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No. IV.

ART. I.—*A Discussion of the question, Is the Roman Catholic Religion, in any or in all its Principles or Doctrines, inimical to Civil or Religious Liberty? And of the question, Is the Presbyterian Religion, in any or in all its Principles or Doctrines, inimical to Civil or Religious Liberty?* By the Reverend John Hughes of the Roman Catholic Church, and the Reverend John Breckinridge of the Presbyterian Church. Philadelphia: Carey, Lea & Blanchard. 1836.
(Concluded.)

WE have been reluctantly compelled, for want of room, to extend our review of this subject to a third number. But we hope that the intrinsic importance, and (to American citizens) the peculiar interest of the question discussed, will plead our apology.

Now it cannot (to repeat a remark already made)—it cannot be said that the language which describes the church as a commonwealth, and her ministers as governors and magistrates—her members as subjects—heretics as rebels and enemies, is *figurative*; because the figure cannot be carried out. The punishment of heresy required by the laws of the church is in fact capital; and Luther was condemned by Leo

X. as a heretic for teaching that such punishment was against the will of the Spirit.

Nor can it be said that canon law is obligatory only by adoption. Heresy, as we suppose, can be predicated only of doctrines of faith, and by this rule we may prove that the church defends by her doctrine, the use she makes of the Decretal epistles of the popes. Pope Nicholas (Distinction 19) says, *Inter canonicas scripturas Decretales epistolae connumerantur.* And again—*Decretales epistolae vim autoritatis habent.* And again, under the same Distinct. by Pope Agatho, *Omnes sanctiones Apostolicæ sedis irrefragabiliter sunt observandæ.* And again, by Stephen—*Quidquid Romana Ecclesia statuit vel ordinat ab omnibus est observandum.* We might select more of similar import. But what we intended especially to advert to was the condemnation of Wickliff by the *Council of Constance*, for teaching *Decretales epistolæ sunt apocryphæ et seducunt a fide Christi et clerici sunt stulti qui student eis.* This sentiment then is heretical: of course the converse of the proposition is Catholic doctrine.

We are aware that great stress is laid upon this point. We are told again and again that the force of the canon law in this country depends upon its adoption by the Catholic communion, and therefore that no argument can be drawn from its provisions touching the tendency of this system against-civil and religious liberty. The sense of the Catholic community of this country, no doubt requires this position of the matter. And we trust they will never be brought to admit upon any other principle the obligatory force of canonical jurisprudence. But that is not the question. The *principle of authority* (which is admitted by the Roman Catholics of the United States) refers us to the fountain head for opinions both as to what is matter for doctrine and matter of doctrine. It is important then, chiefly, to know the opinions of the Roman See upon this subject, and with that view we ask the reader's attention to the following historical facts.

The clergy of France in 1682 (in council) established four articles touching the Liberties of the Gallican church, which are repugnant to the spirit of the canon law as received and asserted at Rome. The transaction originated in an affair of the government, a brief account of which will show the manner in which the canons are regarded at Rome, and the means necessary to countervail the effect which the whole power of that church is ready to give them whenever it can.

A dispute arose upon the right of the king to receive the revenues of archbishoprics and bishoprics, during the vacancy of the See, and to confer all benefices depending upon them, except those which are with charge of souls, until the new prelate should take the oath of fealty.

This question had long been a cause of difference between the court of Rome and France. Innocent XI. had inserted many things in his briefs adverse to the liberties of the Gallican church. He had suppressed a decree of the French parliament, and forbidden to read it under pain of excommunication, and had ordered the bishops to burn their copies of it. The parliament in their turn suppressed this brief.

The assembly of bishops also undertook the defence of the book *de causis majoribus* of M. Gerbais, published in 1679, which Innocent XI. had condemned as schismatical and injurious to the Holy See. This book maintained the maxims of the Gallican church, particularly these, viz. *that bishops ought to be judged in the first instance by their brethren in their provinces, and that they have the right of deciding in matters of faith and discipline.*

The assembly of bishops in 1682 was called by the king. The declaration referred to was confirmed by an edict of the king. It was attacked by the theologians of the times who were imbued with the doctrine of the pope's infallibility. Thomas de Rocabuti published in 1693 three volumes in folio, to establish doctrines contrary to these four articles, and afterwards collected and published in twenty-one volumes, folio, works having the same object, which had been written by others. The parliament of Paris in 1695, forbade the sale of this work. The king of France appointed the celebrated Bossuet to refute this author and his partisans, and to defend the four articles.

Innocent XI. was exceedingly offended with these articles. He refused bulls to those of that assembly of inferior rank who were nominated bishops by the king. The king on the other hand forbade application to Rome for bulls. Then a dispute arose between the pope and the king about the franchises of the ambassadors of the latter at Rome. The king in the course of the dispute fearing the pope would push matters further, appealed against every thing the pope *might undertake* to the prejudice of himself, his subjects, and his crown, to such Universal Council as it *might please* the pope to assemble according to the canonical forms. The archbishops and bishops of France approved this appeal, and

the official of Paris gave the king's procureur general letters (called *Apostolos*) to prosecute it when occasion should require. Innocent XI. died the next year. Alexander VIII. managed so as to get along without granting the bulls which Innocent XI. had refused. Alexander died in 1691. Innocent XII., elected the year following, gave over the dispute.

It should be added that Louis XIV., overcome either by the constancy or by the menaces of three popes, on the 14th of Sept. 1693, wrote a letter to the pope in which he revoked the clauses in his edict of 22d of March, 1682, relative to the declaration of the clergy of France. This letter, however, is not regarded in France as having the form of law. It was kept at Rome as a very precious affair, and Pius VII. had great hopes of success with Buonaparte by means of it. In this he was mistaken. It is said that when the archives of Rome were brought to Paris, Buonaparte went to the hotel Soubise to get it, and having returned with it to the Tuilleries, he cast it into the fire, saying, "we shall not hereafter be troubled with your ashes." (We should doubt this anecdote of Napoleon.) Another fact shows how Rome even now views the modification of her canons in France by these four articles. Pius VII., on arriving at Fontainebleau, urged *Bonaparte* not to allow the four articles to be taught in France, which kept up a discord between Rome and France. The new emperor said that "being a military man he was quite a stranger to this sort of affairs, and that he was quite disposed to give him every satisfaction he could." After the coronation, Pius renewed his request. *Bonaparte* replied quickly—"Holy father, I have made myself acquainted; you deceived me." This ended the matter. But Pius, on his return to Rome, revived the bull of Pius VI. *Autorem fidei*, which condemned these four articles.*

* It must not be supposed from this act of the Gallican clergy, (adopting the four articles,) that as a body they have been the uniform or even hearty defenders of the liberties of the Gallican church. It will be found that since 1560, the greater part of them have considered their interests as identified with those of the court of Rome. The transaction which has been briefly adverted to, was but a momentary departure from their accustomed course, which was soon retraced by an abundance of complaisancy to Rome and of connivances at her aggressions. It never would have occurred, but from a peculiar conjuncture of circumstances. Bossuet's defence of the four articles did not appear in print before 1730,—it having been delayed by the intrigues of the clergy. An edition of it appeared in 1745, but without privilege, and purporting to have issued from the press at Amsterdam. The royal edict requiring that the four articles should be taught in the French schools of theology, was very imperfectly executed. The Jesuits never adopted these articles, and the project of abolishing

There is no difficulty in proving that the See of Rome regards her canons at the present hour, as obligatory upon the members of that communion as ever they were. The history of the four articles of the Gallican clergy proves it. The reader, to appreciate the fertility of this single source of proof, should read that history in its detail. He may find the subject adequately treated in the following works: *Traité de l'autorité ecclésiastique et de la puissance temporelle* by Mr. Dupin, 3 vols. 12mo. *Origine, Progrès et limites de la puissance des papes, ou enclairecissements sur les quatre articles du clergé de France, &c.* (Paris, 1821.) We might mention many other sources of information on this subject, but these are enough. In fact, the admitted principles of the great body of that communion

them was often conceived, between 1700 and the end of the ministry of cardinal Fleury. Yet the substance of these articles was simply "that the ecclesiastical power does not extend to the temporalities of kings—that a general council is superior to the pope, (as the Council of Constance decided)—that the judgment of the pope in matter of faith is not an infallible rule, without the general consent of the church—and that the *customs and laws received* in the Gallican church *ought to be maintained.*" Nothing prevented the repeal of these articles but the fear that the Jansenists would remonstrate and thereby gain favour with the nation (*Essai Historique sur la puissance, etc.*) No where can we find a more striking exemplification of the power of the *esprit du corps*—than in the conduct of the clergy of France in respect to these articles, and particularly of the Society of the Jesuits. In relation to the latter a French author expresses himself thus: "How can any one think that men who are accustomed to place a religious chief above the chiefs of their state—to put their order above their country—their institutions and constitutions above the laws, should be capable of instructing and informing the minds of youth, (M. de Chatelet on education.) But the *esprit du corps* of the "ecclesiastical commonwealth," though unaided by the peculiar organization of that society, would have operated with an energy too mighty for the motive of mere patriotism, especially as the former was stimulated by pontifical patronage, and the hopes which the lowest of the order might cherish of reaching the cardinality and the tiara: and the latter was weakened by isolation from domestic influences and the attachments which marriage and offspring cast upon the soil and the institutions of the country. In fact, the men of Port Royal and the Jansenists have chiefly co-operated with the laity in defence of the religious liberty of France. But these men were cut off from the hopes of clerical promotion. "Pascal," (said the Rev. Mr. Hughes in the former controversy already referred to,) "was a Jansenist, and as such was not a Romanist nor even a Catholic. This mistake of yours, is common among Protestants, even those who ought to be acquainted with the difference." The effect of their position therefore in respect to Rome, was not only to make them better patriots but better Christians. Among them were men who, notwithstanding many and great errors, were equally eminent for their piety and their patriotism. We have no doubt that the intelligent Catholic laity of the United States would sustain the principles of the four articles, and also those of their clergy who should concur with them, even under the reproach of Jansenism and no Romanism. It may be added that Protestantism is too dissident (even as it respects members of the same sect) to generate an *esprit du corps*.

lead infallibly to this result: for either the infallibility of popes and of councils and the principle of authority must be given up, or the right of the church to exact obedience to her canons and her discipline, for all that she calls doctrine, must be admitted. But the history of the four articles shows not only the unalterable purpose of the Roman See to enforce her canons wherever she can, but also the policy and the strength with which she is capable of driving that purpose. The strong hand of the French monarchy was not always equal to a successful resistance. If then these views of the doctrines and discipline of the Roman Catholic church should be esteemed just, it will be obvious that baptism into that communion, brings the subject of it within the operation of a combination of influences which do not terminate (by their own limitation) in merely moral effects.

These remarks apply with almost equal propriety to each of the three specifications which we have extracted. We deem it unnecessary to the argument to say any thing more. Still, we will ask the reader's patience a little longer in reference to the subject of auricular confession and the liberty of the press. Both of these subjects are deeply interesting to us as American citizens, as well as Christians.

The reader doubtless knows that penance is one of the sacraments of the Roman Catholic church; that penances are connected with confession, and indulgences with penances. Excommunications, interdicts, and penances are the three usual or common ecclesiastical punishments. Penance is of two sorts, internal and external. The internal is contrition merely—*affectus animi quo mala commissa plangimus cum serio proposito illa rursus non committendi*: but this sort of penance is not a sacrament. The external penance, which is a sort of punishment, is the kind of penance in question. The reader should bear this distinction in mind while reading the arguments extracted upon this subject. This last kind (which is the sacrament and which is dependent on confession in the ear of a priest) has been made a source of gain to the church since the eleventh century, by means of what are called indulgences. Innocent III. made it necessary to confess once a year at least, and for this purpose the *jus clavium* was imparted to parish priests. An indulgence is a remission of the satisfaction imposed by the priest, and which is due to the church by an offender, who was required, *plorans et sorditatus publice absolutionem petere*. The origin of this institution is curious enough.

One would think that if it be a sacrament it would be coeval with Christianity, but it is not so. It grew out of the heresy of Novatianism. It has been said "heresy makes doctrine," and so it was in this matter. Novatian preached extreme and absolute severity, and the church which had previously been extremely strict (by way of opposition) began to relax. Confession (which had not been required before that time uniformly in all churches) was of little avail in procuring absolution in the Novatian sect, while with the Catholic it became a matter of strict necessity and was made the subject of rules and settled forms. But in that corrupt age it was found that the frequency and multitude of faults required a modification of the original institution. The offending members of the church submitted with great reluctance to a public confession of their faults. (Socrat. l. 5, c. 19. Sozomen l. 7, c. 16.) The Catholic prelates to meet this emergency and remedy the inconvenience, hit upon the expedient of establishing penitentiary priests, to whom confession should be made of faults committed after baptism, who had power to fix the penance or punishment, and finally to absolve offenders. This practice soon became general, and it has been continued in the Latin or Roman church ever since. But in the Eastern or Greek church it was discontinued about the end of the reign of Theodosius, on account of a scandal brought upon the church through a deacon, by the confession of a woman of Constantinople distinguished by her birth. Nectarius, the bishop, cut the scandal short by abolishing the office of penitentiary presbyter. John Chrysostom his successor exhorted his people to confess to God. He added he would not compel men to confess to other men. (*Hom. 2 in Ps. quinquages. Conc. 4, ex Luke c. 16.*) It is worthy of remark how one innovation leads to another.

Such then being the origin of auricular confession, the authority upon which it rests, and the objects which it is made to serve through the medium of indulgences, we are prepared to state our objections to it. This we shall briefly do.

It is without warrant in scripture.

It degrades men into a state of dependence upon the priesthood.

It gives the priesthood a power which they ought not to possess, and which they may use for bad purposes.

Carus erit Verri qui Verrem, tempore quo vult Accusare potest.

It is a yoke upon the consciences of men designed to hold them captive and rule over them.

It serves to lull the consciences of ignorant men, and becomes the occasion of crime.

But we shall not enlarge upon this topic. The remarks of Dr. Breckinridge set forth in a strong light the objections which lie against this doctrine.

We now proceed to the last topic, "The Liberty of the Press." It was objected, as the reader may remember, that this subject does not fall within the limits of the question. "The freedom of the press," says Mr. H., "is as much a doctrine of the church as Symmes's theory of the poles. Hence the objection on this ground has no force. There is not in the whole creed *a doctrine* which forbids me as a Catholic priest to advocate the most unbounded freedom of the press." This remark of the reverend prelate turns upon the distinction between doctrine and discipline. But though it were true that there is no such doctrine, there is *discipline provided* by the church, which has often put a stop to such advocacy. The distinction we have endeavoured justly to appreciate. The weight due to our remarks must be left to the reader. But as the history of the licensure of writings and of the press is somewhat curious, the reader will excuse the liberty we take of going a little into that matter also.

According to the discipline of the church in early times, the censure of books relating to religion belonged to the councils, or to the bishops, but the prohibition of them belonged to the secular power. The emperors, after the censure of a book as heretical by a bishop or council, prohibited it under temporal penalties, and condemned it to the fire. Of this there are many examples in the Theodosian code. The council of Nice condemned the books of Arius. Constantine afterwards by an edict prohibited them and condemned them to be burned. The same course was pursued as to the books of Porphyry. The council of Ephesus condemned the writings of Nestorius, and the emperor prohibited the reading of them. The council of Chalcedon condemned the writings of Eutiches. The emperors Valentinian and Marcian made laws condemning them to be burned. Charlemagne pursued the same practice. And to come down to the times of the Reformation, Charles V. in 1550, promulgated at Brussels a terrible edict against the Lutherans, in which, among others, he prohibited strictly the books of Luther, of John Æcolampadius, of Zuinglius and of Calvin

which had been printed within thirty years, and all those of like nature which had been marked by the theologians of Louvain in their index for that purpose. (Giannone Ist. di Nap. lib. 27, cap. 4. § 1. § 2.) A little before this time, as we learn from Offer's Life of William Tyndal, (viz. 20th Jan. 1543,) a law was made in England, under Henry VIII., entitled most strangely "an act for the advancement of true religion and for the abolishment of the contrary." By this law it was directed that recourse must be had to the Catholic and Apostolic church for the decision of controversies, and therefore all books of the Old and New Testament in English, being of Tyndall's false translation, or comprising any matter of Christian religion, articles of faith or holy scripture, set forth since *Anno Dom.* 1540, or to be set forth by the king, shall be abolished. Printers and booksellers were forbidden to utter any of the aforesaid books. The bible was not allowed to be read in English in any church. Women, artificers' apprentices, journeymen, serving men of the degree of yeomen or under, husbandmen and labourers were expressly forbidden to read the New Testament in English. Mr. Offer remarks—"it is an extraordinary circumstance that there is no clause" (in the law) "to allow the clergy to read the bible in English." (Memoir of William Tyndal, (prefixed to his Testament,) p. 87, 88.)

But previously to these laws of Charles V. and Henry VIII., Leo X. had fulminated the bull (which was read in the council of Lateran, May 4, 1515,) cited by Dr. B. and extracted upon a former page. The reader may find a minute account of this act of pontifical legislation in Giannone (*Opere postume vol. 1. parte pinna cap. VII. et seq.*) It is important to observe, however, the change which had taken place in the pretensions of the church. In the earlier ages, the church through her prelacy *censured* only. It was the *secular power* alone which *prohibited*. But Leo X., in 1515, took it *upon himself* to prohibit the printing of any book or writing *in Rome or in any other city or diocese*, unless it should have been previously examined, &c. (See the bull extracted in a former page.) Or thus, in the original. *Quia tamen multorum querelae nostrum et sedis apostolicae pulsarunt auditum quod nonnulli hujus artis imprimendi magistri in diversis mundi partibus libros tam Graecae, Hebraicae, Arabicae, Chaldaicae linguarum in Latinum translutos quam alios Latino ac vulgari sermone editos, errores etiam in fide ac perniciosam dogmata*

etiam religioni Christianae contrarios, ac contra famam personarum etiam dignitate fulgentium continentes imprimere, aut publice vendere presumunt ex quorum lectura, etc. . . . Nos itaque, re id quod ad Dei gloriam et fidei augmentum ac bonarum artium propagationem salubriter est inventum in contrarium convertatur. . . . Super librorum impressionem curam nostram habendam fore duximus. . . . Volentes igitur ut negotium impressionis librorum hujus modi eo prosperet felicius, statuimus et ordinamus, quod de cætero, perpetuis futuris temporibus nullus librum, etc. tam in urbe nostra quam aliis quibusvis civitatibus et diocæsisibus imprimere seu imprimi facere presumat, etc. (See Giannone, *Apologia dell'istoria civile di Napoli. Parte prima.*) This author, we may remark, by the by, after having obtained an *imprimatur* for his history, became an object of persecution for some of the matters contained in it. In his history, as well as apology for it, he has stated with a good deal of particularity the regulations to which the press was subject in his time. D'Israeli, in his last volume of the *Curiosities of Literature*, gives an interesting account of the author in connexion with his truly great work.

At the epoch referred to, the popes pretended that the princes ought to give effect within their dominions, to all the decrees which emanated from the holy office at Rome, but this claim was resisted, though not uniformly or equally in all the countries of Europe. (*Gian. Ist. di Nap. lib. 27, cap. 4. § 2.*) The fact is both church and state feared the press. They soon found it to be an engine of great power, and that it was necessary to their interests to control it, so far as to allow the public opinions to flow peacefully along in certain channels. The licensure of writings and of the press was at the origin a joint affair of church and state; afterwards a struggle came between the popes and the princes for pre-eminence. But the result is, that the press has been restrained in a large portion of Europe, by one power or the other, till the present moment. In England the press is free, and has been since 1694. In the United States the liberty of the press is secured by the constitution. In France the liberty of the press was made a subject of discussion in the Chamber of Deputies in 1827. Polignac's report in 1830 in restraint of the press, was the cause of a revolution, ever memorable in the history of the press. But now in that country also the press is free. This is the sum total nearly

of the progress of the liberty of the press since the bull of Leo X. (See the *Encyclopedia Americana*; articles—*Books*, censorship of; *Press*, liberty of.) Throughout the rest of Europe, the reasons given by Leo in his bull of 1515, and mentioned by the Rev. Mr. Hughes in his argument, have prevailed. Still the press is making an impression. The gloom of Austria and Italy and Spain is breaking away under the influence of the press, and the day we trust is not distant when despotism in every form will crumble under its power. We shall conclude this topic with a brief account of the execution of the famous bull *Unigenitus* in France. We alluded briefly to this bull at p. 246. It was fulminated by Clement XI. in 1713. By it were condemned one hundred and one propositions extracted from a commentary on the New Testament, published at Paris in 1699 by Father Quesnel. Of these propositions we extract the following.

Prop. 79. It is useful and necessary at every time and in every place and for every kind of persons, to study and know the spirit, piety and mystery of the Holy Scripture. (This reflection is founded upon 1 Cor. 14: 5.)

Prop. 80. The reading of the Sacred Scriptures is for all. (Founded on Acts 8: 28.)

Prop. 81. The holy obscurity of the word of God is not a reason for laymen to dispense themselves from reading it. (Acts 8: 31.)

Prop. 82. The Lord's day ought to be sanctified by Christians by lessons of piety, and above all of the Holy Scripture. It is damnable to wish to withdraw a Christian from this reading. (Acts 15: 21.)

Prop. 83. It is an illusion to persuade that the mysteries of religion should not be communicated to females by the reading of the sacred books. It is not from the simplicity of females, but from the proud science of men that the abuse of the scriptures has arisen and heresies sprung. (John 4: 26.)

Prop. 84. To take the New Testament from the hands of Christians, or to keep it closed to them by taking from them the means of understanding it, is to shut to them the mouth of Christ. (Matt. 5: 2.)

Prop. 85. To interdict to Christians the reading of the Sacred Scriptures, particularly of the gospel, is to interdict the use of light to the sons of light, and to make them undergo a species of excommunication. (Luke 11: 13.)

These are some of the propositions condemned by that

bull as heretical and false. The true Catholic doctrine therefore is the negative or converse of these propositions. And that is the doctrine which warrants the discipline which was resorted to *in fidei augmentum* in that case. It is doctrine, also, which would warrant a repetition of the bull of Leo X. (1515) restraining the press. It has been already stated that 54,000 *lettres de cachet*, were issued in France during the ministry of Cardinal Fleury, in execution of this famous bull, condemning such propositions as the foregoing. This bull then was no *brutum fulmen*. It is of no moment to the main question whether there is or is not a doctrine in the creed of the Roman Catholic church, which warrants such discipline. If there is, that doctrine is inimical to civil and religious liberty. If there is no doctrine of the church of which this discipline was the proper execution, the whole system is chargeable with defects of doctrine which are dangerous to civil and religious liberty. For what shall we say of a religion which permits its ministers to sport with the lives or liberties of men! And besides, if there be no doctrine to warrant these practices of the church, may we not apply to her the character which Paul describes in 2 Thess. 2: 8, by the epithet ὁ ἀνομος,—the lawless one? And it is not unworthy of remark that Augustine, (*de civit Dei lib. 68, c. 52,*) an oracle in the Roman Catholic church,—speaking of Julian asks, (*An ipse non est Ecclesiam persecutus qui Christianos liberales literas docere ac discere vetuit,*) Did not he persecute the church who forbade Christians to teach and learn liberal learning? And what less did Leo X. and Clement XI.?

But there is a curious fact connected with this bull, which deserves to be generally known. One would suppose that pope Clement XI. was most decidedly and thoroughly persuaded of the heterodoxy of Father Quesnel's book, or he would not have condemned it with such results in prospect. But it was not so. Clement vacillated in his opinion of this work—his infallibility to the contrary notwithstanding. Voltaire in his history of the age of Louis XIV. chap. 37, gives the following account of the matter. "Father Quesnel, a priest of the oratory—the friend of the celebrated Arnold, and who was the companion of his retreat till the last moment, had in the year 1671 composed a book of pious reflections upon the text of the New Testament. This book contains maxims which appear to be favourable to Jansenism. But they are mingled with so great a multitude of holy

maxims, and are so full of that unction which gains the heart, that the work was received with universal applause. The good appeared spontaneously in all parts—the evil it was necessary to search out. *Many bishops* gave it the highest applause at its appearance, and confirmed it when the book had received from the author its ultimate perfection. I myself know that the Abbe Renaudot, one of the most learned men of France, being at Rome the first year of the pontificate of Clement XI. going one day to the house of the pope, who loved learned men, and was himself learned, found him reading the book of Father Quesnel. “*There,*” said the pope to him, “*is an excellent work.* We have not a person at Rome capable of writing so. I wish I could bring the author near me.” This is the same pope who afterwards condemned the book. The historian then adds the following remark. “We must not, however, regard these commendations of Clement XI. and the censures that followed them as a *contradiction*. One may be sensibly affected in reading, with the striking beauties of a work, and afterwards condemn its concealed faults.” (Such faults, for example, as those indicated by the propositions above extracted!) The remark of the historian may be very just, but it is hardly consistent with the papal claims to infallibility, upon which alone can the condemnatory and punitive effects of such an act be justified. At all events 54,000 *lettres de cachet*, in one kingdom, was rather a severe visitation upon the errors of those, who only approved sentiments, which many bishops most highly applauded, and which the pope himself did not see cause at first to condemn.

There are many other subjects in the volume before us which are worthy of notice, but our limits will not allow us to treat of them. We observe also many assertions of fact by the Rev. Mr. Hughes, which cannot be made good. And some of his subordinate arguments or illustrations though nominally or formally true, are in reality deceptive. We observe also in some parts defects in alleged proofs, which it is difficult to ascribe to oversight.

Take as examples of his method the following. “On p. 271, it is asserted that the Catholic church teaches and has always taught that the kingdom of Christ is not of this world.” This is a fair proposition and very pertinent to the question. But what is the proof? “The testimony of popes and fathers all agreeing that religion cannot be enforced by violence nor defended unless by patience.” Very good,—

though it does not come strictly within the conditions of the discussion. But who are these agreeing popes and fathers? when did they live? and of what times did they speak? The reader may be surprised to learn that St. Augustine (who died A. D. 430) is the *latest* of the authors cited to prove that the Catholic church *has always* taught this doctrine. Let the reader remember that there have been since Augustine, seventeen œcumenical councils of that church, and two hundred and twenty popes of Rome, and then consider that we are expected to believe that these councils and popes have always taught "that the kingdom of Christ is not of this world," because St. Austin and the fathers who slept before him taught it!

