

But there is a short passage or two, toward the close of the volume, which we confess, we read with some pain, and which we consider as laying the author open to remarks of a very unfavourable kind. The following quotations from the twelfth chapter, beginning at page two hundred and twenty-one, together with the *notes* which accompany them; will prepare the way for a few remarks which we consider the language of our author as demanding.

“Between us and the Presbyterians there has existed a very intimate connection from early times. Near the close of the seventeenth century a formal agreement was entered into by the two denominations in England, with the understanding apparently,—from the title and terms of the compact,*—that they were thenceforward to regard themselves as one denomination. The union was promptly consented to by the churches in New England; and indeed it almost originated with them, one of their ministers, Dr. Increase Mather of Boston, then in England, being ‘singularly instrumental in effecting that union.’

“This happy union has been farther recognized and cemented by several acts of agreement mutually entered into, some forty years since, by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church and the several New England State

* “Heads of Agreement assented to by the United Ministers, formerly called Presbyterian and Congregational.”

Associations. By these acts the perfect equality and fellowship of the churches and ministers of the two denominations are mutually acknowledged; their ordinations, censures, and other ecclesiastical proceedings are reciprocally regarded as valid and obligatory; and the delegates of each, respectively, are entitled to the same privilege of acting and voting in the ecclesiastical assemblies of the other as their own members.*

“They are thus essentially one denomination. Though they have different denominational titles, and some diversity of order, they are yet one, not only by formal consent, but

* “One part of the ‘plan of union’ has respect to the constituting of churches in new settlements. The following are its provisions; which, as they are not generally accessible to our ministers and members, and may be important to many of them, emigrating to the West, are deemed of sufficient importance to form this note.

“1st. It is strictly enjoined on all their missionaries to the new settlements, to endeavour, by all proper means, to promote mutual forbearance and accommodation, between those inhabitants of the new settlements who hold the Presbyterian and those who hold the Congregational form of Church government.

“2nd. If in the new settlements, any Church of the Congregational order shall settle a minister of the Presbyterian order, that Church may, if they choose, still conduct their discipline according to Congregational principles, settling their difficulties among themselves, or by a council mutually agreed upon for that purpose: but if any difficulty shall exist between the minister and the church or any member of it, it shall be referred to the Presbytery to which the minister shall belong, provided both parties agree to it; if not, to a council consisting of an equal number of Presbyterians and Congregationalists, agreed upon by both parties.

“3d. If a Presbyterian Church shall settle a minister of Congregational principles, that Church may still conduct their discipline according to Presbyterian principles; excepting that if a difficulty arise between him and his Church, or any member of it, the cause shall be tried by the association, to which the said minister shall belong, provided both parties agree to it; otherwise by a council, one half Congregationalists and the other half Presbyterians, mutually agreed on by the parties.

“4th. If any congregation consist partly of those who hold the Congregational form of discipline, and partly of those who hold the Presbyterian form; we recommend to both parties, that this be no obstruction to their uniting in one Church and settling a minister: and that in this case, the Church choose a standing committee from the communicants of said Church, whose business it shall be, to call to account every member of the Church, who shall conduct himself inconsistently with the laws of Christianity, and to give judgment on such conduct: and if the person condemned by their judgment, be a Presbyterian, he shall have liberty to appeal to the Presbytery; if a Congregationalist, he shall have liberty to appeal to the body of the male communicants of the Church; in the former case the determination of the Presbytery shall be final, unless the Church consent to a further appeal to the Synod, or to the General Assembly; and in the latter case, if the party condemned shall wish for a trial by a mutual council, the cause shall be referred to such council. And provided the said standing committee of any Church, shall depute one of themselves to attend the Presbytery, he may have the same right to sit and act in the Presbytery, as a ruling elder of the Presbyterian Church.”

in faith, spirit and aim. And notwithstanding a disposition to dissolve their union has been manifested latterly by a small and illiberal minority, or, perhaps we should say, by some disquieted individuals, of one of the parties, we trust in God that it shall never be effected. The two branches of the great family are too much alike in character, they have too many noble and holy enterprises upon their common hands, and have too long been blessed in their union, to be soon or easily sundered and estranged from one another. May God preserve both them and his cause from such a calamity!*"

Mr. Mitchell here refers to *two classes* of articles which have been formed for regulating intercourse between the Presbyterian and Congregational Churches. Concerning both he indulges in a style of remark which we verily think he would have forborne, if he had *understood* the subject on which he was writing.

A plan of "union and correspondence" between the General Assembly of our Church, and the General Association of Connecticut, began about forty-six years ago. It originated in proposals adopted by the General Assembly in 1790; and was consummated in 1792, when the first interchange of three delegates from each body, to sit in the other, took place. These delegates, according to the plan first adopted, did not *vote*; but had the privilege of taking part in all deliberations; mutually communicating the views and feelings of each other respectively; and of suggesting such measures as were judged conducive to the great interests of religion in every part of the Church. After this interchange of delegates had continued for two years, it was found so pleasant, and the fraternal confidence of the parties had become so great, that our General Assembly proposed to the General Association, that the delegates on both sides should be allowed to *vote* on all questions which came before the bodies in which they sat respectively. This proposal was accepted; and, for a number of years, the privilege contemplated by it was

"* Since this volume was prepared for the press, the General Assembly has (at its late session at Pittsburg), *in part* abrogated the above plan of union. But their doings herein are so repugnant to the known sentiments of the great body of the Presbyterians in the United States, that we are persuaded—and indeed we are directly assured by men of extensive influence in that communion—that by another assembly, more correctly exhibiting the sentiments of the Churches, the union will be restored, and more than restored, to its original intimacy. Meantime the act of a waning minority, cannot disturb the substantial harmony that prevails throughout these sister churches."

actually enjoyed and used on both sides; and, in some cases within our recollection, the votes of the Congregational delegates had no small influence in carrying measures proposed in our General Assembly. In the mean while, a similar plan of "union and correspondence" was formed by the General Assembly with the Churches of Vermont, in 1803; of New Hampshire, in 1810; and of Massachusetts, in 1811.* Not long afterwards articles of correspondence were adopted by the General Assembly, with the Associate Reformed Church; with the Reformed Dutch Church; and with the German Reformed Church. The three latter, however, though all Presbyterians, in forming *their* articles of correspondence, declined admitting the privilege of *voting* as one of them, as inconsistent, in their opinion, with constitutional regularity. And hence, for eight or ten years, we had the singular spectacle of all the eastern delegates voting, on all questions, however exclusively interesting to our own Church; while none of the delegates from the Presbyterian bodies were called upon to exercise the same privilege. This anomaly excited attention, and led to those views and suggestions which resulted in the change as to this point which was soon afterwards effected. Mr. Mitchell, indeed, tells us that the privilege of mutually voting in each others public bodies is still exercised, and is one of the evidences of the *unity* of Congregationalists and Presbyterians. He is, however, under an entire mistake. It was abolished a number of years ago. And as the proposal to introduce it came from the General Assembly, so did the request that it might be laid aside. The reasons which prompted the Assembly to propose its relinquishment, were the following.

1. The mutual voting by these delegates which had been long practised, appeared, to many of our wisest and most experienced ministers, on serious consideration, so far as our Church was concerned, to be *unconstitutional*. The form of government under which the General Assembly acts, and by the rules of which it is just as much bound, as any of the lower judicatories—makes express provision for that body maintaining a *correspondence* with sister churches at home and abroad; but not for receiving their members into *authoritative* co-operation with us. It declares, very explicitly, in what manner the General Assembly shall be constituted,

* At later periods a correspondence has been established with the Consociation of Rhode Island, and the General Conference of Maine.

by the ministers and ruling elders from the several Presbyteries; but opens no door for admitting to a complete membership and vote any other description of persons. It was deliberately deemed, therefore, that our fathers, in forming this plan of correspondence, had gone beyond their constitutional warrant, and that we were, of course, bound to retrace our steps.

2. Another argument for abolishing the voting system, was drawn from the fact before stated, viz. that all the delegates from strictly Presbyterian bodies were excluded, by agreement, from this privilege. It was thought unsuitable that this diversity should any longer exist, and that it was better to place all the delegates from corresponding bodies upon an equal footing.

3. A number of years after the formation of our articles of correspondence with the New England Churches, our own form of government was received, and in regard to some minor points, amended. One of these amendments consisted in *taking away from our own corresponding members*, the right of voting. As the constitution of the Church had stood before, when a member of one of our Presbyteries happened to be present at the session of another Presbytery, he was, as a matter of course, invited to sit as a corresponding member; and as long as he occupied such a seat, it was his privilege not only to take part in the debates, when he thought proper, but also to give as effective a vote as if he were a stated and plenary member of the Presbytery in which he held this temporary seat. On the revision of our constitution, in 1821, it was judged best, for weighty reasons, to declare, that such corresponding members, should, thereafter, be allowed to sit and deliberate, but *not to vote*. In these circumstances, was it unkind or unreasonable to withdraw from the delegates of corresponding sister Churches, a privilege which we had deliberately thought proper to withdraw from the ministers of our own denomination when they sat as corresponding members?

4. But one of the most conclusive reasons which prompted us to wish for the abolition of the voting system, was the great *inequality* of the *power* included in this privilege, as enjoyed by the two parties. On the one hand, it is well known that our General Assembly is a *judicial body*; that its decisions are *authoritative*, and bind the Churches which are represented by its members. On the other hand, it is equally well known, that the general Associations of all the

Congregational Churches of New England, have no judicial authority; that they are only *advisory* bodies; and that, of course, a vote given in them *binds* no one, not even those, strictly speaking, who concur in it. Here, then, is a great difference in the *power* and *effect* of votes. In our General Assembly, if the body should happen to be nearly equally divided, a single delegate, or two, from an Association, if they enjoyed the privilege of voting, might really turn the scale, and give law to the Church on a most important point; or might be instrumental in deciding an interesting case of discipline in a manner contrary to the wishes of a real majority of the Church. But no vote in an Association is clothed with any such power. The utmost potency that *it* can exert is to concur in carrying a question in favour of giving *advice*. It can, in no case, carry with it any judicial authority. Is there not an *inequality* here too great and striking to be disregarded? Is it wonderful that the warm friends of the Presbyterian Church felt as if this inequality, though not *now* invested with any danger, might hereafter become matter of just apprehension? For these reasons, the General Assembly of 1829, respectfully proposed to the several associations of New England, that there should be a mutual relinquishment of the privilege of voting. The General Association of Connecticut assented to the proposed alteration at once. One or two of the others declined adopting it. But it has since been acquiesced in by all; and for the last eight or nine years none of the corresponding delegates sitting in our General Assembly have ever voted.

With regard to the correspondence, thus modified, which has long existed between the New England Associations and our General Assembly, we do not suppose that there is any serious purpose in our Church, certainly no extensive desire, that it should be abandoned or impaired. The last General Assembly, in relation to this matter, adopted the following resolution, by a very *large majority*, if not by a *nearly unanimous vote*. A resolution which we are inclined to think expresses the feelings of nineteen twentieths of the whole Presbyterian Church.

“Resolved, that this General Assembly see no cause either to terminate or modify the plan of correspondence with the Associations of our Congregational brethren in New England. That correspondence has been long established. It is believed to have been productive of mutual benefit. It is now divested of the voting power, which alone could be considered as

infringing the constitution of our Church, by introducing persons clothed with the character of plenary members of the assembly. It stands, at present, substantially on the same footing with the visits of our brethren from the congregational union of England and Wales: and in the present age of enlarged counsel, and of combined effort, for the conversion of the world, ought by no means to be abolished. Besides, the Assembly are persuaded, that amidst the unceasing and growing intercourse, between the Presbyterian and Congregational Churches, it is desirable to have that intercourse regulated by compact; and, of course, that it would be desirable to introduce terms of correspondence, even if they did not already exist."

Surely there is no unkind or unfriendly temper manifested in this resolution; but rather every thing of an opposite character. We really hope that when Mr. Mitchell dispassionately reviews his language, he will consider the tone of some of his remarks as rather ungracious and unseasonable.

