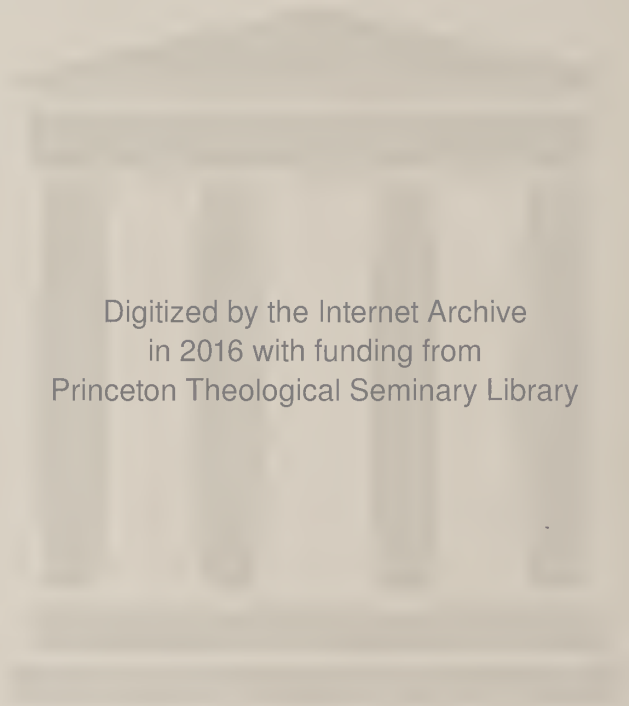


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THE
PRINCETON REVIEW.

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No. III.

Stephen Olwell

- ART. I.—1. *The Last Will and Testament of James Smithson, London.*
2. *The Letters of John Q. Adams, F. Wayland, Thomas Cooper, Richard Rush, S. Chapin, to John Forsyth, Secretary of State, on the subject of the trust assumed by the United States, under the will of James Smithson.*
3. *The Congressional Proceedings and Documents on the same subject.*

THE large bequest made by James Smithson to the United States, struck us at first with a surprise, which we have never wholly overcome. It was rather a novelty, that a distant nation should be selected as trustee, to carry out the intentions of a testator: and this novelty has drawn much attention to the construction of the will. We confess our misgivings that every project hitherto proposed for the right fulfilment of this trust, has failed entirely of responding to the views of the liberal donor. For reasons inexplicable to us, he has chosen to express his wishes in terms so general, as to create hazard of mistaking his meaning. It cannot be doubted, he had the good of society in view. The liberality of the bequest shows he designed to accomplish much. The key to this will is the same which must be applied to every other, the intention of the giver. We are unworthy the trust unless we carefully provide that

the fulfilment is directed by the light which the testator has furnished as to his ulterior views. If this light be dim, or scarce discernible, we should the more watchfully keep it in view lest it be wholly lost. It appears to us there are some points from which the act of this testator may be considered, which give his bequest additional interest in the eyes of the nation, if it do not impose some change in the views of those on whom it has devolved to devise a proper execution of the trust.

The testator was a subject of the British crown: his bequest is to the United States of America; the object, "*an establishment for the increase and diffusion of knowledge among men.*" These three facts furnish all the light we have on the proper disposition of this legacy. At first view they appear to lend little aid, and to afford a wide scope to the discretion of the trustee. But let us examine if there be not implied important restrictions as well as explicit requirements in these circumstances and expressions. Is it not clear that the testator did not intend the endowment of any of the more common institutions of learning, such as are known by the designation of schools, colleges or universities? Such was not his design, because he has not used any expression having such indication. The endowment of colleges, schools, academies, and other institutions of learning was not unknown in England, and the language proper for such a purpose would readily rise to the mind of any donor having in view such object. Can any reason be given or imagined why an intelligent man, intending to found an institution of learning, should not use plain and direct terms to exhibit that intention? He says nothing of education, nothing of learning, nothing of youth,—but he does provide "FOR AN ESTABLISHMENT FOR THE INCREASE AND DIFFUSION OF KNOWLEDGE AMONG MEN." Surely these terms expressly negative the conclusion that he contemplated any institution for the training or education of youth. Is it proper to sink the obvious and direct meaning of this language by explaining them to intend a college or university, which in one sense may be said to have for their object the increase and diffusion of knowledge among *men*? The language of the testator has a higher meaning and a wider scope, if interpreted by the lofty conceptions and deeper sympathies which dictated it. He knew that the multitudes of youth upon whom the work of education was to be wrought, were far more numerous in his own country

than in ours. He knew that the elements of common education were far more extensively diffused and more efficiently wielded here than there. He knew, too, that in all the higher departments of knowledge, greater proficiency had been made in the old than in the new world. And if his object had been simply the increase and diffusion of knowledge among men, in its lowest elements or its highest branches, he knew that the field for the one and the facilities for the other were more ample in the old world. What an array of worthy and learned professors might not such a benefaction have gathered in Germany or France, or Great Britain? And are the channels of knowledge in those countries full? Does not the work of education yet need all the aid there which wisdom and munificence can give it? Can it be presumed that the testator did not know that any or all the sciences now taught in the institutions of Europe, could be more effectually increased and diffused among men from a proper point in that continent, than from the city of Washington? Europe is the centre to which the accumulations of knowledge converge, and from which they diverge to all parts of the world. To acknowledge this truth is neither undervaluing our present importance in the world, nor yielding the high point of future destiny. If the knowledge which the testator desired to increase and diffuse among men was that knowledge which chiefly centres in Europe, can we suppose that he would not have selected Europe as the centre of his operations? And if he intended any of those branches of science usually taught in schools or colleges, would he have chosen the city of Washington as the seat of his institution. It may be presumed he knew there could not be a more unhappy selection for such a purpose. Without taking into account many objections which will readily occur to an intelligent man of the world, he knew that Washington was a capital merely, without business or population except that which was connected with the Government: he knew that an atmosphere pre-occupied by the storms of party spirit, by the breath of calumny, by a noxious crowd of unscrupulous office hunters, by the pestilential influences of hordes of knaves ever hanging on the skirts of power, would not be wholesome for those young in years and in experience. He could not have designed to expose any portion of the youth of our country to such a hazardous trial. In justice to the intelligence of the testator, there is no escape from these and simi-

lar conclusions which press upon us, but by admitting that the knowledge which he intended to diffuse among men was not that in which we are excelled by the learned of Europe. It was another kind, not less important to men, less familiar to the European than to the American mind, and the facilities for the increase and diffusion of which are in Europe immeasurably behind what they are in the United States.