Another example of the kind we speak of, is the argument which concludes to the negative, from the fact that there have been Roman Catholic republics. On p. 200 we have the following—"The case of Venice furnishes a few facts which go to refute the gentleman. Venice was a republic—and Venice was Catholic, therefore the Catholic doctrines have nothing in them inconsistent with republicanism," &c.

Again, on p. 272. "Before Luther and protestantism were heard of, crowds of republics had flourished under the auspices of the Catholic religion and public liberty. Venice rose up from the ocean with all her republican glory round about her, and for five hundred years remained a lofty democratic government. Genoa, Florence, and other free states, are proof that liberty and catholicity are perfectly congenial, notwithstanding the infinite ignorance that asserts the contrary," &c.

And again, on p. 256. "The oldest and purest democracy on earth is the little Catholic republic of St. Marino, not a day's journey from Rome. It has existed now for near fourteen hundred years, and is so jealous of arbitrary power, that the executive authority is divided between two governors who are elected every three months."

This sort of argument is much dwelt on, and like many of the arguments referred to, loses its force when divested of the illusion of the name.

These republics (so called) were not such institutions as our own. Venice, which has been called the eldest daughter of the Roman empire, was really an elective or constitutional monarchy. It had a powerful aristocracy which formed the sole check upon the power of the doge. To see fully how inconclusive this argument is, the reader must turn to the

history of this "lofty democratic government" as it is called. It commenced in 709. Its chief officer was called duke or doge. Before 1172 these princes or dukes had augmented their power so much that the citizens resolved to restrain it, and for that purpose established an independent council and twelve tribunes, to resist the ordinances of the doge or prince. In 1282 there was another change; doge Peter Gradenigo established an hereditary aristocracy. The nobility was divided into three classes. The citizens of good families formed a class between the nobility and the people. The citizens also were divided into classes unequal in rank. The rank of grand chancellor was the highest that could be attained by a citizen.

It will also appear upon examining the structure "of the crowds of republics which flourished under the auspices of the Catholic religion, before Luther and the reformation were thought of," that they were as different from the free institutions of the United States as was Venice. We cannot of course attempt such an examination, but as Florence (the country of the Medici and of Leo X.) has been named, we will bestow a moment upon it. Florence was rather a municipality than a republic. From the year 1266, its population was divided into twelve corporations of the arts, which were divided into the greater and lesser arts. Each corporation had its house of assembly—each named its officers or representatives—each had a military organization and a banner. Our object is not to enter into the question how far religious or civil liberty was enjoyed in these republics, as they were called, nor to inquire what causes contributed to procure the portion which they enjoyed, but simply to destroy the illusion attempted by the word *republic*. And enough has been said to show that the organization of these bodies rank them under a different species entirely from our own body politic. But besides this, we may appreciate perhaps the liberty of conscience enjoyed by the Florentines, by the sentiments of their accomplished countryman Leo X., as contained in his bull of 1515.

After all—Where is this crowd of republics? have they not all been numbered with the things that are not, a half century at least? All those of Italy (with the exception of little St. Marino, safe from its insignificance)—all those of Germany, are gone. The royal republic of Poland is no more. Even the ancient republics of Switzerland have been overturned, though that country still preserves republican

institutions in another form. Would such have been their fate if the principles of Martin Luther had taken root in them at the epoch of the Reformation? And to dwell a moment on this sort of argument. Europe has between two hundred and two hundred and twenty-five millions of inhabitants. And Switzerland alone, of all Europe, (containing about two millions,) has republican institutions. The rest of Europe is subject to monarchs, half of whom claim absolute power. The freest of the countries of Europe is Great Britain, and the people capable of enjoying most liberty are the inhabitants of that island. That country is protestant. France has now a constitutional monarchy: and the French are better fitted for the enjoyment of free institutions than any other people of the continent. In France all religions are free. In fact the lights of liberty correspond exactly with the increase and diffusion of Protestantism, and the gloom of despotic political power deepens in proportion as the spiritual tyranny of the Roman See prevails. But we cannot enlarge.

We give one other example only.

On p. 263, the following passage occurs. "But they (*viz.* the popes) are charged with claiming a right to dispose of the crowns of other nations, and releasing their subjects from their oaths of fidelity. Some few have, indeed, cherished and proclaimed this pretension. But who is the prince that was ACTUALLY DEPOSED by any pope? You will look for his name in history, and you will not find it. The Presbyterians deposed FOUR GOVERNMENTS, and brought two crowned heads to THE BLOCK, in less than a century. The popes never so much as one. Who is the prince on whom the popes conferred a crown and dominions, *which he did not possess before?* NOT ONE. These are the *facts of the case*, and show the value of the gentleman's learning and industry, as exhibited on this subject in his last speech."

These are very extraordinary assertions. But history is the only witness, and to history the reader must be referred. It must be confessed, however, that Presbyterians have never been the supporters of arbitrary power; yet it is due to them to say that they have been as far from pulling down Cæsar by absolutions as they have been from building up St. Peter by indulgences. It may not be uninteresting to read, in connexion with this extract, a passage from the life of Henry IV. emperor of Germany. Pascal II. was elected pope, Aug. 13, 1099. He confirmed the anathemas of his predecessors against Henry IV., and raises up against him an enemy in

an ambitious and ungrateful son. In vain did a paternal letter exhort him to repentance. The answer he received was, that an excommunicate could not be recognised as a king or a father. (Velly Hist. de France, tom. II. (in 12) p. 480.)

Freed from his oaths and his duties by the sovereign pontiff, the young Henry took up arms, and caused himself to be elected emperor in the diet of Mayence. Henry IV. retired to the castle of Ingelheim. Thither went some archbishops, sent by the diet to summon him to remit his crown and the other ensigns of his power into their hands. "Thou hast rent the church of God," said they to him. "Thou hast sold bishoprics, abbeys and all ecclesiastical dignities. Thou hast not observed the holy canons. For all these causes it has pleased THE POPE and the German princes to drive thee from the throne as well as from the church." "I adjure you," replies the monarch, "you, the archbishops of Cologne and Mayence, who hold from me your opulent prelatures—tell what you paid me for them. Ah! if I required of you only an oath of fidelity to me, why have you become the accomplices, or the leaders of my enemies? Could you not wait for the end of a life, which must be abridged by so many misfortunes, or at the least allow me to place my crown on the head of my much loved son?" But Henry was not speaking to fathers, he was addressing inflexible prelates. "Does it not belong to us," cried one, "to instal kings, and to dethrone them, when we have made a bad choice?" At these words, the three archbishops rushed upon their sovereign, tore from his head the imperial crown; and when he said to them, that if *he* was enduring the punishment due to the sins of his youth, *they* would not escape that due to their sacrilegious disloyalty, they laughed at the threat, and to insure the impunity of their crime, by consummating it without delay, they hastened to Mayence to consecrate and bless in the name of God the parricide Henry V. (Otto Frising Chron. l. vii. c. 8—12.—Abb. Ursperg. Chron. p. 243.—Sigon. de Regno italico, l. ix.)

Henry IV., shut up in Louvain, saw an army of his faithful subjects called about him. At their head, he gained a victory over his revolted subjects, but in a second combat, being overcome, without resource, he fell into the power of his enemies, who overwhelmed him with outrage. "The hatred of the popes," wrote this unfortunate prince to Henry I. king of France—"the hatred of popes hath carried them

so far as to violate the rights of nature, they have armed my son against me; this son, contemning the oath of fealty, which he has sworn to me as my vassal, has invaded my kingdom, and what I would gladly conceal, has even attempted my life." (Sigel. Gemblac. *apud struv.* tom. 1. p. 856.—Otto Frising. Chron. l. 7, c. 12.—Fleury, Hist. Eccl. l. 65, n. 42.)

Escaped from prison, but plunged in extreme misery, the old emperor was reduced to the necessity of soliciting a subaltern employment in a church, formerly built by his means, but did not obtain it. He died—his remains are disinterred—for Pascal II. could not permit the corpse of an excommunicate to repose in peace. During five years, the mortal remains of an emperor, who was distinguished by sixty-six pitched battles, are without sepulture. The clergy of Liege, who dared to collect them, were punished for it by anathemas, and almost within our own times a Jesuit named Longuebal, (Hist. de l' egl. Gall. tom. 8, p. 187,) has judged the fidelity and courage of this clergy inexcusable. (Essai Historique sur la puissance temporelle des Papes, p. 147—150.)

In the epistles of this pope we find one written by him to Robert, Count of Flanders, which reveals the interest and the agency which he took in the persecution of this emperor. "Pursue every where and with your strength Henry, the chief of heretics, and his favourers. You cannot offer to God a more agreeable sacrifice than to fight him who has raised himself against God, and who is using his efforts to take the kingdom from the church, and who has been driven off by the judgment of the Holy Spirit, which the prince of the apostles has pronounced. We enjoin this enterprise upon you and your vassals for the remission of your sins, and as a means of arriving at the heavenly Jerusalem." (*Pascal Epist.* 7, cited in the Essai, &c. ubi sup.)*

* The reader may perhaps think it unfair to go back to the 11th century for proofs of the principles held by the Roman church at present. If that church would relinquish its claims to infallibility there would be much force in this suggestion. But so long as Romanists aver that their church has never erred, of what importance is it to them from what period of their history we select our proofs. The ignorance and vices of the dark ages—"the military spirit that prevailed—the feebleness of law—the unsettled order of claims to political power—the strifes and rivalships" through which the popes as pilots had to steer the vessel of the church," (see p. 262,) would be a reason and perhaps excuse for some of the errors of peccable, fallible men. Such, however, the Romanists do not allow their priesthood to be. The popes and their church have always been *infallible*,

These examples will show the reader the necessity of examining the historical verity of some portions of the book, as a preliminary to the consideration of the arguments built upon them.

Upon the whole matter. We consider the book before us in some respects very important. The question was originally shaped and afterwards restricted, with a view evidently to victory in that particular contest. We have shown in several particulars the effect of the definitions, conditions, and terms, to keep out of the debate important topics. But although the question (propounded upon terms) was unduly restrictive, still it was right to accept it, and Dr. Breckinridge has done the public an important service in doing so.

and not less so in the dark ages than in the enlightened ones. This is their doctrine. But the reader will observe we have introduced this passage merely to disprove the assertion "that no prince has ever been actually deposed by any pope," and this language is general enough to embrace the person of Gregory VII. and the time at which he lived. And it may be proper to remind the reader, that the court of Rome, in the 18th century, (which was enlightened enough,) did not suppose the acts of Gregory VII. required any palliation or excuse, but on the contrary were worthy of all praise. For in 1729, "at the instigation of the Jesuits, Benedict XIII. reCanonized this very celebrated Hildebrand, who had already (in the 16th and 17th centuries) been placed in the catalogue of the very blessed, by Gregory XIII. and Paul V. The liturgy was enriched by Benedict XIII. with an *office* to celebrate in honour of St. Hildebrand or St. Gregory VII., on the 25th of May in every year. A legend inserted in this office, relates the lofty deeds of this exemplary pontiff. 'How he resisted with a generous and athletic intrepidity the impious efforts of the emperor Henry IV.—how, like an impenetrable wall, he defended the house of Israel. How he plunged this Henry into the profound abyss of woe,—how he excluded him from the communion of the faithful, *dethroned* him, proscribed him, and *absolved* his subjects, who had sworn fidelity to him, from every duty towards him.' Such are the words which Benedict XIII. (in the 18th century) appointed to be said or sung in the churches, for the edification of the faithful and instruction of kings. The parliament of Paris did not relish this legend. They condemned it and forbade the publication of it in France." In short, "Benedict XIII. was obliged to be content with establishing this devout practice in Italy, where, every year, since 1729, all the churches pay religious homage to Gregory VII." (*Essai historique*, etc. chap. 12.) This legend and office then, are additional proofs of the fact, that Gregory VII. did depose Henry IV. And they prove also in what estimation the conduct of Gregory VII. was held at Rome in 1729, and even now. It is with an ill grace, we are now told, that "those events to be judged of *with justice*, ought to be judged in connexion with the character of the age, the customs of the nations, and the other specific circumstances in which they occurred." (p. 263.) Did Benedict XIII. in 1729 judge *with justice* of Gregory VII. when he reCanonized him? Was he ignorant of the character and conduct of that pontiff? So it seems from the legend and office—and did he, well knowing both, appoint the worship of *dulia* to him as a saint in 1729? Then the "half educated protestants," who make no allowances on the score of times in which Gregory VII. lived, may justify their crimination, by the opinion of Benedict XIII. in 1729, that none should be made.

He has, besides giving us a series of pertinent, powerful and eloquent arguments, drawn forth the views of a learned Roman Catholic prelate, upon subjects of great importance and bearing directly upon our social interests. The arguments of bishop Hughes are very valuable, in that point of view. We wanted something authentic. They are the more valuable for having been deliberately revised after they were spoken. We should consider them still more valuable, if they had received the *imprimatur* of the archbishop, or of a council of the American prelacy. The more deliberate, the more solemn, the more full, explicit and able, the better. We should regret that the truth, (with whomsoever it may reside,) should be defeated for want of sufficient advocacy. There has been a difficulty with some persons of late years, to know what we may think upon the subject of the Roman Catholic religion. It has been often said in England and in this country too, that it has changed—that it is not now that terrific engine of tyranny which it once was—that its doctrines are not anti-social or illiberal any longer—that it is only a sister sect, ever ready to live lovingly enough with the protestant sects. Thousands of our countrymen believe these assertions without a particle of evidence. It is impossible that that church should change without an abandonment of her distinctive principles. A church that is infallibly sure of its own principles, and which is infallibly sure that it has never erred, cannot make any important and permanent change either in its doctrines or discipline: for such an act (itself being judge) would be an act of apostacy. But where is the evidence of any such change? In looking through bishop Hughes' arguments, the reader will find he holds fast to the hierarchy, and the doctrine of its divine right—the principle of authority—its infallibility,—in short, all its distinctive principles. The inquisition, to be sure, he will not defend. None can have a deeper abhorrence of the cruelties real or supposed, of which it was made the instrument, than he has; yet he will show that Protestants are for the most part perfectly deceived with relation to it. (p. 169.) But bishop Hughes does not agree with Dens nor with Bellarmine in the matter of persecution. They approved, but he disapproves. (p. 159, 202, 218, 220, 221.) Bishop Hughes also condemns many of the notes to the Rhemish Testament. (p. 261.) He disapproves, too, of the acts of the popes in affecting to release subjects from their allegiance. (p. 263.) And what is more than all, he is an admirer of the American

constitutions. (p. 83.) Now far be it from us (and we speak with entire sincerity) to impute to the Reverend prelate the least insincerity in his professions—(and yet indeed when (on account of their liberal principles) he calls De Pratt an apostate, (p. 90,) and Dupin a half Protestant, (p. 89,) he speaks liberty in a mystery.) They are however but the sentiments of one individual, holden too in connexion with all the essential principles upon which the stupendous power of Rome has rested for ages. Will the church abandon these? Will she defer to the sentiments of an individual prelate? Will she defer to the decrees even of a provincial council? In fact has any council been held in the United States, at which any important change of principle has been made? Have our clergy, after the example of the prelate of France in 1682, declared articles of liberty? And if they have, can we be sure that any such articles will not be annulled whenever the interest of the Roman See shall require it, and the state of the country promise success to a more rigorous policy?

The principles of that church admit of a change in her policy, though not in her principles or pretensions. The Italian theologians have distinguished two states of the church;—(1.) the state of adolescence and weakness, when she must needs tolerate the empire of princes and follow the evangelical maxims established for the wants of such an epoch: (2.) the state of vigour and power, when the church, reigning over vast countries, having conquered nations, covers the people with her shadow, and crowns and governs kings. *Recte enim jussam TOLERARE reges, quos compescere infirma non posset.* (Def. eb. Gall. p. 2, l. 5, c. 17.) Admitting then that such changes had been made by such authority, we should still need to be informed whether they were not grounded upon the principle thus declared, or whether the church itself, always infallible, has at length changed.

The subjects involved in this discussion are of incalculable importance. We think we can perceive that the world is *nearing* a great conflict. The designs of Providence seem to be legible in the march of civil society. The sciences, the arts, are rapidly accumulating power in the hands of men. Liberal principles are extending. The governments of Europe have lost their giant tyrant strength, and changes for good or evil are evidently at hand. We have stated the theory of our own institutions, in contrast with those of

Europe. We will now add that our great means of perpetuity are moral. Our most important agencies are those which elevate men as intelligent, moral and accountable beings. We cannot afford to give up the schoolmaster—the bible—the Sabbath—the press; in a word, we must not surrender any means which can make men understand and appreciate and respect their own rights and the rights of others. That man who would cut off or weaken the force of any one of these influences, is the enemy of American freedom; that system, whether of politics or religion, which is hostile or even indifferent to the intellectual and moral culture of our citizens, is at ill accord with our institutions. The serviles of Europe, (no small number,) are delighted, whenever the cause of liberty is dishonoured by its defenders. They are informed (but who among us is servile enough to make the report?) speedily enough of the excesses of our countrymen, which are magnified to suit their own purposes. Continental writers of the year 1836, speak of our Lynch law—the burning of the convent—of an attack upon a Protestant minister because he spoke against the Roman Catholics—of an attack upon the printing establishment of an editor who ventured to oppose the current of popular opinion—of the opinions relative to slavery prevalent at the south—and of the treatment of the abolitionists in some quarters. These occurrences, which are causes of pain and mortification to the enlightened friends of liberty, are welcomed in at least half Europe as proof that our free institutions are a failure. They are, however, no proof of that; they are incident merely to a system which seeks to preserve social order by the least possible restraint. The cure is to make men more intelligent and more virtuous. After all, the aggregate of evil resulting from our system will bear but a very small proportion, indeed, to the evils which are produced by the ordinary—diurnal—action of despotic governments. We are apt to misjudge upon this subject. Our disgraces are all known. Our press is trumpet-tongued, and our citizens are as free to proclaim our shame as our praise. But what do we know of Austria—of Italy—of Spain—of Russia! How much does the press in those countries chronicle of the doings of arbitrary power? Nothing—absolutely nothing. Our institutions then are not a failure; and they cannot fail if we are true to the cause of Christ and to ourselves. Let us thank God then and take courage. We have work enough to command the energies and the activity of

every Christian, philanthropist and patriot amongst us. Our population is augmenting rapidly. Our new recruits must be indoctrinated in the principles upon which our civil and religious liberties rest. The enemy is among us sprinkling his tares. The friends of liberty must not allow themselves to be outdone by him. They have now the vantage ground, and God and our country require them to maintain it.

Sam. S. Winchester

ART. II.—*A Course of Legal Study, addressed to students and the profession generally; by David Hoffman, Jur. Utr. Doct. Gottingen.* Second edition, re-written and much enlarged. In two volumes, 8vo. pp. 876. Baltimore. Joseph Neal. 1836.

THIS work prescribes a thorough course of legal reading, which would require for its accomplishment, about seven years of patient and careful study. It also prescribes several shorter courses, to suit the taste and circumstances of the student. Under each title of the law, such works and portions of works, as are appropriate to it, are named; with a succinct, but satisfactory account of their character and authority in the profession. This work has received the strongest commendation from many of the most eminent jurists in this country: and is regarded as highly important and useful, not only to the tyro in law, but to men of long and high standing in the profession. The author was for a long time professor of law in the University of Maryland, and filled his chair with great credit to himself, and lasting benefit to those who received his instructions. In this work, as well as in his professional and professorial performances, he discovers a vast amount of legal and miscellaneous learning, and an intimate acquaintance with the books he describes.

We have long wished to see a similar work on theological reading, in all its branches; believing as we do, that it would greatly facilitate the student in his inquiries, and afford important aid to all, whose profession or inclination leads them to investigate religious or moral subjects. We are aware that a few brief and imperfect sketches of a theological course, have, at different times, been given to the public, but in our judgment, they can make no pretensions to such a place in theological training and education, as the work before us unquestionably occupies in the legal novitiate.

Another important advantage which would accrue to the student and young preacher, from such a work, is the aid it would afford them in selecting suitable books for their libraries. A young preacher, of limited pecuniary means, should be very cautious in the selection and purchase of books, lest he exhaust his funds in the purchase of works which will avail him but little, in the prosecution of his appropriate studies. Salutory counsel and wise direction in this matter, would be invaluable to him.

Our author quotes Dr. Watts as saying that 'the world is full of books, but there are multitudes which are so ill written, they were never worth any man's reading; and there are thousands more which may be good in their kind, yet are worth nothing when the month or year, or occasion is past for which they were written. Others may be valuable in themselves for some special purpose, or in some peculiar science, but are not fit to be perused by any but those who are engaged in that particular science or business; it is, therefore, of vast advantage for the improvement in knowledge, and saving of time, that a young man should have the most proper books for his reading, recommended by some judicious friend.'

He also says of Martin Luther, who, by uniting method with industry, attained an eminence in learning, unknown to the age in which he lived, that "he compares indiscriminate and immethodical readers to such as have no fixed habitation, who dwell every where, reside in no place, and cannot be said to belong to any country. He advises students to confine their attention to the most learned, methodical, and well selected authors, and by no means to distract themselves with too great a variety of books. Indeed, a judicious selection of nutriment seems no less requisite to the enlargement and invigoration of the mind than of the body; for, as Lord Bacon quaintly observes, 'some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested; that is—some books are to be read only in part; others to be read, but not curiously, and some few to be read wholly, and with diligence and attention. Some books, also, may be read by deputy, and extracts made of them by others; but that would be only in the less important arguments, and the meaner sort of books.' "

When a student leaves the seminary, his knowledge of theology, as a science, is necessarily very limited and imper-

fect. He gets but a mere outline, which he is expected to fill up by subsequent study and research. While in the seminary, his time is so much occupied with the routine of duty, that he has but little left, to make himself acquainted with books, or to avail himself of those facilities which a large and well selected library would afford under other circumstances. We are not now advocating the idea that a clergyman should be a mere man of books, far from it. He should be eminently a practical man. But if he would, at the same time, become a sound and thorough divine, he must become acquainted, to a great extent, with the various writings in his profession. He is neither advised nor expected to read every book that has been written on the various points of theology, for of the making of books, and especially of *such* books, there is no end: and it is both impossible, and would be unwise if possible, to read more than a very small portion, and those selected with great care and judgment. One of the resolutions which our author proposes to students of law, and which might be adopted with great advantage by theological students, is "to keep constantly in view the essential distinction, between *reading* and *studying*; two things often confounded; and that as to elementary books especially, the safest rule is, *multum legendum, non multa.*" But it is important that the student should know what books have been written on the countless topics connected with theology, and in what manner those topics are treated, so that they may become books of reference, to which he may turn with ease, whenever an occasion requires it. Such a knowledge of books as that which we have now described, is essential to eminence in the two other learned professions; and we see not how the study of theological bibliography can be safely dispensed with by the divine, if he would aspire to an extensive acquaintance with his science, and to eminent usefulness in his profession. "The researches of the learned," says our author, "as well as of students, are sometimes retarded by the want of even this species of acquaintance with books: a student, therefore, can scarce begin too early to familiarize himself with the sources of knowledge in every branch of his science. To know even the existence of a book, and its general object, is a greater approximation to knowledge than may at first appear obvious." If, therefore, students would treasure up in their minds, and note down in a suitable book, the various *sources* of information on theological subjects, and make

themselves familiar with the analysis or general outline of all the theological works they may meet with, they would be furnished with a magazine from which they could draw such information as the occasion demanded.

The art of study chiefly consists in two things. 1. A strict regard to method. Without this, the knowledge which a student may acquire by immethodical reading, will be unavailable and void, because without form. It will be "*rudis indigestaque moles.*" This species of reading enervates the mind, and renders it incapable of patient and severe study. 2. The art of study consists in having some point in view, to which all the student's researches should be aimed. *Subjects* should be studied rather than *books*. These should be used only as helps to understand those. This will secure a concentration of thought and reading on one point, and the result will be like gathering the solar rays into a focus, it will be *effectual*.

"The art of study," says our author, "is, no doubt, a nice one; and is capable, perhaps, of being reduced to a system. Mr. Gibbon remarks that Salmatius had read as much as Grotius, perhaps more. But their different modes of reading made the one, an enlightened philosopher; and the other, a pedant, puffed up with useless erudition. He attributes the ignorance, sometimes found even in great readers, to their neglect of method, and to their not having proposed to themselves an end to which all their studies may point. The habit of skipping irregularly from one subject to another, in his opinion, renders them incapable of combining their ideas, weakens the energies of their mind, generates a dislike to application, and even robs them of the advantages of natural good sense. If this be the unhappy result of not possessing the art of study, the evil must be still greater, when the student has no acquaintance with the sources of knowledge; their various connections and dependencies; and the best authors who have treated the numerous departments which compose his science."

Error in doctrine is the result of ignorance, and the sad defection which we are called to witness in this day, has mainly grown out of the ignorance of young divines. Puffed up with self importance, and filled with conceit, they send forth a crude and undigested mass of mixed truth and error, and felicitate themselves with the idea of starting something *new, not knowing* that all they teach, both true and false, has a thousand times been taught since the Christian era.

If the authors of new discoveries in theology, would carefully consult the writings of other ages, they would find, perhaps to their mortification, certainly to their advantage, that others have been before-hand with them in the matter.

In the work before us the theologian will find much to interest and instruct him. The character of our church judicatories renders it important that those who compose them, should have some acquaintance with the great principles of law. And in this work may be found sources of information on topics frequently introduced and discussed in ecclesiastical courts. There are certain great principles which pervade all laws, and are essential to their vitality and force. These should be familiar to all those who may be called on from time to time to legislate for the church of Christ. An unwise and inefficient law, is often the source of greater vexation and injury to the body governed by it, than even the want of a good one. No human institution is perfect, and the mind of man cannot compass by anticipation, the endless variety and number of exigencies wherein a wise and wholesome legislation will be needed, and cannot therefore, provide beforehand for every case of difficulty that may arise. Hence the wisest system of human laws has grown out of the necessities of society as they occurred, and consequently, has grown up with society itself, as it advanced from one degree of refinement and civilization to another. The exigencies of society have, as they successively arose, suggested the appropriate laws which they required. But it is the duty of legislators, whether civil or ecclesiastical, to furnish themselves with such information, as will enable them to execute their high and important commission, in the wisest manner, and to the greatest possible advantage to those for whom they act.