With regard to the "plan of union between Presbyterians and Congregationalists, in the new settlements," Mr. Mitchell, we presume, is aware that it is wholly a separate matter from the "correspondence" with the Associations of New England, of which we have been speaking in the preceding pages. The former was established in 1801, *nine years after* the articles of correspondence were adopted, and in operation; and was intended to meet a special difficulty which had, in many instances, occurred, in forming churches out of the heterogeneous mass of population in the new settlements. It had been in operation about thirty-three years, when the proposal for its repeal was brought before the General Assembly. And we verily think that, if Mr. Mitchell had been acquainted with the whole history of the operation of that "Plan of Union;" if he had witnessed, as we have done, intimately, all the uneasiness, the conflicts, and the trouble to which it has given rise, he would have thought it any thing but a plan adapted to promote "union;" and would have been glad to see it discarded as soon as possible. We beg our readers to turn back to a preceding page, in which the articles of this plan are recited at length from Mr. Mitchell's book, and, then, after giving them an impartial perusal, and weighing carefully the following remarks, to say, whether they wonder that the operation of these articles should be found unfavourable to harmony.

1. Our first remark is, that this whole plan was manifestly

intended, from its whole spirit and scope, to be a *temporary arrangement*, to meet an immature and unsettled state of things, and by no means to be adopted as a permanent ecclesiastical system. Could it be considered, therefore, as fair and proper, when a church formed in the "new settlements" had settled down regularly on the simple, Congregational plan; when there was no longer a mixture of the two denominations; when the Congregational form of government was decidedly, if not unanimously preferred;—and when there was no longer that troublesome diversity and conflict of opinion which the plan contemplates, and was intended to remedy;—can it be considered, we say, as fair and proper for such a congregation to avail itself of the provisions of this plan, and to send delegates to sit in our judicatories? Surely the privilege contemplated belongs exclusively to a church made up partly of Presbyterians, and partly of Congregationalists, who cannot agree to unite upon any other than some middle or accommodating plan. Of course, when a church really and entirely Congregational in its government and discipline, avails itself of this "plan" to send a "committee man," even to the Presbytery, it makes a use of this accommodating system which is altogether unjustifiable, and one which, however honestly intended, ought never to be allowed. It is perverting a mutual privilege from its original design, and making it to serve a purpose which its spirit wholly forbids. Why might not *any* Congregational Church, in the state of New York, or elsewhere, that wished, for a particular purpose, to have a seat and a vote in a neighbouring Presbytery, on the same principle, send forward a "committee man," and claim admission?

2. A second remark is, that the obvious intention of the plan, in regard to "committee men," is that they should not be entitled to seats in any judicatory *higher than the Presbytery*. The rule expressly declares, that they shall be allowed to sit in the Presbytery, but not a word is said of any higher judicatory. Yet very soon after the plan was adopted, these "committee men" began to present commissions for seats in the General Assembly, and claimed seats in that judicatory, as a right founded on one of the provisions of the plan. And even when their admission was objected to, and warmly opposed, still it was insisted upon; the objection was overruled; and large numbers of them, at different times, occupied seats, and participated in judicial deci-

sions intended to operate on the whole church. This leads to a

. 3. Third remark, which is, that when "committee men" thus introduced, are permitted to sit and vote in the higher judicatories of the church, and especially in the General Assembly, the practice, it is evident, must have a most *unequal operation*, and can scarcely fail of exciting apprehension in discerning minds. It is well known that the constitution of our church requires every minister and elder, before he is clothed with office, solemnly to adopt the Confession of Faith of our Church, as "containing the system of doctrine taught in the Holy Scriptures;" and also to declare, that he "approves the plan of government of the Presbyterian Church in the United States." Now, if these solemn declarations are required of all who properly belong to *our own body*; when no man among us, however wise, pious or learned, can be admitted to the office of either *teacher* or *ruler*, without making the solemn profession and engagement which an assent to these formularies imports;—can it be either reasonable or equitable, to give the same privilege and power, on easier terms, to those who are not members of our own body at all? Especially when it is considered,

4. That in the higher judicatories of our Church, and particularly in the General Assembly, the most important questions concerning doctrine and order are continually coming up, in the shape of references, appeals, complaints, &c. to be judicially decided for the guidance of our whole body. Every one will see and acknowledge at once, that these decisions ought always to be in conformity with those public standards of doctrine, government and discipline, in accordance with which we have, as a church, agreed to walk together. But is it wise or safe to admit into such a judicial body, entrusted with these high, delicate and momentous duties, men, however pious, who have never subscribed our public standards; nay, more than this, men who, by the very name and character in which they present themselves, as candidates for seats in that body, practically declare, that *they do not approve our form of government, and cannot assent to our Confession of Faith?* Is it just and right to give to such brethren seats in our highest judicatories; and decisive votes in the most delicate cases of discipline in regard to doctrine or order? One or two such votes might turn the scale in modifying the laws, and controlling the vital concerns of a Church, to the constitution of which they have

such insuperable repugnance, that they are constrained in conscience to stand aloof from it, and never, in fact, attempt to approach it, but for the purpose of interposing to take a part in its government. Is this wise? Is it equitable? Ought it to be desired by the brethren themselves? Ought it to be granted them if they did desire it? One would think a fair and honourable mind would revolt equally from seeking or allowing any thing of this kind. Yet cases of this nature have, no doubt, occurred in our General Assembly every year for the last fifteen or twenty years. Gentlemen reputed pious;—who had never adopted our public standards, and could not conscientiously do it;—gentlemen who disliked our form of government, and who could not be regular elders because they could not honestly make the profession, and take the engagements of elders;—have yet sat as judges in deciding great questions for the whole Presbyterian Church; and have sometimes, as bystanders have thought, given votes directly in opposition to our public formularies. Nor is this all. They themselves are not subject to the regulations and judgments which they assist in forming! Like the Scribes and Pharisees of old, they lay burdens on the shoulders of others which they themselves will not touch with one of their fingers. Is it any wonder that such facts should give pain to sound and conscientious Presbyterians? Is it strange that they contemplated such brethren, thus legislating and judging for them, with distrust and apprehension? Truly if they did not so regard them, it would argue a want of intelligence, or a degree of recklessness of the most extraordinary kind. Is this really doing as we would wish others, in like circumstances, to do to us? Nothing has ever surprised us more than to see men professing a sincere attachment to the Presbyterian Church, indifferent to the facts which have been stated, and void of all apprehension in regard to their consequences. In the view of those who have no particular desire to preserve our doctrine and order in their purity, such facts must, of course, appear as trifles, and all contest about them folly:—but in the estimation of those who wish to “keep that which has been committed to them,” and to transmit it pure and entire to their children, it is impossible that such facts should appear otherwise than deeply ominous and threatening.

5. One consideration more has rendered many sound Presbyterians averse to the “plan” in question; which is that the conditions of it with regard to “committee men,”

have not been always faithfully observed, and it is really difficult to know how far they *are* observed. Some of this class have been not only commissioned to the General Assembly, but sent under the name of "Ruling Elders;" *so styled* in their commissions; and under this name and guise have taken their seats. Surely it is, in all cases, due to justice and order that their real character be known. To conceal that character, and to present commissioners under the title of Ruling Elders, who never bore that office, is a deception altogether unjustifiable. Indeed, in one case, at least, that fell under our notice, an individual was commissioned, and took his seat in the General Assembly, under the title of a "Ruling Elder," who was *not even a "committee man,"* but an ordinary private member of the church.

Is it wonderful that the General Assembly, when they saw the "plan" liable to these objections, and thus operating; when they perceived it to be, in many ways, working mischief, and likely to undermine all our distinctive principles of church order; when they found, that, instead of promoting "union," it rather generated heart burnings and strife; and when it became evident that no remonstrance on the subject could obviate these evils; but that they would be likely to continue and grow as long as the system lasted;—when these things were apparent, was it wonderful that the General Assembly came to the deliberate conclusion, that it was advisable to set aside the system altogether; and that the sooner it was abolished, the better both for the purity and peace of both parties. After all, however, so tender was the General Assembly of the feelings and interests of the Churches which had been formed under this plan, that it resolved, that the repeal of the plan should not interfere with the continued existence and operation of such churches; but should only arrest the *progress* of the business, and prevent the formation of *more* on that principle.

As to the offensive language which Mr. Mitchell has allowed himself to employ, concerning the act of the last General Assembly, in proposing to the General Association of Connecticut the repeal of this plan of union for churches in the "new settlements,"—we can easily pardon it, under the confident persuasion that he would not have expressed himself thus, had he understood the subject. We appeal from Mr. Mitchell *in the dark*, to Mr. Mitchell *better informed*. We have never been accused, that we know, of belonging to the class of the *ultra* orthodox; but we think we can ven-

ture to assure this gentleman that when he stigmatizes this act of the last Assembly, as the act of "a waning minority;" and when he gives an implied promise to his readers,—on the credit of "men of extensive influence in our communion,"—that this act of the last Assembly will be rescinded by the next—he labours under a grievous mistake. We are greatly deceived, if the conviction that the last Assembly acted wisely in this matter, is not *waxing*, instead of "waning." Of one thing we are quite certain, that *such language*, coming from such a quarter, and breathing such a spirit—will not be likely to conciliate reflecting Presbyterians to the cause which such language is manifestly intended to promote.

Mr. Mitchell is, evidently, very much attached to the principles of the Congregational system. He thinks them founded in the word of God, and more conducive than any other to promote the interests of pure and undefiled religion. Of this, we make no complaint. Nay, we honour him for his honest decision and zeal in what he esteems a good cause. But what would *he* think of a body of Presbyterians who, though pious and honest, should conscientiously and perseveringly busy themselves in going in to the Congregational Churches, and there building up a system, under the guise of "union" and brotherhood, which he saw was calculated to weaken, and finally to undermine and destroy that ecclesiastical order which he deemed of great importance to the best interest of the churches with which he is connected? We need not wait for an answer. He would deeply disapprove their conduct. Nay, more, he would feel indignant. Nor should we blame the feeling.

We can assure our readers that we are so far from having any disposition to remove or impair the ties by which we are bound to our Congregational brethren of New England, that the very reverse is the fact. It is because we earnestly wish all our intercourse with them to be placed on the most pleasant and edifying footing that the communion of saints can exemplify, that we are grieved when any either of their number or our own, are guilty of uttering language, or manifesting a spirit which we deem unfriendly to union. We have never considered it as matter of complaint when our beloved brethren of New England have manifested a preference to their own system of church order. We hope they will allow us to enjoy the same privilege; and will not consider it as an offence if we are unwilling to concur, and per-

severe, in plans of procedure which are, in our estimation, adapted slowly, but certainly to destroy that system, which some of us, at least, prize as highly as any of *their* number can prize that which *they* have chosen.

It was our happiness, in early life, to be connected, in social and official intercourse, with brethren from New England, whose spirit and conduct it is delightful to remember. Some of them have gone to their reward. Others still live to edify and bless the Church. They did not forget the land or the Church of their nativity; but they became soon attached to the Church of their adoption, and sought its peace and edification with an honour and fidelity of the most exemplary kind. From the moment they joined our ranks, and subscribed our formularies, they identified themselves with our system, and became its cordial supporters. *O si sic omnes!* If our correspondence with the Congregational Churches is to continue (and we can cordially say, *esto perpetua!*) it must be conducted in good faith on both sides. If this principle be at any time, or by either denomination forgotten; if the acts of each party be not mutually respected; if a policy or plans be at any time pursued, on either side, which may give even plausible reason to suspect that purposes of encroachment and ecclesiastical advantage are entertained by either party; the correspondence cannot long be satisfactory; nay, it ought not to be continued for an hour. But, if, on the other hand, the intercourse of the two denominations be habitually marked with the spirit of the gospel; if they studiously "follow the things which make for peace;" if they come together to be promoters of each other's zeal, and "helpers of each other's joy;" if they cordially unite in CONTENDING FOR AND PRESERVING "THE FAITH ONCE DELIVERED TO THE SAINTS," and mutually set their faces against ALL PERVERTERS AND CORRUPTERS OF THE TRUTH; and if their counsels be constantly directed to the advancement of that "kingdom which is not meat and drink, but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost;" all will be well. Our intercourse will be equally pleasant and profitable; and the powers of Satan will be abashed at every meeting of our joint assemblies. We can remember the time when a spirit like this appeared eminently to characterize and govern our connection. It was so in the days of the venerable Rodgers and Macwhorter, on the one side, and of the venerable and excellent Dwight, Strong, and men like them, on the other. Long, very long, may this blessed spirit preside over all our

intercourse! Henceforth may there be no other strife between us than who shall be most indulgent and respectful to each other's peculiarities; who shall love one another, and our common Master with the most fervent affection; and who shall do most for the conversion of the world to God, and thus "filling it with his glory!"