If the testator did not intend to found an institution of learning embracing the highest departments of science, nor one for the diffusion of the simpler elements of education, the inquiry remains, what did he intend to accomplish? He intended, clearly, to do good: to erect an institution which, by the increase and diffusion of knowledge among men, should increase their happiness and improve their social condition. He intended, it must be presumed, to make his liberal benefaction as effective as possible for these purposes. It is apparent that he was not a man whose views or whose charities were circumscribed by his own country or neighborhood. He regarded all men as his neighbours. He has made the United States his trustee, but he designed the good influences of his bequest to be exerted not merely among citizens of that country, but to be extended "*among men*" of all countries. These words are sweeping and significant, and their scope cannot be narrowed without a violation of the spirit of the trust. If we would faithfully perform the duty devolved upon us of expounding this will, we must transport ourselves for that purpose to the British Islands, that we may contemplate the condition of men from the point of view occupied by the testator. He had immediately round him the population of his own country, and the swarms of the neighboring continent were nearly under his eye. We must pause upon the prospect which lay before and around him. If we would know the good he designed to accomplish, we must look at the evils and the miseries which awakened his sympathies. Of the scene presented to his view, he could not be an unmoved spectator. He beheld one half his fellow subjects in abject poverty, of whom a very large proportion were in a state of hopeless and utter destitution. He beheld them degraded in mind as well as wretched in body. The wailings of misery, the cries of hunger, and the deep murmurings of discontent assailed his ear from all sides. He saw that the regular labour and the regular food

of slavery would be a boon to millions of his countrymen. He saw multitudes on multitudes crowding into the close air of manufactories, or delving far below the surface of the earth in mines, and by their labour swelling the mighty sum of British exports, but scarce securing by that labour the boon of food and raiment—strangers alike as they were to comfort and peace of mind.

All this he beheld in a land whose chart of liberty has been the boast of centuries. In a land whose princes, nobles, gentry, merchants and manufacturers exhibited a wealth to which past and present time can furnish no parallel. In a land whose constitution professed to embrace the interests and well being of all classes; in which the Christian religion was established by law, and its chief ministers paid with a liberality without example; in which the voice and deeds of philanthropy were more astounding than any people ever before exhibited; from which Bibles, containing the great law of charity were sent in every language to every people, and from which the missionaries of the cross went to all nations, proclaiming the glad tidings of that gospel which declares “that the faith which is sufficient to remove mountains, without charity, is nothing.”

He found that every effort of the humane to better the condition of their suffering brethren was nearly abortive. They were met with arguments against disturbing the harmonies and proportions of the social fabric, and warned not to remove a stone nor column of the public edifice, lest the whole should fall and perish. The objectors admitted that those suffering under this system were greatly the most numerous; but that could not affect the argument, because vested rights and venerable privileges should not lightly be disturbed, and above all, an agrarian spirit was not to be encouraged or aided. Individuals could not be expected to give up what they had honestly acquired in due course of law, and in the existing state of things. There was plainly no remedy for the victims of a popular government and an established religion. So little could be accomplished at home for millions suffering the extremities of human woe, that active philanthropists were by sheer necessity driven from Great Britain for a field of labour. Hence the measures for suppressing the slave trade, the magnificent plans for civilizing heathen nations, the purchase of freedom for a million of West Indian slaves, whose condition was far

superior to that of more than twice that number at home, for whose wretchedness there was no remedy.

Such was the melancholy spectacle which the testator beheld in his own country. It presented questions of grave and deep import in relation to the social condition of men. No one, neither the most humane nor the most wise, had been able to devise a remedy for these evils, securing sufficient confidence to give it the least prospect of being carried into effect. Interests, commercial, manufacturing, agricultural, civil, military, naval, religious and literary, in all their various forms bound up together, presented a gordian knot which no effort of humanity, of skill, of wisdom, of patience, of boldness, or of sagacity could untie. It seemed as if no remedy remained but to cut its complicated folds, and scatter them before the storms and blood of a revolution. He could not but turn in despair from such a scene, convinced that his intended legacy could accomplish no permanent good for his suffering countrymen.

If he bent his eyes to the neighboring continent, the prospect was equally gloomy. The poor of continental Europe have been variously estimated from ten to fifty millions, or from one-twentieth to one-fifth of the population. This different result arises rather from the different basis of the estimates, than from error, or a difference of opinion. Other estimates range from the same reason between these extremes. Villaneuve de Bergamont, who fixes the proportion of one-twentieth, or nearly eleven millions, as the number of the poor of Europe, includes only those who are unable to work, those whom bodily defect, other inability, or the want of work, leave at public charge. Those on the other hand who assume the higher proportion of one-fifth, or nearly fifty millions, include not only those who are thrown on the public to perish or be relieved, but the much greater number in every country who struggle on in unnoticed misery, suffering the ills of constant poverty.

The philanthropist who looks abroad upon the condition of his fellow men with due intelligence, will be smitten with sympathy more deep for those whose hearts are frozen with the daily dread of utter destitution, than for those who have sunk into the hands of the administrators of public charity. The beggar publishes his wants with busy clamor; the public has discovered the wretchedness of the inmates of its hospitals and almshouses; but who can find the abodes of modest want, of patient misery; who can num-

ber the poor whose food and raiment and shelter are far, far below the lowest standard of comfort ; whose hopes for this world are cut off, and who have had no proper teaching for the world to come ; who can tell their anguish who begin to feel their descent from a better condition into the abyss of helpless ruin, degradation and crime? Great Britain and Ireland alone contain not less than twelve millions, who, if their condition be above that of utter poverty, it is one in which "they struggle through life, battling with misery and want, wholly dependent on the contingencies of employment, adequate wages and parish relief, asking for labour as a boon, although it scarce nets them an existence." France contains, it cannot be doubted, six millions whose situation is not better. Holland and Belgium, in a population of six millions, contain three-quarters of a million of these sufferers. The number of the poor in these four countries are best ascertained, and although they most abound there, who that knows much about the population of Europe can doubt that if these four kingdoms contain nineteen millions of suffering poor, the remainder of the continent must include at least thirty millions more.*

A close and impartial survey of the condition of the European people, of which the above is but a faint outline, must leave upon the heart of any benevolent and intelligent observer, impressions of sympathy and grief at once deep and abiding. Our testator could not have returned from such an inquiry, such a far-reaching prospect of human woe and degradation, without feeling humbled and horror-stricken at the exhibition of selfishness, bad government and inhumanity which it implied. We may conceive his exclaiming,—What is all other knowledge and wisdom worth, in comparison with that which would teach how to raise these prostrate millions to a condition of comfort and peace—a condition in which they could gain adequate food and raiment and shelter by their own labour, and in which they would be freed from the ever-gnawing apprehension of famine and destitution? What is the glory of Europe in arts, in arms, in letters, in science, in philosophy, in Christianity, to eighty millions of poor, if none of these can rescue them from their present doom? What avails it to speak of free and despotic governments, of monarchy, aris-

* See and compare statements and tables in *De Gerando Bienfaisance Publique*, *Primiere Partie*, Liv. 1. c. 4, and *Econ. Polit. Chret.* Liv. 2. c. 1.

tocracy and democracy, when now, or heretofore, under all these forms, men have been made to undergo the extremities of human suffering? Men unite in the social state, or submit to government to better their condition; but where is the savage who would change his state for that of the poor in Europe—too knowing to be barbarians; too wise to enjoy that ignorance which is bliss; and too poor to be free? There is much that is wrong in human governments: they have hitherto failed in their object. It is not the form—for all forms have been tried, from the sternest despotism to the wildest democracy, and with the same sad results.

Can any man who surveys the past or present condition of men in the social state, doubt the intense selfishness and depravity of the human heart, under the influence of certain temptations? Hitherto, all remedies have failed of adequate success, and the men, whose powers of endurance being exhausted, have risen for redress of wrongs, and seized the power which was wielded to their injury, have only demonstrated by excesses the most daring and monstrous, that they too were unfit and dangerous depositories of power. They soon relapse into their former hapless condition, or others take their place. Men may have changed positions, but the ranks of misery have not been thinned.