There are, also, certain great principles of interpretation, which are applicable to all laws. These, too, should be familiar to those who, as judges in a court of Jesus Christ, are required to expound and apply the laws of the church. In the administration of these laws, the personal rights of individuals are often involved. Reputation, character, and usefulness may be at stake. And the occasion demands the utmost caution, wisdom and sense of justice, in those who are intrusted with so momentous a concern.

Ignorance of the great principles of interpretation, sometimes leads good men to resort to their own private views of expediency in determining what should be the judgment of

the court in any given case. When once this course is adopted, those whose province it is to interpret the existing laws, begin to wander in the wide but forbidden paths of judicial legislation.

To show the importance and bearing of these remarks, let us farther state as our judgment, that in cases, strictly judicial, our judicatories can adopt no principles unknown to the constitution, for the time being, existing. They cannot, in that capacity, make new laws. It is their limited province to expound, administer, and execute the law as it is. This we understand to be in accordance with that great principle of liberty—Governments derive their just powers from the governed. The laws are indirectly made by those who are bound by them. When a party is on trial he is justly excluded from any participation in the judgment to be pronounced in his own case. So that if, while thus excluded, a new law, or principle, to suit his case, should be made or adopted, he would be deprived of the inherent right of participating in the enactment of a law by which he is to be bound. To enact a law, under such circumstances, is to declare the party on trial, innocent of transgressing any law existing at the time that he is said to have offended; and involves the court in a dilemma, the horns of which are, innocence of the party accused, or absurdity in the accusation itself, that is—either the party is innocent, or he has transgressed a law which had no existence at the time the offence is alleged to have been committed, which is absurd. In order, virtually, to enact a law under such circumstances, it is not necessary that it be formally and professedly done, for such an interpretation of the existing law, as amounts to the enactment of something new, is judicial legislation, perpetrated under the cover of judicial interpretation. This brings to bear upon the party accused, the most odious principle of absolute despotism. It is making a law expressly for the very party who is excluded from all participation in its enactment.

Our judicatories are liable to the practice of this injustice in various ways: for example; if, when the party accused is arraigned, no fair interpretation of the law or constitution, will bear out the judgment of guilty, and the court, with the view of reaching and punishing the alleged offence, should adopt such a construction of the law as will effect this object, it amounts to judicial legislation, and the proceeding is marked by every trait which may characterize injustice.

The court may be sincere and honest in their purpose, and verily think they are doing God's service, but this mode of accomplishing that purpose, is not the less oppressive and wrong, on that account. No plea of expediency or necessity can avail to change the unrighteous aspect of the case. No want of adequate provision in the constitution, for the case before them, can justify the court in enacting an *ex post facto* law. If the original framers of the constitution have been guilty of oversight, neglect, or ignorance, in the work assigned them, shall another be made to suffer *judicially* the consequences of their error or omission? This is one of those cases where even a guilty person should go unpunished, rather than be punished unconstitutionally and unlawfully. All violence done to the constitution, is an injury inflicted on the whole body or community who are governed by it; and supposing that they have suffered by the alleged offence, still it is better that they should suffer by one offence than by two. The constitution is a shield of protection, and a bond of union; and if this be violated or infringed, confidence in it, as a security against oppression, is shaken, if not destroyed.

Besides: the party accused subjected himself to the government of this constitution as it exists, in its plain and obvious import; and not to that temporising construction of it, which the undefined, uncertain, and shifting views of expediency or policy may suggest. There is no fixed and acknowledged standard of expediency, by which the defects of a written constitution may be arbitrarily supplied, or its supposed excrescences lopped off, to suit the emergencies of a particular case.

Every one who is subject to our ecclesiastical laws, became so by his own choice: and his voluntary subjection to these laws, is the giving up of a portion of his original liberty, with the view to secure a specified advantage. It is entering into a contract or covenant, by which one party alienates certain rights, and by which the other secures to the former, certain privileges, by way of an equivalent. This agreement should be so construed, as that neither party may overreach, or take an unfair advantage of, the other. And it is evident that only such control, both in kind and extent, can be exercised by the one over the other, as is granted by the terms of the contract, and as arises out of the dereliction of liberty, contained in the contract itself. In regard to civil courts, Powell, in his essay upon the law of contracts and agree-

ments, says that "it is absolutely for the advantage of the public at large, that the rights of the subject should, when agitated in a court of law, depend upon *certain* and *fixed* principles of law; and not upon rules and constructions of equity, which when applied there, must be *arbitrary* and *uncertain*, depending, in the extent of their application, upon the *will* and *caprice* of the judge."

The author of an essay on the Trial by Jury, remarks that "it must be apparent, on the slightest view of the subject, that if the judge be either *incapacitated* by *want of knowledge*, from deciding according to law, or *disposed*, by *inclination*, to make his own notions of equity the rule of his decisions; the *Judge* then becomes, in fact, a *Legislator*: *his will* is substituted for law, and his judicial acts assume the shape of legislative acts. Law, in this case, would be truly a strange and capricious thing: for depending, as it would, upon the arbitrary opinions of a multiplicity of judges, in their various and separate tribunals, the law would be nothing more than what their several *wills*, prompted perhaps by interest, by partiality, or by want of knowledge,—might choose to make it." These remarks will apply strictly to our ecclesiastical courts: for if expediency or policy be the rule of interpretation, or if different constructions of the constitution be adopted by different judicatories, through ignorance of the great pervading principles of jurisprudence, whether of legislation or interpretation; then what is declared to be constitutional and right in one synod, may be held to be unconstitutional and unjust, in another.

Whatever species of reading and reflection will tend to remedy this evil, and prevent this mischief, surely claims the attentive consideration of every clergyman and elder in the Presbyterian church.

New and doubtful constructions of the constitution, should be proposed with careful premeditation, and encouraged with great caution. One innovation commonly paves the way for many others: and however harmless may be the first, there can be no security for the character of the rest that may follow. "The power of the legislature," says the writer of Junius' letters, "is *limited*, not only by the rules of natural justice, and the welfare of the community, but by the *forms* and *principles* of our *particular constitution*."

Judge Patterson, in his charge to the jury, in the case of Vanhorne's lessee vs. Dorrance, remarks that "the *constitution* is the origin and measure of legislative authority. It

says to legislators—thus far shall ye go, and no farther. Not a particle of it should be shaken; not a pebble of it should be removed. Innovation is dangerous. One encroachment leads to another; precedent gives birth to precedent; what has been done, may be done again; thus *radical principles* are gradually broken in upon, and the constitution eventually destroyed.” Washington, in his address to the people of the United States, says, “Towards the preservation of your government, and the permanency of your present happy state, it is requisite, that you not only discountenance irregular oppositions to its acknowledged authority, but also that you resist with care, the *spirit of innovation* upon its principles, however specious the pretexts.”

We do not, in all this, wish to be understood as pleading for the introduction of rigid technicalities, into our ecclesiastical courts. For although they may be important and useful in the forms of legislative and judicial proceedings, yet they are sometimes burdensome, unnecessary, and may become unfavorable to truth and justice. They should be our servants, not our masters. Nor would we contend for that literal construction of the constitution which is servile, or which would render the instrument itself unmeaning or contradictory: “*qui haeret in litera, haeret in cortice.*”

Such a course of reading as might be selected from the work before us, on points intimately connected with ecclesiastical jurisprudence, would not only store the mind with useful and available information, but would also train and discipline it for wielding that knowledge in the most effectual manner. Such reading habituates the mind to close thought, comprehensive views of a subject, systematic investigation, lucid analysis and sound deduction. It enables the mind to see the gist of an argument, to lay hold on the strong points of a case, and to detect the sophistry of a subtle debater. Who has not witnessed the deference which is paid, even though it be sometimes involuntary and reluctant, to the opinions and arguments of distinguished legal characters, in our ecclesiastical courts? Who has not seen the results of that mental training of which we speak, in the power which such speakers have exerted over the minds and judgments of the rest of the body?

Such training also greatly assists the mind in the investigation and elucidation of the doctrines of the gospel, especially such as are couched in forensic terms, and imparts to pulpit performances, perspicuity and method, as well as

depth and solidity of thought. It is, undoubtedly, the solemn duty of every minister of the gospel, to avail himself of all the helps within his reach, both in preparing for, and in discharging the duties of his high office, both in the pulpit, and in the judicatories of the church. And our object, in this article, is to call the attention of such, to this important subject. The great object of education, is not so much the multiplication of ideas, as the proper training and cultivation of the mind. It is to discipline the mind, and teach it how to think, how to study, how to acquire knowledge, and how to use it to the best advantage, when acquired. The course of reading, and the mental discipline which we have recommended, certainly falls within the notion of theological education: and we hope to see the day when it will be regarded as an essential part of it.

But we must return from this digression to a farther notice of the work before us.

Immediately after the Prœm, we have Dr. Johnson's celebrated prayer, before the study of law. "Almighty God, the giver of wisdom, without whose help, resolutions are vain, without whose blessing, study is ineffectual, enable me, if it be thy will, to attain such knowledge as may qualify me to direct the doubtful, and instruct the ignorant, to prevent wrongs, and terminate contentions; and grant that I may use that knowledge which I shall attain, to thy glory, and my own salvation; for Jesus Christ's sake. Amen."

Then follow a few short resolutions to be adopted by the student, one of which is, "to avoid, rigidly, all STUDIES on the Sabbath." And another—"to give due attention to my religious studies." The introduction of this prayer, as well as other matters contained in this volume, give pleasing evidence of the author's disposition to blend the sanctity of religion with the severity of legal study, and to throw around the practice of his profession the hallowed influences and restraints of true piety. The Bible is placed conspicuously at the head of the course, and the note which accompanies it, shows the author's high estimate of its importance in the legal, as well as in all the other professions of life. This note occupies nearly twenty octavo pages, and of course is too long to be here inserted, but it is well worthy of an attentive perusal, and contains much information, and many sources of information, relative to the sacred volume, calculated to be highly useful to the theological, as well as the law student. This note treats of the importance of the bible

to lawyers and legislators. Of the purity and sublimity of its morals; its eloquence and poetry, &c. The author then states the difficulties which must be encountered in perusing the sacred volume with profit, and under each head refers the reader to such works as will tend to obviate these difficulties.

In noticing the political writings of Thomas Paine, our author thus speaks of him. "Eminently endowed with intellectual force, and possibly with virtue, at the time he rendered such valuable services to the cause of American independence, we have only to deplore his subsequent loss of mind and of morals, when he drank in all that was infamous and wicked in the demoniac philosophy of the early revolutionists of France; and became as remarkable for his crusade against religion, as he had been in his noble exertions in the cause of freedom."

The auxiliary subjects, as they are called, are full of interest to all who seek after knowledge; and the sources of information, under each head, are exceedingly valuable, and may be useful in every profession. These auxiliary subjects are—1. The geography, and civil, statistical and political history of the United States. 2. Forensic eloquence and oratory. 3. Legal biography and bibliography. 4. Legal reviews, &c. 5. Codification and amendments of law. 6. Medical jurisprudence. 7. Military and naval law. 8. Logic. 9. Professional deportment. An appendix contains the author's views and advice in regard to note-books, debating societies and moot-courts, &c.

Under the head of professional deportment, our author recommends a series of resolutions to the young practitioner, which, if adopted and adhered to by the profession generally, would relieve it of much of the odium which in the popular judgment (or prejudice, as the case may be) now attaches to it. From the fifty given, we can only insert a few, and we do it not only for the purpose of showing the moral cast of the work itself, but also to spread them before the eyes of some whom they may essentially benefit.

Resolution X. reads thus, "Should my client be disposed to insist on captious requisitions, or frivolous and vexatious defences, they shall be neither enforced nor countenanced by me. And if still adhered to by him, from a hope of pressing the other party into an unjust compromise, or with any other motive, he shall have the option to select other counsel."

Resolution XI. "If, after duly examining a case, I am per-

sued that my client's claim or defence (as the case may be) can not, or rather ought not, to be sustained, I will promptly advise him to abandon it. To press it further in such a case, with the hope of gleaning some advantage by an extorted compromise, would be lending myself to a dishonourable use of legal means, in order to gain a *portion* of that, the *whole* of which I have reason to believe would be denied to him both by law and justice."

Resolution XII. "I will never plead the statute of limitations, when based on the *mere efflux of time*; for if my client is conscious he owes the debt, and has no other defence than the *legal bar*, he shall never make me a partner in his knavery."

Resolution XIII. is of the same character, relating to the plea of "*Infancy*."

Resolution XV. "When employed to defend those charged with crimes of the deepest dye, and the evidence against them, whether legal or moral, be such as to leave no just doubt of their guilt, I shall not hold myself privileged, much less obliged, to use my endeavours to arrest or to impede the course of justice, by special resorts to ingenuity—to the artifices of eloquence—to appeals to the morbid and fleeting sympathies of weak juries, or of temporizing courts—to my own personal weight of character—nor finally to any of the overweening influences I may possess, from popular manners, eminent talents, exalted learning, &c. Persons of atrocious character, who have violated the laws of God and man, are entitled to no such special exertions from any member of our pure and honourable profession; and indeed, to no intervention beyond securing to them a fair and dispassionate investigation of the facts of their cause, and the due application of the law. All that goes beyond this, either in manner or substance, is unprofessional, and proceeds, either from a mistaken view of the relation of client and counsel, or from some unworthy and selfish motive, which sets a higher value on professional display and success, than on truth and justice, and the substantial interests of the community.

Such an inordinate ambition, I shall ever regard as a most dangerous perversion of talents, and a shameful abuse of an exalted station. The parricide, the gratuitous murderer, or the perpetrator of like revolting crimes, has surely no such claim on the commanding talents of a profession, whose object and pride should be the suppression of vice, by the vindication and enforcement of the laws. Those, therefore, who

wrest their proud knowledge from its legitimate purposes, to pollute the streams of justice, and to screen such foul offenders from merited penalties, should be regarded by all (and certainly shall be by me) as ministers at a holy altar, full of high pretension, and apparent sanctity, but inwardly base, unworthy, and hypocritical—dangerous in the precise ratio of their commanding talents, and exalted learning.”

Resolution XXXII. “If my client consents to endeavours for a compromise of his claim, or defence, and for that purpose I am to commune with the opposing counsel, or others, I will never permit myself to enter upon a system of tactics, to ascertain who shall overreach the other, by the most nicely balanced artifices of disingenuousness, by mystery, silence, obscurity, suspicion, vigilance to the letter, and all the other machinery used by this class of tacticians, to the vulgar surprise of clients, and the admiration of a few ill-judging lawyers. On the contrary,—my resolution in such a case is, to examine with great care, previously to the interview, the matter of compromise; to form a judgment as to what I will offer, or accept; and promptly, frankly, and firmly to communicate my views to the adverse counsel. In so doing, no lights shall be withheld that may terminate the matter as speedily, and as nearly in accordance with the rights of my client as possible; although a more dilatory, exacting, and wary policy might finally extract something more than mine own, or even my client’s hopes. Reputation gained for this species of skill is sure to be followed by more than an equivalent loss of character: shrewdness is too often allied to unfairness, caution to severity, silence to disingenuousness, wariness to exaction, to make me covet a reputation based on such qualities.”

Resolution XXXIII. “What is wrong, is not the less so from being common. And though few *dare to be singular*, even in a right cause, I am resolved to make my own, and not the conscience of others, my sole guide. What is morally wrong, cannot be professionally right, however it may be sanctioned by time or custom. It is better to be right with a few, or even none, than wrong, though with a multitude. If, therefore, there be among my brethren, any traditional moral errors of practice, they shall be studiously avoided by me, though in so doing, I unhappily come in collision with what is (erroneously I think) too often denominated the policy of the profession. Such cases fortunately occur but seldom,—but when they do, I shall trust to that moral firm-

ness of purpose which shrinks from no consequences, and which can be intimidated by no authority however ancient or respectable.”

Resolution XLI. “In reading to the court or to the jury, authorities, records, documents, or other papers, I shall always consider myself as executing a *trust*, and as such, bound to execute it faithfully and honourably. I am resolved, therefore, carefully to abstain from all false, or deceptive readings; and from all uncandid omissions of any qualifications of the doctrine maintained by me, which may be contained in the text, or in the notes. And I shall ever hold that the obligation extends, not only to words, syllables, and letters, but also to the *modus legendi*: all intentional false emphasis, and even intonations, in any degree calculated to mislead, are petty impositions on the confidence reposed; and whilst avoided by myself, shall ever be regarded by me in others, as feeble devices of an impoverished mind; or as pregnant evidences of a disregard for truth, which justly subjects them to be closely watched in more important matters.”

The foregoing is a fair specimen of the fifty resolutions recommended by our author, to students of law, for their adoption. And, to use the quaint but expressive language of Lord Coke, they are worthy of being written in letters of gold, but far more worthy of being faithfully adhered to.

Although the last resolution in this series requires the other forty-nine to be read twice every year during professional life, yet we would respectfully suggest the following, as the fifty-first and concluding one, namely.

Whereas it is lamentably true, in consequence of human weakness and imperfection, that the best resolutions often fail to bind the conscience and control the purpose, when strong temptations to disregard them assail the mind and heart, I am resolved to place no dependence upon my own firmness and ability to adhere to the foregoing resolutions, but to seek habitually, by prayer to God, that grace and strength from on high, which alone can enable me to do so.

If these resolutions be rigidly observed, the young practitioner might indulge the hope, expressed in a note to the 49th, “of attaining eminence in his profession, and of leaving this world with the merited reputation of having lived an honest lawyer.”

It were well for the cause of religion, and the reputation of the clergy, if similar resolutions were adopted, and regard-

ed by all who compose our ecclesiastical judicatories. It is a mournful fact, that sometimes the great Christian duties of courtesy and candour, seem to be lost sight of, in the heat of debate, and in the zeal to accomplish some sinister or party purpose. The spirit of innovation and radicalism is closely allied to that of chicanery and disingenuousness. A reckless fanaticism spurns the restraints of Christian decorum, and leaps over the barriers even of truth and justice. Hence, our judicatories have sometimes of late, been the theatre of the most humiliating exhibitions of bitterness, strife, and crimination. A wide departure from sound doctrine, with a professed attachment to the truth; a determined hostility against that which by promises and profession we are bound to love and cherish, and a relentless persecution of those whom religion, station and denominational relationship, make it our duty to love and honour, force upon the mind the painful suspicion of insincerity in the professions and declarations of some, who occupy the responsible station of Christian ministers; and the unworthy means, the petty artifices, and the low cunning of the wiley demagogue, to which they resort to avoid detection, and to conceal their purpose, leave no room for doubt, that they are awfully deficient in the spirit of vital godliness, as well as of high-minded and honourable deportment. Let not those, therefore, decry the legal profession, or any of its members, for adroitness in overreaching, and tact in deception, whose own conduct, under far more aggravating circumstances, would disgrace the meanest pettifogger: but let them rather receive the rebuke, "physician heal thyself." The legal practitioner is exposed by his profession, to multiplied and strong temptations, which it is in vain to expect unsanctified men always to resist. But there are many honourable exceptions to the charge so often brought against the profession, and who are ornaments to the bar, and shining lights in the Church. We must not identify the profession with the misconduct of some of its unworthy members; for, while we are no apologists for the latter, we are prepared to adopt, in regard to law, in its most extensive sense, the oft quoted and eloquent language of the judicious Hooker, "Of law there can be no less acknowledged, than that her seat is the bosom of God, her voice the harmony of the world; all things in heaven and earth do her homage, the very least as feeling her, and the greatest as not exempted from her power; both angels and men, and creatures of what

condition soever, though each in different sort and manner, yet all with uniform consent, admiring her as the mother of their peace and joy."

ART. III.—*Lectures illustrating the Contrast between true Christianity and various other Systems; by William B. Sprague, D.D., Minister of the Second Presbyterian Congregation in Albany,* New-York: Daniel Appleton & Co. 1837. pp. 386.

J. W. Alexander

DR. SPRAGUE holds the pen of a ready writer. It seems to give him little trouble to throw off a volume of several hundreds of pages. And as he is a ready, so he is a useful writer: his opinions seldom furnish occasion for just censure; and his style is so free from blemish that there is little left for the critic but to applaud. The only fault which we remember to have heard charged against his style is that it is so smooth as often to be deficient in vigour. But whatever may be the fact in regard to former publications, we are of opinion that the lectures now before us furnish no evidence of the fault in question: they are evidently written, not only in a style of uncommon perspicuity, but with point and force. It was our design before this time to give a review of this publication, which seems not yet to have attracted as much attention as the importance of the subjects treated, and the excellence of the composition demand; but by the press of other matters our space has been so pre-occupied, that we could not find room for many things which we wished to lay before the public.

These lectures furnish much correct and valuable information respecting the false systems of which they treat; and will, we think, be hereafter considered by the judicious part of the Christian public, as a production of Dr. Sprague's pen, which has as good claims to become a standard work in our Theological literature, as any other with which he has favoured the world. The lectures are eight in number. The following are their titles, in the order in which they are arranged: 1. Christianity contrasted with Atheism. 2. Christianity contrasted with Paganism. 3. Christianity contrasted with Deism. 4. Christianity contrasted with Mohamedism. 5. Protestant

Christianity contrasted with Romanism. 6. Evangelical Christianity contrasted with Unitarianism. 7. Practical Christianity contrasted with Antinomianism. 8. Experimental Christianity contrasted with Formalism.

We are persuaded that a bare inspection of the above table of contents, will induce a desire in many persons, to get possession of a volume in which so many interesting subjects are discussed, and that by a writer who stands so high in the public estimation. And the more we consider the plan of treating these subjects, by exhibiting them in contrast with pure Christianity, the better are we pleased with the design. This method adds peculiar force and vivacity to the whole discussion; and the selection of topics is so complete that we feel no wish to propose any change: the only idea which occurs in relation to a plan so felicitous in its conception, is, that it might perhaps, be enlarged with advantage; not so much by increasing the matter under the several heads, as by adding some other topics.

In the first of these lectures, in which Christianity is contrasted with Atheism, the ingenious author makes the following points, on which he brings these two systems into comparison, by considering their influence respectively: 1. Upon the Intellect. 2. Upon the Conscience. 3. Upon the Heart. 4. Upon the Life.

As a favourable specimen of the racy and pointed style of the author, in this volume, we will extract the third point of contrast, between these two systems, namely, their influence respectively on the heart.

“Let me now, thirdly, direct your attention to the opposite influences which the two systems exert upon the HEART. I shall consider them in their tendency to *mould its affections*, and *satisfy its desires*.

“That we may rightly estimate their influence in *moulding the affections*, it is necessary that we bear in mind that the moral character of an individual, by which I mean the real state of his heart, is determined in no small degree, by his intellectual views; and that, as truth and error are directly opposite in their nature, so they exert a directly opposite influence upon the heart. I know that systems of gross error have sometimes been professed where there has been the decency of a moral life; nevertheless, this does not prove that even external morality is the fruit of error, or that error is not naturally and essentially hostile to morality: it only proves that there may be countervailing influences arising from con-

stitutional temperament, or education, or some other cause, strong enough to prevent the full and legitimate operation of error; or, as the case may be, that the error which is professed sits so loosely upon the mind, and is held with so little intelligence and reflection, that it exercises but a partial dominion over the heart. And, on the other hand, who needs be told that truth, even truth of the noblest kind, is often professedly received, where none of its legitimate fruits ever appear; either because it is held as a mere speculation, or because its influence is neutralized by the power of corruption? But notwithstanding these accidental, counteracting influences, both in respect to truth and error, it still remains true that each has its appropriate influence; that truth is the seed of virtue, that error is the germ of corruption and crime."

The lecturer then proceeds to illustrate this particular by showing, 1. That Atheism contracts the affections, while Christianity expands them. 2. That Atheism brutalizes the affections; Christianity refines them. 3. Atheism debases the affections; Christianity exalts them.

The following extract is at the same time so ingenious and so just, that we cannot deny ourselves the pleasure of laying it before our readers, on the comparison of the two systems, as it relates to satisfying the desires of the mind:

"And here, if it would not lead me into too wide a range, I might call your attention distinctly to each of the several desires which make part of our original constitution, and show you how Atheism satisfies none of them—how Christianity satisfies them all. I might show you how Atheism mocks the desire of *existence*, by opening before the mind the hideous gulf of annihilation; how Christianity meets it, by establishing not only the immortality of the soul, but the resurrection of the body. I might show you how Atheism mocks the desire of *action*, by supplying no adequate motive to action, and limiting the exercise of our faculties to the brief period of the present life; how Christianity meets it, by at once giving our faculties a right direction, and opening a noble field for their exercise. I might show you how Atheism mocks the desire of *knowledge*, by miserably contracting the field of thought, and breathing over every subject an air of skepticism; how Christianity meets it, not only by leading the intellect, as with the hand of an angel, from one part of God's visible works to another, but by throwing open the gates of other worlds, that the beams of immor-

tal truth may pour down in all their brightness upon the mental eye. I might show you how Atheism mocks the desire of the *approbation and esteem of other beings*, by originating a character which every virtuous being must hate, and which every intelligent being must condemn; how Christianity meets it, by forming in man a spirit of benevolence, and disposing him to do good to all as he has opportunity. I might show you how Atheism mocks the desire of *society*, by inspiring a distrustful and unsocial spirit, and making man the enemy of man; how Christianity meets it, by inculcating a spirit of universal good will, and associating men together for purposes of mutual enjoyment and improvement. But instead of entering so broad a field, I shall consider the several desires of the soul as concentrated in the general desire of *happiness*; and shall dismiss this branch of the subject with two or three remarks illustrative of the contrast between the two systems in their bearing upon this leading and comprehensive desire."

The contrast on the last mentioned of the particulars is strongly exhibited, by showing, 1. That Atheism produces doubt: Christianity certainty. 2. That Atheism supplies no object adequate to fill the capacities of the soul; while such an object is supplied by Christianity. 3. That if Christianity be true, Atheism hazards every thing: if Atheism be true, Christianity hazards nothing.