For ourselves, in fine, we are constrained to say, with emphasis, the longer we live, the deeper is our conviction, that, if the Presbyterian Church desires to have a healthful and solid growth, and to accomplish the greatest amount of good in our own body, and to all around her; her true policy is, not to level the walls which divide her from other denominations; not to seek a rapid enlargement, by gaining numbers at the expense of surrendering her peculiarities as a denomination. Our strength and glory, as a Church, consist in our simple, pure, apostolical doctrine and government, accompanied by the Holy Spirit's awakening and sanctifying power. The moment we give up these, we are like Sampson shorn of his locks. The Philistines will be upon us, and will prevail against us. All history bears witness, that when Presbyterians degenerated into Arminianism, or Pelagianism, and consented to exchange their government and discipline for a more lax system, their glory departed. Their peace was gone. They gained in numbers; but they lost in purity, in harmony, and in strength. The true way for every denomination (and we should say the same if we were conscientious Congregationalists) is faithfully to hold fast and maintain that system of truth and order which it verily believes to be founded in the word of God, without surrender or compromise; to treat all denominations around it with respect and kindness; to indulge in no exclusive claims, or denominational reproaches; to co-operate with others in enterprizes of general Christian benevolence, as far as can be done without the sacrifice of a single principle; and to employ its utmost strength in sustaining at home, and spreading as far as possible abroad, that system of doctrine, worship, and discipline, which it believes to be scriptural. This is the true way to peace, to harmony, to brotherly love, and to spiritual strength. No denomination of Christians ever faithfully and prayerfully pursued this course without being blessed of God, and largely prospering. And were the Presbyterian Church, from this hour, sacredly and strictly to adopt this plan in conducting all her affairs; acting faithfully in conformity with her own published principles; seek-

ing no additional alliances; making no compromises, for the sake of gaining either money or men; receiving none, either as ministers or elders, but those who appeared truly and sincerely to love her system as a whole, and decisively to prefer it to all others; were she, henceforth, simply to take this course; turning neither to the right hand nor to the left for the purpose of enlarging her borders; and exerting herself to the utmost, to give her system, in its simplicity and purity, as far as possible, to all nations; her growth would be not, perhaps, quite so rapid; but it would be healthful, homogeneous, and peaceful. Every accession to her numbers, instead of introducing disaffection and division into her camp, would be an increase of real strength. Such a policy, faithfully pursued, would be the precursor of the most happy and prosperous day she has yet seen, and render her a richer blessing than she has ever yet been, to the religious denominations around her, to our country, and to the world.

Charles Goodloe

ART. VI.—*Slavery.* By *William E. Channing.* Boston: James Munroe and Company; 1835. pp. 166.

EVERY one must be sensible that a very great change has, within a few years, been produced in the feelings, if not in the opinions of the public in relation to slavery. It is not long since the acknowledgement was frequent at the south, and universal at the north, that it was a great evil. It was spoken of in the slaveholding states, as a sad inheritance fixed upon them by the cupidity of the mother-country in spite of their repeated remonstrances. The known sentiments of Jefferson were reiterated again and again in every part of his native state; and some of the strongest denunciations of this evil, and some of the most ardent aspirations for deliverance from it ever uttered in the country, were pronounced, but a few years since, in the legislature of Virginia. A proposition to call a convention, with the purpose of so amending the constitution of the state as to admit of the general emancipation of the slaves, is said to have failed in the legislature of Kentucky by a single vote.* The sen-

* It is probable that many reasons combined to make a convention desirable to those who voted for it. But to get rid of slavery, was said to be one of the most prominent.

timents of the northern states had long since been clearly expressed by the abolition of slavery within their limits. That the same opinions and the same feelings continued to prevail among them, may be inferred, not only from the absence of all evidence to the contrary, but from various decisive indications of a positive character. In the year 1828 a resolution was passed by an almost unanimous vote in the legislature of Pennsylvania, instructing their Senators in Congress to endeavour to procure the passage of a law abolishing slavery in the District of Columbia. In 1829 a similar resolution was adopted by the assembly of New York. In 1828 a petition to this effect was presented to Congress, signed by one thousand inhabitants of the District itself; and the House of Representatives instructed the proper committee, in 1829, to inquire into the expediency of the measure.* How altered is the present state of the country! Instead of lamentations and acknowledgements, we hear from the south the strongest language of justification. And at the north, opposition to the proceedings of the anti-slavery societies, seems to be rapidly producing a public feeling in favour of slavery itself. The freedom of discussion, the liberty of the press, and the right of assembling for consultation, have in some cases been assailed, and in others trampled under foot by popular violence. What has produced this lamentable change? No doubt, many circumstances have combined in its production. We think, however, that all impartial observers must acknowledge, that by far the most prominent cause is the conduct of the abolitionists. They indeed naturally resist this imputation; and endeavour to show its injustice by appealing to the fact that their opinions of slavery have been entertained and expressed by many of the best men of former days. This appeal, however, is by no means satisfactory. The evil in question has been produced by no mere expression of opinion. Had the abolitionists confined themselves to their professed object, and endeavoured to effect their purpose by arguments addressed to the understandings and consciences of their fellow-citizens, no man could have any reason to complain. Under ordinary circumstances, such arguments as those presented on this subject in Dr. Wayland's *Elements of Moral Science*, and in Dr. Channing's recent publication, would have been received with respect and kindness in every part of the country. We make this assertion, because the

* Jay's Inquiry, p. 157, 161.

same sentiments, more offensively, and less ably urged, have heretofore been thus received.

See the remarks

It is not by argument that the abolitionists have produced the present unhappy excitement. Argument has not been the characteristic of their publications. Denunciations of slaveholding, as man-stealing, robbery, piracy, and worse than murder; consequent vituperation of slaveholders as knowingly guilty of the worst of crimes; passionate appeals to the feelings of the inhabitants of the northern states; gross exaggerations of the moral and physical condition of the slaves, have formed the staple of their addresses to the public. We do not mean to say that there has been no calm and Christian discussion of the subject. We mean merely to state what has, to the best of our knowledge, been the predominant character of the anti-slavery publications. There is one circumstance, which renders the error and guilt of this course of conduct chargeable, in a great measure, on the abolitionists as a body, and even upon those of their number who have pursued a different course. We refer to the fact that they have upheld the most extreme publications, and made common cause with the most reckless declaimers. The wildest ravings of the *Liberator* have been constantly lauded; agents have been commissioned whose great distinction was a talent for eloquent vituperation; coincidence of opinion as to the single point of immediate emancipation has been sufficient to unite men of the most discordant character. There is in this conduct such a strange want of adaptation between the means and the end which they profess to have in view, as to stagger the faith of most persons in the sincerity of their professions, who do not consider the extremes to which even good men may be carried, when they allow one subject to take exclusive possession of their minds. We do not doubt their sincerity; but we marvel at their delusion. They seem to have been led by the mere impulse of feeling, and a blind imitation of their predecessors in England, to a course of measures, which, though rational under one set of circumstances, is the height of infatuation under another. The English abolitionists addressed themselves to a community, which, though it owned no slaves, had the power to abolish slavery, and was therefore responsible for its continuance. Their object was to rouse that community to immediate action. For this purpose they addressed themselves to the feelings of the people; they portrayed in the strongest colours the misery of the slaves; they dilated on the gratuitous

crime of which England was guilty in perpetuating slavery, and did all they could to excite the passions of the public. This was the very course most likely to succeed, and it did succeed. Suppose, however, that the British parliament had no power over the subject; that it rested entirely with the colonial Assemblies to decide whether slavery should be abolished or not. Does any man believe the abolitionists would have gained their object? Did they in fact make converts of the planters? Did they even pretend that such was their design? Every one knows that their conduct produced a state of almost frantic excitement in the West India Islands; that so far from the public feeling in England producing a moral impression upon the planters favourable to the condition of the slaves, its effect was directly the reverse. It excited them to drive away the missionaries, to tear down the chapels, to manifest a determination to rivet still more firmly the chains on their helpless captives, and to resist to the utmost all attempts for their emancipation or even improvement. All this was natural, though it was all, under the circumstances, of no avail, except to rouse the spirit of the mother country, and to endanger the result of the experiment of emancipation, by exasperating the feelings of the slaves. Precisely similar has been the result of the efforts of the American abolitionists as it regards the slaveholders of America. They have produced a state of alarming exasperation at the south, injurious to the slave and dangerous to the country, while they have failed to enlist the feelings of the north. This failure has resulted, not so much from diversity of opinion on the abstract question of slavery; or from want of sympathy among northern men in the cause of human rights, as from the fact, that the common sense of the public has been shocked by the incongruity and folly of hoping to effect the abolition of slavery in one country, by addressing the people of another. We do not expect to abolish despotism in Russia, by getting up indignation meetings in New York. Yet for all the purposes of legislation on this subject, Russia is not more a foreign country to us than South Carolina. The idea of inducing the southern slaveholder to emancipate his slaves by denunciation, is about as rational as to expect the sovereigns of Europe to grant free institutions, by calling them tyrants and robbers. Could we send our denunciations of despotism among the subjects of those monarchs, and rouse the people to a sense of their wrongs and a determination to redress them, there would be some pros-

pect of success. But our northern abolitionists disclaim, with great earnestness, all intention of allowing their appeals to reach the ears of the slaves. It is, therefore, not to be wondered at, that the course pursued by the anti-slavery societies, should produce exasperation at the south, without conciliating sympathy at the north. The impolicy of their conduct is so obvious, that men who agree with them as to all their leading principles, not only stand aloof from their measures, but unhesitatingly condemn their conduct. This is the case with Dr. Channing. Although his book was written rather to repress the feeling of opposition to these societies, than to encourage it, yet he fully admits the justice of the principal charges brought against them. We extract a few passages on this subject. "The abolitionists have done wrong, I believe; nor is their wrong to be winked at, because done fanatically, or with good intentions; for how much mischief may be wrought with good designs! They have fallen into the common error of enthusiasts, that of exaggerating their object, of feeling as if no evil existed but that which they opposed, and as if no guilt could be compared with that of countenancing and upholding it. The tone of their newspapers, as far as I have seen them, has often been fierce, bitter, and abusive." p. 133. "Another objection to their movements is, that they have sought to accomplish their object by a system of agitation; that is, by a system of affiliated societies gathered, and held together, and extended, by passionate eloquence." "The abolitionists might have formed an association; but it should have been an elective one. Men of strong principles, judiciousness, sobriety, should have been carefully sought as members. Much good might have been accomplished by the co-operation of such philanthropists. Instead of this, the abolitionists sent forth their orators, some of them transported with fiery zeal, to sound the alarm against slavery through the land, to gather together young and old, pupils from schools, females hardly arrived at years of discretion, the ignorant, the excitable, the impetuous, and to organize these into associations for the battle against oppression. Very unhappily they preached their doctrine to the coloured people, and collected these into societies. To this mixed and excitable multitude, minute, heart-rending descriptions of slavery were given in the piercing tones of passion; and slaveholders were held up as monsters of cruelty and crime." p. 136. "The abolitionists often speak of Luther's vehemence as a model to future reformers. But who,

that has read history, does not know that Luther's reformation was accompanied by tremendous miseries and crimes, and that its progress was soon arrested? and is there not reason to fear, that the fierce, bitter, persecuting spirit, which he breathed into the work, not only tarnished its glory, but limited its power? One great principle which we should lay down as immovably true, is, that if a good work cannot be carried on by the calm, self-controlled, benevolent spirit of Christianity, then the time for doing it has not come. God asks not the aid of our vices. He can overrule them for good, but they are not the chosen instruments of human happiness." p. 138. "The adoption of the common system of agitation by the abolitionists has proved signally unsuccessful. From the beginning it created alarm in the considerate, and strengthened the sympathies of the free states with the slaveholder. It made converts of a few individuals, but alienated multitudes. Its influence at the south has been evil without mixture. It has stirred up bitter passions and a fierce fanaticism, which have shut every ear and every heart against its arguments and persuasions. These effects are the more to be deplored, because the hope of freedom to the slaves lies chiefly in the dispositions of his master. The abolitionist indeed proposed to convert the slaveholders; and for this end he approached them with vituperation and exhausted on them the vocabulary of abuse! And he has reaped as he sowed." p. 142.