Revolutions, agitations, wholesale murder and agrarian distributions only make the evil that is dreadful ten fold worse; and there is little hope for the happiness which is born in such scenes. Happily there is one exception, full of promise for the after destiny of nations. The men who achieved the revolution which gave existence to the United States of America, have exhibited a wisdom and moderation in the use of power, which, though hitherto without a parallel, cannot be without its influences. To the experiments now making in that vast phalanx of confederated republics in the new world, must the friends of humanity look for that knowledge which is needed to renovate the nations of the old world. Already has light from that quarter penetrated the darkest portions of Europe. Old aspirations are grown stronger, and new hopes are born. To the lessons taught by these great experiments in the science of government and legislation, must we continue to look for the most desirable and necessary of all knowledge, that on which depends our social progress. They are

teaching us by example, but ere long we trust they will teach us by precept. Theirs is the great school of knowledge for men: political wisdom must increase amidst the free action of more than a score of separate administrations, and the free discussion of as many separate legislative bodies. There alone political science has free scope; the governments which are founded on actual compact, may be dissolved by the parties at their pleasure, and the agreement may be changed and amended as time and experience may dictate. There the cure of any social evil being discovered, the application is in their own hands. Age consecrates no abuse and protects no absurdity. Changes create no apprehension and bring no danger. All their institutions are subject to the public mind, and may be made better or worse as often as that mind directs.

If it be no injustice to the testator to suppose such reflections to have passed through his mind, we are furnished with a key to his bequest. He designed to increase that knowledge which has been developing in this country during the last sixty years, and to diffuse it among men. He designed, so far as lay in his power, to make us worthy, and then hold us up as an example to other nations. Could he be more explicit? He did not wish to declare in the solemn act of his last will, that his own government was unworthy of his bequest, or incapable of executing his designs. The words employed, convey to a British ear no reproach. The testator doubtless believed that in Great Britain the true intent of his legacy would not be conjectured, and that consequently no obstacle would be interposed to the free transmission of the funds to the possession of his great trustee. But could he have apprehended that we should lack acumen in this country to discover his intention? He purposely placed upon his trustee the responsibility of reading aright his pregnant language. He has said enough to give scope for a liberal interpretation, and yet no restriction appears to prevent that application of the fund which will go to promote the highest interests of men in this life. If his views had been directed to the promotion of Christianity, it cannot be supposed that he would have selected our government as his trustee, which has no religious power delegated to it, and cannot assume a missionary office. His object was not merely scientific nor literary, for the reasons heretofore given. His aim was political, and therefore the caution with which his views are expressed. It now remains to be

determined whether, as a nation, we are worthy of the confidence reposed in our intelligence and goodness; for if we cannot now divine the meaning of the simple but expressive words of this bequest, then unquestionably we are not yet fit to undertake the due execution of this will. If the national mind is too obtuse to comprehend the great design of the testator, then the national charity is insufficient to carry it into effect. Who can foresee, on the other hand, if we dedicate this fund to the great object of promoting the social well being of men, how far the philanthropists of the old world may be stimulated to give increased efficacy to the intended institution, by pouring additional means into the coffers of a trustee so enlightened and so faithful? The men of Europe and Asia whose hearts may be devoted to this great object, if the press is open to them, and if their voices are not paralyzed by fear of the powers that be, are so embarrassed by vested rights, by time-anchored observances and prejudices, laws and institutions, by the unprepared state of certain classes for any increase of political power, by the fear that all change may be for the worse, and by the dread of revolutions, that they find themselves constantly entangled in questions of expediency; seeing what is right when they look far ahead, but wholly unable to determine the perplexing questions which attend the first steps of their forward progress. In this country, we neither fear the truth, nor need we dread to follow its indications, or to make any change which promises a better condition. All we want is a knowledge of our deficiencies and the remedies applicable to them: it depends only on our patriotism and energy whether we make the application.

If the construction of this bequest now proposed should prevail, it remains to consider what would be a liberal and enlightened fulfilment of the testator's object. Having a due comprehension of his design, how can the trust be executed by an increase and diffusion of that knowledge among men which will best subserve their most pressing wants, and most promote their social welfare?

There is no institution in which the science of government is taught on a scale corresponding with its importance.* Our nation is the home of political truth: no pos-

* There are departments in many of the continental Universities in which the following subjects are taught to some extent. 1. The law of nations. 2. The constitutional law of the most famous nations. 3. The principles of

sible discovery in that department of knowledge could give alarm here to the most timid, or threaten the peace of society. Our institutions ask for all the light which can be thrown upon them, and are ready to undergo any change or modification which may promise an improved social condition. In this field, inquiry is restricted by no limits, and truth may carry into actual operation every plan for which she can secure the favour of the people.

The institution contemplated by the testator may here have as broad a basis as the utmost requisitions of political science and the highest social interests of man can require. Its professors should not be merely learned and eloquent men, not merely philosophers and statesmen, but such as fear God and love men: not fanatics seeking distinction, not drivellers seeking office, but having hearts more set upon doing good than upon their own distinction or advancement. Their object should be to give to their hearers, and through them, to the world, every lesson important to mankind, which may be deduced from the origin, history, and present state of our institutions, or from the past or present condition of our people. They should furnish a careful and impartial estimate of the progress of our great experiment in self-government, and mark specially the mutual influence of the people upon the institutions, and of the institutions upon the people. They should ascertain by all the evidence within their reach, whether our success, thus far, is owing to the excellence of our government and laws, or to the character of the people. They should, in fact, omit no topic suggested by our form of government, our legislation, our position and our hopes, and handle every subject with the double view of advancing our best interests at home, and of giving useful information to all who may seek it abroad.

Every fragment of ancient legislation and of that of the middle ages, and every exposition of administrative wisdom and skill could be put in requisition to correct and ripen the

the Roman and German law. 4. Police administration. 5. Political Economy. 6. Universal History. 7. History of public treaties. 8. Diplomacy. 9. Statistics. In many of the German states, every candidate for public office has not only to pass through this course of studies, but also through a preparatory course in various departments of government for several years; and after two, and in some cases three examinations, he becomes eligible as an officer of state. This is very well, as far as it goes; but the door of political truth is not wide open in Germany, and the student is kept within limits of investigation prescribed by power and expediency and not by truth.

knowledge of modern times. The whole legislation of the existing European nations could be displayed and studied with advantages similar to those of comparative anatomy. We are not justified, because we enjoy many peculiar privileges, in supposing that all the wisdom in legislation and in administration belongs to us. Our advantage lies not so much in the mere excellence of our laws and institutions as in this, that we have a facility in selecting what may suit us, and in adopting it at pleasure. There is no power to prevent any change deemed for the better, and no prejudice or apprehension to interpose obstacles to any desired alterations. All the storehouse of European wisdom and experience may be ransacked for lessons in political science. It would be presumption which facts do not justify, to assume that we can learn nothing from the modern nations of Europe. The truth is, we have much to learn from that quarter, and they have much to learn from us, which it was doubtless the intention of the testator to communicate by means of his intended institute. We have more than a score of legislative bodies annually at work, of whom it may with truth be said, that their proceedings are original, and untainted by any knowledge of the legislation of continental Europe, or any legislation but their own. Our legislators have hitherto had little time to inquire, and slender means of knowing what has been done elsewhere. Their minds have acted freely and fearlessly; many valuable truths have been elicited, and many excellent laws enacted; but much more might have been accomplished, if, upon minds thus prepared, the light of knowledge and experience had been poured from all the rest of the world.