We do not agree with those who think that it is useless to publish lectures on Atheism. There is perhaps, at this time, no more appalling danger which threatens the church and the country, than a species of infidelity, which deserves to be denominated Atheism; because it denies all moral obligation and aims at excluding all divine worship, and indeed, every vestige of religion, from the world. To propagate this system, societies are formed, lectures are delivered, tracts circulated, and books, replete with the poison of Atheism, published and read by many. While these efforts are made in several of our populous cities in the face of day, and with alarming effect on the minds of unguarded youth, the friends of Christianity have as yet done little to counteract the evil. They are so much occupied in maintaining their respective peculiarities, that this most dangerous enemy is permitted to steal a march upon them. Why is not provision made for the delivery of public lectures in all our largest cities, on the fundamental principles of religion? A lecturer so popular as Dr. Sprague, might do immense good

by half a dozen lectures on the being and attributes of God. What if infidels should refuse to attend; yet multitudes of young men who are exposed to the contagion of atheistical opinions might be essentially benefitted, by being fortified against the insidious poison. We do not know how the benevolent could accomplish more good, than by instituting a course of lectures in Boston, New York, Philadelphia and Baltimore, to be delivered every winter. In London, there are many such lectures, and from this source we have been furnished with some of our ablest treatises, on the evidences of natural and revealed religion.

The second lecture of Dr. Sprague, on Paganism, is good, and will have a salutary effect, by showing the wretched and degraded state of the heathen, and thus stirring up Christians to labour for their conversion, and by teaching us what we all would be this day, were it not for the benign influence of Christianity. And of course, what will be the condition of our posterity if we should suffer the precious deposit of revealed truth to be wrested from us: for although atheism and irreligion would be the proximate effect; yet soon the constitution of man would demand some kind of religion, and there would be a return to some form of idolatry and will-worship: that is, to Paganism.

The third lecture, "Christianity contrasted with Deism," is, in our judgment, one of the ablest in the book: but we have room to give only an outline of the author's plan. The two systems are contrasted in respect to 1. The extent of their discoveries. 2. The certainty of their evidence. 3. The energy of their operations. 4. The character of their results.

This comprehensive plan is beautifully carried out and illustrated. We would willingly present the whole lecture to our readers; but this would not consist with the plan of our work; and is unnecessary, because Dr. Sprague's volume, on fine paper and in handsome type, may be purchased at a reasonable rate, in any of our theological bookstores. The object of our review is to recommend this popular and valuable work to the perusal of all who read our pages.

The fourth lecture, "Christianity contrasted with Moham-edism," is also an able performance. The plan is to contrast the two systems, in respect to 1. The grounds of their authority. 2. The means of their propagation. 3. The characters of their founders. 4. Their influence on the world.

Under the first of these particulars, the lecturer asserts, p. 120, "This is a species of evidence (miracles) which Mo-

hamedism has never seriously pretended to claim." Now this is true, as it relates to Mohamed himself, and the Koran; but if the author will consult the controversial tracts, published by Professor Lee, on this subject, he will find, that the Mohamedans ascribe almost innumerable miracles to the founder of their religion, which they pretend are as well authenticated as those recorded in the Old and New Testaments. In this lecture, under the head of the means of the propagation of the two systems, the first particular is, "that Mohamedism was introduced at a period when every thing was favourable to its extension: Christianity at a period when the state of the world opposed the greatest obstacles to its success." It may be truly said, that at no time of the world is the introduction of a new religion easy; the obstacles from the existing religious establishments, and from the strong prejudices of all people, in favour of what they have been taught from infancy, must oppose a great obstacle in the way of any one who undertakes to bring men off from their old religion to one entirely different. These obstacles were in the way of Mohamedism as much as of Christianity. Neither had the countenance and favour of the ruling powers; even his own fellow citizens and kindred, were, for the most part, bitterly opposed to his pretensions. Judging, a priori, from existing circumstances, hardly any thing could be conceived more improbable than his success, in propagating a new religion over so large a portion of the globe. Neither is it manifest that the time when Christianity was propagated was peculiarly unfavourable. One government embraced all civilized nations; universal peace prevailed; the Greek and Latin languages were spoken almost every where in the Roman empire; and learning was widely diffused, which rendered it practicable by written discourses to disseminate opinions far and wide. It was, indeed, an enlightened age; which would have been unfavourable to the propagation of an imposture; but the supposition of its being an imposture does not seem to us properly introduced into this comparison. Here are two religions, both of which obtained a most extraordinary circulation. These are events to be accounted for. In regard to Christianity we say, that nothing but divine interposition could have given success to the enterprise. And it is incumbent on us to account for the wide spread of Mohamedism, from natural causes. The lecturer lays much stress on *the time*; we think, entirely too much. We think that the rapid progress of Mohamed-

ism is to be attributed to two causes: first, the success which attended his arms; without which his religion would in all probability have died with him. And secondly, the ardour of enthusiasm, with which he continued to inspire his followers. Never were men more actuated by strong devotional feelings than the early soldiers of Mohamed and the caliphs who succeeded him. Their religion rendered them invincible. Their generals commenced the battle with prayer at the head of their troops. Paradise was confidently expected as the immediate reward of those who should fall in the conflict. In this elevated enthusiasm, we think is found the true secret of the successes of the Mohamedans in their military expeditions. It is true, the Greek and Persian empires were in a distracted and enfeebled state, which rendered it less difficult for devoted and ardent spirits, under the strong impulse of religious zeal, to achieve a conquest over them. We do not deny that there was something in the state of religious sects in Arabia, and of the condition of the civil governments in other countries, which were favourable to Mohamed's enterprise; but we cannot see a sufficient ground for the prominence given to this matter in this contrast; especially when there are so many other strong points, on which the author has insisted.

The contrast between Protestantism and Romanism, in the fifth lecture, is, we think, well conducted. The points of comparison are—1. Their agreement with Scripture. 2. Their conformableness to reason. 3. Their claim to antiquity. 4. Their adaptation to human nature. 5. Their effects on human society.

The sixth lecture, in which evangelical Christianity is contrasted with Unitarianism is, perhaps, the longest in the volume; but it is not too long. It is, in our opinion, eminently suited to subserve the cause of truth, and save souls from perdition. The reasonings on this subject are commonly so abstruse, or involve so much of learned criticism, that common readers are not much instructed. But the view here taken, while it is just, is popular and convincing. We would therefore particularly request the attention of the reader to this lecture; and if he has been vacillating between orthodoxy and Unitarianism, and still is possessed of some impartiality of judgment, and some love of the truth, we are of opinion, that his faith in the old doctrines of the church will receive sensible confirmation, by the careful perusal of this lecture.

The two systems are contrasted in the following respects:

1. Their accordance with the obvious interpretation of the Bible.
2. The homage which they pay to the authority of Scripture.
3. The nature and importance of their peculiar doctrines.
4. Their adaptation to pacify a guilty conscience.
5. Their tendency to produce and cherish the Christian virtues.

We quote the following passage to show how far Unitarians do actually go in the disbelief of some of the plainest and most important doctrines of the New Testament. It is generally known that they are agreed in rejecting with scorn the Trinity and the Incarnation of the Son of God; the atonement, and regeneration by a divine, internal influence; and the total and inherent corruption of human nature; but it is not so well understood by many, that they explain away the doctrine of the resurrection of the body, and of a day of final and universal judgment. And some who are aware that such men as Belsham in England, had run to this astonishing length, may yet suppose that Unitarians, in our own country, are more sober-minded, and less erroneous. Let such as entertain these sentiments, ponder the citations from the writings of the leaders of the sect, in the following extract:

“It may perhaps occur to some that I have allowed to Unitarianism too little that is peculiar to Christianity, inasmuch as I have not considered as part of the system the doctrines of a resurrection and final judgment in the sense in which they are generally held by evangelical Christians. I vindicate myself from any unfairness here, by reading to you one or two brief extracts from Unitarian publications of high authority. One of the most distinguished champions of Unitarianism in this country holds the following language:— ‘The resurrection which Paul preached had no concern with the flesh and blood that compose the body while we live. And it will probably be found that our Lord himself, although in speaking either to the Pharisees, who held to the resurrection of the body,—a doctrine which was taught by Zoroaster to the Chaldeans, and had been brought from Chaldea by the Jews, on their return from their captivity,—or to the Sadducees who denied that doctrine, he sometimes appears to accommodate his language to the previously existing opinions of the age,—never yet taught the resurrection of

the body as a doctrine of his own; but that, on the contrary, when speaking as he often spoke, of the resurrection of the dead, he meant the survivorship of the spirit.' Again, in the *Christian Examiner* it is thus written:—'I do not believe there ever will be any general judgment. The assembled universe, so often spoken of, as gathered at once before the throne of God, to be reciprocally spectators of each others' trial and judgment, is, I believe, a mere coinage of the human brain. Certainly the Scriptures assert no such thing.' 'The last day therefore spoken of in the Scriptures, we conceive to be the last day of each individual's mortal life.' And thus in the *Unitarian Advocate*:—'We are told that Christ will judge the world.' 'We are not to presume, however, that he will do it in person; but only that the world will be judged by the principles which he has set forth in the gospel.' I do not say that all Unitarians would concur in these views; but I take for granted the mass of them do, from finding them thus explicitly stated in some of their standard publications; and in view of these statements I leave you to define, as well as you can, the boundary between Unitarianism and Deism."

The more we meditate on the subject, the more are we convinced, that Unitarianism is as really subversive of Christianity as Deism. There is indeed more of truth in the system, but much more of inconsistency. And if there be any such thing as fundamental truth in Christianity they reject it; and, therefore, as it relates to salvation, their prospects are not a whit better than those of a sober deist. While they seem to acknowledge and honour Christ, they do in fact deny him and degrade him. How can they suppose that they honour the Son, even as they honour the Father? We cannot be censured as bigoted for refusing to rank Unitarians among Christians. They are no more Christians than Mohamedans are Christians. They do not, in fact, think so honorably of Christ as do the Mohamedans. If Unitarianism is the true religion, then Mohamed was a great reformer. If this religion be true then the propagation of Christianity produced the most odious and incurable system of idolatry which ever existed in the world. Indeed, upon this hypothesis, Christ utterly failed of establishing the religion which he and his apostles taught; for it has been made to appear with an evidence, to which we can scarcely wish for addition, that Unitarianism was not the belief of the primitive church, in the age immediately succeeding that of

the apostles. In short, if Unitarianism be Christianity, there is nothing in it of so much value, that any reasonable man should think it necessary to make much sacrifice for its support and propagation. Christ is not necessary to salvation, nor to the most exalted piety; for good men, such as Abraham, Samuel, Isaiah, Daniel, &c. were saved, and obtained while living, the favour of God, without any dependence on Jesus Christ. As they have rejected the doctrine of the resurrection and judgment to come, we wonder they do not adopt the whole creed of the Sadducees, and not only reject angels and spirits, but a future state. Surely they can as readily find out how this doctrine was borrowed from the Pagans, as that of the resurrection of the body; for while the heathen never dreamed of a resurrection of the body, they generally held, in some form, the immortality of the soul. As to Zoroaster's teaching the resurrection of the body, we believe it to be a mere Unitarian figment.

We cannot refrain from again recommending to our readers, the careful perusal of this lecture; and would suggest the duty of turning the attention of others to it, who may need the salutary correction which it is adapted to produce on the attentive and rational mind.

The seventh lecture presents a contrast between Practical Christianity and Antinomianism; and contains much useful matter; but on the whole we are less satisfied with it, than with either of the preceding. We do not mean to insinuate, that there are any erroneous views on the subject treated; but there is a vagueness in the exhibition of Antinomianism, which renders it difficult for us to perceive precisely the object of the writer's opposition. The doctrine of eternal justification is commonly reckoned as Antinomian, and doubtless it seems to look that way and is erroneous; yet the defenders of this opinion have never pleaded for exemption from the moral law as a rule of life. Dr. Gill has written much in favour of this opinion, and yet he was considered by all who knew him to be an eminently holy man. Dr. Crisp was called an Antinomian, and certainly used a phraseology respecting our sins being borne by Christ, which is very objectionable; and yet there is reason to think, that he was a man of eminent faith. So the author of "*The Marrow of Modern Divinity*," has sometimes spoken of the abrogation of the moral law to believers, in a way which has given much offence, and occasioned no little trouble in the church; but he never meant to deny that believers are bound to con-

form their lives to the moral law; but only, that the law has no dominion over those who are united to Christ, as a covenant of works; while he strenuously maintains the necessity of personal holiness. There is at present within the established church of England, a set of men who are by their enemies called Antinomians; and yet perhaps they are among the holiest men in England. These are the followers of the late Dr. Hawker, who seems to have been a man of devoted and elevated piety. These men do, in words, reject the law, as having nothing to do with the true believer; but they hold that his very nature leads him to holy living; and that this is effectually provided for in the covenant of grace. As nearly as we have been able to learn, these men hold the doctrines of grace in the clearest and fullest manner, attributing every thing to the righteousness and grace of Christ; but to avoid a legal spirit, they run into some extremes, and give unnecessary offence to others, by unwarrantable expressions. The real opinions of these persons may be seen in a periodical published for several years back, entitled "The Spiritual Magazine," in the works of Dr. Hawker in ten volumes, and in Mr. Caine's treatise on the Covenants.

Arminians are wont to reproach the doctrine of imputed righteousness as a rank Antinomian doctrine; but it would be easy to show that their system contains much more of the leaven of Antinomianism than the Calvinistic; for they believe, that the moral law under which man was created has been set aside by the gospel or new covenant, and a milder law, better suited to our lapsed and fallen nature, has been substituted. And it can be shown, that every other system than that which teaches justification by the righteousness of Christ must be tinctured with Antinomianism. We cannot but express the wish that in a second edition of these lectures, this one may be left out, or what would be better, freed from ambiguous statements, and rendered more definite and palpable in the mode of treating this error. Still, as we said, we do not charge the writer with teaching any thing positively erroneous; but only with not making more evident the errors which he meant to oppose; so that precious truth might not be suspected as Antinomianism.

The last lecture in this volume contains a contrast between Experimental Christianity and Formalism, Sentimentalism, and Fanaticism. In general, we are of opinion that Dr. Sprague is very happy in his method, and in the selection of terms to express his ideas, in these contrasts: but in this case

he has failed exceedingly in this respect. From the manner in which things entirely different in their nature are here grouped together, the impression has been left on our minds that the author had become somewhat weary of his work, and was in haste to bring it to a conclusion. We asked ourselves what conceivable relation is there between Formalism, Sentimentalism, and Fanaticism. Indeed, we are at a loss to know precisely what the author means by the two first terms; for he has not with his usual discrimination given us accurate definitions of them. Formalism, as we understand the term, embraces no peculiar system of opinions, but is merely a practical error, in which many, who profess the true religion, rest in the mere performance of external rites or forms. This, indeed, will bear to be contrasted with experimental Christianity, the essence of which is in the affections of the heart; but certainly ought not to be placed under the same category with sentimentalism, which, if we take up correctly the idea of the writer, is merely a matter of refined feeling. These two things instead of forming one side of the contrast, are susceptible of a complete contrast with one another: the one consisting altogether in external performances, the other in sentiment. But as neither of these necessarily includes any system of erroneous opinions, we think they were unsuitable to be employed as standing in contrast with true religion. And as they are in opposition to one another, so there is little affinity between either of them and fanaticism, with which they are so intimately associated in this contrast. Indeed, we cannot but think that the term sentimentalism is not judiciously introduced in this place. It is an undefinable something which may accompany true experimental Christianity, as well as that which is spurious; therefore it cannot properly stand in contrast with experimental religion. It is then our decided opinion that both these terms, formalism and sentimentalism, should be dropped, and the contrast be between experimental Christianity and Fanaticism, not only because the terms as used are incongruous, but because, in all the other cases in this volume, some system of truth is contrasted with an erroneous one; whereas, in this instance, there is no particular error brought into view when these terms are used. And we would respectfully suggest to the author another reason for confining the contrast instituted in this lecture, to experimental Christianity and Fanaticism. This last subject is here treated by far too cursorily and superficially. There is, at

this time, scarcely a more important subject treated in the volume: and while we should be reluctant to see this subject handled by many who are good writers on other subjects, we believe that Dr. Sprague has so carefully studied the subject of true and spurious revivals; and has been in circumstances so favourable to just observation on the true spirit of Fanaticism as it has appeared in our country, not only in religion, but on the subject of temperance, abolition, retrenchment, &c., that he is well qualified to write judiciously and instructively on this subject. We do hope, therefore, that he will not only take in good part our free but friendly remarks, but will so far yield to our suggestions, as to write this lecture over again, for the next edition of his work, with such improvements as we are sure he is capable of making. And here we would conclude our remarks by cordially recommending this volume to all classes of readers, as one which will richly repay them for the expense of buying and the time of perusing it. It has occurred to us, that it would be very suitable to be introduced as a class-book into our academies and female schools of the higher order, in connexion with the Evidences of Christianity. It would tend greatly to enlarge the minds of young ladies by making them familiar with subjects of the highest interest.

ART. IV.—*The Doctrine of Predestination truly and fairly stated; confirmed from clear Scripture Evidence; and Defended against all Material Arguments and Objections advanced against it: to which is annexed a short and faithful Narrative of a remarkable Revival of Religion in the Congregation of New Londonderry, and other parts of Pennsylvania, as the same was sent in a Letter to the Rev. Mr. Prince of Boston. By Samuel Blair, late Minister of the Gospel at Fagg's Manor, Chester County, Pennsylvania. Baltimore: 1836. Matchett, Printer.*

Amibard Alexander

IT is a matter of lively interest with us to recover from oblivion all the writings of those pious and laborious men who laid the foundation of the Presbyterian church in these United States. We have it also at heart to record all well-authenticated accounts of the characters, manners, and lives

of these fathers of our church; for, unless this is speedily done, many facts, which may now be authenticated, will sink into irremediable oblivion. We feel sincerely thankful, therefore, to those persons in Baltimore, who have given us a reprint of the essay of the Rev. Samuel Blair on Predestination; and also of his letter to the Rev. Mr. Prince of Boston. Mr. Samuel Blair was undoubtedly one of the ablest theologians, and most solemn and successful preachers of the day in which he lived; and no better evidence of the strength of his mind, and the soundness of his opinions, need be sought for, than is contained in this essay on a subject which is often misrepresented by its enemies, and not well understood by its friends. A century has now elapsed since Mr. Blair was conspicuous in the church in those regions; and many of the people who now occupy the ground on which he laboured in the ministry, are scarcely acquainted with any thing further that related to this distinguished man than his name. We think, therefore, that our readers will be gratified with such hints respecting him as we have been able to glean.

The Rev. Samuel Blair was, we have reason to think, born in the north of Ireland, whence his parents emigrated to Pennsylvania when he was a boy. The first certain information which we can obtain of him, was while he was a pupil in the school at Neshamony, under the tuition of the Rev. Mr. William Tennent, the father of Gilbert, William, John, and Charles Tennent. From the literary character and solid attainments of the Tennents and Blairs, who finished their education at this school, the teacher must have been eminent in his profession. And the man who was privileged to train four such men as Gilbert and William Tennent, Samuel and John Blair, must ever be considered as an eminent benefactor of the Presbyterian church. The building in which these distinguished men drank in the salutary streams of classical and theological literature, was no better than a log cabin; which, however, on account of the eminence of the men who proceeded from it, was denominated *THE LOG COLLEGE*, long before any chartered college existed in the middle states. This fabric has for some time been in ruins; but the spot where it stood can be pointed out by the aged inhabitants of the vicinity. When the General Assembly of the Presbyterian church formed the determination to establish a Theological Seminary, many of the friends of the enterprise, felt a strong desire that it should be founded on this sacred spot, where such men as the Tennents and Blairs

had been educated. To encourage such a location, the Rev. Nathanael Irwin, then pastor of the Presbyterian church in Neshamony, left a bequest of one thousand dollars to the seminary, provided the General Assembly should conclude to place the seminary on this site.

When Mr. Samuel Blair had finished his classical, and also his preparatory theological studies, he was licensed to preach the gospel, by the presbytery of Newcastle; soon after which, he received a call from the Presbyterian congregation in Shrewsbury, New Jersey. Until lately, we did not know that this excellent and able minister, had ever been the pastor of a church in our vicinity. And we believe, that, though there is still a Presbyterian church in Shrewsbury, there is not a person in that place or in that whole region who has the least idea that the Rev. SAMUEL BLAIR was once the pastor of a Presbyterian church in that village. Who knows but that God has a regard for the place, for the sake of his devoted servant, who preached and prayed there. At any rate, the knowledge of the fact has created a deeper interest for the place, in our minds, and we believe, will have that effect on the present pastor and his little flock who now worship there. This brings to our recollection, the case of a pious woman who died in that village, not many years since. For eight years she was bed-ridden, and during a part of that time there was no pastor; and the little flock had so dwindled, that the hearts of the few that remained were utterly disheartened: but this good woman never ceased to pray for this almost desolate church, and to encourage all around her to trust in the Lord, and to hope that he would still return and visit the desolations of Zion. And God permitted her to live to see a decent and commodious house of worship erected, a pastor settled, and a goodly number gathered into the fold. Though she was never able to visit this house of prayer, and meet with the precious little flock who worshipped there; yet they were accustomed, as a church, to meet with her, in her own house, not only for preaching, prayer, and praise, but for *breaking of bread* in commemoration of the sufferings of our Lord. The writer of this article, on one occasion, was present, when a devoted servant of God, now at rest, preached in her room, and another minister dispensed the sacred symbols of the Lord's body, to this heavenly minded woman, and to the church in her house: and he seldom ever was witness to a scene of deeper, tenderer interest. Now, had this precious woman

ever known that the pious and evangelical Samuel Blair had once prayed and preached, in the place for which she sent up to heaven so many fervent prayers, it would have mightily confirmed and encouraged her believing heart. It was repeatedly said by one who knew her, and the situation of the church in Shrewsbury, that he doubted not, that this little church was preserved from utter extinction by the prayers of this one woman, who for eight years never left her bed, but as she was lifted by others. Her pastor was desirous that there should be some memorial of this patient and devoted servant of God, and he prepared a tract containing a particular account of her afflictions and her faith; but whether he ever got it published, we are not able to say. The reader will indulge us in this digression, we are sure, as it relates to a church, of which Mr. Blair was once the pastor. And as we have entered into some particulars, respecting this church, which was certainly one of the oldest in this part of New Jersey, we will trespass a little further on the patience of the reader, by remarking, that about the close of the last century, the Presbyterian church in Shrewsbury was burnt to the ground; and one disaster followed another, in such quick succession, that about 1812, almost every vestige of a Presbyterian congregation had disappeared. In the village, it is doubted whether a single Presbyterian family remained. The most considerable members of the church had died or emigrated; and it was almost forgotten, in the place, that there ever had existed a Presbyterian church in Shrewsbury. There were, however, a few respectable families in the vicinity, who claimed to be Presbyterians; but they had no bond of union, no place of worship, and never met together as a religious society. After the lapse of a few years, some pious ladies in Princeton, formed themselves into a missionary society to supply destitute places in the state, with the gospel; and having obtained an enterprising missionary, he was directed to visit this place, and to endeavour to resuscitate the church here. This he accomplished with a laudable zeal; and searched out what Presbyterian families remained in the country around, and had them collected and organized, with the view of erecting a new church.

It appears, that some of the most respectable citizens of Monmouth county had once been members of this congregation; as a sample of which one was found remaining, old Mr. Tiebout, a judge of the Court of Common Pleas. This old gentleman, now about three score and ten, alike distinguished

for piety and good sense, took the young missionary by the hand most cordially, and promised him all the co-operation which his standing in society and property could afford. For a long time he had despaired of seeing the desolations of this little Zion restored. He seemed to himself to be left alone, in the midst of other people, with whom he could not comfortably associate in worship. But now his spirits revived, and his zeal received a new impulse. A plan of rebuilding their church was formed; and while the missionary visited all the families in the vicinity, supposed to be friendly to such an institution, the judge repaired to the city of New York, where he had many friends and acquaintances, and so represented the situation of affairs in Shrewsbury, that he secured some aid to the cause, which was now dearer to his heart than any earthly interest. The result of these exertions was, the erection of a small commodious church, in which the gospel has been preached, and the worship of God conducted, with but short interruptions, for more than a dozen years. The pious judge Tiebout, in the evening of his days, had the delightful privilege of meeting with a small church of single-hearted and devoted Christians; and of having an evangelical preacher to lodge in his house, and to dispense the word of life, every Sabbath day. And when about to leave the world, having no offspring of his own, he bequeathed his house and farm for the support of a minister, for ten years; calculating, that by the time these years had elapsed, the church, if at all prospered, would be able to stand on its own foundation. And this expectation has not been entirely disappointed, for the church still exists and grows, and enjoys the labours of a diligent and faithful pastor.

Here we would take occasion to observe, that we have seen few places in all this country, the situation of which pleases us so well, as Shrewsbury. It is a few miles from the sea shore, and within a few hours sail of New York city. The village is on a beautiful and fertile plain, which lies between two small rivers, called the North and South rivers. At Black-point, where these streams flow together, in full view of the Atlantic ocean on one hand, and the brow of the highlands on the other, is one of the most delightful spots we ever visited. The late William Bingham, Esq. of Philadelphia, whose taste for elegance was unsurpassed in this country, was so struck with the beauty of this situation, that, on an elevation of the highlands, he erected an elegant mansion which commands a complete view of the road by which

all ships that enter the port of New York from the Atlantic must pass in full view. And there is not an hour of the day when vessels of every description may not be seen. The point at the junction of the two small rivers was fixed upon, not many years since, as the site of a polytechnic college, and an ample charter was obtained from the New Jersey legislature, by which the managers were authorized to confer literary degrees, the same as any other college. Buildings were commenced, and one or more of the projectors of the plan took up their residence there; but soon the whole scheme fell through. The reasons of the failure are not particularly known to us, but may readily be conjectured. It seems to us, however, that this spot must sooner or later become the site of some flourishing institution.