Unmixed good or evil, however, in such a world as ours, is a very rare thing. Though the course pursued by the abolitionists has produced a great preponderance of mischief, it may incidentally occasion no little good. It has rendered it incumbent on every man to endeavour to obtain, and, as far as he can, to communicate definite opinions and correct principles on the whole subject. The community are very apt to sink down into indifference to a state of things of long continuance, and to content themselves with vague impressions as to right and wrong on important points, when there is no call for immediate action. From this state the abolitionists have effectually roused the public mind. The subject of slavery is no longer one on which men are allowed to be of no mind at all. The question is brought up before all of our public bodies, civil and religious. Almost every ecclesiastical society has in some way been called to express an opinion on the subject; and these calls are constantly repeated. Under these circumstances, it is the duty of all

in their appropriate sphere, to seek for truth, and to utter it in love.

“The first question,” says Dr. Channing, “to be proposed by a rational being, is not what is profitable, but what is right. Duty must be primary, prominent, most conspicuous, among the objects of human thought and pursuit. If we cast it down from its supremacy, if we inquire first for our interests and then for our duties we shall certainly err. We can never see the right clearly and fully, but by making it our first concern. . . . Right is the supreme good, and includes all other goods. In seeking and adhering to it, we secure our true and only happiness. All prosperity, not founded on it, is built on sand. If human affairs are controlled, as we believe, by almighty rectitude and impartial goodness, then to hope for happiness from wrong doing is as insane as to seek health and prosperity by rebelling against the laws of nature, by sowing our seed on the ocean, or making poison our common food. There is but one unfailing good; and that is, fidelity to the everlasting law written on the heart, and re-written and republished in God’s word.

“Whoever places this faith in the everlasting law of rectitude must, of course, regard the question of slavery, first, and chiefly, as a moral question. All other considerations will weigh little with him compared with its moral character and moral influences. The following remarks, therefore, are designed to aid the reader in forming a just moral judgment of slavery. Great truths, inalienable rights, everlasting duties, these will form the chief subjects of this discussion. There are times when the assertion of great principles is the best service a man can render society. The present is a moment of bewildering excitement, when men’s minds are stormed and darkened by strong passions and fierce conflicts; and also a moment of absorbing worldliness, when the moral-law is made to bow to expediency, and its high and strict requirements are decried or dismissed as metaphysical abstractions, or impracticable theories. At such a season to utter great principles without passion, and in the spirit of unfeigned and universal good will, and to engrave them deeply and durably on men’s minds, is to do more for the world, than to open mines of wealth, or to frame the most successful schemes of policy.”

No man can refuse assent to these principles. The great question, therefore, in relation to slavery is, what is right? What are the moral principles which should control our

opinions and conduct in regard to it? Before attempting an answer to this question, it is proper to remark, that we recognise no authoritative rule of truth and duty but the word of God. Plausible as may be the arguments deduced from general principles to prove a thing to be true or false, right and wrong, there is almost always room for doubt and honest diversity of opinion. Clear as we may think the arguments against despotism, there ever have been thousands of enlightened and good men, who honestly believe it to be of all forms of government the best and most acceptable to God. Unless we can approach the consciences of men, clothed with some more imposing authority than that of our own opinions and arguments, we shall gain little permanent influence. Men are too nearly upon a par as to their powers of reasoning, and ability to discover truth, to make the conclusions of one mind an authoritative rule for others. It is our object, therefore, not to discuss the subject of slavery upon abstract principles, but to ascertain the scriptural rule of judgment and conduct in relation to it. We do not intend to enter upon any minute or extended examination of scriptural passages, because all that we wish to assume, as to the meaning of the word of God, is so generally admitted as to render the laboured proof of it unnecessary.

It is on all hands acknowledged that, at the time of the advent of Jesus Christ, slavery in its worst forms prevailed over the whole world. The Saviour found it around him in Judea; the apostles met with it in Asia, Greece and Italy. How did they treat it? Not by the denunciation of slaveholding as necessarily and universally sinful. Not by declaring that all slaveholders were men-stealers and robbers, and consequently to be excluded from the church and the kingdom of heaven. Not by insisting on immediate emancipation. Not by appeals to the passions of men on the evils of slavery, or by the adoption of a system of universal agitation. On the contrary, it was by teaching the true nature, dignity, equality and destiny of men; by inculcating the principles of justice and love; and by leaving these principles to produce their legitimate effects in ameliorating the condition of all classes of society. We need not stop to prove that such was the course pursued by our Saviour and his apostles, because the fact is in general acknowledged, and various reasons are assigned, by the abolitionists and others, to account for it. The subject is hardly alluded to by Christ in any of his personal instructions. The apostles refer to it,

not to pronounce upon it as a question of morals, but to prescribe the relative duties of masters and slaves. They caution those slaves who have believing or Christian masters, not to despise them because they were on a perfect religious equality with them, but to consider the fact that their masters were their brethren, as an additional reason for obedience. It is remarkable that there is not even an exhortation to masters to liberate their slaves, much less is it urged as an imperative and immediate duty. They are commanded to be kind, merciful and just; and to remember that they have a Master in heaven. Paul represents this relation as of comparatively little account, 'Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called. Art thou called being a servant (or slave), care not for it; though, should the opportunity of freedom be presented, embrace it. These external relations, however, are of little importance, for every Christian is a freeman in the highest and best sense of the word, and at the same time is under the strongest bonds to Christ,' 1 Cor. vii. 20—22. It is not worth while to shut our eyes to these facts. They will remain, whether we refuse to see them and be instructed by them or not. If we are wiser, better, more courageous than Christ and his apostles, let us say so; but it will do no good, under a paroxysm of benevolence, to attempt to tear the bible to pieces, or to extort, by violent exegesis, a meaning foreign to its obvious sense. Whatever inferences may be fairly deducible from the fact, the fact itself cannot be denied that Christ and his inspired followers did treat the subject of slavery in the manner stated above. This being the case, we ought carefully to consider their conduct in this respect, and inquire what lessons that conduct should teach us.

We think no one will deny that the plan adopted by the Saviour and his immediate followers must be the correct plan, and therefore obligatory upon us, unless it can be shown that their circumstances were so different from ours, as to make the rule of duty different in the two cases. The obligation to point out and establish this difference, rests of course upon those who have adopted a course diametrically the reverse of that which Christ pursued. They have not acquitted themselves of this obligation. They do not seem to have felt it necessary to reconcile their conduct with his; nor does it appear to have occurred to them, that their violent denunciations of slaveholding and of slaveholders is an indirect reflection on his wisdom, virtue, or courage. If the present course

of the abolitionists is right, then the course of Christ and the apostles was wrong. For the circumstances of the two cases are, as far as we can see, in all essential particulars, the same. They appeared as teachers of morality and religion, not as politicians. The same is the fact with our abolitionists. They found slavery authorized by the laws of the land. So do we. They were called upon to receive into the communion of the Christian Church, both slaveowners and slaves. So are we. They instructed these different classes of persons as to their respective duties. So do we. Where then is the difference between the two cases? If we are right in insisting that slaveholding is one of the greatest of all sins; that it should be immediately and universally abandoned as a condition of church communion, or admission into heaven, how comes it that Christ and his apostles did not pursue the same course? We see no way of escape from the conclusion that the conduct of the modern abolitionists, being directly opposed to that of the authors of our religion, must be wrong and ought to be modified or abandoned.

An equally obvious deduction from the fact above referred to, is, that slaveholding is not necessarily sinful. The assumption of the contrary is the great reason why the modern abolitionists have adopted their peculiar course. They argue thus: slaveholding is under all circumstances sinful, it must, therefore, under all circumstances, and at all hazards, be immediately abandoned. This reasoning is perfectly conclusive. If there is error any where, it is in the premises, and not in the deduction. It requires no argument to show that sin ought to be at once abandoned. Every thing, therefore, is conceded which the abolitionists need require, when it is granted that slaveholding is in itself a crime. But how can this assumption be reconciled with the conduct of Christ and the apostles? Did they shut their eyes to the enormities of a great offence against God and man? Did they temporise with a heinous evil, because it was common and popular? Did they abstain from even exhorting masters to emancipate their slaves, though an imperative duty, from fear of consequences? Did they admit the perpetrators of the greatest crimes to the Christian communion? Who will undertake to charge the blessed Redeemer and his inspired followers with such connivance at sin, and such fellowship with iniquity? Were drunkards, murderers, liars, and adulterers thus treated? Were they passed over without even an exhortation to forsake their sins? Were they recog-

nised as Christians? It cannot be that slaveholding belongs to the same category with these crimes; and to assert the contrary, is to assert that Christ is the minister of sin.

This is a point of so much importance, lying as it does at the very foundation of the whole subject, that it deserves to be attentively considered. The grand mistake, as we apprehend, of those who maintain that slaveholding is itself a crime, is, that they do not discriminate between slaveholding in itself considered, and its accessories at any particular time or place. Because masters may treat their slaves unjustly, or governments make oppressive laws in relation to them, is no more a valid argument against the lawfulness of slaveholding, than the abuse of parental authority, or the unjust political laws of certain states, is an argument against the lawfulness of the parental relation, or of civil government. This confusion of points so widely distinct, appears to us to run through almost all the popular publications on slavery, and to vitiate their arguments. Mr. Jay, for example, quotes the second article of the constitution of the American Anti-Slavery Society, which declares that "slaveholding is a heinous crime in the sight of God," and then, to justify this declaration, makes large citations from the laws of the several southern states, to show what the system of slavery is in this country, and concludes by saying, "This is the system which the American Anti-Slavery Society declares to be sinful, and ought therefore to be immediately abolished." There is, however, no necessary connexion between his premises and conclusion. We may admit all those laws which forbid the instruction of slaves; which interfere with their marital or parental rights; which subject them to the insults and oppression of the whites, to be in the highest degree unjust, without at all admitting that slaveholding itself is a crime. Slavery may exist without any one of these concomitants. In pronouncing on the moral character of an act, it is obviously necessary to have a clear idea of what it is; yet how few of those who denounce slavery, have any well defined conception of its nature. They have a confused idea of chains and whips, of degradation and misery, of ignorance and vice, and to this complex conception they apply the name slavery, and denounce it as the aggregate of all moral and physical evil. Do such persons suppose that slavery, as it existed in the family of Abraham, was such as their imaginations thus picture to themselves? Might not that patriarch have had men purchased with his silver, who were well

clothed, well instructed, well compensated for their labour, and in all respects treated with parental kindness? Neither inadequate remuneration, physical discomfort, intellectual ignorance, moral degradation, is essential to the condition of a slave. Yet if all these ideas are removed from the commonly received notion of slavery, and how little will remain. All the ideas which necessarily enter into the definition of slavery are deprivation of personal liberty, obligation of service at the discretion of another, and the transferable character of the authority and claim of service of the master.* The manner in which men are brought into this condition; its continuance, and the means adopted for securing the authority and claim of masters, are all incidental and variable. They may be reasonable or unreasonable, just or unjust, at different times and places. The question, therefore, which the abolitionists have undertaken to decide, is not whether the laws enacted in the slaveholding states in relation to this subject are just or not, but whether slaveholding, in itself considered, is a crime. The confusion of these two points, has not only brought the abolitionists into conflict with the scriptures, but it has, as a necessary consequence, prevented their gaining the confidence of the north, or power over the conscience of the south. When southern Christians are told that they are guilty of a heinous crime, worse than piracy, robbery or murder, because they hold slaves, when they know that Christ and his apostles never denounced slaveholding as a crime, never called upon men to renounce it as a condition of admission into the church, they are shocked and offended, without being convinced. They are sure that their accusers cannot be wiser or better than their divine Master, and their consciences are untouched by denunciations which they know, if well founded, must effect not them only, but the authors of the religion of the bible.