The grand experiment of the fitness of men for wise self-government is making in this country. The great school of political science should also be here, that their influences and operations may be mutually effective. Let all knowledge come to the ordeal of experiment, and be subjected to the judgment of men who, while they mould the form of their own laws and constitutions, obey all their requirements and submit to all their pressure.

We shall venture at the close of our remarks to submit an outline of an institution, which as we believe will best fulfil the intentions of the founder of the Smithsonian Institute. If we have been so fortunate as to secure favour for the views above advanced, the plan of carrying them out will be offered with none the less deference. We hope the

general idea may attract all the attention it deserves, and that finding favor, it may secure for the plan of its operation the best wisdom of the nation, and for its continued accomplishment in this age and hereafter the most virtuous and gifted minds which can be brought into the service of the highest temporal interest of man. Before submitting this outline, however, it may not be without advantage to consider how far the proposed establishment may be needful in the present condition of our institutions and of our people, without reference to the immediate views of the testator. It becomes us to examine whether we may not be in special need of that knowledge which we are expected to impart to others; to ascertain whether a survey of the great features of our civil history, and due deliberation upon the present conjuncture, may not furnish clear evidences of our own deficiencies, and thus indicate plainly the nature of the schooling we need, who may be expected to teach the rest of the world by example and by precept. The time has come certainly when every obligation of patriotism requires us carefully to gather all the fragments of our experience, and all the lessons of wisdom which are strewn on the path by which we have reached our present position.

Whatever may be the merit of our political institutions, or the wisdom of our past legislation, or the skill of our civil administration, it is very apparent that an exemption from the evils of party spirit is not among the blessings we enjoy. No country, unfortunately, has ever afforded such scope for party strifes, and in none has the demon of selfishness which sways the sceptre of party, ever committed more widespread mischief. Every voice of wisdom, of skill, of warning and of knowledge is drowned in the noise of party warfare. Bodily activity, intellectual force, and moral purity, are all absorbed in the great game of party. Patriotism is mocked: standing aloof from these contests induces the hatred of both parties, and any attempt to serve the country, not made under the banners of a party is derided as simple, Quixotical, and is known to be utterly in vain.

If the exemplification were not before our eyes, the time and exertions bestowed on party enterprizes would be incredible: but the sacrifice of talents and mind, and the utter prostration of morals which ensue, are beyond estimation. The intense excitement observed, is the excitement of the gambler, which destroys or perverts all powers of mind, absorbs all good affections and roots up every moral principle.

There is no institution, no department of the government, free from the polluted touch of the excited and unscrupulous partisan. There is no question so vital, and no exigency so pressing as to be exempt from this unhallowed interference. Every interest of the country sinks into insignificance before the withering influence of party zeal and discipline; and where one voice is raised for national weal, a thousand trumpets summon hosts to insure the success of a party. The history of such strifes furnishes in all ages a most humbling view of human nature; but we are destined apparently to make the final and most complete exhibition of the intense and ineffable meanness and selfishness to which men may sink under the influence of such excitements.

The cause of all this, is found in certain traits of human nature displayed profusely in all the history of man. Our institutions, moreover, are the work of men, and cannot therefore be perfect; although they are the work of men tried in the conflicts of adversity and hard experience, and therefore highly valuable. No men, without similar training, would have established such a government, but it is no disparagement of their wisdom to say that a trial of their work may demonstrate the necessity of improving its form and operation.

We do not hesitate to aver that we shall be visited with the storms of party and all their attendant ravages, so long as posts of honour, of influence, and of profit, are set up as the wages of party contests, as the prey of the designing and selfish, and as stimulants to the efforts of demagogues. There is something fatally wrong in our election laws. Their operation is a curse to the nation, which is converted by their influence into great race-grounds, in which the high places of our governments are lost and won in the same spirit, but with mischiefs more manifold than attend those assemblies for fraud and dissipation, where jockies and gamblers meet to prey upon society.

Who can reveal the amount of money levied, of late years, and corruptly expended to influence elections? Who can unfold the perjury and fraud used in introducing illegal votes and accomplishing illegal naturalization? Who can tell how many more votes have been counted than there are legal voters? Who can say how many elections have depended for their result upon fraud and perjury? and how many men now hold office upon that basis? The magnitude

of this evil cannot now be told ; it has penetrated the vitals of our government, and it has threatened and does now threaten the disorganization of the body politic. But the magnitude of this evil, however to be lamented, and especially in its effect upon public morals, brings with it one consolation and offers one ground of hope which is not small.

That our institutions, which are but the popular breath, should survive such a state of things, proves they have a vitality and force which may yet preserve them for brighter days. The hour is now dark, darker than the hour of danger, for it is the darkness of corruption ; than the hour of selfishness and oppression, for "madness now rules the hour."

That there is a remedy for all this we do not doubt ; it cannot be that free institutions must always fall by their freedom. Our people are no worse, if no better than others ; nay, many facts point them out as the best fitted to sustain political freedom, of any who have figured in history. Let the truth be sought with unsparing strictness, and with untiring zeal ; it will be found that our institutions are in fault. Our ancestors made them as perfect as they could ; we are unworthy the legacy, if half a century's experience has not enabled us to make them better.

If this monster of corruption which weighs us down like an incubus, could be detached and driven away, new vigour would be imparted to every department of our government, and wisdom and moderation might take the place of folly and madness. How is it to be accomplished ? How are our constitution and our laws of election and patronage to be so altered as to produce this great result ? These are questions worthy of the greatest minds, placed in the most favorable position for their consideration. Surely knowledge on this subject needs to be increased and diffused among men. If the remedy cannot be found, there is no hope of freedom ; if free governments must necessarily be the arena of such exhibitions as we now witness, then must they be regarded as unfavorable to the best interests of the human race.

If it be possible to erect an institution devoted to the discussion of social, constitutional, and legal questions ; which should be barred against the ineffable meanness of office-hunting which now intrudes upon every department of the government ; barred against the headstrong and ignorant meddling of the demagogue, against the indiscriminating rashness of faction and the mind-subduing effect of party dis-

cipline, what important subjects would arise at once for consideration ! What light might be struck out, and what knowledge diffused by a calm, persevering, impartial pursuit of truth, taking in the experience of ancient and modern times, and gathering all the wisdom which can be brought to bear upon the social interests of men ! The past trial of our institutions evinces that in no department but one, as at present constituted, has such a mode of inquiry been adopted. If the judicial branch of our institutions has not kept its ermine wholly spotless from the stains so revolting in others, it has shown itself immeasurably more pure, more wise, and more intellectual. It has been our bulwark. Greater progress has been made in the knowledge of its duties than has ever elsewhere been made in the same period. But the investigations of the judge are confined to a narrow limit. He can only decide the case before him, and although his range of discussion may often seem wide, yet the limits are comparatively narrow within which usage and the law of judicial examination confine his researches. He cannot legislate nor pronounce what the law ought to be, but is confined to determining what the law is in the particular case before him. Precedents are his guide, and not philosophy ; authority rather than truth. But these restrictions are necessary ; for judicial duties are by their nature confined to the administration of law as it existed when the facts occurred upon which decision is invoked.