But to return to Mr. Blair. It appears from a paper of advice to his people, which he dictated on his death bed, that he had been seventeen years in the ministry, eleven of which he had spent in Fagg's Manor, and the other six he must have been the minister of Shrewsbury; his settlement in that place occurred, therefore, in the year 1734, when he was only twenty-two years of age. To what presbytery this congregation then belonged does not appear; it must have been either to the presbytery of Philadelphia or of New York, for four years afterwards the presbytery of New Brunswick was formed by the synod of certain churches and ministers taken from each of these presbyteries. Mr. Samuel Blair was therefore one of the ministers who constituted our presbytery of New Brunswick, at its first erection, in the year 1738. But it was not long after this event, before he received an urgent call to settle in the congregation of New Londonderry, in Fagg's Manor, Chester County, Pennsylvania. Not wishing to take so important a step without the best advice, he laid the whole matter before his presbytery, who advised him to accept the call, as they were of opinion that it would introduce him into a more enlarged field of usefulness, as that part of the country was then rapidly filling up, by emigrations from the north of Ireland, with a Presbyterian population. Mr. Blair, in his letter to the Rev. Mr. Prince of Boston, annexed to the 'Essay on Predestination,' says, "Having been regularly liberated from my former charge in East Jersey above an hundred miles north-eastward from hence, the reverend presbytery of New Brunswick, of which I had the comfort of being a member, judged it to be my duty, for sundry reasons, to remove

from them." The congregation to which he now came had been recently organized, and consisted, as did nearly all Presbyterian congregations in Pennsylvania, at that time, of emigrants from Ireland; and probably many of them from Londonderry, as they gave the name of New Londonderry to their congregation, or to a village within its bounds. The congregation has generally been spoken of under the name Fagg's Manor; but this letter of Mr. Blair to Mr. Prince is dated New Londonderry, Aug. 6, 1744. This congregation had existed about fourteen or fifteen years before he came to them, but they had never enjoyed the labours of a regular pastor until he was installed over them. This event occurred in the month of April, 1740, although he removed and settled among them in Nov. 1739.

Mr. Blair had not been long labouring in this field before he was permitted to see his ministry crowned with extraordinary success. A glorious revival took place among his people, the influence of which extended far and wide. But as he drew up, at the request of Mr. Prince of Boston, a particular account of this work of grace, for publication, it will be gratifying to many, now after the lapse of nearly a century, to read a narrative of God's wonderful mercy to his church in the days of our fathers.

"I cannot, indeed, give near so full and particular a relation of the revival of religion here as I might have done, had I had such a thing in view at the time when God was most eminently carrying on his work among us: I entirely neglected then to note down any particulars in writing, for which I have been often very sorry since; so that this account must be very imperfect to what it might otherwise have been.

"That it may the more clearly appear that the Lord has indeed carried on a work of true real religion among us of late years, I conceive it will be useful to give a brief general view of the state of religion in these parts before this remarkable season. I doubt not then, but there were still some sincerely religious people up and down; and there were, I believe, a considerable number in the several congregations pretty exact, according to their education, in the observance of the external forms of religion, not only as to attendance upon public ordinances on the Sabbaths, but also as to the practice of family worship, and perhaps secret prayer too; but, with these things the most part seemed, to all appearance, to rest contented; and to satisfy their consciences just

with a dead formality in religion. If they performed these duties pretty punctually in their seasons, and as they thought, with a good meaning, out of conscience, and not just to obtain a name for religion among men, then they were ready to conclude that they were truly and sincerely religious. A very lamentable ignorance of the main essentials of true practical religion, and the doctrines nearly relating thereunto, very generally prevailed. The nature and necessity of the *new birth* was but little known or thought of, the necessity of a conviction of sin and misery, by the Holy Spirit's opening and applying the law to the conscience, in order to a saving closure with Christ, was hardly known at all to the most. It was thought, that if there was any need of a heart-distressing sight of the soul's danger, and fear of divine wrath, it was only needful for the grosser sort of sinners; and for any others to be deeply exercised this way, (as there might sometimes be some rare instances observable) this was generally looked upon to be a great evil and temptation that had befallen those persons. The common names for such soul-concern were, *melancholy*, *trouble of mind* or *despair*. These terms were in common, so far as I have been acquainted, indifferently used as synonymous; and *trouble of mind* was looked upon as a great evil, which all persons that made any sober profession and practice of religion, ought carefully to avoid. There was scarcely any suspicion at all, in general, of any danger of depending upon self-righteousness, and not upon the righteousness of *Christ* alone for salvation. *Papists* and *Quakers* would be readily acknowledged guilty of this crime, but hardly any professed *Presbyterian*. The necessity of being first in *Christ* by a vital union, and in a justified state, before our religious services can be well pleasing and acceptable to God, was very little understood or thought of; but the common notion seemed to be, that if people were aiming to be in the way of duty as well as they could, as they imagined, there was no reason to be much afraid.

“ According to these principles, and this ignorance of some of the most soul-concerning truths of the gospel, people were very generally through the land careless at heart, and stupidly indifferent about the great concerns of eternity. There was very little appearance of any hearty engagedness in religion: and, indeed the wise, for the most part, were in a great degree asleep with the foolish. 'Twas sad to see with what a careless behaviour the public ordinances were attended,

and how people were given to unsuitable worldly discourse on the Lord's holy day. In public companies, especially at weddings, a vain and frothy lightness was apparent in the deportment of many professors; and in some places very extravagant follies, as horse running, fiddling and dancing, pretty much obtained on those occasions."

"There were some hopefully pious people here at my first coming, which was a great encouragement and comfort to me. I had some view and sense of the deplorable condition of the land in general; and accordingly the scope of my preaching through that first winter after I came here, was mainly calculated for persons in a natural unregenerate estate. I endeavoured, as the Lord enabled me, to open up and prove from his word, the truths which I judged most necessary for such as were in that state, to know and believe, in order to their conviction and conversion. I endeavoured to deal searchingly and solemnly with them; and, through the concurring blessing of God, I had knowledge of four or five brought under deep convictions that winter. In the beginning of March I took a journey into *East Jersey*, and was abroad for two or three Sabbaths. A neighbouring minister, who seemed to be earnest for the awakening and conversion of secure sinners, and whom I had obtained to preach a Sabbath to my people in my absence, preached to them, I think, on the first Sabbath after I left home. His subject was the dangerous and awful case of such as continue unregenerate and unfruitful under the means of grace. The text was, Luke xiii. 7. *Then said he to the dresser of his vineyard, behold, these three years I come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and find none, cut it down, why cumbereth it the ground?* Under that sermon there was a visible appearance of much soul-concern among the hearers, so that some burst out with an audible noise into bitter crying; (a thing not known in those parts before.) After I had come home, there came a young man to my house under deep trouble about the state of his soul, whom I had looked upon as a pretty light, merry sort of a youth: he told me, that he was not any thing concerned about himself in the time of hearing the abovementioned sermon, nor afterwards, till the next day that he went to his labour, which was grubbing, in order to clear some new ground: the first grub he set about was a pretty large one, with a high top, and when he had cut the roots, as it fell down, those words came instantly to his remembrance, and as a spear to his heart, *Cut it down, why*

cumbereth it the ground? So, thought he, must I be cut down by the justice of God, for the burning of hell, unless I get into another state than I am now in. He thus came into very great and abiding distress, which, to all appearance has had a happy issue: his conversation being to this day as becomes the gospel of Christ.

“The news of this very public appearance of deep soul-concern among my people, met me an hundred miles from home: I was very joyful to hear of it, in hopes that God was about to carry on an extensive work of converting grace among them; and the first sermon I preached after my return to them was from Matthew vi. 33. *Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness.* After opening up and explaining the parts of the text, when in the improvement, I came to press the injunction in the text, upon the unconverted and ungodly, and offered this as one reason, among others, why they should now henceforth first of all *seek the kingdom and righteousness of God*, viz. that they had neglected too, too long to do so already. This consideration seemed to come and cut like a sword upon several in the congregation, so that while I was speaking upon it, they could no longer contain, but burst out in the most bitter mourning. I desired them, as much as possible, to restrain themselves from making a noise that would hinder themselves or others from hearing what was spoken: and often afterwards I had occasion to repeat the same counsel. I still advised people to endeavour to moderate and bound their passions, but not so as to resist or stifle their convictions. The number of the awakened increased very fast, frequently under sermons there were some newly convicted, and brought into deep distress of soul about their perishing estate. Our Sabbath assemblies soon became vastly large: many people from almost all parts around inclining very much to come where there was such appearance of the divine power and presence. I think there was scarcely a sermon or lecture preached here through that whole summer, but there was manifest evidences of impressions on the hearers; and many times the impressions were very great and general: several would be overcome and fainting; others deeply sobbing, hardly able to contain, others crying in a most dolorous manner, many others more silently weeping; and a solemn concern appearing in the countenance of many others. And sometimes the soul exercises of some, though comparatively but very few, would so far affect their bodies, as to occasion some strange,

unusual bodily motions. I had opportunities of speaking particularly with a great many of those who afforded such outward tokens of inward soul-concern in the time of public worship and hearing of the word; indeed many came to me of themselves in their distress for private instruction and counsel; and I found, so far as I can remember, that, with by far the greater part, their apparent concern in public was not just a transient qualm of conscience, or merely a floating commotion of the affections; but a rational fixed conviction of their dangerous perishing estate. They could generally offer, as a convictive evidence of their being in an unconverted miserable estate, that they were utter strangers to those dispositions, exercises and experiences of soul in religion, which they heard laid down from God's word as the inseparable characters of the truly regenerate people of God; even such as before had something of the form of religion; and I think the greater number were of this sort, and several had been pretty exact and punctual in the performance of outward duties. They saw that they had been contenting themselves with the form, without the life and power of godliness; and that they had been taking peace to their consciences from, and depending upon, their own righteousness, and not the righteousness of *Jesus Christ*. In a word, they saw that true practical religion was quite another thing than they had conceived it to be, or had any true experience of. There were likewise many up and down the land brought under deep distressing convictions that summer, who had lived very loose lives, regardless of the very externals of religion. In this congregation I believe there were very few that were not stirred up to some solemn thoughtfulness and concern more than usual about their souls. The general carriage and behaviour of people was soon very visibly altered. Those awakened were much given to reading in the holy scriptures and other good books. Excellent books that had lain by much neglected, were then much perused, and lent from one to another; and it was a peculiar satisfaction to people to find how exactly the doctrines they heard daily preached, harmonize with the doctrines maintained and taught by great and godly men in other parts and former times. The subjects of discourse almost always, when any of them were together, were the matters of religion and great concerns of their souls. All unsuitable, worldly, vain discourse on the Lord's day seemed to be laid aside among them: indeed, for any thing that appeared, there seemed to be an almost uni-

versal reformation in this respect in our public assemblies on the Lord's day. There was an earnest desire in people after opportunities for public worship and hearing the word. I appointed in the spring to preach every Friday through the summer when I was at home, and those meetings were well attended, and at several of them the power of the Lord was remarkably with us. The main scope of my preaching through that summer, was, laying open the deplorable state of man by nature since the fall, our ruined, exposed ease by the breach of the first covenant, and the awful condition of such as were not in *Christ*, giving the marks and characters of such as were in that condition: and moreover, laying open the way of recovery in the new covenant, through a Mediator, with the nature and necessity of faith in *Christ*, the Mediator, &c. I laboured much on the last mentioned heads, that people might have right apprehensions of the gospel method of life and salvation. I treated much on the way of a sinner's closing with *Christ* by faith, and obtaining a right peace to an awakened wounded conscience; showing, that persons were not to take peace to themselves on account of their repentings, sorrows, prayers, and reformations, nor to make these things the ground of their adventuring themselves upon *Christ* and his righteousness, and of their expectations of life by him: and, that neither were they to obtain or seek peace in extraordinary ways, by visions, dreams, or immediate inspirations; but by an understanding view and believing persuasion of the way of life, as revealed in the gospel, through the suretyship, obedience, and sufferings of *Jesus Christ*, with a view of the suitableness and sufficiency of that mediatory righteousness of *Christ* for the justification and life of law-condemned sinners; and thereupon freely accepting him for their Saviour, heartily consenting to, and being well pleased with, that way of salvation; and venturing their all upon his mediation, from the warrant and encouragement afforded of God thereunto in his word, by his free offer, authoritative command, and sure promise to those that so believe. I endeavoured to show the fruits and evidences of a true faith, &c.

“ In some time many of the convinced and distressed afforded very hopeful, satisfying evidence that the Lord had brought them to a true closure with *Jesus Christ*, and that their distresses and fears had been in a great measure removed in a right gospel-way by believing in the Son of God; several of them had very remarkable and sweet deliverances

this way. It was very agreeable to hear their accounts, how that, when they were in the deepest perplexity and darkness, distress and difficulty, seeking God as poor condemned hell-deserving sinners, the scene of the recovering grace, through a Redeemer, has been opened to their understandings, with a surprising beauty and glory, so that they were enabled to believe in Christ with joy unspeakable and full of glory. It appeared that most generally the Holy Spirit improved, for this purpose, and made use of some one particular passage or another of the Holy Scripture that came to their remembrance in their distress, some gospel-offer or promise, or some declaration of God directly referring to the recovery and salvation of undone sinners, by the new covenant: but with some it was otherwise, they had not any one particular place of scripture more than another in their view at the time. Those who met with such remarkable relief, as their account of it was rational and scriptural, so they appeared to have had at the time the attendants and fruits of a true faith, particularly humility, love, and an affectionate regard to the will and honour of God. Much of their exercise was in self-abasing and self-loathing, and admiring the astonishing condescension and grace of God towards such vile and despicable creatures, that had been so full of enmity and disaffection to him: then they freely and sweetly, with all their hearts, chose the ways of his commandments; their inflamed desire was to live to him forever, according to his will, and to the glory of his name. There were others that had not had such remarkable relief and comfort, who yet I could not but think were savingly renewed, and brought truly to accept of, and rest upon, Jesus Christ, though not with such a degree of liveliness and liberty, strength and joy; and some of these continued, for a considerable time after, for the most part, under a very distressing suspicion and jealousy of their case. I was all along very cautious of expressing to people my judgment of the goodness of their states, excepting where I had pretty clear evidences from them, of their being savingly changed, and yet they continued in deep distress, casting off all their evidences: sometimes in such cases I have thought it needful to use greater freedom that way than ordinary; but otherwise I judged that it could be of little use, and might readily be hurtful.

“Beside these above spoke of, whose experience of a work of grace was in a good degree clear and satisfying, there were some others (though but very few in this congre-

gation that I know of) who, having very little knowledge or capacity, had a very obscure and improper way of representing their case. In relating how they had been exercised, they would chiefly speak of such things as were only the effects of their souls' exercise upon their bodies from time to time, and some things that were just imaginary, which obliged me to be at much pains in my enquiries before I could get any just ideas of their case. I would ask them, what were the thoughts, the views, and apprehensions of their minds, and exercise of their affections at such times when they felt, perhaps, a quivering overcome them, as they had been saying, or a faintness, thought they saw their hearts full of some nauseous filthiness, or when they felt a heavy weight and load at their hearts, or felt the weight again taken off, and a pleasant warmth rising from their hearts, as they would probably express themselves, which might be the occasion or causes of these things they spoke of? and then, when with some difficulty I could get them to understand me, some of them would give a pretty rational account of solemn spiritual exercises. And upon a thorough, careful examination this way, I could not but conceive good hopes of some such persons.

“But there were, moreover, several others, who seemed to think concerning themselves that they were under some good work, of whom yet I could have no reasonable ground to think that they were under any hopeful work of the Spirit of God. As near as I could judge of their case from all my acquaintance and conversation with them, it was much to this purpose: they believed there was a good work going on, that people were convinced, and brought into a converted state, and they desired to be converted too; they saw others weeping and fainting, and heard people mourning and lamenting, and they thought if they could be like those it would be very hopeful with them: hence they endeavoured just to get themselves affected by sermons, and if they could come to weeping, or get their passions so raised as to incline them to vent themselves by cries, now they hoped they were got under convictions, and were in a very hopeful way; and afterwards they would speak of their being in trouble, and aim at complaining of themselves, but seemed as if they knew not well how to do it, nor what to say against themselves, and then they would be looking and expecting to get some texts of scripture applied to them for their comfort; and when any

scripture text, which they thought was suitable for that purpose, came to their minds, they were in hopes it was brought to them by the Spirit of God, that they might take comfort from it. And thus, much in such a way as this, some appeared to be pleasing themselves just with an imaginary conversion of their own making. I endeavoured to correct and guard against all such mistakes, so far as I discovered them in the course of my ministry; and to open up the nature of a true conviction by the Spirit of God, and of a saving conversion.”

“This blessed shower of divine influence spread very much through this province that summer, and was likewise considerable in some other places bordering upon it. The accounts of some ministers being sometimes distinguished by their searching, awakening doctrine, and solemn, pathetic manner of address, and the news of the effects of their preaching upon their hearers, seemed in some measure to awaken people through the country, to consider their careless and formal way of going on in religion, and very much excited their desires to hear those ministers. There were several vacant congregations without any settled pastors, which earnestly begged for their visits, and several ministers who did not appear heartily to put to their shoulders to help in carrying on the same work, yet then yielded to the pressing importunities of their people in inviting these brethren to preach in their pulpits, so that they were very much called abroad and employed in incessant labours, and the Lord wrought with them mightily, very great assemblies would ordinarily meet to hear them upon any day of the week, and oftentimes a surprising power accompanying their preaching, was visible among the multitudes of their hearers. It was a very comfortable, enlivening time to God’s people, and great numbers of secure, careless professors, and many loose, irreligious persons, through the land, were deeply convinced of their miserable, perishing estate, and there is abundant reason to believe, and be satisfied, that many of them were in the issue, savingly converted to God. I myself had occasion to converse with a great many up and down who have given a most agreeable account of very precious and clear experiences of the grace of God, several even in *Baltimore*, a county in the province of *Maryland*, who were brought up almost in a state of heathenism, almost without any knowledge of the true doctrines of Christianity, afford very satisfying evidence of

being brought to a saving acquaintance with God in Christ Jesus.

“Thus, sir, I have endeavoured to give a brief account of the revival of religion among us in these parts, in which I have endeavoured all along to be conscientiously exact in relating things according to the naked truth, knowing that I must not speak wickedly even for God, nor talk deceitfully for HIM: and, upon the whole, I must say it is beyond all dispute with me, and I think it is beyond all reasonable contradiction, that God has carried on a great and glorious work of his special grace among us.”

Besides what we have extracted, the letter contains an account of the religious experience of several individuals, which it would gratify us to lay before our readers; but our limited space forbids us this pleasure; and the whole letter being now republished, all who wish for further information may readily have access to it. As Mr. Blair seems to have been conscientiously desirous of publishing a truly correct narrative of this extraordinary revival, he took the precaution to get the elders of the church to read the account, and to add their attestation. Accordingly Mr. Blair's letter is accompanied by a certificate, signed by six elders, corroborating the narrative of their minister.

The pious reader will be struck with the similarity between this revival and many of those which have been experienced in our own time. The effects of the divine Spirit's operations on the human heart, however many circumstantial differences there may be, are in every age and country substantially the same. And this striking similarity in the exercises of the pious, furnishes a strong evidence of the reality of experimental religion.

Mr. Blair was truly a burning and a shining light; but, like many others of this description, while he enlightened others, he consumed himself. Though his life was protracted a few years beyond that of Brainerd or Davies, yet he did not reach his fortieth year. Of his last sickness we have not been able to collect any particulars, except that from his dying bed he dictated an advice to his beloved people, to which we have already referred, but the discourse, though it was printed, is not within our reach. His remains were deposited in the burying ground at Fagg's Manor, where his tomb may still be seen, on which is the following inscription.

“ Here lyeth the body of
REV. SAMUEL BLAIR,
Who departed this life,
The 5th day of July, 1751,
Aged 39 years and 21 days.

“ In yonder sacred house I spent my breath,
Now silent, mouldering, here I lie in death ;
These silent lips shall wake, and yet declare
A dread Amen to truths they published there.”

His fame was great throughout the Presbyterian church, and has been handed down with lustre to the present time. The Rev. Dr. Finley, a contemporary and friend, who preached his funeral sermon, and who was well qualified to judge of his ministerial character, has left us the following testimony. “ He was diligent in the exercise of his office to the utmost of his bodily strength; *not sparing himself*; and God remarkably succeeded his faithful ministrations to the conversion of many souls.” And as a member of the church judicatories, the same reverend person bears the following honourable testimony. “ We waited for his sage remarks, and heard attentively his prudent reasonings. After *his* words, how seldom had any occasion to speak again. His speech dropped upon us, and we waited for him as for the rain.”

It is reported of him that there was a solemnity in his person and appearance which struck an awe into the mind of the beholder; and this was most conspicuous and impressive when he was in the pulpit. We remember, many years ago, to have conversed with an aged man, who was brought up in Pennsylvania, and had been awakened under Mr. Blair's ministry. He informed us that, when a wild young man, he had been induced, by the fame of Mr. Blair, to ride far, one morning, to hear him preach; but passing the house where the minister had lodged, he saw him walking in the yard with his arms folded; and, said he, “ The very sight of him threw me into a tremor from which I did not recover until I saw him in the pulpit, and heard him, with awful emphasis, give out the text ‘ Except a man be born again,’ &c. From that moment I fell under the deep conviction that I was a lost and ruined sinner, and this impression never left me entirely, until I hope I was born again.” This man had maintained a character of eminent piety for about half a century when he gave us this account.

We are unable to compare such men as Gilbert Tennent and Samuel Blair. They were both preachers of extraordinary power; and were chief instruments in carrying on the work of the Lord.

The estimation in which Mr. Blair was held as a preacher by a good judge, may be learned from the following anecdote, received from the lips of Dr. Rodgers, by a person now living. When the Rev. Samuel Davies returned from Europe, his friends wished to know his opinion of the celebrated preachers he had heard in England and Scotland. After dealing out liberal commendation to such as he admired most, he concluded by saying, that he had heard no one who, in his judgment, was superior to his former teacher, the Rev. Samuel Blair.

Mr. Blair had one brother younger than himself, who was educated also at Neshaminy, and who also entered the ministry. His name was John, and he was first settled in Cumberland county, probably at Carlisle or its vicinity, about the year 1742. But this being then a frontier, he and his people were driven back into the older settlements, by the hostile incursion of the Indians, who were then very troublesome to the new settlements. At the time of the premature death of his brother Samuel, he was without a charge, and very soon received a call to become his successor, as the pastor of the church in Fagg's Manor, which he accepted.

And here may be the proper place to mention, that Mr. Samuel Blair, being a good classical scholar as well as an able theologian and powerful preacher, soon after his settlement at New Londonderry, instituted an academy there, after the model of the one at Neshaminy, the benefits of which he had experienced as well as witnessed. The object of this institution was the preparation of young men of talents and piety for the gospel ministry. So deeply were the fathers of the Presbyterian church in these United States impressed with the necessity of learning, for this sacred office, that several of the ablest and most learned of them devoted much of their time to this work, and by this means accomplished much more than they would have done by spending their whole time in preaching.* That this was true in regard to Mr.

* Besides the Log College at Neshaminy, in Bucks county, Pennsylvania, which may be considered the mother institution, and the academy established at Fagg's Manor by the Rev. Samuel Blair, there was a famous school at West Nottingham, under the tuition of the Rev. Samuel Finley, who succeeded Mr. Davies as president of New Jersey college. In this school the following distin-

Blair's academy, will be evident from a mere recital of the names of some who obtained their classical learning at this school. Among these were Samuel Davies, so well known to the American, and also to the British churches; John Rodgers, so long a conspicuous preacher in New York; Hugh Henry, a highly esteemed Presbyterian minister on the eastern shore of Maryland; Alexander Cumming; and James Finley. To have been instrumental in training such men as these is honour enough for any one man, and this honour properly belongs to Samuel Blair, whose memory should be preserved fresh in the Presbyterian church to the latest periods.

John Blair, who was not inferior to his brother in learning and abilities, though he probably was so in pulpit eloquence, succeeded him not only in the pastoral office, but also as principal of the academy. In this important station he continued for nine years. But, in the mean time, New Jersey college having been erected for the express purpose of raising

guished persons were pupils at the same time: Governor Martin of North Carolina, Ebenezzer Hazard, Esq. of Philadelphia, Dr. Benjamin Rush, and his brother Jacob Rush, Esq. a distinguished and pious judge, the Rev. William Tennent of Abington, and the Rev. James Waddel, D.D. of Virginia. Another excellent academical and theological institution was erected at Pequea, under the care of the Rev. Robert Smith, who married Mr. Blair's sister. From this school also, many eminent men proceeded, whose names we are unable to give. But the sons of the reverend principal are sufficient to give celebrity to the school in which they received their elementary education, for they were all uncommonly excellent classical scholars. Two of them are too well known as presidents of colleges, and as eloquent preachers, to require any further notice here; a third was a highly respectable clergyman, formerly pastor of a Presbyterian church in Wilmington, Delaware, and afterwards of a Dutch Reformed church in this vicinity. But one of the most accomplished classical teachers who ever gave instruction in this country, was the Rev. Dr. Allison, a native of Ireland, but a graduate of the university of Glasgow. He is supposed to have arrived in this country in the year 1735, but his name does not appear on the records of the synod until 1737. He first set up his school at New London, in Maryland, but it was not long before it was transferred to Newark, Delaware; where it long flourished under the care of Dr. M'Dowell, Dr. Allison having been removed to the city of Philadelphia, to be the rector of an academy there, and afterwards appointed vice-provost of the college, now the university of Pennsylvania. It is admitted that Dr. Allison's scholars were the most accomplished in classical literature of any educated in this country: but at that time, in all the schools above mentioned, this species of learning was much more thoroughly cultivated than it is at present. And while we are mentioning Presbyterian schools of that period, we cannot forget the school commenced at Elizabethtown, then transferred to Newark, and erected into a college, and finally fixed at Princeton, under the name of the college of New Jersey, on which the smiles of Providence continue to rest. For much accurate information on this whole subject, see the Rev. Dr. Green's *Christian Advocate*, vol. xi., and also his *History of the College of New Jersey*.

up men for the ministry, and having, by a wonderful Providence, been deprived of several of its distinguished presidents, by their sudden removal by death, Mr. John Blair, in the vacancy produced by the decease of the Rev. Dr. Finley, was elected professor of Divinity; upon which, he removed from Fagg's Manor, and transferred his residence to Princeton; and as the college remained for sometime without a head, Mr. Blair, at the request of the Trustees, acted as president until the arrival of the Rev. Dr. Witherspoon from Scotland. After which he resigned his office in college, and accepted an invitation to settle as pastor at Wallkill, Orange county, New York, where he remained until his death, which event occurred Dec. 8, 1771, at which time he was no more than fifty-one or fifty-two years of age. Mr. John Blair left behind him a Treatise on Regeneration, which is ably written and orthodox. He published also a discourse respecting the terms of admission to the sacraments, in which he endeavours to prove that there is no more propriety in excluding those who wish to attend on them, than to exclude them from other parts of God's worship. This piece the late Dr. J. P. Wilson, of Philadelphia, republished in a small selection of "Sacramental Treatises."