The argument from the conduct of Christ and his immediate followers seems to us decisive on the point, that slaveholding, in itself considered, is not a crime. Let us see how this argument has been answered. In the able "Address to the Presbyterians of Kentucky, proposing a plan for the instruction and emancipation of their slaves, by a committee of the synod of Kentucky," there is a strong and extended argument to prove the sinfulness of slavery *as it exists*

* PALEY'S definition is still more simple, "I define," he says, "slavery to be an obligation to labour for the benefit of the master, without the contract or consent of the servant." Moral Philosophy, Book III. ch. 3.

among us, to which we have little to object. When, however, the distinguished drafter of that address comes to answer the objection, "God's word sanctions slavery, and it cannot therefore be sinful," he forgets the essential limitation of the proposition which he had undertaken to establish, and proceeds to prove that the bible condemns slaveholding, and not merely the kind or system of slavery which prevails in this country. The argument drawn from the scriptures, he says, needs no elaborate reply. If the bible sanctions slavery, it sanctions the kind of slavery which then prevailed; the atrocious system which authorized masters to starve their slaves, to torture them, to beat them, to put them to death, and to throw them into their fish ponds. And he justly asks, whether a man could insult the God of heaven worse than by saying he does not disapprove of such a system? Dr. Channing presents strongly the same view, and says, that an infidel would be labouring in his vocation in asserting that the bible does not condemn slavery. These gentlemen, however, are far too clear-sighted not to discover, on a moments reflection, that they have allowed their benevolent feelings to blind them to the real point at issue. No one denies that the bible condemns all injustice, cruelty, oppression, and violence. And just so far as the laws then existing, authorized these crimes, the bible condemned them. But what stronger argument can be presented to prove that the sacred writers did not regard slaveholding as in itself sinful, than that while they condemn all unjust or unkind treatment (even threatening) on the part of masters towards their slaves, they did not condemn slavery itself? While they required the master to treat his slave according to the law of love, they did not command him to set him free. The very atrocity, therefore, of the system which then prevailed, instead of weakening the argument, gives it tenfold strength. Then, if ever, when the institution was so fearfully abused, we might expect to hear the interpreters of the divine will, saying that a system which leads to such results is the concentrated essence of all crimes, and must be instantly abandoned on pain of eternal condemnation. This, however, they did not say, and we cannot now force them to say it. They treated the subject precisely as they did the cruel despotism of the Roman emperors. The licentiousness, the injustice, the rapine and murders of those wicked men, they condemned with the full force of divine authority; but the mere extent of their power, though so liable to abuse, they left unnoticed.

Another answer to the argument in question is, that "The New Testament does condemn slaveholding, *as practised among us*, in the most explicit terms furnished by the language in which the sacred penman wrote." This assertion is supported by saying that God has condemned slavery, because he has specified the parts which compose it and condemned them, one by one, in the most ample and unequivocal form.* It is to be remarked that the saving clause "*slaveholding as it exists among us*," is introduced into the statement, though it seems to be lost sight of in the illustration and confirmation of it which follow. We readily admit, that if God does condemn all the parts of which slavery consists, he condemns slavery itself. But the drafter of the address has made no attempt to prove that this is actually done in the sacred scriptures. That many of the attributes of the system as established by law in this country, are condemned, is indeed very plain; but that slaveholding in itself is condemned, has not been and cannot be proved. The writer, indeed, says, "The Greek language had a word corresponding exactly, in signification, with our word servant, but it had none which answered precisely to our term slave. How then was an apostle writing in Greek, to condemn our slavery? How can we expect to find in scripture, the words 'slavery is sinful,' when the language in which it is written contained no term which expressed the meaning of our word slavery?" Does the gentleman mean to say the Greek language could not express the idea that slaveholding is sinful? Could not the apostles have communicated the thought that it was the duty of masters to set their slaves free? Were they obliged from paucity of words to admit slaveholders into the Church? We have no doubt the writer himself could, with all ease, pen a declaration in the Greek language void of all ambiguity, proclaiming freedom to every slave upon earth, and denouncing the vengeance of heaven upon every man who dared to hold a fellow creature in bondage. It is not words we care for. We want evidence that the sacred writers taught that it was incumbent on every slaveholder, as a matter of duty, to emancipate his slaves (which no Roman or Greek law forbade), and that his refusing to do so was a heinous crime in the sight of God. The Greek language must be poor indeed if it cannot convey such ideas.

Another answer is given by Dr. Channing. "Slavery,"

* Address, &c., p. 20.

he says, "in the age of the apostle, had so penetrated society, was so intimately interwoven with it, and the materials of servile war were so abundant, that a religion, preaching freedom to its victims, would have armed against itself the whole power of the State. Of consequence Paul did not assail it. He satisfied himself with spreading principles, which, however slowly, could not but work its destruction." To the same effect, Dr. Wayland says, "The gospel was designed, not for one race or one time, but for all men and for all times. It looked not at the abolition of this form of evil for that age alone, but for its universal abolition. Hence the important object of its author was to gain it a lodgement in every part of the known world; so that, by its universal diffusion among all classes of society, it might quietly and peacefully modify and subdue the evil passions of men; and thus, without violence, work a revolution in the whole mass of mankind. In this manner alone could its object, a universal moral revolution, be accomplished. For if it had forbidden the *evil* without subduing the *principle*, if it had proclaimed the unlawfulness of slavery, and taught slaves to *resist* the oppression of their masters, it would instantly have arrayed the two parties in deadly hostility throughout the civilized world; its announcement would have been the signal of a servile war; and the very name of the Christian religion would have been forgotten amidst the agitations of universal bloodshed. The fact, under these circumstances, that the gospel does not forbid slavery, affords no reason to suppose that it does not mean to prohibit it, much less does it afford ground for belief that Jesus Christ intended to authorize it."*

Before considering the force of this reasoning, it may be well to notice one or two important admissions contained in these extracts. First, then, it is admitted by these distinguished moralists, that the apostles did not preach a religion proclaiming freedom to slaves; that Paul did not assail slavery; that the gospel did not proclaim the unlawfulness of slaveholding; it did not forbid it. This is going the whole length that we have gone in our statement of the conduct of Christ and his apostles. Secondly, these writers admit that the course adopted by the authors of our religion was the only wise and proper one. Paul satisfied himself, says Dr. Channing, with spreading principles, which, however slowly, could not but work its destruction. Dr. Wayland says,

* Elements of Moral Science, p. 225.

that if the apostles had pursued the opposite plan of denouncing slavery as a crime, the Christian religion would have been ruined; its very name would have been forgotten. Then how can the course of the modern abolitionists, under circumstances so nearly similar, or even that of these reverend gentlemen themselves be right? Why do not they content themselves with doing what Christ and his apostles did? Why must they proclaim the unlawfulness of slavery? Is human nature so much altered, that a course, which would have produced universal bloodshed, and led to the very destruction of the Christian religion, in one age, is wise and Christian in another?

Let us, however, consider the force of the argument as stated above. It amounts to this. Christ and his apostles thought slaveholding a great crime, but they abstained from saying so for fear of the consequences. The very statement of the argument, in its naked form, is its refutation. These holy men did not refrain from condemning sin from a regard to consequences. They did not hesitate to array against the religion which they taught, the strongest passions of men. Nor did they content themselves with denouncing the general principles of evil; they condemned its special manifestations. They did not simply forbid intemperate sensual indulgence, and leave it to their hearers to decide what did or what did not come under that name. They declared that no fornicator, no adulterer, no drunkard could be admitted into the kingdom of heaven. They did not hesitate, even when a little band, a hundred and twenty souls, to place themselves in direct and irreconcilable opposition to the whole polity, civil and religious, of the Jewish state. It will hardly be maintained that slavery was, at that time, more intimately interwoven with the institutions of society, than idolatry was. It entered into the arrangements of every family; of every city and province, and of the whole Roman empire. The emperor was the Pontifex Maximus; every department of the state, civil and military, was pervaded by it. It was so united with the fabric of the government that it could not be removed without effecting a revolution in all its parts. The apostles knew this. They knew that to denounce polytheism was to array against them the whole power of the state. Their divine Master had distinctly apprized them of the result. He told them that it would set the father against the son, and the son against the father; the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the

another, and that a man's enemies should be those of his own household. He said that he came not to bring peace but a sword, and that such would be the opposition to his followers, that whosoever killed them, would think he did God service. Yet in view of these certain consequences the apostles did denounce idolatry, not merely in principle, but by name. The result was precisely what Christ had foretold. The Romans, tolerant of every other religion, bent the whole force of their wisdom and arms to extirpate Christianity. The scenes of bloodshed which century after century followed the introduction of gospel, did not induce the followers of Christ to keep back or modify the truth. They adhered to their declaration that idolatry was a heinous crime. And they were right. We expect similar conduct of our missionaries. We do not expect them to refrain from denouncing the institutions of the heathen, as sinful, because they are popular, or intimately interwoven with society. The Jesuits, who adopted this plan, forfeited the confidence of Christendom, without making converts of the heathen. It is, therefore, perfectly evident that the authors of our religion were not withheld by these considerations, from declaring slavery to be unlawful. If they did abstain from this declaration, as is admitted, it must have been because they did not consider it as in itself a crime. No other solution of their conduct is consistent with their truth or fidelity.

Another answer to the argument from scripture is given by Dr. Channing and others. It is said that it proves too much; that it makes the bible sanction despotism, even the despotism of Nero. Our reply to this objection shall be very brief. We have already pointed out the fallacy of confounding slaveholding itself with the particular system of slavery prevalent at the time of Christ, and shown that the recognition of slaveholders as Christians, though irreconcilable with the assumption that slavery is a heinous crime, gives no manner of sanction to the atrocious laws and customs of that age in relation to that subject. Because the apostles admitted the masters of slaves to the communion of the church, it would be a strange inference that they would have given this testimony to the Christian character of the master who oppressed, starved, or murdered his slaves. Such a master would have been rejected as an oppressor, or murderer, however, not as a slaveholder. In like manner, the declaration that government is an ordinance of God, that magistrates are to be obeyed within the sphere of their lawful authority;

that resistance to them, when in the exercise of that authority, is sinful,* gives no sanction to the oppression of the Roman emperors, or to the petty vexations of provincial officers. The argument urged from scripture in favour of passive submission, is not so exactly parallel with the argument for slavery, as Dr. Channing supposes. They agree in some points, but they differ in others. The former is founded upon a false interpretation of Rom. xiii. 1—3; it supposes that passage to mean what it does not mean, whereas the latter is founded upon the sense which Dr. C. and other opponents of slavery, admit to be the true sense. This must be allowed to alter the case materially. Again, the argument for the lawfulness of slaveholding, is not founded on the mere injunction, "Slaves obey your masters," analogous to the command, "Let every soul be subject to the higher powers," but on the fact that the apostles did not condemn slavery; that they did not require emancipation, and that they recognised slaveholders as Christian brethren. To make Dr. Channing's argument of any force, it must be shown that Paul not only enjoined obedience to a despotic monarch, but that he recognized Nero as a Christian. When this is done, then we shall admit that our argument is fairly met, and that it is just as true that he sanctioned the conduct of Nero as that he acknowledged the lawfulness of slavery.

The two cases, however, are analogous as to one important point. The fact that Paul enjoins obedience under a despotic government, is a valid argument to prove, not that he sanctioned the conduct of the reigning Roman emperor, but that he did not consider the possession of despotic power a crime. The argument of Dr. C. would be far stronger, and the two cases more exactly parallel, had one of the emperors become a penitent believer during the apostolic age, and been admitted to the Christian church by inspired men, notwithstanding the fact that he retained his office and authority. But even without this latter decisive circumstance, we acknowledge that the mere holding of despotic power is proved not to be

* It need hardly be remarked that the command to obey magistrates, as given in Rom. xiii. 1—3, is subject to the limitation stated above. They are to be obeyed as magistrates; precisely as parents are to be obeyed as parents, husbands as husbands. The command of obedience is expressed as generally, in the last two cases, as in the first. A magistrate beyond the limits of his lawful authority (whatever that may be) has, in virtue of this text, no more claim to obedience, than a parent who, on the strength of the passage "Children obey your parents in all things," should command his son to obey him as a monarch or a pope.

a crime by the fact that the apostles enjoined obedience to those who exercised it. Thus far the arguments are analogous; and they prove that both political despotism and domestic slavery, belong in morals to the *adiaphora*, to things indifferent. They may be expedient or inexpedient, right or wrong, according to circumstances. Belonging to the same class, they should be treated in the same way. Neither is to be denounced as necessarily sinful, and to be abolished immediately under all circumstances and at all hazards. Both should be left to the operation of those general principles of the gospel, which have peacefully ameliorated political institutions, and destroyed domestic slavery throughout the greater part of Christendom.