Although it has not fallen within the range of judicial inquiry to cast any broad light upon great social questions, yet it has shown that knowledge and wisdom and independence of mind may co-exist with moral purity in a government like ours ; while manliness, honesty and intellect are in other departments sunk in the mire of faction, Let us secure similar qualities of mind for a wider range of knowledge, for a more unlimited scope of inquiry ; for a survey of our whole system as it stands, and for a consideration of the principles upon which all human government should rest.

The voyage of discovery in social or political knowledge, when philosophy,—the love of truth,—can be secured at the helm, should be pushed into every sea, whatever the storms, or the distance, or the obstructions of the passage. The survey should comprehend every accessible inlet and point: no gloom should deter, and no danger frighten the navigator. But as the object of this pursuit of truth should be to promote human welfare, the pursuit can never in consistency be so

prosecuted as to endanger human happiness. The means should never be allowed to destroy the end. With such views no question arising out of our institutions can be too delicate to be approached by the friend of man.

The main feature of our government is the association of a large number of sovereign states, of great power and wealth, for the common welfare, and the question which precedes in importance every other among us, is the value of this union in reference to the general well being and happiness. Many regard this subject as too sacred to be approached; but however such a question might suffer in the hands of insincere and ignorant partizans, the importance of truth and human happiness transcends all other considerations. If our national and state legislatures are unfit for the discussion of this great and vital topic in that honest and enlightened way which it demands; if the press is subsidized for party purposes, or so disgraced as not to command the public ear, it is the more needful that truth should have a temple of her own, that political science should find a refuge where it might be nurtured to maturity, where every lesson of wisdom and experience might be cherished, improved, and sent forth on its proper mission to the world.

The design of our constitution being "to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquillity, provide for the common defence, promote the general welfare and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity," it cannot be denied that when it ceases to attain these ends, the contract of union should be dissolved. We unite for our mutual advantage and not for disadvantage; if we encounter the latter and cannot secure the former, then duty requires us by proper means to seek a change of our political position. This union cannot in any view of the subject be valuable, except as it promotes the best interests of the people; among our pure and wise men it must always, then, be a matter of inquiry how far this object is promoted by our form of government.

Our union has no parallel. History does not inform us of any alliance of independent nations in which so many rights have been sacrificed to attain ends so good as those mentioned in the preamble of our constitution. The history of nations is an enumeration of battles, a tale of bloodshed, in which it is apparent that the mind of man has been far more exercised in wars and their causes and consequences, than in devising means of comfort and happiness. The morals of nations has

always been far below the standard of the individuals composing them: the morals of civilized nations at this day, are little above the morals of individual barbarians. An injury to one man, however worthless, is deemed sufficient cause for dooming hundreds of thousands to a violent death, and thrice as many more to remediless woe. An injury of small value in regard to property, is deemed ample justification for the same expenditure of blood, but for an expenditure of money and a destruction of property to a thousand fold the amount. The national code of honour and morals has always been one of savage absurdity, of aimless stupidity.

Nations fight for a shadow while they let go the substance. They sacrifice millions of lives and money to vindicate the rights of their straggling citizens abroad, but lift not a hand to relieve millions of their most worthy subjects pining in want and misery at home. National honour stands far above all considerations of human life or possessions, and both are sacrificed to it with unsparing profusion. It permits governments to inflict any imaginable injury on its own subjects, but to brook no affront however small, from others. History however, proves that honour has never flourished among nations as such, although its vindication has been so bloody and relentless. Instances of national perfidy and dishonour crowd every page of history.

It was a noble thought of our fathers to blot out a code reeking with carnage and stained with rapine, to substitute such a treaty of alliance as the Constitution of the United States. The deed was still nobler than the thought. The thought was not only new, but the mode of accomplishing it, was still more original. The rights surrendered absolutely for the attainment of these worthy ends, were such as had never been surrendered by any nation but at the point of the victor's sword. These rights had been defended by all nations, in all periods, with a jealousy and pertinacity which perhaps originated the greater number of wars which had ever taken place. Myriads of men had fallen to sustain them.

Our fathers made a common stock of those rights which it costs so much blood to defend, so many contests to assert: they submitted to a common tribunal those questions which had heretofore been deferred to the arbitrement of the sword. They wisely foresaw that the states, as separate nations, must encounter perpetual occasions of hostility, and that their wide territories must often, in the lapse of time, be made the arena of fierce wars. They foresaw that as

separate states, our mountain passes would be filled with fortresses, and our heights covered with cannon; that our cities must be environed with ramparts, that our rivers must be lines of defence, and our valleys battle fields: and finally, that hostile navies must rule our seas and lakes, and penetrate our harbors. Without, in their fondest hopes, anticipating the results of their wisdom and moderation, the ambassadors of these states met in the spirit of compromise, and gave up their respective rights to declare war against each other, or against any power foreign to all, to keep armies or navies, to make separate treaties, to regulate commerce, to impose duties, to coin money, to emit bills of credit, to naturalize citizens, to establish post offices, to any jurisdiction over seas, lakes, or navigable rivers. All these and many more very important powers were surrendered to a government, constituted for the express purpose of taking them in charge. What has been our experience under this government? It has been subjected to shocks of conflicting interests, and to assaults from faction which would have shaken any previous political contract to atoms. Can any man doubt that without this the states would have been long since involved in tedious, bitter and complicated wars? Can any one doubt that the north would be armed against the south, and the slaves against their masters? That our mountain ranges would separate opposing armies? Or that the navigation of our great rivers would not be stopped? That our boundary lines would not be guarded by an innumerable host of custom houses? And that all the vexations and obstacles of European continental intercourse would not now be in force here, with many others due to our superiority of invention? Who can estimate the mutual injury which such people as inhabit our states could have inflicted? Who can say that we would not long since have been parcelled out among the European powers, called to assist in fighting our battles? Such a separate, and therefore hostile, independence, would, in a few years, breed such evil passions, such a spirit of anarchy, that no hope could be entertained of establishing a union like that which now exists. We should soon have sunk into the condition of those colonies, which on our continent have emancipated themselves from Spanish dominion, to claim the name of republics, but to live under the atrocities of military despotism.

Without claiming that our national constitution is perfect,

or asserting that it does not need important amendments, must we not acknowledge to it a heavy debt of gratitude, not only for what we are, but above all, for what we have escaped? Has not our union then a value above all estimation? Is it not worth maintaining, not only at the original cost, but at every cost which may be required to insure its stability? Should not every needed power be supplied, and every needed sacrifice be made? Should not every defect be immediately cured, and every excrescence early lopped away? To perpetuate and improve this constitution is the highest interest which can engage our citizens, and one of the fondest hopes of enlightened and virtuous men of all countries. To guard this interest, demands all the wisdom and energy which can be concentrated upon it: to secure it, requires sleepless vigilance, and a constant increase and diffusion of knowledge, corresponding to the ever varying emergencies which occur in the affairs of nations. The spirit of compromise in which the constitution originated, must be kept alive in every event of its administration: the compact which was made in the devotion of self-sacrifice, must be carried into execution in the same spirit. The alliance formed in generous disinterestedness, cannot be carried out in the indulgence of rankling selfishness. Our constitution can only perform its proper office, when we yield ourselves wholly to its appropriate sway: it was made, not merely to be ratified in its origin, but to be obeyed forever afterwards. This forms a subject of enduring freshness and importance, upon which the strongest light should be unceasingly and broadly thrown.