Mr. Samuel Blair had two sisters married to eminent Presbyterian clergymen; the one to the Rev. Dr. Robert Smith of Pequea, as before mentioned; the other to the Rev. Mr. Carmichael of Brandywine; and one sister who remained unmarried. He left behind him one son, the late Rev. Dr. Samuel Blair of Germantown, who died there, at an advanced age, twelve or fifteen years since. Dr. Blair, in his youth, was considered the most accomplished and promising young man in the Presbyterian church, as an evidence of which it may be mentioned, that at the age of twenty-five he was elected president of New Jersey college. This office he wisely declined, but accepted an invitation to settle in the Old South Church, Boston; but in going thither by water, he suffered shipwreck, and was for a time much exposed. By this disaster his health and spirits received a shock from which he never entirely recovered. To increase the misfortune, he lost his whole stock of written sermons, which, to a young man in such a conspicuous situation, must have been no small inconvenience. He returned from Boston after a short residence, and took up his abode in Germantown, Pennsylvania, where he spent the remainder of his life in literary retirement. His health was feeble and his voice

weak; so that during many years that he continued to live, he never had any pastoral charge, and preached but seldom. He was a modest, friendly man, and had a delicate taste in composition and eloquence. When congress met in Philadelphia, he was for a while chaplain to that body.

Mr. Samuel Blair of Fagg's Manor also left several daughters; at least two, one of whom was married to the Rev. David Rice, and became the mother of a numerous offspring; many of whom are still well known in Virginia and Kentucky.

But to return from this long digression to the article under consideration, we would remark, that there existed a difference of opinion in the Presbyterian church, respecting the true character of the revival which commenced about the year 1740, and which extended through almost every colony where Presbyterians resided; and also with great power through New England. There was also a wide difference of feeling in regard to the ministry of Mr. Whitefield, who laboured most incessantly and successfully in this country. The leaders and friends of the revival were the Tennents, Blairs, Smith, Rowland, &c., who belonged principally to the presbyteries of New Brunswick and Newcastle; while the majority of the other presbyteries considered Mr. Whitefield to be a rash enthusiastic man, who, by his impassioned eloquence, drove the people to distraction; and the revival, as it was called, they believed to be a grand delusion, by which poor ignorant souls were persuaded that they were suddenly converted, and adopted into the favour of God. The controversy soon became so hot that the contending parties could no longer live in the same communion. The Presbyterian church was rent into two parts, the one of which received the denomination of *Old Side*, and the other that of *New Side*. Mr. Samuel Blair, as being a chief instrument in promoting the revival in Pennsylvania, took a very active part in defending it, and in repelling the attacks made on the Rev. Mr. Whitefield, whom he and his associates believed to be an eminent servant of God, and the most successful as well as the most eloquent preacher of the day. But happily few things were published on this controversy, and most of what was written has sunk into oblivion, from which it would not be for edification to rescue it if it were practicable. The spirit of the parties, we know, was exceedingly exasperated against each other; but there were then no religious papers to serve as channels for the wide circulation of the bitterness of controversy. By degrees the heat of this contention subsided,

and the leading men on both sides endeavoured to promote, not only peace, but union, which, after a while, they accomplished. This schism lasted about seventeen years, during which time each party had formed a synod. The *New Side* had become strong by a coalition with the Presbyterians of New York; and by the accession to their party of the Presbyterian ministry in East Jersey, who did not join the *New Side* until four years after the schism had taken place. The two synods met in Philadelphia, in the year 1758, and united into one body under the name of THE SYNOD OF NEW YORK AND PHILADELPHIA, and adopted the Westminster Confession of Faith, as the standard of doctrine, to be received by all ministers, candidates, and elders in the church, without qualification. It should be remarked, that the unhappy schism of which we have spoken, had no reference whatever to doctrine. The *NEW SIDE* were as rigid in their adherence to the doctrines of the Confession and Catechisms, as the *Old Side*; the only other point of difference, besides that of the revival, related to the qualifications of candidates for the ministry. The *Old Side* insisted more on the necessity of *learning*; the *New Side*, of *piety*; and in order to secure this point, they examined all candidates on their experimental acquaintance with religion; to which their opponents objected, for various reasons. But when the union was formed this principle was conceded, and became a standing rule in all the presbyteries; and the same regulations relative to learning in candidates were adopted, which are now in force. Mr. Blair did not live to see this union consummated. No doubt he would have rejoiced in it, for he was a man of a meek and respectful disposition, and of a catholic spirit.

The congregation of Fagg's Manor, after the departure of the Rev. John Blair to Princeton began to decline. It was difficult to find a successor to such men, and the people were unwilling to call any minister, unless he came near to the standard to which they had been accustomed. The consequence was that the congregation remained long vacant, and of course did not flourish; and when they obtained a pastor at last, he turned out to be in all respects dissimilar to their former pastors. In his hands every thing went down, until he saw fit to relinquish his charge and remove to the west. Another long vacancy now occurred, and it did appear, as though this once famous church would become extinct. Still some of the old members, of deep and lively piety, remained; but the rising generation possessed another spirit, and many

emigrated to Western Virginia and to the western part of Pennsylvania. In 1795, we conversed with an aged man above 80, who had been an elder in the church of Fagg's Manor, in the time of Samuel Blair, of whom he could not speak without tears; but he seemed to think that the world was entirely changed, for said he, "I hear no man preach now as did Samuel Blair." But God remembered and visited these long desolations. Under the faithful and diligent labours of their late pastor, the Rev. Mr. White, who settled among them when a young man, and continued in active service, about thirty years, this church was again built up, and has for many years held a respectable standing in the presbytery of Newcastle.

We have occupied so much of our allotted space, in giving a sketch of the life of Mr. Blair and collateral events, that we have little room left for any remarks on the "Essay on Predestination;" but as we wish our readers to peruse the whole discourse, there will be no use in making any selections. It will be sufficient to observe, that it is characterized by vigour, clearness, and sound orthodoxy. The person who reads it with attention and impartiality, will need no other evidence that the author was a man of powerful mind, and an uncompromising Calvinist. We were also agreeably disappointed, in finding that there is very little objectionable in the style; and we see not why it may not now be circulated with as much advantage, as a century ago, when it was first published. There are some other things in print from the pen of Mr. Blair, which we should be pleased to see again. Every relic of such a man is precious, and should be preserved.

J. A. Alexander

ART. V.—*Critical Remarks on an alleged interpolation
in Isaiah 7: 8.*

SOME of our readers must have heard Mr. Wolff's graphic account of the orthodox Professor in Germany, who, after stating various neological interpretations of a certain passage, ventured to suggest, with all humility, whether it might not *possibly* be understood, as having reference to Jesus Christ. The same sort of feeling, in a less degree, exists among ourselves, produced by an exaggerated estimate

of foreign erudition. Some, who are forward in disclaiming all regard for systems and authorities, that is, orthodox authorities and Christian systems, seem to lose their independence, when it comes into collision with the systems and authority of German unbelievers. And others, who are peevishly impatient of all opposition from their friends and brethren, seem really afraid to differ from a foreign infidel. The worst effect of this is, that young men form the habit of regarding, with deference, opinions from abroad, which, if broached at home, would be rejected with contempt. As the growing use of German books—the literary worth of which is undeniable—renders inevitable, on the part of students, some acquaintance with the dogmas of the unbelieving critics, it is desirable that these should be exposed in their true character, without regard to that factitious dignity, with which they are invested by the feeling above mentioned. It is not uncommon, for example, to evade the exegetical difficulties of a passage, by rejecting that part of it, in which the puzzle lies, as an interpolation. This is especially resorted to, in cases where the text, as it stands, admits of no explanation, except upon the supposition that the writer was inspired. Rather than make this concession, these impartial critics will resort to any mode of dealing with the text, however violent and arbitrary. And yet they do it with an air of confidence, which frequently imposes on the unsuspecting reader, as if there were not two sides to the question, or as if the evidence lay wholly upon one. The only method of correcting the impressions, which are thus made to the disadvantage of the sacred volume, is by showing, in specific cases, that the supposition of an interpolation is encumbered with at least as many difficulties as the common reading. Such an *exposé* we shall try to make, in reference to the last clause of Isaiah 7: 8. And we beg the reader to bear in mind, that the question is not, whether the text, in its actual state, is free from obscurity and doubt—for we admit that it is not—but whether the difficulties which attend it are more grave and numerous than those which attend the supposition of an interpolation. In order to accomplish our design, it will be necessary to ascertain the meaning of the whole verse, and its connexion with the one which follows. As we do not write exclusively for biblical scholars, we shall abstain from introducing Hebrew words, and hope to be excused for the awkward phraseology and circumlocutions, which will thus be forced upon us.

Isaiah 7: 8. FOR THE HEAD OF SYRIA *is* DAMASCUS, AND THE HEAD OF DAMASCUS *is* REZIN; AND WITHIN THREESCORE AND FIVE YEARS SHALL EPHRAIM BE BROKEN, THAT IT BE NOT A PEOPLE. 9. AND THE HEAD OF EPHRAIM *is* SAMARIA, AND THE HEAD OF SAMARIA *is* REMALIAH'S SON. IF YE WILL NOT BELIEVE, SURELY YE SHALL NOT BE ESTABLISHED.

These verses comprise three distinct parts, each of which, and especially the second, has been a subject of dispute and doubt. These three parts are the following:

(1.) "For the head of Syria [is] Damascus, and the head of Damascus [is] Rezin"—together with the corresponding clause of v. 9—"And the head of Ephraim [is] Samaria, and the head of Samaria [is] Remaliah's son."

(2.) The sentence interposed between these corresponding clauses—"and within threescore and five years shall Ephraim be broken, that it be not a people."

(3.) The last clause of v. 9—"if ye will not believe, surely ye shall not be established." The last of these divisions we shall only have occasion to refer to; the first and second must be separately considered.

Some of the Jewish writers make the first clause of v. 8 the apodosis of the sentence begun in v. 7—"it shall not happen nor come to pass [with respect to you] but [with respect to] the head of Syria [which is] Damascus, and the head of Damascus [which is] Rezin, and the head of Ephraim [which is] Samaria, and the head of Samaria [which is] Remaliah's son"—the last clause of v. 8 being read as a parenthesis. If this were the sense intended by the prophet, "with respect to you" would be an emphatic and essential part of the sentence; yet those very words are supplied by the hypothesis, which shows that the interpretation rests on a gratuitous assumption—not to mention the unnatural and forced construction which it renders necessary.

A new interpretation has been recently proposed by Hitzig, who connects v. 8, in sense, very intimately with v. 4, where Rezin and Pekah are described as "smoking tails of fire-brands." According to his theory, the text may thus be paraphrased—"You have nothing to fear from Syria and Ephraim; for what is Syria? The head of Syria is Damascus, and the head of Damascus is Rezin, a mere smoking fire-brand! And what is Ephraim? The head of Ephraim is Samaria, and the head of Samaria Remaliah's son, another smoking fire-brand!" The description will then be merely contemptuous. It cannot be denied that this interpretation is

ingenious, and that the construction, which it involves, is natural and simple. The objection to it is, that the two latter clauses of vs. 8, 9, imply that their respective parallels are prophetic, not descriptive. Or even waving the last clause of v. 8, the genuineness of which has been disputed, the objection seems to be sufficiently supported by the words "if ye will not believe, ye shall not be established." The belief, here named as a condition of their safety, was surely not a mere belief that Rezin and Pekah were unworthy of regard, but a belief that something would happen in relation to them, which something must be foretold in the words now in question.

There seems therefore little risk of error in adopting the almost unanimous conclusion of the learned, that these words contain a prophecy or promise, intended to encourage the intimidated Jews. On this supposition the text may thus be paraphrased—'You need not fear the conquest of your country by the Syrians and Israelites. Damascus is, and shall be still, the capital of Syria, not of Judah; and Rezin is, and shall be still, the sovereign of Damascus, not of Jerusalem;' and so likewise in relation to Ephraim, Samaria, and the son of Remaliah. Aben Ezra, the author of the first interpretation above mentioned, objects, that the words in question cannot be a prophecy, because the defeat and death of Rezin happened almost immediately, and it could not therefore be predicted, that he was still to be "the head of Damascus." But the amount of the prediction, on the hypothesis last stated, is not that he should continue to be king forever, nor even for a long time, but that, while he did reign, he should reign at Damascus, not Jerusalem, and over Syria, not Judah.*

Between the two clauses just explained we read these words—"and within threescore and five years shall Ephraim be broken, that it be not a people."† This clause has always been a subject of dispute and perplexity, and various expedients have been used to solve its difficulties. The latest German writers cut the knot by rejecting the whole clause as an

* Non latius imperabit Rex Syriæ quam nunc imperat.—*Grotius*.

† Literally "broken from a people," a common Hebrew idiom. 1 Sam. 15: 23, "He hath rejected thee from [being] king." Isaiah 17: 1, "Behold Damascus is taken away from [being] a city. Ch. 23: 1, "It is laid waste, so that there is no house, no entering in," literally from a house, from entering in.—The Septuagint version, in the case before us, is ἐκλείψει ἡ βασιλεία ἐφραϊμ ἀπὸ λαοῦ. *Vulg.* Desinet Ephraim esse populus.

interpolation.* This is certainly the cheapest and most summary expedient that has been proposed; but in the absence of all historical or external proof, it is little more than an acknowledgment of inability to explain the passage. Against such a conclusion, when advanced by German writers of a certain school, it might be urged as an argument *ad hominem*, that it is wholly at variance with their favourite canon of criticism, according to which, a difficult reading is more likely to be genuine than an easy one, the latter, in most cases, being merely the result of an attempt to clear up some original obscurity. It will also be seen that this modern hypothesis of an interpolation involves more gratuitous assumptions, than any of those which it is meant to supersede. The reasons given for rejecting the disputed clause are:

(1.) That it is evidently out of place, and breaks the continuity of the discourse, the first clause of v. 8 and the first clause of v. 9 forming an exact poetical parallelism:

“For the head of Syria is Damascus, and the head of Damaseus Rezin;
And the head of Ephraim is Samaria, and the head of Samaria Remaliah’s son.”

(2.) That a prediction of what was to occur after the lapse of sixty-five years, could not have encouraged or consoled the Jews, in the state of imminent peril to which they were exposed.

(3.) That such exact specifications of time are unknown to the prophets, who deal wholly in round numbers or omit dates altogether.

(4.) That the prediction, as it stands, is wholly at variance with the fact, because the only events in which the fulfilment can be sought are the conquest of Samaria by Tigleth Pileser, and the overthrow of the kingdom of Israel by Shalmaneser, the first of which took place before the death of Ahaz, and the last in the sixth year of Hezekiah, that is to say, about one and twenty years from the date of the prediction.†

It need scarcely be observed that the last of these objec-

* “The difficulties, above stated, lead me to regard it as a gloss or interpolation by a later hand.”—*Gesenius*. “No text in the Old Testament is so certainly a gloss as this.”—*Hitzig*. It is curious to observe, not in this case only, but in others more important, how “a fellow-feeling makes us wondrous kind.” *Hitzig*, for example, takes no pains, in general, to disguise his contempt for the critical talent of *Gesenius*; but as soon as he finds him rejecting a signal prophecy as spurious, he refers the reader to the thorough and masterly argument of his rival—“die gründliche Kritik derselben bei *Gesenius*.” When the authority of revelation is to be assailed, Pilate and Herod are soon made friends.

† *Gesenius* adds, as another reason, that the prediction is inconsistent with v. 16, where the desolation of the country is foretold as about to take place in a

tions to the genuineness of the clause, if admissible, is fatal, and abundantly sufficient to decide the whole dispute. If the passage, as it stands, contains a false prediction, it cannot be recognized as genuine by any who recognize the scriptures as inspired, though we cannot understand why one who denies their inspiration, should scruple to admit the existence of such errors, or pronounce a passage spurious because it is not true. Be that as it may, if this objection is well founded, any refutation of the rest would be unavailing. It is therefore entitled to the first consideration.

The historical facts, assumed in this objection, are not to be disputed. The first is, that about two years after the date of this prophecy, Tiglath Pileser, king of Assyria, called in by Ahaz to assist him, took from Pekah the best part of his dominions, "Gilead and Galilee, all the land of Naphtali, and carried [the inhabitants] captive to Assyria," (2 Kings 15: 29,) Pekah himself being killed about the same time by Hoshea who succeeded him, (*ib. v. 30.*) In the same expedition Tiglath Pileser took Damascus, killed Rezin, and carried many Syrians into captivity, (2 Kings 16: 9.) The other fact is, that in the ninth year of Hoshea, who succeeded Pekah, "Shalmaneser, king of Assyria, took Samaria, and carried Israel away into Assyria," (2 Kings 16: 9.) To which of these events, the objector asks, does the prophecy refer, and how can the chronology of the prediction be made to quadrate with the facts of history?

In this inquiry it is presupposed, not only that the statements above given are correct, but that these are the only events to which the prediction can refer. This being granted, for the present, a mere English reader might think it a sufficient reply to the objection, that the word "within" does not mean precisely at the end of a certain period, but any time before its close, as that which is to

year or two. But that the desolation there described, and the destruction here predicted, are identical, is a mere assumption, or, to use a favourite expression of his own, "bittweise angenommen." He also seeks support for his hypothesis in the collocation of the Hebrew words, the later form "sixty and five" being used instead of the ancient "five and sixty." It is a sufficient answer to this argument, that the former collocation occurs, at least, three times in the book of Genesis—viz. in ch. 4: 24. 18: 28. 46: 15. If this mode of expression was in use at all, so early, whether it was the common one or not, there is no reason why Isaiah may not have employed it in poetical composition. The precise determination of the age of ancient writings, from the occasional use of certain words and phrases, is another variety of critical empiricism, much in vogue at present, upon which we cannot dwell.

happen to-morrow is certainly to happen *within* a year. But this is a misconception founded on an imperfect version. "Within" is not a fair equivalent for the Hebrew phrase, which strictly means "in yet," the true sense of the clause before us being, not "within the space" or "during the lapse of sixty-five years," but "in sixty-five years longer," and the usage of the language entirely forbids our taking the expression in an indefinite sense. Thus Jeremiah says (ch. 28: 3, 11) "within two full years," and Joseph to the butler and baker (Gen. 40: 13, 19) "yet within three days shall Pharaoh lift up thy head," which event took place "the third day" from the time of the prediction, (ib. v. 20.) So likewise Joshua said to the people (ch. 1: 11), "Within three days ye shall pass over this Jordan," which assurance "came to pass AFTER three days," (ch. 3: 2.) It must be admitted, therefore, that the clause before us was intended to define the time of the event predicted, and we are still required to reconcile the time thus defined with the date of the event.*

The easiest and worst mode of solving the problem is by an emendation of the text. Of such emendations it will here suffice to mention three.

Stendel proposes to change a single vowel point in the word translated *years*, the effect of which, as he alleges, is to make it mean *repeatedly* or *again*. He then proposes to supply the word "days" after "sixty-five." But "sixty-five days" is as much too short a period as "sixty-five years" is said to be too long; not to mention that the form and sense given to one of the Hebrew words are equally unauthorized, and that the ellipsis of "days" is merely a gratuitous assumption. The other two emendations strike directly at the root of the difficulty and change the numbers given in the text.

Grotius and Cappellus drop the plural termination of the

* Though the argument from usage, as stated in the text, is sufficient to set aside the indefinite interpretation of the phrase in question, it will not be improper to suggest, as an additional objection, that, if such were its import, no good reason could be given why a definite and broken number should have been employed instead of a round number, such as seventy or sixty. This objection could only be evaded by supposing, with Luzzatto, that sixty-five is in fact here used as a round number, or rather as two round numbers, sixty being used in the Talmud as an indefinite expression for any large number, and five, even in scripture, for any small one. "Five of you shall chase a thousand." According to this ingenious but extraordinary exposition, "threescore and five" means pretty much the same as our indefinite expression *a hundred and more*, or *a hundred more or less*—"de maniere que 65 soit dit comme nous dirions, cent et plus."

word translated *sixty*, and convert it into *six*. "Within six and five years Ephraim shall be broken." But even admitting that Isaiah could have written "six and five" instead of "eleven," the chronology of this exposition is no less open to objection than that of the common reading. Cappellus argues that, as the prophecy was uttered two years before the death of Pekah, and as Shalmaneser conquered Samaria in the ninth year of Hoshea who succeeded Pekah, the interval between the prediction and the event was just eleven years. It is generally agreed, however, that this computation is entirely erroneous, as it overlooks a considerable interval of interregnum,* and that the conquest of Shalmaneser took place twenty-one years after this prediction.

Admitting this to be the case, Vitringa has proposed another emendation of the text. The Hebrew word for *sixty* is derived from *six*, by adding the plural termination, ים. Now in Hebrew manuscripts it is a common practice to abbreviate the plural form of nouns by omitting the ים, this omission being indicated by a stroke over the י, and it so happens that י alone, with a similar stroke over it, is used, in later Hebrew, as a cipher for the number ten. This numerical sign, Vitringa supposes some transcriber to have confounded with the plural termination, and thus to have substituted "sixty and five" for "six, ten, and five," i. e. $16 + 5 = 21$, the exact number of years which intervened between the prophecy and Shalmaneser's conquest. To the question, why Isaiah should have said "sixteen and five" instead of "twenty-one," he ingeniously replies, that by this unusual combination he distinguishes the sixteen years of Ahaz from the five of Hezekiah, which should elapse before the event happened—assuming that the prophecy was uttered in the first year of Ahaz, and that Hezekiah reigned one year in common with his father—both which suppositions are consistent with the best chronological hypotheses. The Germans, however, very properly object, that Vitringa's theory involves two other suppositions, which are altogether destitute of proof. The one is, that it was usual to denote a number, partly by words and partly by ciphers, "six, 10,

* "This computation does not agree at all with the chronology of the kings of Judah, whose history we know more accurately [than that of Israel], and with respect to whom there is no ground for suspecting any error in the text. There must therefore be assumed, and is in fact assumed by almost all historians, an interregnum between Pekah and Hoshea, with which hypothesis this computation [of Cappellus] is entirely inconsistent."—*Gesenius on Isaiah*, vol. 1, p. 288.

and five," instead of "6, 10, and 5" or "six, ten, and five." The other is, that letters were used at all for ciphers in Isaiah's time. The assumption of these facts is certainly inadmissible, but not more inadmissible than that of an interpolation, made at some indefinite period, far beyond the date of any extant manuscript or historical evidence, by some unknown hand, and for some mysterious purpose, not, as in other cases, to clear up an obscurity, but, it should seem, with an express design to make "confusion worse confounded." All these absurdities are involved in the hypothesis proposed by Gesenius, who nevertheless reflects, with great contempt, on the gratuitous assumptions of Vitringa. *Quis tulerit Grucchos de seditione querentes?*

The question, however, still remains, whether the passage, as it stands, can be reconciled with history. We answer that it can, in more ways than one, each far more natural and rational than the hypothesis of an interpolation. Some of the ancient Jews gave an interpretation of the passage, with respect to its chronological difficulties, which has been adopted by a long array of later writers.* Assuming Shalmaneser's conquest as the event predicted, they count backwards, and adding six years of Hezekiah's reign, to sixteen of Jotham's, and as many of Ahaz, find that twenty-seven more are wanting to complete the sixty-five, which twenty-seven being taken from the fifty-two of Uzziah's reign, we reach the twenty-fifth year of that king, as the *terminus a quo*. Now, according to the tradition of the Jews, Uzziah was smitten with the leprosy in the twenty-seventh year of his reign, and that event was synchronous with "the earthquake" several times mentioned as a signal occurrence of Uzziah's reign. In this reign Amos prophesied, the title of whose book is "the words of Amos who was among the herdmen of Tekoa, which he saw concerning Israel in the days of Uzziah king of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam son of Joash king of Israel, two years before the earthquake"—i. e. according to the traditional computation above stated, in the twenty-fifth year of Uzziah, or sixty-five years before the conquest of Samaria by Shalmaneser. Among other predictions uttered by Amos, at the time thus ascertained, we find the following, twice repeated (Amos 7: 11, 17)†—"Israel

* Jerome—Jarchi—Kimchi—Calvin—Brentius—Oecolampadius—Pellicanus—Vatablus—Forcieri—Schmid—Sanctius—Alting, &c.

† The English version of the two texts varies, but in Hebrew they are just the same.

shall surely be led away captive out of their own land." To this prediction, as the Jews suppose, Isaiah here refers, and they explain his meaning thus—"At the expiration of the sixty-five years, Ephraim shall be broken, that it be not a people"—i. e. 'when sixty-five years have elapsed from the date of the prophecy of Amos, it shall be fulfilled.'

The difficulties which attend this exposition are not to be dissembled; but neither should they be exaggerated. It is objected that the phrase here used always elsewhere has relation to a period reckoned from the time of speaking, and this is certainly the ordinary usage; but it does not follow that the other application of the phrase is inadmissible. 'Such a thing will happen at the end of nineteen hundred years' properly means, that it will happen nineteen hundred years from the present time; but if an interpreter of the Apocalypse should say 'I believe that the millennium will begin at the end of nineteen hundred years,' he would be generally understood to mean nineteen hundred years after the birth of Christ. The difference, in this case, would arise from the reader's knowledge of a former era, and his previous habit of computing from that era, as a *terminus a quo*, in relation to this subject. If then the contemporaries of Isaiah were familiar with the prophecy of Amos, and expecting its fulfilment, he might, without absurdity or inconvenience, assume it as a well known *terminus a quo*, in his own prediction. That such a mode of computation was less simple and more liable to be mistaken, than a direct one from the present time, may be admitted, as a circumstance entirely in keeping with that partial obscurity and studied ambiguity which are almost essential to the being of a prophecy. The definiteness of the number "sixty-five" is excepted to, as we shall see below, as something at variance with prophetic usage. But is not the force of that objection greatly weakened by the supposition, that the number, thus complained of as too definite, was to be reckoned from a former epoch, not expressly but implicitly referred to? The want of a direct specification of that epoch has, indeed, been alleged as an objection to the theory; but on the ground just mentioned, it may be rather said to strengthen it. Nor was there any more need of Isaiah's mentioning the prophecy of Amos, than in the imaginary case before used as an illustration, it would be necessary to name the Christian era as the *terminus a quo*. It is only necessary to suppose that the people were familiar with the prophecy referred to and expecting its ful-

filment, which is certainly a natural and simple supposition, especially when we consider the reverent attachment of the believing Jews to their scriptures, and their national jealousy of Ephraim or Israel.