The truth on this subject is so obvious that it sometimes escapes unconsciously from the lips of the most strenuous abolitionists. Mr. Birney says, "He would have retained the power and authority of an emperor; yet his oppressions, his cruelties would have ceased; the very temper that prompted them, would have been suppressed; his power would have been put forth for good and not for evil."* Here every thing is conceded. The possession of despotic power is thus admitted not to be a crime, even when it extends over millions of men, and subjects their lives as well as their property and services to the will of an individual. What becomes then of the arguments and denunciations of slaveholding, which is despotism on a small scale? Would Mr. Birney continue in the deliberate practice of a crime worse than robbery, piracy, or murder? When he penned the above sentiment, he must have seen that neither by the law of God nor of reason is it necessarily sinful to sustain the relation of master over our fellow creatures; that if this unlimited authority be used for the good of those over whom it extends and for the glory of God, its possessor may be one of the best and most useful of men. It is the abuse of this power for base and selfish purposes which constitutes criminality, and not its simple possession. He may say that the tendency to abuse absolute power is so great that it ought never to be confided to the hands of men. This, as a general rule, is no doubt true, and establishes the inexpediency of all despotic governments whether for the state or the family. But it leaves the morality of the question just where it was, and where it was seen to be, when Mr. Birney said he could

* Quoted by Pres. Young, p. 45, of the Address, &c.

with a good conscience be a Roman emperor, i. e. the master of millions of slaves.

The consideration of the Old Testament economy leads us to the same conclusion on this subject. It is not denied that slavery was tolerated among the ancient people of God. Abraham had servants in his family who were "bought with his money," Gen. xvii. 13. "Abimeleck took sheep and oxen and men servants and maid servants and gave them unto Abraham." Moses, finding this institution among the Hebrews and all surrounding nations, did not abolish it. He enacted laws directing how slaves were to be treated, on what conditions they were to be liberated, under what circumstances they might and might not be sold; he recognizes the distinction between slaves and hired servants, (Deut. xv. 18); he speaks of the way by which these bondmen might be procured; as by war, by purchase, by the right of creditorship, by the sentence of a judge, by birth; but not by seizing on those who were free, an offence punished by death.* The fact that the Mosaic institutions recognized the lawfulness of slavery is a point too plain to need proof, and is almost universally admitted. Our argument from this acknowledged fact is, that if God allowed slavery to exist, if he directed how slaves might be lawfully acquired, and how they were to be treated, it is in vain to contend that slaveholding is a sin, and yet profess reverence for the scriptures. Every one must feel that if perjury, murder, or idolatry had been thus authorized, it would bring the Mosaic institutions into conflict with the eternal principles of morals, and that our faith in the divine origin of one or the other must be given up.

Dr. Channing says, of this argument also, that it proves too much. "If usages, sanctioned under the Old Testament and not forbidden under the New, are right, then our moral code will undergo a sad deterioration. Polygamy was allowed to the Israelites, was the practice of the holiest men, and was common and licensed in the age of the apostles. But the apostles no where condemn it, nor was the renunciation of it made an essential condition of admission into the Christian Church." To this we answer, that so far as polygamy and

* On the manner in which slaves were acquired, compare Deut. xx. 14. xxi. 10, 11. Ex. xxii. 3. Neh. v. 4, 5. Gen. xiv. 14. xv. 3. xvii. 23. Num. xxxi. 18, 35. Deut. xxv. 44, 46.

As to the manner in which they were to be treated, see Lev. xxv. 39—53. Ex. xx. 10. xxii. 2—8. Deut. xxv. 4—6, &c. &c.

divorce were permitted under the old dispensation, they were lawful, and became so by that permission; and they ceased to be lawful when the permission was withdrawn, and a new law given. That Christ did give a new law on this subject is abundantly evident.* With regard to divorce, it is as explicit as language can make it; and with regard to polygamy it is so plain as to have secured the assent of every portion of the Christian church in all ages. The very fact that there has been no diversity of opinion or practice among Christians with regard to polygamy, is itself decisive evidence that the will of Christ was clearly revealed on the subject. The temptation to continue the practice was as strong, both from the passions of men, and the sanction of prior ages, as in regard to slavery. Yet we find no traces of the toleration of polygamy in the Christian church, though slavery long continued to prevail. There is no evidence that the apostles admitted to the fellowship of Christians, those who were guilty of this infraction of the law of marriage. It is indeed possible that in cases where the converts had already more than one wife, the connexion was not broken off. It is evident this must have occasioned great evil. It would lead to the breaking up of families, the separation of parents and children, as well as husbands and wives. Under these circumstances the connexion may have been allowed to continue. It is however very doubtful whether even this was permitted. It is remarkable that among the numerous cases of conscience connected with marriage, submitted to the apostles, this never occurs.

Dr. Channing uses language much too strong when he says that polygamy was common and licensed in the days of the apostles. It was contrary both to Roman and Grecian laws and usages until the most degenerate periods of the history of those nations. It was very far from being customary among the Jews, though it might have been allowed. It is probable that it was, therefore, comparatively extremely rare in the apostolic age. This accounts for the fact that scarcely

* "The words of Christ (Matt. xix. 9) may be construed by an easy implication to prohibit polygamy: for if 'whoever putteth away his wife, and *marrieth* another committeth adultery' he who *marrieth* another *without* putting away the first, is no less guilty of adultery: because the adultery does not consist in the repudiation of the first wife (for, however unjust and cruel that may be, it is not adultery), but in entering into a second marriage during the legal existence and obligation of the first. The several passages in St. Paul's writings, which speak of marriage, always suppose it to signify the union of one man with one woman." PALEY'S Moral Phil. Book III. Chap. 6.

any notice is taken of the practice in the New Testament. Wherever marriage is spoken of, it seems to be taken for granted, as a well understood fact, that it was a contract for life between one man and one woman; compare Rom. vii. 2, 3. 1 Cor. vii. 1, 2, 39. It is further to be remarked on this subject, that marriage is a positive institution. If God had ordained that every man should have two or more wives, instead of one, polygamy would have been lawful. But slaveholding is denounced as a *malum in se*; as essentially unjust and wicked. This being the case, it could at no period of the world receive the divine sanction, much less could it have continued in the Christian church under the direction of inspired men, when there was nothing to prevent its immediate abolition. The answer then of Dr. Channing is unsatisfactory, first, because polygamy does not belong to the same category in morals as that to which slaveholding is affirmed to belong; and secondly, because it was so plainly prohibited by Christ and his apostles as to secure the assent of all Christians in all ages of the church.

It is, however, argued that slavery must be sinful because it interferes with the inalienable rights of men. We have already remarked, that slavery, in itself considered, is a state of bondage, and nothing more. It is the condition of an individual who is deprived of his personal liberty, and is obliged to labour for another, who has the right to transfer this claim of service, at pleasure. That this condition involves the loss of many of the rights which are commonly and properly called natural, because belonging to men, as men, is readily admitted. It is, however, incumbent on those who maintain that slavery is, on this account, necessarily sinful, to show that it is criminal, under all circumstances, to deprive any set of men of a portion of their natural rights. That this broad proposition cannot be maintained is evident. The very constitution of society supposes the forfeiture of a greater or less amount of these rights, according to its peculiar organization. That it is not only the privilege, but the duty of men to live together in a regularly organized society, is evident from the nature which God has given us; from the impossibility of every man living by and for himself, and from the express declarations of the word of God. The object of the formation of society is the promotion of human virtue and happiness; and the form in which it should be organized, is that which will best secure the attainment of this object. As, however, the condition of men is so very

various, it is impossible that the same form should be equally conducive to happiness and virtue under all circumstances. No one form, therefore, is prescribed in the bible, or is universally obligatory. The question which form is, under given circumstances, to be adopted, is one of great practical difficulty, and must be left to the decision of those who have the power to decide, on their own responsibility. The question, however, does not depend upon the degree in which these several forms may encroach on the natural rights of men. In the patriarchal age, the most natural, the most feasible, and perhaps the most beneficial form of government was by the head of the family. His power by the law of nature, and the necessity of the case, extended without any other limit than the general principles of morals, over his children, and in the absence of other regular authority, would not terminate when the children arrived at a particular age, but be continued during life. He was the natural umpire between his adult offspring, he was their lawgiver and leader. His authority would naturally extend over his more remote descendants, as they continued to increase, and on his death, might devolve on the next oldest of the family. There is surely nothing in this mode of constituting society which is necessarily immoral. If found to be conducive to the general good, it might be indefinitely continued. It would not suffice to render its abrogation obligatory, to say that all men are born free and equal; that the youth of twenty-one had as good a right to have a voice in the affairs of the family as the aged patriarch; that the right of self-government is indefeasible, &c. Unless it could be shown that the great end of society was not attainable by this mode of organization, and that it would be more securely promoted by some other, it would be an immorality to require or to effect the change. And if a change became, in the course of time, obviously desirable, its nature and extent would be questions to be determined by the peculiar circumstances of the case, and not by the rule of abstract rights. Under some circumstances it might be requisite to confine the legislative power to a single individual; under others to the hands of a few; and under others to commit it to the whole community. It would be absurd to maintain, on the ground of the natural equality of men, that a horde of ignorant and vicious savages, should be organized as a pure democracy, if experience taught that such a form of government was destructive to themselves and others. These different modes of constituting civil society are not necessarily

either just or unjust, but become the one or the other according to circumstances; and their morality is not determined by the degree in which they encroach upon the natural rights of men, but on the degree in which they promote or retard the progress of human happiness and virtue. In this country we believe that the general good requires us to deprive the whole female sex of the right of self-government. They have no voice in the formation of the laws which dispose of their persons and property. When married, we despoil them almost entirely of a legal existence, and deny them some of the most essential rights of property. We treat all minors much in the same way, depriving them of many personal and almost all political rights, and that too though they may be far more competent to exercise them aright than many adults. We, moreover, decide that a majority of one may make laws for the whole community, no matter whether the numerical majority have more wisdom or virtue than the minority or not. Our plea for all this is, that the good of the whole is thereby most effectually promoted. This plea, if made out, justifies the case. In England and France they believe that the good of the whole requires that the right of governing, instead of being restricted, to all adult males, as we arbitrarily determine, should be confined to that portion of the male population who hold a given amount of property. In Prussia and Russia, they believe with equal confidence, that public security and happiness demand that all power should be in the hands of the king. If they are right in their opinion, they are right in their practice. The principle that social and political organizations are designed for the general good, of course requires they should be allowed to change, as the progress of society may demand. It is very possible that the feudal system may have been well adapted to the state of Europe in the middle ages. The change in the condition of the world, however, has gradually obliterated almost all its features. The villain has become the independent farmer; the lord of the manor, the simple landlord; and the sovereign leige, in whom, according to the fiction of the system, the fee of the whole country vested, has become a constitutional monarch. It may be that another series of changes may convert the tenant into an owner, the lord into a rich commoner, and the monarch into a president. Though these changes have resulted in giving the people the enjoyment of a larger amount of their rights than they formerly possessed, it is not hence to be inferred that they

ought centuries ago to have been introduced suddenly or by violence. Christianity "operates as alterative." It was never designed to tear up the institutions of society by the roots. It produces equality not by prostrating trees of all sizes to the ground, but by securing to all the opportunity of growing, and by causing all to grow, until the original disparity is no longer perceptible. All attempts, by human wisdom, to frame society, of a sudden, after a pattern cut by the rule of abstract rights, have failed; and whether they had failed or not, they can never be urged as a matter of moral obligation. It is not enough, therefore, in order to prove the sinfulness of slaveholding, to show that it interferes with the natural rights of a portion of the community. It is in this respect analogous to all other social institutions. They are all of them encroachments on human rights, from the freest democracy to the most absolute despotism.