How have we to lament that in Congress, where the delegates of the states meet under this constitution, they mistake its scope, and disregard its just claims. Assembled by virtue of its authority, and sworn to give it their support, we find them not consulting for the common weal, but contending for distinct and irreconcilable interests, with an unwavering obstinacy wholly destructive of the spirit of our government, and in defiance of the compromise which is the basis of our institutions! What wise legislation can ever result from an unyielding assertion of sectional interests? The common welfare must be sought in a broad view of the interests of all, and can only be formed by blending in a common mass the territorial claims of all. If our constitution is worth preserving, it demands the sacrifice of individual interests as strongly, to carry it into execu-

tion, as to give it being in the first instance. So long as sectional interests are the sole object of contention, victory may fall sometimes to one and sometimes to another, but the good of the nation will be forgotten and sacrificed.

At the very time when a large proportion of the German states, yet politically independent of each other, find themselves impelled by the necessity of the case and the advantages in prospect, to form a commercial union, for the main purpose of equalizing their customs, increasing their foreign commerce, and abolishing the expensive and vexatious burdens of their boundary custom houses, we of the United States, enjoying a union commercial and political, are misusing and casting away the very benefits for which they are struggling. Insensible of the inestimable advantages of our union to our industrial, commercial, and civil interests, we disregard and neglect them because we have never been without them.

It was a reasonable expectation that great advances would be made in the United States of America in the career of legislation: that new truths must be struck out by the unrestrained action of such a large number of legislative bodies, and that some new modes of proceeding would be devised which might be a safeguard against abuses and vices to which such deliberations had previously been exposed. We commenced with fourteen legislatures, fifty years ago,—that of the general government and thirteen states; since that time fourteen states have been added to the union: in these legislative bodies there are two houses, and all these have been yearly engaged in the great business of law-making. Can it be said that the increase and diffusion of political knowledge correspond with all this apparatus of legislation? The expense and consumption of time has been enormous; has the profit been commensurate?

Whatever merit this legislation may claim, all capable observers know that it presents besides a fearful mass of rash crudities and dangerous ignorance, wholly inexcusable in assemblies which assume to deliberate before action. These demerits have, it must be noted, appeared more conspicuous in our recent than in our earlier legislation. The theory of the representative system is certainly captivating; but we cannot be without apprehension when we find that the working of elections on the evil passions of men, too often casts up the scum of society as the representation upon

which is devolved all legislative power. The practice under this beautiful theory no where redeems the expectation which the theory creates. The abuses to which it has been subjected appear to prove that there is something radically wrong, not only in the mode of election, but in the processes of legislation.

If space were allowed, it would be easy to signalize the abuses of power which have been committed in the name of legislation, and under virtue of authority derived directly from the people. In this country the instances throng to our memory, touch our peace of mind, and apply to our purses so constantly that any index is unnecessary. We see and feel and hear of it every day. We are so familiar with legislative enormities, that we regard them as belonging to our government—a sort of inevitable evil in free institutions. Many are ready, however, to condemn wholly a plan of government, in which such flagrant outrages upon social order are constantly occurring, and flying at once to other extremes, seem to prefer any form of government to that of which disgusting selfishness is so conspicuous a feature. But so strongly does the representative system commend itself in theory, that we must believe all its failures to proceed from error in administration. It is certainly true, whatever to the contrary demagogues or visionary democrats may have taught, that our people as such are incapable of governing themselves—that is, no majority is capable of comprehending and acting upon all the varied and complicated questions of law, fact, and policy, foreign and domestic, which arise in the administration of our government.

Our public affairs, committed to unfit men, are in a condition which sickens and discourages us, turn whither we will. We have committed vast schemes of interterritorial communication to men utterly ignorant of every element of such undertakings; to men wholly ignorant of the face of the country, except so much as lay within their own election district: the guardianship of millions of money to men without business habits, without ability to keep their private accounts, and too often without that character which would deserve in private life the smallest pecuniary trust: the enactment and amendment of our laws civil and criminal, to men as unfit for the task as ploughmen are to be sailors: the devising measures for the common good, and for the prevention of threatened danger, to men who had no ideas beyond success in a contested election, and so

many dollars a day for their time. The result is just what must happen to any individual who should manage his affairs in the same way.

In all the states, as well as in the national government, the adjudication upon and construction of our laws is entrusted to men of special skill and wisdom, to men long devoted to the study of the general principles of law, and to acquiring an intimate knowledge of all our enactments: to men holding their offices for life, during good behaviour, or for a long period, to secure freedom from party bias and the utmost independence of judgment. In addition to this, all questions coming before judges thus qualified must be specially and fully discussed in their presence by men of like acquaintance with laws and general principles. A particular tribunal under these judges is appointed to ascertain the truth in every case, and all the facts must be established by the testimony of witnesses, under the sanctions of an oath. Such is the care taken to have correct decisions in regard to individual controversies. But why should justice between individuals be deemed of higher importance than the national welfare? Whether viewed in the light of theory or practice, it seems difficult to assign a reason why more knowledge and wisdom and greater exemption from improper bias are required in the interpretation of laws than in making them. If it be the true theory of democratic governments that ignorance, faction and unfitness should rule in the enactment of laws, it would seem necessary that special knowledge, skill and freedom from undue bias, should govern their judicial interpretation,—that the evils of their operation might not correspond with the vices and blunders of their origin. Such is not, however, the theory of our representative government. There is no reason why we may not, and much reason why we should, bring as much peculiar fitness and wisdom to the aid of our legislative as is sought for our judicial proceedings. Plain sense teaches that if all possible pains were taken in the enactment of laws, there would be proportionately less difficulty in comprehending their import, and less demand made upon the science of judges and advocates, and upon the time and money of jurors, witnesses, and suitors.

If the questions arising in our national and state legislatures were what they ought to be, of exclusive reference to the public welfare, in all the varied and conflicting relations of social life; and in affairs, foreign, domestic, and private, the knowledge and intellect requisite for wise decisions

should not be less than that which is employed in the higher courts of the states and of the nation. It can scarce be doubted, that if all the judicial business of the nation were suddenly removed into our various legislatures, it would meet with the same maltreatment which now characterizes our legislation. Who can say that our legislation would suffer by being transferred into the judicial tribunals? Could it be worse by omission, perversion, and abuse, than it is now? Has not the judiciary on the other hand proved as efficient and as useful as any mere human institution will ever be? It is true that a vast reform is needed in our judicial establishments, but that reform must be made by the legislative department. It is more a reform of the laws regulating the administration of justice, than a reform of the judges and their conduct. We may imagine what would be the fate of judicial business, if instead of being done in the forms now prescribed, the whole were submitted to a confused assembly consisting of court, bar, officers, suitors, jurors, witnesses, and bystanders; yet the fate of our national business is now fully as deplorable and hopeless. It cannot be, and is not because our legislators are wholly incapable or wholly vicious. The fault lies in our election laws, which promote faction, and send to our legislative halls men heated by political contests and pre-occupied by party pledges; and also in the constitution of our legislative departments, which are made the arena of electioneering operations, and of offensive private squabbling.