This hypothesis, however, involves another supposition or assumption, not so easily explained. This is the chronological assumption upon which it rests, especially the synchronism of "the earthquake" with Uzziah's leprosy, as having both occurred in the twenty-seventh year of that king's reign. This is alleged to be a mere rabbinical invention, intended to relieve the exegesis of the passage from inexplicable difficulties. That it rests on no historical foundation better than the tradition of the Jews, must be admitted. That this tradition was invented for the end alleged, is itself a gratuitous assumption. If it involved any thing incredible, or even highly improbable, the case were not the same; but the very facts assumed, if they had been stated in the sacred history, would have appeared not only credible but natural and in their proper place. Nay more, the very fact that a tradition, in itself not improbable, removes the otherwise inextricable difficulties of an ancient author, would, in any other department of criticism, be a strong presumptive proof, that the tradition was a true one. It is not to be forgotten, that, in cases like the present, demonstrative certainty is not to be expected; that the choice lies, not between a theory involving some assumptions on the one hand, and a clear historical deduction on the other, but between hypotheses possessing different degrees of plausibility, and all involving something quite incapable of proof.

Allowing, therefore, all due weight to the objections which have been urged against this ancient exposition,* let it be candidly compared with the modern German theory of interpolation. The facts assumed in the former, without historical proof, are simply these:

(1.) That "the earthquake" occurred in the twenty-seventh year of Uzziah's reign.

(2.) That the prophecy of Amos, ch. 7: 11, 17, was so familiar to the Jews, that Isaiah, when predicting the destruction of the ten tribes, might have referred to it, and reckoned

* It is mentioned, not only by Jerome, but by Eusebius, whose words are these. Τα γε μὴν ἐξήκοντα πέντε ἔτη φασὶν Ἑβραίων παῖδες εἰς τὸ ἀκριβὲς συμπληροῦσθαι, εἴ τις ἀριθμῆν ἄρξῃται τοῦς χρόνους ἀπὸ τοῦ πέμπτου καὶ εἰκοστοῦ ἔτους τοῦ Ὀζίου βασιλείας.

from it, without any serious risk of being generally misunderstood.

To these two suppositions let as much improbability be attached as they will bear, and then let them be compared with the hypothesis of Gesenius, which gratuitously assumes,

(1.) That in Isaiah's autograph, the clause in question was entirely wanting, and continued to be wanting for an undefinable period.

(2.) That some unknown person, in transcribing the prophecy, chose to insert a sentence of his own, which sentence was the clause in question.

(3.) That in making this interpolation, he had no regard to facts which had occurred, because, by supposition, the clause is inconsistent with facts.

(4.) That he did not design to elucidate the passage, because it is confessedly more intricate and dark than it would be without the disputed clause.

(5.) That he did not design merely to insert a sentence of vague and general import, because in that case he would probably have specified no number, much less so precise a number as the one in question.

(6.) That, to all appearance, therefore, he acted without motive, or that at least his motives are to us mysterious and inexplicable in a high degree.

(7.) That the ancient Jews, though proverbially scrupulous in guarding their sacred books from depravation, suffered this arbitrary and absurd interpolation to become a part of a most signal prophecy, though fully aware that it obscured the meaning, embarrassed the sacred history, and jeopardized the credit of a writer, whom they believed to be inspired of God.

(8.) That the text, thus corrupted, eventually gained such universal circulation as to obliterate all traces of the genuine reading, though all the advantages of clearness, coherence, and simplicity were in favour of the latter.

It would be doing gross injustice to the Jews, to say of such a figment, *Credat Judaeus Apella!**

Thus far we have proceeded on the supposition, that the objector is correct in assuming Shalmaneser's conquest as the event to which the prophecy refers. In order to present a full view of the matter in controversy, it must now be added

* It was a significant saying of Lord Hailes, that a good book might be written sur la crédulité des incrédules.

that the truth of this assumption has been questioned or denied by critics and chronologers of no mean name, among whom it will suffice to mention Piscator and archbishop Usher.

According to these writers, the prediction has reference, not to the conquest of Samaria by Shalmaneser, but to the extinction of the Israelites as a distinct nation, by their amalgamation with Assyrian colonists, when "the king of Assyria brought men from Babylon, and from Cuthah, and from Ava, and from Hamath, and from Sepharvaim, and placed them in the cities of Samaria, INSTEAD OF THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL, and they possessed Samaria, and dwelt in the cities thereof," (2 Kings 17: 24.) Which king of Assyria is meant, appears from Ezra 4: 2, where the foreign colonists say to the Jews—"We seek your God, as ye do, and we do sacrifice unto him, since the days of Esar-haddon king of Assur, which brought us up hither." Now it was Esar-haddon who carried Manasseh into captivity (2 Chr. 33: 11), which event, according to the Talmud and the Seder Olam, took place in the twenty-second year of Manasseh's reign, i. e. sixty-five years from the date of this prediction. It was probably in the course of the same expedition that he effected the amalgamation before mentioned, to which, as Usher argues, the expression of Isaiah is peculiarly appropriate. He does not say, that in sixty-five years Ephraim should be overthrown, or conquered, or made captive, but that it should be so broken or smitten as to cease to be a nation, which was signally accomplished, when it became impossible to distinguish the pure Israelites, if any such there were, from the Samaritans or men of mixed descent.

In order to an impartial judgment, the difficulties which attend this exposition must be distinctly stated. The following objections have been urged, in substance, by Vitringa and Gesenius.

(1.) Too much stress is laid upon the phrase, "that it be not a people," which might, without any impropriety, be used in relation to the downfall of the government of Israel, and the cessation of its independence.

(2.) It is assumed, without proof, that the Israelites remained distinct until the time of Esar-haddon, and then for the first time lost their nationality.

(3.) It is assumed, without proof, that the introduction of the Aramean colonists was synchronous, or nearly so, with

the defeat and deportation of Manasseh, and that the latter happened in the twenty-second year of his reign.

(4.) It is not probable that the prophet, in the circumstances of the case before us, would have passed by the nearer and more important event of the destruction of the kingdom of the ten tribes, to predict a comparatively trifling incident, the amalgamation of the remnants of the people with the foreign colonists.

The first objection is entirely negative; all that it asserts may be admitted without effect upon the adverse argument.

Because the phrase in question might be applied, in an improper sense, to a partial destruction of the nation, does it follow that it cannot be applied here, in its proper sense, to their complete annihilation as a distinct people? The objection itself implies that the latter application is the more obvious and exact one, and any reader can determine for himself whether the terms employed are more descriptive of the downfall of a government, or of the loss of distinctive nationality produced by exile and amalgamation.

As to the second objection, it is sufficient to observe, that between the time of Shalmaneser and that of Esar-haddon, the sacred history repeatedly refers to Israel as a people still subsisting;* nor is it easy to assign any reason for the introduction of the Assyrian colonists, unless it was intended to consummate the destruction of the Israelites, not as individuals, but as a people.

The synchronism objected to (in No. 3) is in itself more probable, than a contrary supposition would be. It is certainly more likely, in the absence of explicit proof, that Esar-haddon finished the conquest of Israel and effected that of Judah, in a single expedition, than that he did so in two different campaigns. As to the precise year of Manasseh's reign, it must be freely admitted that its designation rests on a mere tradition; but one which involves no improbability. It is also worthy of notice, that this tradition was not suggested, in the first place, for the purpose of explaining this prediction, but is stated in the Jewish books before referred to, under another head and in a different connexion. There

* 2 Kings 23: 20. Josiah "slew all the priests of the high places, that were there," viz. (v. 19) "the high places that were in the cities of Samaria," (2 Chr. 34: 6) "the cities of Manasseh and Ephraim and Simcon, even unto Naphtali." (v. 7) "Josiah cut down all the idols throughout the land of Israel." (2 Chr. 35: 18) "The priests and the Levites and all JUDAH AND ISRAEL that were present, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem."

is therefore the least possible occasion for suspicion as to its authenticity. In reference to this objection and the one preceding, both of which are aimed at assumptions without proof, we must remind the reader, as we did before, that he is called upon to choose, not between an axiom and a problem, but between two problems, and we only ask that the gratuitous assumptions, charged upon Usher's exposition, may be placed by the side of those involved in the conclusion of Gesenius and Hitzig, and a judgment formed on the result of that comparison. If Usher's hypothesis is, in this respect, unreasonable, that of Gesenius is absurdity itself.

The fourth objection is exceedingly intangible. The mention of one event rather than the other must be referred to a discretion, for which the prophet himself was not responsible. If the object of the prophecy was to announce God's intended dealings with the ten tribes of Israel, it is hard to perceive why the mention of the great decisive shock should have been more appropriate than that of the final consummation. But whether the objection can be answered or not, it is clearly of too slight a texture to resist the arguments in favour of the theory against which it is aimed.

We have now propounded two solutions of the chronological difficulty, which has been made a reason for rejecting the clause as spurious. Each is supported by authoritative names, as well as by strong arguments. On comparing the objections to these two hypotheses with those which attend the supposition of a corruption in the text, either by alteration or interpolation, the principal argument against the genuineness of the clause may be safely set aside.

As the objection just disposed of is the last of the series given above (p. 562), it will be convenient to pursue the same inverted order in our further observations. The next objection, then, is that the mention of a number so precise as "sixty-five" is at variance with the usage of the prophets, who either dispense with specifications of time, or confine themselves to what are called round numbers. Allowing to this argument its utmost force, it only furnishes the ground of a presumption, which might serve to corroborate, but cannot countervail, a proof from other evidence. An argument from usage can only be conclusive in relation to matters of usage. To extend it further would in fact be to maintain that any form of expression, which occurs but once, is spurious. The objection, moreover, assumes what is not true, viz. that the numbers specified, in other cases, by the pro-

phets, are round numbers, in the sense of indefinite, vague numbers. Seventy, for instance, as used by Jeremiah and Daniel, is a round number, in the sense of being a multiple of ten; but that it was not intended to be definitely understood, is a gratuitous assumption, on the part of those who disbelieve the scriptures. Even they, however, must admit that if the number sixty-five could be historically shown to have exactly corresponded with the date of the event, and to have been announced before it, the argument from usage would be null and void. This objection, by itself, is therefore wholly without weight.

Admitting, however, that the prophet might have specified the time with such precision, the objector still insists, that the prediction is irrelevant to the occasion, and inadequate to the purpose which he must have had in view. He had just exhorted Ahaz, by divine command, not to be afraid of his invaders, the kings of Syria and Ephraim. He then proceeds as if to give a ground for the strong confidence which he had recommended. He first assures him, that the bounds of Syria were not to be enlarged, and then adds, in the words of this clause, that in sixty-five years Ephraim should be broken, so as not to be a people. Now what consolation, under imminent danger, could be rationally gathered from the promise of an event so distant?

This objection merits grave consideration, as it is founded, in a great degree, on truth and common sense, and not on cavil and conjecture. We say *in a great degree*, because the objection does assume too much; for it assumes, not only that the prophet's object was to encourage Ahaz, but that this was his only object, and that consequently whatever did not tend to promote this object was irrelevant and out of place. But the sending of Isaiah to meet Ahaz, who was an impious unbeliever, and had manifested no desire for divine counsel, nor any sense of his dependence on Jehovah, is, at least, presumptive proof, that something more was intended than to relieve his fears. The place appointed for the meeting shows, moreover, that an effect was designed to be produced upon the people as well as upon the king, and from the whole tenor of the subsequent context (particularly v. 14), it is clear that the designed effect was not merely that of dispelling present fear, but that of fixing the attention on ulterior events, and on the whole series of Jehovah's promises.

All this notwithstanding, it is still true that the fears of

the king and people were to be dispelled, and that the irrelevancy of this clause to that design does constitute an argument against its being genuine. We dispose of the objection, therefore, not by denying its allegation, but by admitting and explaining it. The prophet himself appears to have perceived the want of correspondence in the members of this sentence, and to have added the first clause of the next verse for the very purpose of supplying what would otherwise have been a great defect in his consolatory prophecy. The train of thought, in which the passage had its origin, may be thus described. Intending to allay the fears excited by the presence or approach of the invaders, the prophet looks first at the king of Syria, as the more powerful of the confederates, and assures his hearers, that the bounds of Syria were not to be enlarged—"the head of Syria is Damascus, and the head of Damascus Rezin"—after which he turns to Ephraim, and is suddenly engrossed with a prophetic view of the final catastrophe which awaited that apostate kingdom—"within threescore and five years shall Ephraim be broken, that it be not a people"—then, as if remembering that this prediction, however interesting or important, was not adapted to his immediate purpose, that of encouraging the invaded Jews, he repeats, in reference to Ephraim, what he had just before predicted as to Syria, viz. that its boundaries were not to be enlarged by the conquest of Judea—"and the head of Ephraim is Samaria, and the head of Samaria Remaliah's son."

The whole may then be paraphrased as follows. 'Be not afraid of Rezin and Pekah. Rezin is sovereign of Damascus, and Damascus is the capital of Syria, nor shall either become more than it now is. As for Ephraim its utter destruction is approaching; in sixty-five years it shall cease to be a people. And in the mean time, though the kingdom still subsists, it shall not be enlarged. Pekah shall never reign in any other capital, nor shall Samaria be the capital of any other kingdom.' This relation of the clauses may be rendered obvious by simply inserting "in the mean time" after "and" at the beginning of v. 9.*

This view of the passage, if it does not render it entirely natural in its construction or entirely free from doubt, may at least be said to exempt it from an absolute necessity of mutilation. Any exposition of the passage, as it stands, if coherent with the context and consistent with itself, must be

* Calvin translates the particle *interea*.

preferred to the long series of gratuitous assumptions, involved in the supposition that the clause is spurious.

If the foregoing answer to the second objection (as arranged above, p. 562) is sufficient and conclusive, it will also serve to set aside the only one remaining. This is a rhetorical one, founded on the apparent dislocation of the sentence, by the insertion of a foreign clause between two parallel and nicely balanced members. Without here dwelling on the undue stress, habitually laid by the modern German critics, upon points of mere taste, which are subject to no law, except that of individual sentiment and judgment, it is sufficient to observe that if the train of thought, to which this sentence gives expression, has been fairly represented in the foregoing paragraph, the irregular construction, here complained of, though it may detract from that kind of elegance which consists in mere mechanical regularity, is no more a real fault, even of style, than Milton's abrupt pauses and occasional violations of the ten-inch rule. As to the sense, supposing it to be what we have represented it above, it is expressed more strongly, as the text now stands, than it could have been by the most punctilious adherence to the German standard of rhetorical propriety, and the German rules of Hebrew composition.

The natural conclusion from the arguments which have been advanced, is, that the reasons offered furnish no sufficient ground for altering the text of the clause in question, much less for rejecting it entirely as spurious. An extended discussion of the question has been given, because a similar course of reasoning may be applied to many other cases, and because it is desirable to show distinctly, that this favourite modern mode of solving difficulties, by expunging the passages in which they are involved, so far from arguing superior penetration on the part of its inventors, is, in fact, an evasive artifice, the ultimate design of which is to escape the logical necessity of owning, that the scriptures were given by inspiration of God. Our design will be accomplished, if what we have written should put the biblical inquirer on his guard against those dogmatical decisions in relation to the genuineness of certain parts of scripture, which are characteristic of some German writers, and not without effect on their disciples in America.

ART. VI.—*Lectures on the Atheistic Controversy; delivered at Sion Chapel, Bradford, Yorkshire. By the Rev. B. Godwin, D.D. With an Appendix to the American edition.* Second American edition from the London. Published at Boston, by Hilliard, Gray & Co. 1836.

Archibald Alexander

WE are pleased to find that the demand for these lectures has been such as already to justify a second edition. Many persons seem to think that all arguments on this subject are useless, because there are, as they suppose, few, if any, atheists in the world; and if there are any, they are too blind and perverse to be at all influenced by any reasoning, however conclusive it may be. As to the non-existence or paucity of atheists, we can only say, that we wish it were the fact; but the truth is far different. Men entertaining atheistical opinions are numerous, bold in avowing their sentiments, and zealous in propagating them. And as to the objection that atheists are too much blinded by prejudice and bad passions to be benefited by argument, it is probably too true, in regard to such as are confirmed in their atheistic belief: but there are many who have only commenced this dreadful career, and who are not destitute of misgivings, as to the truth of the system of infidelity. To such, a clear and forcible argument may be of infinite service, in reclaiming them from the danger of sinking into the most horrible gulf in the universe. But the chief reason for entering into the atheistic controversy is, for the sake of those who are not yet caught in this snare of the Devil, but who may be placed in such circumstances as to be exposed to the danger of being infected with this deadly poison.

The account which Dr. Godwin gives of the occasion of these lectures, is so interesting, and shows so clearly the extent and increase of atheistical opinions in the manufacturing districts of England, that we think it will be useful to lay it before our readers, from his preface, with very little abridgment.

“Something more than twelve years ago, Providence directed the author’s steps to one of the most populous manufacturing districts of the kingdom; he soon observed, that the character of the population, in general, was marked by no small degree of activity, energy, and enterprise, extending to every subject which engaged their attention: that they seldom remained indifferent spectators, or silent observers of

what was passing around them, but on all questions of trade, politics, or religion, they generally took a decided part, and, whether right or wrong, pursued their object with determination and spirit. While, therefore, he beheld with satisfaction the vigorous efforts which were made to support most of the benevolent institutions which distinguish the present day, he saw, with deep regret, vice assuming a great degree of boldness, and perceived, that a daring spirit of infidelity had, to a considerable extent, not only rejected the truths of revelation, but even denied or questioned the being of a God. He found, that besides regular meetings for discussing the favourite topics of scepticism, many works of infidelity were in circulation, and that the opportunities afforded for the inculcation of its tenets, by the frequent intercourse to which manufacturing employments give rise, were by no means lost. He frequently wished, that some one qualified for the undertaking would step forward in the cause of truth, and endeavour, by a reference to nature, and an appeal to reason, to stop the progress of errors so pernicious. To one or two friends of scientific attainments, a plan of this kind was suggested, but in vain; while the pressure of the author's engagements, and the sense of the importance of such an undertaking, deterred him from making the attempt, though it still continued to occupy his thoughts.

“Towards the close of 1833, the following placard was posted on the walls of the town and neighbourhood:

“ ‘On Sunday last, in the Primitive Methodist Chapel, Mr. Matfin, according to previous announcement, repeated a declamation on INFIDELITY, which he had before delivered in the surrounding villages. Its character was therefore known, and, prior to its repetition, last Sunday evening, he received a letter, of which the following is a copy:

“ ‘ ‘SIR,—As you have taken advantage of the protection of the pulpit to misrepresent and abuse a certain portion of your fellow-creatures, whose only peculiarity is a devotedness to truth, a refusal to profess opinions, which appear to them erroneous and absurd, though the reward of their honesty be the persecutions of interested hypocrisy on the one hand, and of prejudice, bigotry, and superstition, on the other;—as you have described such as enemies to human happiness, and fit only to be hunted from society, common justice requires, that while you thus endeavour to commit them to the antipathies of your hearers, you should allow them to be heard in their own defence. You are, therefore,

requested either to permit a reply at the termination of your sermon, or otherwise offer the use of your chapel for that purpose, some evening of the ensuing week. You have described infidels as the most vicious and detestable beings in nature; but if you refuse them the common justice here demanded, your conduct will belie your words, and will prove you to be much more vicious and detestable.

“ ‘Bradford, November 15th, 1833.’

“ ‘At the conclusion of the sermon, and while the collection was progressing, Mr. M. stated, that he had received a very ridiculous letter from the infidels, but he must tell them that ‘if any one attempted to read any thing, or speak, or kick up a dust,’ they would subject themselves to a penalty of forty-one pounds, and that officers were in attendance to mark them out, in order that the law might be enforced.

“ ‘Here is a pretty specimen of the liberality of parsons! They will *only* assert the truth of Christianity where their dogmas cannot be gainsayed! If, however, they be sincere in their declaration, that such a doom, as they assert, awaits those who differ from them in opinion and belief, is it not then their duty to hear, and answer the reasons assigned for such difference? They must know, that belief is not dependent on the will—it is the result of perception, and that, therefore, declamation against, and vituperation of infidelity, are quite useless. Persuasion or threatenings can be of no avail to alter opinions and belief honestly entertained;—all such changes must be the result of conviction from reflection, reasoning and argument. They should establish the truth of their creed, by exhibiting the force of its evidence, and the futility of all objections. Let any one, competent to this task, undertake it, and he may obtain the co-operation of the sceptic for the eliciting of the truth.

“ ‘Bradford, November 22d, 1833.’

“ ‘On reading the above, the author at once felt that such an appeal should be met; and as he found that no one else was likely to take up the subject, he determined on attempting to ‘establish the truth’ of what is generally believed, ‘by exhibiting the force of its evidence, and the futility of all objections.’ As soon as his intentions were known, those who had espoused the sentiments alluded to, professed themselves highly pleased, and offered to render any assistance to such an investigation. A public meeting for discussion was suggested; but that, on several accounts, was declined, as less eligible than a course of lectures. It was also requested, that

permission might be given to those who held sceptical opinions, to reply, in the chapel, to the arguments which might be advanced; but this was not admissible. The author, however, went as far as he could with propriety; he promised them a syllabus of the lectures, and offered, when they should fix on a time and place for replying, to announce the appointment from the pulpit, and with his friends to hear what should be advanced by them; and, farther, that if they should prove any statement of importance to be incorrect, or any material argument unsound, he would willingly acknowledge it. The difficulty of obtaining a suitable place was finally alleged as a reason for abandoning this plan, and the author was urged to commit his lectures to the press, that they might thus receive an answer. So urgent, indeed, was the request, that a deputation from the body, offered to print the lectures at their own expense, if they should be furnished with the manuscript. As to publishing, no decided reply could then be given; but they were promised, at all events, copious notes.

“In February and March the lectures were delivered in Sion Chapel, where the author officiates as pastor. The interest felt in the town and neighbourhood was far greater than the lecturer had anticipated. The place was crowded to excess; the congregation increasing as the course proceeded, and though the pressure and heat were great, a silent and unremitting attention was given to the whole of the lectures, which occupied, on an average, each, about two hours and a quarter in delivery. Those who had embraced the tenets of infidelity, were general and regular in their attendance, and their behaviour was marked with propriety. Indeed, it is but just to say, in all the communications the author has had with the leaders of the sceptical party, he has been treated with the utmost respect and courtesy. In his intercourse with them he has often expressed his deep concern for their welfare, and his sense of the pernicious nature of their principles, which they have uniformly received with kindness. It is also but just to add, that though the greater part of those who are professedly sceptical, deny, it appears, the existence of a supreme and intelligent Creator, distinct from nature, they are not, as far as the author can learn, disgraced by licentious habits; many of them he believes to be men of upright conduct, against whom nothing can be alleged but their principles. That such men should embrace a system so contrary to the general sense of mankind, so opposed to the cou-

clusions of most of the wisest and best of men; a system so extravagant in its opinions, so barren of all that is good, so unfavourable in its aspect on virtue, is a cause of surprise and regret. May 'the Father of lights' mercifully convince them of their error—may they 'know the truth,' and may the truth 'make them free.'

"In addition to the frequent and urgent requests of the followers of infidelity, and the great difficulty found in furnishing, according to promise, such notes as would answer the purpose, a unanimous and affectionate request came from the author's own beloved charge, that the lectures might be published,—he could hesitate no longer.

"In consequence of these circumstances, they now appear before the public."

We have been requested, by the American editor, to express our opinion of the merits of this work, and our judgment whether it is not well adapted for theological students. Believing that an answer published in our periodical would be more acceptable than a private letter, we are free to say, that, in our judgment, these lectures are written with no common ability, and with no inconsiderable erudition. The whole argument is, at the same time, ingenious, logical, and presented in a form as condensed as is consistent with perspicuity. We therefore view these lectures as a very valuable addition to our literature on the atheistic controversy; and if they should be widely circulated and carefully perused, the benefit to our increasing population would be incalculable. In answer to the inquiry, whether they are not well adapted for theological students, we would say, that they are calculated to be useful to all men, of whatever age or condition, who have sufficient mental culture to follow the writer in his very conclusive reasonings. But if it be intended to inquire, whether these lectures would be suitable as a TEXT BOOK for theological students, instead of Paley's *Natural Theology*, our answer would be, that this volume should, by no means, be made to supersede Paley, but may be read and studied with great advantage by all those who have made themselves well acquainted with that inimitable work. We mean to express it as our opinion, that Dr. Godwin's Lectures are not so well adapted for an elementary work, on this subject, as Dr. Paley's. The statements and facts are not sufficiently expanded to be entirely level to the capacities of beginners; but the condensed form in which they are proposed in this work, is admirably adapted to rivet the

conviction and enlarge the knowledge acquired by the study of Paley. And having so good an opportunity, we would also recommend the careful perusal of Lord Brougham's Natural Theology. It should be studied in connexion with Paley's work, already so extensively in use.

We conclude our notice of these Lectures by recommending them to the careful perusal of our readers; and by expressing the hope that they will be extensively circulated in our country.

Twelve Lectures on the Connexion between Science and Revealed Religion; delivered in Rome, by Nicholas Wiseman, D.D. Principal of the English College, and Professor of the University of Rome. First American from the first London edition. Andover: published by Gould and Newman, 8vo. 404 pages.

THE following subjects are treated in these Lectures: 1. The Study of Languages. 2. Same subject. 3. The Natural History of the Human Race. 4. The same subject. 5. On the Natural Sciences. 6. The same subject. 7. Early History. 8. The same subject. 9. Archaeology. 10. Sacred Literature. 11. Oriental Literature and Profane Studies. 12. Conclusion.

These lectures are learned and ingenious, though they cannot be said to be very profound. They contain scarcely any thing by which it could be known that the author belonged to the Romish communion; and although we do not subscribe to all the opinions expressed in them, we are of opinion, that they may be read, not only with pleasure, but profit, by the biblical student.