It is further to be remarked that all these rights suppose corresponding duties, and where there is an incompetence for the duty, the claim to exercise the right ceases. No man can justly claim the exercise of any right to the injury of the community of which he is a member. It is because females and minors are judged (though for different reasons), incompetent to the proper discharge of the duties of citizenship, that they are deprived of the right of suffrage. It is on the same principle that a large portion of the inhabitants of France and England are deprived of the same privilege. As it is acknowledged that the slaves may be justly deprived of political rights on the ground of their incompetency to exercise them without injury to the community, it must be admitted, by parity of reason, that they may be justly deprived of personal freedom, if incompetent to exercise it with safety to society. If this be so, then slavery is a question of circumstances, and not a *malum in se*. It must be borne in mind that the object of these remarks is not to prove that the American, the British, or the Russian form of society is expedient or otherwise; much less to show that the slaves in this country are actually unfit for freedom, but simply to prove that the mere fact that slaveholding interferes with natural rights, is not enough to justify the conclusion that it is necessarily and universally sinful.

Another very common and plausible argument on this subject is, that a man cannot be made a matter of property. He cannot be degraded into a brute or chattel without the grossest violation of duty and propriety; and that as slavery

confers this right of property in human beings it must, from its very nature, be a crime. We acknowledge the correctness of the principle on which this argument is founded, but deny that it is applicable to the case in hand. We admit that it is not only an enormity, but an impossibility that a man should be made a thing as distinguished from a rational and moral being. It is not within the compass of human law to alter the nature of God's creatures. A man must be regarded and treated as a rational being even in his greatest degradation. That he is, in some countries and under some institutions, deprived of many of the rights and privileges of such a being, does not alter his nature. He must be viewed as a man under the most atrocious system of slavery that ever existed. Men do not arraign and try on evidence, and punish on conviction either things or brutes. Yet slaves are under a regular system of laws which, however unjust they may be, recognise their character as accountable beings. When it is inferred from the fact that the slave is called the property of his master, that he is thereby degraded from his rank as a human being, the argument rests on the vagueness of the term *property*. Property is the right of possession and use, and must of necessity vary according to the nature of the objects to which it attaches. A man has property in his wife, in his children, in his domestic animals, in his fields and in his forests. That is, he has the right to the possession and use of these several objects according to their nature. He has no more right to use a brute as a log of wood, in virtue of the right of property, than he has to use a man as a brute. There are general principles of rectitude obligatory on all men, which require them to treat all the creatures of God according to the nature which he has given them. The man who should burn his horse because he was his property, would find no justification in that plea either before God or man. When therefore it is said that one man is the property of another, it can only mean that the one has a right to use the other *as a man*, but not as a brute or as a thing. He has no right to treat him as he may lawfully treat his ox, or a tree. He can convert his person to no use to which a human being may not, by the laws of God and nature, be properly applied. When this idea of property comes to be analyzed, it is found to be nothing more than a claim of service either for life or for a term of years. This claim is transferable, and is of the nature of property, and is consequently liable for the debts of the owner, and subject to his disposal by will

or otherwise. It is probable that the slave is called the property of his master in the statute books, for the same reason that children are called the servants of their parents, or that wives are said to be the same person with their husbands and to have no separate existence of their own. These are mere technicalities designed to facilitate certain legal processes. Calling a child a servant does not alter his relation to his father; and a wife is still a woman though the courts may rule her out of existence. In like manner where the law declares, that the slave shall be deemed and adjudged to be a chattel personal in the hands of his master, it does not alter his nature, nor does it confer on the master any right to use him in a manner inconsistent with that nature. As there are certain moral principles which direct how brutes are to be used by those to whom they belong, so there are fixed principles which determine how a man may be used. These legal enactments, therefore, are not intended to legislate away the nature of the slave as a human being; they serve to facilitate the transfer of the master's claim of service, and to render that claim the more readily liable for his debts. The transfer of authority and claim of service from one master to another, is, in principle, analogous to transfer of subjects from one sovereign to another. This is a matter of frequent occurrence. By the treaty of Vienna, for example, a large part of the inhabitants of central Europe changed masters. Nearly half of Saxony was transferred to Prussia; Belgium was annexed to Holland. In like manner Louisiana was transferred from France to the United States. In none of these cases were the people consulted. Yet in all a claim of service more or less extended was made over from one power to another. There was a change of masters. The mere transferable character of the master's claim to the slave does not convert the latter into a thing, or degrade him from his rank as a human being. Nor does the fact that he is bound to serve for life produce this effect. It is only property in his time for life, instead of for a term of years. The nature of the relation is not determined by the period of its continuance.

It has, however, been argued that the slave is the property of his master, not only in the sense admitted above, but in the sense assumed in the objection, because his children are under the same obligation of service as the parent. The hereditary character of slavery, however, does not arise out of the idea of the slave as a chattel or thing, a mere matter

of property, it depends on the organization of society. In England one man is born a peer, another a commoner; in Russia one is born a noble, another a serf; here one is born a free citizen, another a disfranchised out-cast (the free coloured man), and a third a slave. These forms of society, as before remarked, are not necessarily, or in themselves, either just or unjust; but become the one or the other, according to circumstances. Under a state of things in which the best interests of the community would be promoted by the British or Russian organization, they would be just and acceptable to God; but under circumstances in which they would be injurious, they would be unjust. It is absolutely necessary, however, to discriminate between an organization essentially vicious, and one which, being in itself indifferent, may be right or wrong according to circumstances. On the same principle, therefore, that a human being in England is deprived, by the mere accident of birth, of the right of suffrage; and in Russia has the small portion of liberty which belongs to a commoner, or the still smaller belonging to a serf, in this country one class is by birth invested with all the rights of citizenship, another (females) is deprived all political and many personal rights, and a third of even their personal liberty. Whether this organization be right or wrong is not now the question. We are simply showing that the fact that the children of slaves become by birth slaves, is not to be referred to the idea of the master's property in the body and soul of the parent, but results from the form of society, and is analogous to other social institutions, as far as the principle is concerned, that children take the rank, or the political or social condition of the parent.

We prefer being chargeable with the sin of wearisome repetition, to leaving any room for the misapprehension of our meaning. We, therefore, again remark that we are discussing the mere abstract morality of these forms of social organization, and not their expediency. We have in view the vindication of the character of the inspired writings and inspired men from the charge of having overlooked the blackest of human crimes, and of having recognised the worst of human beings as Christians. We say, therefore, that an institution which deprives a certain portion of the community of their personal liberty, places them under obligation of service to another portion, is no more necessarily sinful than one which invests an individual with despotic power (such as Mr. Birney would consent to hold); or than

one which limits the right of government to a small portion of the people, or restricts it to the male part of the community. However inexpedient, under certain circumstances, any one of these arrangements may be, they are not necessarily immoral, nor do they become such, from the fact that the accident of birth determines the relation in which one part of the community is to stand to the other. In ancient Egypt, as in modern India, birth decided the position and profession of every individual. One was born a priest, another a merchant, another a labourer, another a soldier. As there must always be these classes, it is no more necessarily immoral, to have them all determined by hereditary descent, than it was among the Israelites to have all the officers of religion from generation to generation thus determined; or that birth should determine the individual who is to fill a throne, or occupy a seat in parliament.

Again, Dr. Wayland argues, if the right to hold slaves be conceded, "there is of course conceded all other rights necessary to insure its possession. Hence, inasmuch as the slave can be held in this condition only while he remains in the lowest state of mental imbecility, it supposes the master to have the right to control his intellectual development just as far as may be necessary to secure entire subjection."* He reasons in the same way, to show that the religious knowledge and even eternal happiness of the slave, are as a matter of right conceded to the power of the master, if the right of slaveholding is admitted. The utmost force that can be allowed to this argument is, that the right to hold slaves includes the right to exercise all *proper* means to insure its possession. It is in this respect on a par with all other rights of the same kind. The right of parents to the service of their children, of husbands to the obedience of their wives, of masters over their apprentices, of creditors over their debtors, of rulers over their subjects, all suppose the right to adopt proper means for their secure enjoyment. They, however, give no sanction to the employment of any and every means which cruelty, suspicion, or jealousy may choose to deem necessary, nor of any which would be productive of greater general evil than the forfeiture of the rights themselves. According to the ancient law even among the Jews, the power of life and death was granted to the parent; we concede only the power of correction. The old law gave the same power to the

* Elements of Moral Science, p. 221.

husband over the wife. The Roman law confided the person and even life of the debtor to the mercy of the creditor. According to the reasoning of Dr. Wayland, all these laws must be sanctioned if the rights which they were deemed necessary to secure, are acknowledged. It is clear, however, that the most unrighteous means may be adopted to secure a proper end, under the plea of necessity. The justice of the plea must be made out on its own grounds, and cannot be assumed on the mere admission of the propriety of the end aimed at. Whether the slaves of this country may be safely admitted to the enjoyments of personal liberty, is a matter of dispute; but that they could not, consistently with the public welfare, be entrusted with the exercise of political power, is on all hands admitted. It is, then, the acknowledged right of the state to govern them by laws in the formation of which they have no voice. But it is the universal plea of the depositaries of irresponsible power, sustained too by almost universal experience, that men can be brought to submit to political despotism only by being kept in ignorance and poverty. Dr. Wayland, then, if he concedes the right of the state to legislate for the slaves, must, according to his own reasoning, acknowledge the right to adopt all the means necessary for the security of this irresponsible power, and of consequence that the state has the right to keep the blacks in the lowest state of degradation. If he denies the validity of this argument in favour of political despotism, he must renounce his own against the lawfulness of domestic slavery. Dr. Wayland himself would admit the right of the Emperor of Russia to exercise a degree of power over his present half civilized subjects, which could not be maintained over an enlightened people, though he would be loath to acknowledge his right to adopt all the means necessary to keep them in their present condition. The acknowledgement, therefore, of the right to hold slaves, does not involve the acknowledgement of the right to adopt measures adapted and intended to perpetuate their present mental and physical degradation.

We have entered much more at length into the abstract argument on this subject than we intended. It was our purpose to confine our remarks to the scriptural view of the question. But the consideration of the objections derived from the general principles of morals, rendered it necessary to enlarge our plan. As it appears to us too clear to admit of either denial or doubt, that the scriptures do

sanction slaveholding; that under the old dispensation it was expressly permitted by divine command, and under the New Testament is no where forbidden or denounced, but on the contrary, acknowledged to be consistent with the Christian character and profession (that is, consistent with justice, mercy, holiness, love to God and love to man), to declare it to be a heinous crime, is a direct impeachment of the word of God. We, therefore, felt it incumbent upon us to prove, that the sacred scriptures are not in conflict with the first principles of morals; that what they sanction is not the blackest and basest of all offences in the sight of God. To do this, it was necessary to show what slavery is, to distinguish between the relation itself, and the various cruel or unjust laws which may be made either to bring men into it, or to secure its continuance; to show that it no more follows from the admission that the scriptures sanctions the right of slaveholding, that it, therefore, sanctions all the oppressive slave laws of any community, than it follows from the admission of the propriety of parental, conjugal, or political relations, that it sanctions all the conflicting codes by which these relations have at different periods and in different countries been regulated.

We have had another motive in the preparation of this article. The assumption that slaveholding is itself a crime, is not only an error, but it is an error fraught with evil consequences. It not merely brings its advocates into conflict with the scriptures, but it does much to retard the progress of freedom; it embitters and divides the members of the community, and distracts the Christian church. Its operation in retarding the progress of freedom is obvious and manifold. In the first place, it directs the battery of the enemies of slavery to the wrong point. It might be easy for them to establish the injustice or cruelty of certain slave laws, where it is not in their power to establish the sinfulness of slavery itself. They, therefore, waste their strength. Nor is this the least evil. They promote the cause of their opponents. If they do not discriminate between slaveholding and the slave laws, it gives the slaveholder not merely an excuse but an occasion and a reason for making no such distinction. He is thus led to feel the same conviction in the propriety of the one that he does in that of the other. His mind and conscience may be satisfied that the mere act of holding slaves is not a crime. This is the point, however, to which the abolitionist directs his attention. He examines their argu-

ments, and becomes convinced of their inconclusiveness, and is not only thus rendered impervious to their attacks, but is exasperated by what he considers their unmerited abuse. In the meantime his attention is withdrawn from far more important points; the manner in which he treats his slaves, and the laws enacted for the security of his possession. These are points on which his judgment might be much more readily convinced of error, and his conscience of sin.