What grave subjects for human weal are suggested by a consideration of this abuse of the best hope of man in society,—the liberty of deliberating for his own welfare or of appointing others to do it!

There are numberless other subjects intimately connected with our social institutions and the well being of our people, which in like manner deserve the most profound and searching consideration—a consideration not only deep and patient, but continued for generations, until the truth shall be finally elicited. We shall glance rapidly at some of the more important of these topics.

The relations of our national and state governments with the Christian religion, remain undefined and undetermined. Our country is deemed a part of Christendom. It is a Christian nation;—but not, according to an opinion very prevalent now, a nation of Christians. No religion can be established among us bylaw; but we recognize Christianity

by our officially proclaimed fasts, in the form of our oaths, in the enjoined abstinence from secular labours on the Sabbath, in the punishment of blasphemy, and in the appointment of chaplains in the army, navy, and legislative halls. We guarantee unlimited freedom of opinion in matters of religion; yet we deny polygamy to the Mahomedan, the right of suttee to the Hindoo widow, and we should strictly prohibit and punish many other impure and bloody acts of worship practised by heathen idolaters, should they come to reside among us, and plead the rights of conscience. In truth, nearly every form of worship except Judaism and Christianity are virtually excluded by our laws. We do not permit, however, any act, *contra bonos mores*, although perpetrated in the name of Christianity; we do not, in fine, allow any persons so to construe the Christian religion, as that their observances shall violate the laws or destroy the public peace. We do not yield to fanatics who deny the validity of all political power, nor to those who believe only in a pure theocracy, nor could allow to the popes the power claimed and exercised in various periods of their history.

It is certain our institutions have absorbed some of the requirements of the Christian religion, but how many, and to what definite extent is yet undetermined. How far we are bound to enforce the observance of the Christian Sabbath, and especially against those, who, like the Jews, do not believe in it as a divine institution, is yet unsettled. How far the rights of conscience are to be respected, is equally unknown: for men may profess to believe any thing, and warp their faith and consciences at will. This great but delicate subject remains to be explored in its various aspects, and it demands a solemn regard for truth, and powers of discrimination of the highest order, and exercised under the most favorable circumstances.

A question of vital importance in one aspect of this subject, has already been proposed and discussed with great excitement. The obligation on the states to furnish the means of education without expense, to all children within their respective borders, has of late years been acknowledged in many of them, and acted upon with great efficiency.

The point now agitated is, how far the education thus extended should be religious, and whether the Bible, the rule of Christian conduct, our obligations to which, as a civilized people, cannot be told, should be introduced into

the schools, and its contents be made a part of the course of instruction. This introduction is strenuously resisted on various grounds. We have no space here for the discussion; but must observe that if we are indebted to the Bible for that which most distinguishes us from the barbarians who are yet without its influences, it seems strange that it should be excluded from a course of education designed to fit the coming generation to discharge duly their duty to themselves, to their country, and to the world. The utmost that we can hope from an education unmingled with Christian instruction, is a race of politicians and electors as graceless as those who now disgrace the country and neglect its interests.

This subject is presented in yet another aspect. One denomination of Christians has objected to the use of the Bible in the public schools in the common version, and to all biblical teaching, unless under its own supervision: and it claims a part of the school fund proportionate to its population, to be applied to support schools in its own way. The ministers of religion who make this claim, declare that one of their people cannot "allow his child to frequent the public schools as at present constituted, without wounding his own conscience, and sinning against God." In the schools of which this complaint is made, the Bible in the common English version is taught without note or comment. What one sect has done another may do; and if the principle prevails, that every religious denomination is entitled to the care of its own children, public education falls to the ground.

It remains then to be determined whether, when we give to our youth the usual instruction in literature, we are not bound to impart to them the elements of Christian knowledge, which are the sources of our system of morals, the ground work of our civil liberty, and the basis of our civilization: whether Christianity may not be recognized in our schools, and in the presence of our children, as well as in our courts and legislatures, and in the presence of soldiers and sailors: whether the same principle which excludes the Bible from our schools, will not exclude the chaplains from Congress, and from the army and navy. It is to be seen whether there be not common Christian ground on which the children of the republic can be trained, with some unity of feelings and views, as citizens of the same country: whether a government, whose duty it is to provide for the common welfare, to encourage virtue and to repress crime,

can yield the right or avoid the obligation of training up its youth in the only way which can secure these ends.

Is the rule which prevails in every feature of our institutions, that the majority must govern, to be abandoned, when we come to a subject so vital to the future progress and destiny of the nation as education? Such are a few of the queries suggested by this topic: to what deliberative body in our republic can we now look for an adequate consideration and just decision of such questions?

The duties of statesmen, requiring attention to the exigencies of the present, are not more imperative than those which demand the exercise of all their sagacity and foresight, in anticipating the results to posterity of what is now done right, of what is done wrong, and of what is left undone. Legislators must look back upon history for a knowledge of human nature and for lessons of experience: they must survey accurately and patiently the actual condition of those upon whose interests they are called to deliberate, to learn what present measures are required, and they must cast their eyes keenly forward to avoid laying shackles upon the limbs of their descendants, which time may increase until the victims are crushed. Thus a wide field of inquiry is spread before the eye of the public man. The actual condition of the population before him, the causes which have resulted in that condition, and its tendencies towards the future, are subjects for deep reflection. We need hardly say that this field is little traversed by the minds of our legislators: they occupy different ground, appearing to care little for the past, and to be regardless of the future; let the most indulgent to their failings declare what they have done for the present generation, and record what debt posterity will owe them for their wisest measures!

Matters of interest are however not wanting to absorb the attention of our rulers and to call forth all their powers of intellect. The Author of our being is no respecter of persons; we believe all men to be equal before Him, but exactly in what sense it is not for us to define. It is quite plain, however, in His word and in His providence, and in the mental and physical constitution of men, that He did not design strict equality of condition in this world. The mental and bodily endowments of men, their personal appearance and size, differ in wide and endless diversity; and their actual condition in life presents a ceaseless variety of contrasts not less striking than sorrowful. Power, wealth, knowledge,

and wisdom, have in all ages had few possessors. It is from this inscrutable but inevitable inequality of condition that many of our most urgent duties, religious, social, and humane, arise. Of the two precepts which sum up the whole of the divine law one enjoins the love of our fellow men. This precept, and the very object of human government alike require of nations and individuals unwearied efforts to increase the sum of human happiness. We have seen how very inadequately this great end has been accomplished in the civilized nations of Europe, where we find a swelling mass of human misery of which it is hard to say whether the aggregate is the more incredible or the more dreadful; we have seen the vast advantages under which our nation commenced its career; but neither of these facts release us from the obligations of good government. If we neglect to improve our opportunities we may soon lose all the power of our present position, and sink into the sad state of the European population. Happiness has its price as well as liberty; both are the purchase of unceasing vigilance, and untiring humanity.