Christian Consistency, or the Connexion between Experimental and Practical Religion; designed for Young Christians. By the Rev. E. Mannering, of Holy Will Mount Chapel. London: R. Baynes, Paternoster Row. 1836. pp. 253.

THE contents of this excellent little volume are,
 1. General Observations on Experimental Religion.
 2. The Nature of the Christian Walk.
 3. The Importance of the Christian's Walk.

4. The Doctrines of the Gospel adorned by Christian Consistency.

5. The order of the Divine Communications to the Souls of Men, and the use to be made of the Word of God.

6. Blessings to be realized, and the means of obtaining them.

7. The Christian's desire to walk in God's Statutes.

8. Rules to be observed for the Promotion of Soul Prosperity.

9. The Christian, by abiding in Christ, is supplied with Influence and Strength for the discharge of his Obligations.

10. Abiding in Christ secured by Divine Teaching.

11. Indications of Character and Exhortations to Consistency.

12. Appeals and Invitations to timid and doubting Christians.

As far as we know there has been no American edition of this book; and yet we have seen nothing of late years, from the land of our fathers, which is better deserving a reprint, than this unpretending volume. The sentiments here expressed, while they are truly evangelical, have a tendency to excite to diligence in the use of means, and constancy in holy living. There is, in our opinion, a remarkable knowledge of the holy scriptures, in their practical application, manifested by the author. We have seldom seen the duties of the Christian life exhibited in so condensed a form, and with references to scripture, so clear and pertinent, that no room is left for doubt in regard to our obligations. As an illustration of this remark, we might refer to the whole book, but we would particularly direct the attention of the reader to Chaps. V. and VI., where he will not be disappointed in finding much in a small space. That part of Chap. V. which shows the relation between the word and the Christian graces (pp. 74, 75) struck us as very remarkable. As a short specimen of the author's manner, we insert the following: "*We must not, however, neglect duty because of its difficulties; for strength and wisdom are both promised.* The Lord gives grace in season; and the supplies of his spirit are adapted to that amount of labour which we are called to render. It is, perhaps, scarcely possible to draw the line of distinction between human volition and divine influence with such exactness, as to mark, with unerring precision, the point upon which turn all successful efforts to do the will of God; yet

the fact of our working by his assistance is clearly stated in scripture, and is apparent to our own minds.

“That the necessity and glory of divine influence may be neither forgotten nor obscured, I must remind you of the position we have already taken, *that God only can incline the heart to duty, and that we are as much indebted to his Spirit for a holy thought, as for ‘the divine nature.’* But you must remember, also, that though you work by God’s assistance, and though he must have all the glory of your obedience, the work is yours, not his. Christ died for the offences of his people, and rose again for their justification; but he does not repent and believe for them. He, doubtless, works the principle of faith and godly sorrow within them, and bestows the grace of these habits upon them; nor can they repent and believe without his aid; still the act of repenting and believing is theirs. As creatures, we live, and move, and have our being in God; nor can we put forth any physical power without his aid; but it is the man who walks and works, assisted by his Creator. And does not God afford the Christian strength for the ordinary duties of his calling? And in discharging them, does he not receive power proportioned to their difficulty? If called, by divine Providence, to take a journey of any considerable length, am I to sit at my ease, and then expect that God will, in some miraculous way, carry me forward? This would be the height of folly. No—I must walk by God’s assistance; and not expect his aid if I refuse to walk. Just so, or nearly so, it is with spiritual exercises. I have no power in myself to pray, or to believe, or to repent; may I then, on the ground of personal inability, become slothful and indifferent? Certainly not; my course is plain, because my duty is obvious. Weak as I am, and though, without Christ, I can do nothing, I must yet attempt to accomplish his pleasure, believing that he will afford his promised aid, and lead me on to his own glory. ‘My strength,’ he says, ‘is made perfect in weakness,’ (2 Cor. xii. 9.) How often have we gone to the throne of grace, neither disposed nor prepared to pray; yet in opening our mouths before the Lord, he has filled them with arguments, and enabled us both to wrestle and prevail with the Angel of the Covenant. His assurance is, ‘as thy day, so shall thy strength be.’ He does not give us grace one week for the necessities of another, nor dying faith for living moments; but, day by day, and hour by hour, he supplies us with the needful influences of his Spirit.” pp. 141, 142.

We have been the more particular in noticing this delightful little volume, in the expectation that some of our booksellers would be induced to give an American edition of the work.

The Marys, or the Beauty of Female Holiness. By Robert Philip, of Maberly Chapel. New York: Appleton & Co.

MR. PHILIP has, within a few years, favoured the Christian public with a succession of popular works. All his writings are evangelical, and considerably imbued with the spirit of piety. His style is always perspicuous, and his manner lively. To promote vital godliness seems to be his constant aim; and we feel no hesitation in recommending his writings, although they do not fall in very exactly with our own taste. Mr. Philip seems, however, to have formed a pretty just estimate of what would suit the majority of religious readers of the present age; for whilst many books much more instructive and profound are neglected, his writings are read with avidity. He not only composes with vivacity, but gives indulgence to his imagination, and is fond of presenting truth in the garb of allegory, and has no scruples about the propriety of introducing, for a good end, fictitious characters. With all this we find no fault; especially, as we know, that by this means the author attracts readers. We could wish, however, that there could be found more of solid instruction in his pages than is apparent in this volume: the food is luscious, but too frothy for our sober taste. We like, however, Mr. P's. independent mode of thinking; and sometimes, when he departs from the common track of thought, we entirely agree with him in sentiment; but, in other cases, he appears to us to fail in judgment. An example of both shall now be given.

In the first chapter, p. 37, after urging the obligation of inscribing holiness on all the details of family duty, he goes on to say, "I am not pleading for what is called 'mixing up religion with every thing,' if by that is meant *talking* about religion whilst transacting the business of life, or giving a religious turn to every conversation. This is neither necessary nor wise, as it is usually conducted by those who try it most: indeed, they are thus often guilty of 'casting pearls before swine,' and more likely to create prejudices against

religion than to commend it. Even their own piety is in danger of being suspected of sinister design or of sanctimonious pretence, by this forced internixture of sacred and common things. So far, therefore, as speaking perpetually about religion is concerned, I have no sympathy with the habit, and see none of the beauty of holiness in it. I have, however, quite a little respect for both the vulgar and the sentimental proverb—'business in its place, and religion in its own place.' That really means in the lips of those who use it most, 'they are distinct things, therefore keep them separate;' a maxim equally treasonable and untrue. They are, indeed, *made* distinct things; but who made them so? Not God: he joins with the injunction, 'not slothful in business,' the commandment, 'Be fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.' He says, 'Whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.' It sounds ill, therefore, when men, professing to be Christians, say, that they give themselves to religion and business in turn, and never try both at once. Such men do not understand the spirit of true religion, whatever adepts they may be in business."

In the above remarks there is much just discrimination; and the sentiments expressed are seasonable, and well adapted to correct prevailing practical errors on both extremes.

As an example of new but injudicious remark, we would cite the following. "Paul when enumerating the successive manifestations of Christ to the disciples, by which 'many infallible proofs' of the resurrection were given, adds with great emphasis, '*Last of all he was seen of me.*' If Mary of Magdala lived long enough to read or hear this exclamation, how naturally and emphatically she must have exclaimed, '*First of all, He was seen of me.*' It is not improbable that both she and the other female witnesses of the resurrection did live to read or hear St. Paul's personal testimony to this great truth. How, then, do you think, did they approve of being left out of the list of witnesses by Paul; seeing they were the first persons to whom the Saviour 'showed himself alive?' The four evangelists had not treated them thus in their gospels. In each of the gospels, the Marys are placed at the head of the 'great cloud of witnesses' which attest the resurrection. Why then are they not in the epistles also? Obviously, because it would have been no kindness to the Marys, whatever honour it might have been to them; for as Paul's epistles were chiefly addressed to gentile churches, and as persecution raged in Judea, at the time, any reference

to the Marys, or to the women of Galilee, as the first witnesses, might have drawn more visitors around them, than they could conveniently, or wisely, or safely welcome. Thus both their character and life might have been perilled, had their names been made as public and imperishable in the epistles, as they were in the gospels. Paul's silence, therefore, was the shield of their holy reputation, and of their precious life. Both these were hazarded quite enough, by the publicity and popularity which their names had acquired in Judea." In the same strain the author proceeds to the end of the chapter. We called the sentiments here expressed *new*, and we should be surprised to learn that such thoughts had ever before entered any human mind; and we doubt whether any sound mind, now when they are proposed, will be disposed to adopt them. To us, this whole train of thought appears supremely ridiculous. It is an instance of egregious trifling in expounding scripture. But although we cannot but judge such remarks to be injudicious, it is pleasant to know, that they are not of a nature to do much injury, except so far as all perversion of the views of the sacred writers is of bad tendency.

L' Union de l'Eglise et de l'Etat dans la Nouvelle Angleterre, considérée dans ses effets sur la Religion aux Etats-Unis. Par un Américain. Paris. 1837. pp. 84. 12mo.

THIS, we believe, is a production of our indefatigable friend and countryman, the Rev. Robert Baird. It is his second publication in the French language, since he went to Europe. It was occasioned by the frequent inquiries of his European friends, as to the entrance of Socinianism and Universalism into the churches of this country, and particularly those of New England, which might have been expected, from the character of their founders, to enjoy the longest immunity from error and corruption. The author of this little work gives first a brief sketch of the New England states, and of the pilgrims, with special reference to ecclesiastical affairs. He then proceeds to point out what he calls the fundamental error in the organization of the colonies, viz. the restriction placed on liberty of conscience by connecting civil rights with ecclesiastical or religious standing. He then traces the effect of this arrangement, as exhibited in

the "half-way covenant," in the growth of hypocritical professions, in a laxity of practice with respect to the Lord's Supper, and in the laws which regulated the support of ministers. The sixth and last chapter has reference to the religious statistics of New England. If this tract should answer the purpose of diffusing more correct ideas in relation to our country, among European Christians, the author will be entitled to acknowledgements on both sides of the water.

A Narrative of Events connected with the Rise and Progress of the Protestant Episcopal Church in Virginia. To which is added an Appendix containing the Journals of the Convention in Virginia from the Commencement to the present time. By Francis L. Hawks, Rector of St. Thomas's Church, N. Y. Harper & Brothers. 1836. 8vo.

WE notice this work, so long after its appearance, merely for the purpose of expressing our pleasure at the growing spirit of historical research, especially in reference to church affairs. The volume before us is the first of a series called "Contributions to the Ecclesiastical History of the United States of America," and since its publication, Dr. Hawks, we believe, has been laboriously employed in the collection of materials, both at home and abroad. With respect to the present volume we have nothing here to say in the way of criticism, although we are of opinion that some of its statements are open to correction, in relation to the other religious denominations of Virginia. If we should have occasion to give a more extended notice of the series hereafter, we shall recur to this suggestion. Our object now is to express our hope, that due attention may be given, at least by Presbyterians, to Dr. Hawks's suggestion "to his fellow Christians of other denominations," with respect to "the propriety of preserving their several histories, without which the book of our national story must always be incomplete." (Preface, p. xi.) We have already adverted to this subject in our article on Samuel Blair, and we hope that our suggestions will derive new weight from the example and authority of Dr. Hawks.

Samuel Miller

ART. VII.—*Decline of Religion, and its Causes; a Sermon preached before the Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church of the State of New York, in Trinity Church, in the city of New York, October 6th, 1836. By Evan M. Johnson, Rector of St. John's Church, Brooklyn.* Brooklyn, 8vo. pp. 16. 1836.

THIS is one of the most weak and ill-considered discourses we have read for a long time. Indeed it is, in itself, utterly unworthy of notice. But as it affords us an opportunity of making some remarks on subjects which it discusses, and which we deem seasonable, we think proper to place its title at the head of this article, and to make some of its contents a text on which to found our comments.

The author assumes, as a conceded point, that religion, in our country in general, is on the decline; that infidelity and moral profligacy are evidently gaining ground; and that Christian and moral influence is now at a lower ebb than it has at any time been within the last quarter of a century. He assumes, too, that the fault, in regard to this state of things, cannot lie with the church; because this would be to charge the Master with forming an imperfect institution, which fails of effecting its intended benefits. He forgets that there was a deplorable state of things in several of the churches to which the apostle Paul sent inspired epistles, particularly in the churches of Corinth and Galatia: that both doctrinal error and moral delinquency prevailed within them to a distressing degree. And yet the apostle, in remonstrating with those churches on the state of things among them, does not ascribe it to the surrounding heathen, but to themselves. He addresses the members of those churches in terms of severe rebuke. He charges them with having embraced "another gospel;" with being "foolish" and "bewitched;" with having "not obeyed the truth;" with having "begun in the Spirit, and ended in the flesh;" insomuch that he declares he "stood in doubt of them." Were the apostolic churches true churches of Christ, or were they not? Were they less perfect, and less efficacious *then* than they are at the present day? We had thought that the state of the visible church had been marked with imperfection in all ages; that its antediluvian period was distinguished by deplorable degeneracy; that on various occasions, under the Old Testament economy, it was brought very low—nay, to the verge of ruin; that

since the New Testament church was set up, its periods of darkness and corruption, both in principle and practice, had been frequent, long and mournful. And yet we never thought of inferring, from all this, that the church of Christ, as a divine institution, was a failure; that it had ever ceased to exist; or that it was not the product of infinite wisdom and benignity. We had thought that the corruption of the church, from time to time, was to be set down to the same melancholy account, as the perversion of the Bible, and the ungrateful abuse of all the means of grace, of which, alas! the church is full.

Are there not thousands of members of the purest and best church in the world, who are ignorant, erroneous in doctrine, or chargeable with moral aberrations by no means creditable to the Christian character? We think we could point out some such among the multitudes who call themselves Presbyterians. And we are greatly deceived if we could not point out an equal number, of the same character, in regular connexion with the Protestant Episcopal Church. Yet we never imagined that this fact would justify the inference that Christianity was a faulty "scheme;" or that the church, as a moral machine, was ill-adapted to answer the great purpose for which it was designed. We have rather ascribed it to the depravity and infatuation of man, who is capable of perverting the best gifts of heaven, and who never profits as he ought by the choicest blessings of a merciful God. The gospel ought to win to its affectionate reception *all* who hear its joyful sound: but was this desirable object ever realized? All those who unite themselves with the professing people of God, ought to "let their light shine before men," and to "adorn the doctrine of God their Saviour in all things." But was this ever seen to be really the case with all professing Christians? Were there not heretical, immoral, worldly-minded church members, even under the eyes of the apostles themselves, who gave great trouble, and divided and agitated the body of Christ?

Mr. Johnson, however, it would appear, can admit nothing of this. The true cause of the "decline of religion," he thinks to be in no wise, and in no degree, in the church itself—that is, in the *Episcopal Church*—for he thinks no protestant denomination but his *own sect* is entitled to the name of a *Church*. He sincerely speaks of the body of Methodists, Baptists and Presbyterians as "*calling themselves churches,*" but utterly disallows the name as applicable to

them. And he feels bound, on principle, to go out of his own denomination for all the sources of that mischief, which he so pathetically describes, and professes so feelingly to lament. He is confident that, if the Episcopal Church had been the predominant sect in the United States; if the gospel had been published, and its pure morality preached from ten thousand pulpits of that sect throughout the length and breadth of our land, the "decline of religion," of which he complains, would never have occurred. How does this matter stand in *England*, where the Episcopal church is actually established "throughout the length and breadth of the land;" where, from more than "ten thousand pulpits," Episcopal preachers are ministering continually? Is there no infidelity there? Is there less moral profligacy there than in our country? Is it not well known that there is *more* rather than *less*? Is there not to be found in the bosom of that Church, reigning as it is with undisputed sway—as much difference of opinion; as much absurdity and fanatical delusion; as much profaneness and contempt of things sacred, to the full, as we have to mourn over in our own beloved country? If these facts are well known to every one on this side of the Atlantic, excepting the author of the sermon before us, we ask, what becomes of his argument? We can readily acquit his integrity in this matter, for we have no doubt that he really believes all that he alleges; but it can only be at the expense of his information and his understanding.

But our readers will, perhaps, be curious to know to what specific sources of moral mischief Mr. J. ascribes the "decline of religion" of which he speaks. The *first* is *Religious Controversy*; in treating which the author does not fail to hold up to public view, as constituting no small part of the corroding materials now at work, the controversy between the Old and New School in the Presbyterian church; and also the public debates on infidelity which have taken place in our principal cities. In regard to the former, we have only to say, in this connection, that, not long since, when the Episcopal church was torn with strife and division; when the appearance of one angry pamphlet after another seemed, for a while, to threaten even a schism in the body, we have no recollection that any Presbyterian writer was guilty of the undignified and childish indelicacy of meddling with the controversy on either side. If such an one were to be pointed out, we should be glad to disown him as unworthy of the name. With respect to the latter controversy, we do not

choose, at present, to express an opinion; as we have so little specific information; as we have heard directly opposite statements on the subject; and as our author, by the contents of the present discourse, and by the character of a preceding one, with which we had something to do, has inspired us with so little respect for either his opinions or his information.

We cannot think, however, that controversy, as such, and however conducted, is necessarily injurious to the interests of religion. We believe that truth and order have been maintained, in all ages, by means of "contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints." In the Epistles of Paul to the churches of *Corinth* and *Galatia*, we see an "Old School" Presbyterian warmly opposing error and innovation, and zealously maintaining the truth. Did the inspired and venerable apostle do no good by those Epistles?

The *second* source of the evil of which our author complains, is what he calls, "*the combined effort to suppress Popery in our country.*" On this subject we have little to say, as we expressed our opinion upon it, somewhat at length, in our notice of a former discourse from the same pen. So far as improper weapons have been resorted to in exposing the errors and acts of Popery, we shall always be among the first to reprobate them. But to maintain that it is wrong in itself to expose those errors and acts; to warn our children and the public against them; and in doing this, to depict in appropriate colours the profligacy of many of the Romish ecclesiastics; to denounce all this as sinful, and as contributing to the "decline of religion," is to abandon the principles of the glorious Reformation, and to condemn those illustrious and devoted men who, taking their lives in their hands, came out from the Church of Rome, and left a faithful testimony against her enormous corruptions. If a fearful proportion of the Romish clergy are morally corrupt, as well as deplorably ignorant and superstitious; if they are engaged, with consummate art and address, in a system adapted to deceive and destroy;—it is, surely, due to truth, as well as to the purity of the gospel, to let their real character be known. He who would cover it up is a murderer of souls. It is far more adapted to make infidels, to let such a miserable system of corruption pass for real Christianity, than to tear off the mask, and expose it in all its native deformity, in contrast with the spirit of real religion. So thought the venerable reformers of the Church of England, and acted

accordingly. We cannot but wish that the author of this sermon had more knowledge of their works; more veneration for their character; and a larger participation in their spirit. If all American Protestants were of his way of thinking, Popery might be left to go on in every part of the country, "eating as doth a canker," and our children become an un-instructed and unwarned prey to Popish allurements.

Our author next ascribes the decline of religion to the influence of *temperance societies*. He complains, first, that efforts in behalf of this cause have been made by *voluntary associations*, instead of being left to the "Church;" and, secondly, that these efforts have been carried to a *length* which has brought reproach on the cause of enlightened piety. With regard to the *first*, we are as much disposed as any of our neighbours to guard against the encroachments of voluntary societies, and to honour the authority of the church in its appropriate sphere. But we would ask Mr. Johnson *what the church was doing in this matter*, when voluntary associations took it up? We would further ask him, whether more has not been actually done, within the last ten years, through the instrumentality of temperance societies, to diminish the use of intoxicating drinks, and to reform drunkards, than had ever been done, by all other means, for any like period, or for ten times that period, before? And we would once more ask him, what the church, in her proper sphere, *could be expected to do* more than to visit drunkards with her discipline? Nay, is it in the *power* of the church, in her ecclesiastical character, to do more than discipline offenders against the law of temperance? Can she officially apply those prophylactic means which, in this case, are of all others by far the most effectual? What have even those portions of the church which claim the sole privilege of acting in this matter, and which have criminated temperance societies as meddling with that which does not belong to them—*what have they done*, even since the temperance movement began, and while rebuking those who are ready and willing to exert themselves in this great cause? We are really ashamed to ask these questions; and wonder that Mr. Johnson was not awed into silence on this subject by the consciousness that they might be asked, and that they could not fail to place him and his argument in a most awkward position. The fact is, there is, perhaps, no vice, in regard to which the most important means of reformation, to wit, the *preventive*,—are less within the power of the visible church,

and which more imperiously call for the efforts of voluntary associations. Organized ecclesiastical bodies bear some resemblance, in regard to such matters, to civil courts. A court of civil law is authorized to try persons charged with crimes, and to acquit or condemn; but could scarcely, with propriety, employ itself in banding the community to prevent crime. So the church, in the exercise of that authority, with which she is vested for edification, and not for destruction, not only has the power, but is bound, to instruct the people in their duty, and to exclude from her privileges all who openly violate the laws of Christ; but it does not appear to be her appropriate duty, as a judicial body, privately to prevail on her individual members to bind themselves to abstain from practices in their own nature lawful, for the sake of opposing particular vices, and begetting a strong public sentiment and habit in favour of particular virtues. We really do not see how the *preventive* system of which we speak—and which it would seem, ought, under God, to be mainly relied on,—could be advantageously prosecuted, by either civil or ecclesiastical bodies, in an authoritative form. We consider the whole objection, then, that “a few years ago it was discovered in *New England* that the cause of temperance could be much better advanced by the establishment of special associations, than through the instrumentality of the church of Christ”—as at once childish and preposterous. Of all the plans of benevolence which distinguish the present day, we would say, that the temperance reformation more indispensably calls for the action of voluntary societies, rather than ecclesiastical boards or bodies, than any other.

With respect to the *length* to which some of the advocates of temperance have carried their principles—while we concur in the severest censure that can be pronounced upon it, as both extravagant and unscriptural; we cannot think it wise, on account of this extravagance, to denounce the whole system as mischievous. Upon the same principle that the inspired apostle Paul said, “neither if we eat meat are we the worse, nor if we eat not are we the better; nevertheless, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no meat while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend,”—may the enlightened and zealous friend of temperance now say—“Since the use of wine, as a common drink, is, confessedly, so injurious to thousands; since it deceives the young and unwary, and destroys multitudes who consider tipping on ardent spirits as vulgar;—I will deny myself this indulgence,

and drink no wine as long as I live (excepting at the sacramental table), that I may discourage the use of that which is every day destroying the lives, the character, and the usefulness of thousands."

For ourselves, we are not ashamed of such a principle or practice as this. We can have no doubt that intemperance is a more fearful destroyer than sword, famine and pestilence combined. We have quite as little doubt that in this immense field of reform, so infinitely important to our children, and to all the best interests of society, according to the old homely proverb, "an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure;" and it appears to us that, in this field, the church, precious as her agency is, cannot, by her discipline, accomplish *all* that it is desirable and important to have done. In these circumstances, to frown on the agency of voluntary societies, when they attempt to do what the church never *did* attempt, is not *now* doing, and cannot possibly do, is something worse than ungracious. When such societies are arrogant, let us reprove them; when they become extravagant, let us restrain and rebuke them; but let us not refuse to accept their services because their mode of rendering them is marked with human imperfection.

Mr. Johnson further alleges, that "the *revival system* has done injury to the cause of religion." We have no doubt that there is much foundation for this charge. Some of those who have vaunted themselves as the peculiar friends and only skilful promoters of revivals of religion, have, unquestionably, disgraced the cause which they professed to honour, and have done more to promote fanaticism, than real religion. Yet we are quite sure that those who denounce the most sober, scriptural and benign effusions of the Holy Spirit which have ever adorned the church of God, and deny much of what enters essentially into the evangelical system, are at least as unfriendly to the great interests of pure and undefiled religion as those whom our author stigmatizes with so much severity. On this whole subject we think Mr. Johnson might derive profit from reading an excellent letter on Revivals of Religion, written by a minister of his own church, once a brother rector at Brooklyn, and now bishop of the Protestant Episcopal church in Ohio. He will find this letter, the eleventh in order, in the Appendix to Dr. Sprague's admirable "Lectures on Revivals of Religion." We recommend it to his careful and serious perusal.

We cannot forbear recurring again to the marked contrast between the spirit of the inspired apostles and that of Mr. Johnson. When *they* were called to mourn over a declining state of religion, we never find them uttering their complaints against the surrounding population, out of the church, as the cause of the evil:—but they address themselves directly to the members of the church, charging them with want of soundness in the faith; with want of fidelity in preaching the truth; and with want of exemplary holiness of heart and life. These solemn charges are pressed with warmth and faithfulness; and no hope of redress intimated but from a return of the church to truth and duty.

But, in the view of Mr. Johnson, as we understand him, all this is misapprehension and erroneous teaching. Defection and corruption cannot lie with the church. This would be to pronounce an institution of Christ a “failure.” The church is not to be inculpated without nullifying her character. All sources of delinquency and corruption are to be found *without*. Hence, if the visible church could be found rearing her temples, and planting her ministrations in every part of the land, the decline of religion would be out of the question. We suppose that nothing more than the mere statement of this opinion is necessary for its refutation. We think that the man who can undertake to maintain it, surrounded with the light of ecclesiastical history, and particularly in view of the single fact, that the apostolic church, as all grant, with a regular ministry, and pure worship, gradually apostatized into the deplorable corruptions of the Papacy—must have placed a lock and key on his understanding.

We should be truly sorry to see these sentiments adopted, or this practice imitated by Presbyterians. We hope they will never allow themselves, as some other denominations seem to be doing, to set up a particular form of ecclesiastical order as an object of idolatrous worship,—which must occupy the foreground of every statement, and every exhortation, whatever else may be left doubtful or obscure; and be ready to make every thing bow down to this idol. So far from *preventing* the decline of religion, this is the very error which, in all ages, has *led* to that deplorable result. Whenever professing Christians begin to lay more stress on rites and forms than on the religion of the heart; whenever they are disposed to make a particular form of ecclesiastical order no where found in the Bible, a more prominent and precious

object than the essential elements of Christian character, the decline of the church in genuine prosperity is inevitable. Let any one contemplate the degeneracy of the church under the claims and the superstition of the bishop of Rome, and then entertain a doubt, if he can, of the truth and importance of this statement.