In the second place, besides fortifying the position and strengthening the purpose of the slaveholder, the error in question divides and weakens the friends of freedom. To secure any valuable result by public sentiment, you must satisfy the public mind and rouse the public conscience. Their passions had better be allowed to rest in peace. As the anti-slavery societies declare it to be their object to convince their fellow-citizens that slaveholding is necessarily a heinous crime in the sight of God, we consider their attempt as desperate, so long as the bible is regarded as the rule of right and wrong. They can hardly secure either the verdict of the public mind or of the public conscience in behalf of this proposition. Their success hitherto has not been very encouraging, and is certainly not very flattering, if Dr. Channing's account of the class of persons to whom they have principally addressed their arguments, is correct. The tendency of their exertions, be their success great or small, is not to unite, but to divide. They do not carry the judgment or conscience of the people with them. They form, therefore, a class by themselves. Thousands who earnestly desire to see the south convinced of the injustice and consequent impolicy of their slave laws, and under this conviction, of their own accord, adopting those principles which the bible enjoins, and which tend to produce universal intelligence, virtue, liberty and equality, without violence and sudden change, and which thus secure private and public prosperity, stand aloof from the abolitionists, not merely because they disapprove of their spirit and mode of action, but because they do not admit their fundamental principle.

In the third place, the error in question prevents the adoption of the most effectual means of extinguishing the evil. These means are not the opinions or feelings of the non-slaveholding states, nor the denunciation of the holders of slaves, but the improvement, intellectual and moral, of the slaves themselves. Slavery has but two natural and peaceful modes of death. The one is the increase of the slave popu-

lation until it reaches the point of being unproductive. When the number of slaves becomes so great that the master cannot profitably employ them, he manumits them in self-defence. This point would probably have been reached long ago, in many of the southern states, had not the boundless extent of the south-western section of the Union presented a constant demand for the surplus hands. Many planters in Virginia and Maryland, whose principles or feelings revolt at the idea of selling their slaves to the south, find that their servants are gradually reducing them to poverty, by consuming more than they produce. The number, however, of slaveholders who entertain these scruples is comparatively small. And as the demand for slave labour in the still unoccupied regions of the extreme south-west is so great, and is likely to be so long continued, it is hopeless to think of slavery dying out by becoming a public burden. The other natural and peaceful mode of extinction, is the gradual elevation of the slaves in knowledge, virtue and property to the point at which it is no longer desirable or possible to keep them in bondage. Their chains thus gradually relax, until they fall off entirely. It is in this way that Christianity has abolished both political and domestic bondage, whenever it has had free scope. It enjoins a fair compensation for labour; it insists on the moral and intellectual improvement of all classes of men; it condemns all infractions of marital or parental rights; in short, it requires not only that free scope should be allowed to human improvement, but that all suitable means should be employed for the attainment of that end. The feudal system, as before remarked, has in a great measure, been thus outgrown in all the European states. The third estate, formerly hardly recognized as having an existence, is becoming the controlling power in most of those ancient communities. The gradual improvement of the people rendered it impossible, and undesirable to deprive them of their just share in the government. And it is precisely in those countries where this improvement is most advanced that the feudal institutions are the most completely obliterated, and the general prosperity the greatest. In like manner the gospel method of extinguishing slavery is by improving the condition of the slave. The grand question is, How is this to be done? The abolitionist answers, by immediate emancipation. Perhaps he is right, perhaps he is wrong; but whether right or wrong, it is not the practical question for the north. Among a community which have

the power to emancipate, it would be perfectly proper to urge that measure on the ground of its being the best means of promoting the great object of the advancement of human happiness and virtue. But the error of the abolitionists is, that they urge this measure from the wrong quarter, and upon the wrong ground. They insist upon immediate abolition because slavery is a sin, and its extinction a duty. If, however, slaveholding is not in itself sinful, its abolition is not necessarily a duty. The question of duty depends upon the effects of the measure, about which men may honestly differ. Those who believe that it would advance the general good, are bound to promote it; while those who believe the reverse, are equally bound to resist it. The abolitionists by insisting upon one means of improvement, and that on untenable ground, are most effectually working against the adoption of any other means, by destroying the disposition and power to employ them. It is in this way that the error to which we have referred throughout this article, is operating most disadvantageously for the cause of human liberty and happiness. The fact is, that the great duty of the south is not emancipation; but improvement. The former is obligatory only as a means to an end, and, therefore, only under circumstances where it would promote that end. In like manner the great duty of despotic governments is not the immediate granting of free institutions, but the constant and assiduous cultivation of the best interests (knowledge, virtue and happiness) of the people. Where free institutions would conduce to this object, they should be granted, and just so far and so fast as this becomes apparent.

Again, the opinion that slaveholding is itself a crime, must operate to produce the disunion of the states, and the division of all ecclesiastical societies in this country. The feelings of the people may be excited violently for a time, but the transport soon passes away. But if the conscience is enlisted in the cause, and becomes the controlling principle, the alienation between the north and the south must become permanent. The opposition to southern institutions will be calm, constant, and unappeasable. Just so far as this opinion operates, it will lead those who entertain it to submit to any sacrifices to carry it out, and give it effect. We shall become two nations in feeling, which must soon render us two nations in fact. With regard to the church its operation will be much more summary. If slaveholding is a heinous crime, slaveholders must be excluded from the church. Several of

our judicatories have already taken this position. Should the general assembly adopt it, the church is ipso facto, divided. If the opinion in question is correct, it must be maintained, whatever are the consequences. We are no advocates of expediency in morals. We have no more right to teach error in order to prevent evil, than we have a right to do evil to promote good. On the other hand, if the opinion is incorrect, its evil consequences render it a duty to prove and exhibit its unsoundness. It is under the deep impression that the primary assumption of the abolitionists is an error, that its adoption tends to the distraction of the county, and the division of the church; and that it will lead to the longer continuance and greater severity of slavery, that we have felt constrained to do what little we could towards its correction.

We have little apprehension that any one can so far mistake our object, or the purport of our remarks, as to suppose either that we regard slavery as a desirable institution, or that we approve of the slave laws of the southern states. So far from this being the case, the extinction of slavery, and the amelioration of those laws are as sincerely desired by us, as by any of the abolitionists. The question is not about the continuance of slavery, and of the present system, but about the proper method of effecting the removal of the evil. We maintain, that it is not by denouncing slaveholding as a sin, or by universal agitation at the north, but by the improvement of the slaves. It no more follows that because the master has a right to hold slaves, he has a right to keep them in a state of degradation in order to perpetuate their bondage, than that the Emperor of Russia has a right to keep his subjects in ignorance and poverty, in order to secure the permanence and quiet possession of his power. We hold it to be the grand principle of the gospel, that every man is bound to promote the moral, intellectual, and physical improvement of his fellow men. Their civil or political relations are in themselves matters of indifference. Monarchy, aristocracy, democracy, domestic slavery, are right or wrong as they are, for the time being, conducive to this great end, or the reverse. They are not objects to which the improvement of society is to be sacrificed; nor are they strait-jackets to be placed upon the public body to prevent its free development. We think, therefore, that the true method for Christians to treat this subject, is to follow the example of Christ and his apostles in relation both to despotism and slavery. Let them enforce as moral duties the great princi-

ples of justice and mercy, and all the specific commands and precepts of the scriptures. If any set of men have servants bond or free, to whom they refuse a proper compensation for their labour, they violate a moral duty and an express command of scripture. What that compensation should be, depends on a variety of circumstances. In some cases the slaveholder would be glad to compound for the support of his slaves by giving the third or half of the proceeds of his estate. Yet this at the north would be regarded as a full remuneration for the mere labour of production. Under other circumstances, however, a mere support, would be very inadequate compensation; and when inadequate, it is unjust. If the compensation be more than a support, the surplus is the property of the labourer, and cannot morally, whatever the laws may say, be taken from him. The right to accumulate property is an incident to the right of reward for labour. And we believe there are few slaveholding countries in which the right is not practically acknowledged, since we hear so frequently of slaves purchasing their own freedom. It is very common for a certain moderate task* to be assigned as a day's work, which may be regarded as the compensation rendered by the slave for his support. The residue of the day is at his own disposal, and may be employed for his own profit. We are not now, however, concerned about details. The principle that "the labourer is worthy of his hire" and should enjoy it, is a plain principle of morals and command of the bible, and cannot be violated with impunity.

Again, if any man has servants or others whom he forbids to marry, or whom he separates after marriage, he breaks as clearly a revealed law as any written on the pages of inspiration, or on the human heart. If he interferes unnecessarily with the authority of parents over their children, he again brings himself into collision with his Maker. If any man has under his charge, children, apprentices, servants, or slaves, and does not teach them, or cause them to be taught the will of God; if he deliberately opposes their intellectual, moral, or religious improvement, he makes himself a transgressor. That many of the laws of the slaveholding states are opposed to these simple principles of morals, we fully believe; and we do not doubt that they are sinful and ought to be rescinded. If it be asked what would be the conse-

* We heard the late Dr. Wisner, after his long visit to the south, say, that the usual task of a slave, in South Carolina and Georgia, was about the third of a day's work for a northern labourer.

quence of thus acting on the principles of the gospel, of following the example and obeying the precepts of Christ? We answer, the gradual elevation of the slaves in intelligence, virtue and wealth; the peaceable and speedy extinction of slavery; the improvement in general prosperity of all classes of society, and the consequent increase in the sum of human happiness and virtue. This has been the result of acting on these principles in all past ages; and just in proportion as they have been faithfully observed. The degradation of most eastern nations, and of Italy, Spain, and Ireland, are not more striking examples of the consequences of their violation, than Scotland, England, and the non-slaveholding States are of the benefits, of their being even imperfectly obeyed. Men cannot alter the laws of God. It would be as easy for them to arrest the action of the force of gravity, as to prevent the systematic violation of the principles of morals being productive of evil.

Besides the two methods mentioned above, in which slavery dies a natural and easy death, there are two others by which, as history teaches us, it may be brought to an end. The one is by the non-slaveholders, in virtue of their authority in the state to which the slaves and their masters belonged, passing laws for its extinction. Of this, the northern States, and Great Britain are examples. The other is by servile insurrections. The former of these two methods is of course out of the question, as it regards most of the southern states; for in almost all of them the slaveowners have the legislative power in their own hands. The south, therefore, has to choose between emancipation by the silent and holy influence of the gospel, securing the elevation of the slaves to the stature and character of freemen, or to abide the issue of a long continued conflict against the laws of God. That the issue will be disastrous there can be no doubt. But whether it will come in the form of a desolating servile insurrection, or in some other shape it is not for us to say. The choice, however, is between rapidly increasing millions of human beings educated under moral and religious restraints, and attached to the soil by the proceeds of their own labour, or hordes of unenlightened barbarians. If the south deliberately keep these millions in this state of degradation, they must prepare themselves for the natural consequences, whatever they may be.

It may be objected that if the slaves are allowed so to improve as to become freemen, the next step in their progress

is that they should become citizens. We admit that it is so. The feudal serf, first became a tenant, then a proprietor invested with political power. This is the natural progress of society, and it should be allowed thus freely to expand itself, or it will work its own destruction. If a tree is not allowed to grow erect and in its natural shape, it will become crooked, knotted and worthless, but grow it must. This objection would not be considered of any force, if the slaves in this country were not of a different race from their masters. Still they are men; their colour does not place them beyond the operation of the principles of the gospel, or from under the protection of God. We cannot too frequently remember, that it is our province to do right, it is God's to overrule results.* Let then the north remember that they are bound to follow the example of Christ in the manner of treating slavery, and the south, that they are bound to follow the precepts of Christ in their manner of treating their slaves. If both parties follow the Saviour of men, both will contribute to the promotion of human excellence and happiness, and both will have reason to rejoice in the result.

* If the fact that the master and slave belong to different races, precludes the possibility of their living together on equal terms, the inference is, not that the one has a right to oppress the other, but that they should separate. Whether this should be done by dividing the land between them and giving rise to distinct communities, or by the removal of the inferior class on just and wise conditions, it is not for us to say. We have undertaken only to express an opinion as to the manner in which the bible directs those, who look to it for guidance, to treat this difficult subject, and not to trace out a plan to provide for ulterior results. It is for this reason, we have said nothing of African colonization, though we regard it as one of the noblest enterprises of modern benevolence.

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