On a broad survey of our population, slavery is encountered as one of its great evils. This has been an evil in all ages, and in nearly all countries, ancient and modern, until a very recent date. Its magnitude as an offence against humanity has not been felt until within a few years, and unfortunately, the subject had been but very imperfectly discussed when it was seized upon by men more ambitious of distinction as philanthropists, than full of desire to benefit the slave. These have indulged in a course of denunciation against holders of slaves, of the most virulent kind, and have thus provoked angry and heated recriminations. That which should have been a discussion demanding the deepest reflection, the most wise and patient research, and the exercise of the best feelings of our nature, has degenerated into open, rancorous, and determined warfare. Who was the aggressor in this contest? Whoever is responsible, the mischiefs which have already resulted can never be estimated. However unpleasant to touch a subject which has been thus handled, we are of opinion it should not be abandoned to fanatics of one idea, nor left to those who have been thrown into a state of excitement very unfavorable to wise resolves.

Personal bondage is not the only evil, nor is personal freedom the only blessing in the world; both conditions are to be taken with their concomitants, before just conclusions can be attained. Slavery would be a relief to millions who are

suffering the pangs of famine and destitution : sufficient food and clothing, and labour in a pure atmosphere, compared with want and nakedness, crowded into masses and breathing, as they toil for life, an atmosphere scarce fit to sustain respiration. No curse can exceed, on the other hand, that of liberty degenerated into anarchy. Slavery in this country has been handed down to us; against whom the sin of its introduction is recorded God knows. Those states in which it exists are obliged to deal with it as an existing evil, and they are bound to amend the condition of their slaves if they can. This obligation cannot be discharged by merely giving them liberty: these states know that the poor of many countries are in a far worse situation than their slaves. They know that the feudal slaves set free in England, when the masters had no longer any interest in retaining them, have been vagrants and paupers to the present time. (See Sir M. Eden on the Poor, 1 vol. pp. 58, 59.) They may well regard the question of the proper disposition of their laboring population as one of great magnitude and difficulty, and requiring for its due solution all the social wisdom and all the anxious deliberation which can be given to it.

If those who have allowed their indignation to burn so fiercely against slavery as it exists in this country, will make a searching and faithful examination into the condition of the poor in all the rest of the world, and make an estimate of human miseries arising from all causes, they will find themselves obliged to withdraw their sympathy from our coloured slaves, and bestow it upon their fellow men who are called to endure far heavier privations and calamities. If misery could be accurately estimated, it would we believe be found in our day, that much the largest portion of that now endured in the world is caused by the destitutions of poverty. If such an estimate could be made, it may be questioned whether war and its attendant evils has not made greater demands on human endurance than either slavery or poverty. Let the philanthropist set himself against every thing which adds to human woe; but let him not violate the laws of charity in pursuit of his object, and above all let him not interpose himself between God and man, and pronounce final and severe judgment in a case in which his position may render him incapable of forming even a correct opinion.

Many of the states of our confederacy are happily exempt from the evil of human bondage. While these may justly congratulate themselves upon this fortunate exemption and

upon being freed from one of the most perplexing subjects which has engaged the minds of practical statesmen, they must not forget their own peculiar duties and hazards. While they invoke the blessings of liberty for the African, they must not omit to guard against the horrors of pauperism, and to secure the present as well as future generations from this scourge of humanity.

Let those who are laboring to rescue the hapless negro, beware lest in their present prosperity they are forging for posterity fetters far more irksome, complicated, and difficult to rend than those of slavery. Great Britain found it more practicable to remove the chains from a million of West India slaves, than to carry into effect any measure of adequate relief to the squalid victims of penury among her own population. May it never happen that the states at present without slaves, shall find it easier to purchase the freedom of all the bondsmen in the United States, than to lift from the dust millions of their own citizens who may be ground to that position by the operation of causes which they are now fostering!

As a nation we have already entered upon the mercantile and industrial system, to the abuses of which the unspeakable miseries of the most miserable beings of Europe are chiefly owing. We cannot without criminal omission of duty shut our eyes to the woes which these abuses have shed upon multitudes who cannot now be restored to peace or comfort. We cannot shut our ears to the voice of warning uttered by enlightened and competent observers in the old world. After speaking of the industrial ardour which has seized upon all conditions of life, of the rage for innovations, for improvement, and for increased production in all branches of industry, which characterizes the present age, the eloquent Sismondi breaks forth in alarm at this movement by which society is hurried onward:—"We have," he says, "pointed out the dreadful consequences to the present, and the more dreadful results to future time, and we have called upon all thinkers, upon all good men, upon all friends of humanity, to aid us to stop or retard the social chariot, which seems by its accelerated progress to be plunging us into an abyss." (*Etudes sur l'Econ. Pol. tom. II. p. 211.*)

"We do not err in asserting," says V. de Barmont, (*Econ. Pol. Chret. tom. II. p. 2.*) "that pauperism advances at the rate of the increase and condensation of the laboring population, and that is steadily influenced by the direction

given to industry, by the concentration of capital and labour, and still more promoted by the relaxation of religion and morals. We shall find a proportionate increase of the poor, wherever the theories of civilization and political economy which have prevailed in England shall have been longer established and more extensively applied." The same author remarks that, in the course of the investigations preparatory to the work cited, "he had been struck by the dreadful influence of the industrial and political system of England upon France, upon Europe, and upon no small portion of the rest of the world. That system, based upon insatiable selfishness, and upon a profound contempt of human nature, stood unveiled to my view in a way which could not but create comparisons favorable to my own country. It was plain that pauperism had taken its rise in England, and that the disease had thence spread into the rest of Europe."—"There has resulted in England a monstrous centralization of fortune and a despotism of wealth, which has been incessantly exercised in the acquirement of new possessions. Such has been the steady progress of that proud and greedy class which has become master of the population."—"They spare no pains nor expense to improve the breed of the inferior useful animals, but give no thought to their laborers, except it be to overtax their strength and increase their misery."—"This opulence has long dazzled the eyes of many, and not a few nations have been seduced by their example: at last time and experience have begun to remove the veil which concealed the frightful misery of a population oppressed, famished, and driven to despair."—"Events now show that the colossus is tottering, and that a gulph is yawning beneath the fabric." "England is destined to perish by the causes which have begot her pauperism; perhaps by the pauperism itself. All who have reflected profoundly upon the condition of that kingdom, cannot avoid feeling that presentiment. It would be a great misfortune, doubtless, but may it not be said that it is merited, and that Providence owes this memorable lesson to the world?"

"But should other nations wait this dispensation of Providence, before they renounce the principles which govern the economical and industrial system of England? Assuredly, no."—"The English system reposes upon the concentration of capital, of commerce, of lands, of labour, upon unlimited production; upon the substitution of machinery

for human labour ; upon the reduction of wages ; upon the perpetual stimulus of human wants ; upon the moral degradation of man." (*Econ. Pol. Chret. tom. I. 23.*)

"They feel neither affection nor gratitude to their employers," says Buret, speaking of the working classes, "and the employers regard them in return with no sentiment of regard ; they know them not as men, but only as instruments of production, upon which they expend as little as possible. The hordes of laborers have no security of steady employment ; the business which has assembled them only feeds them when it needs them, and as soon as their services can be dispensed with they are abandoned without remorse. They are then forced to put their labour at the price which it may suit the employer to give. The longer, the more painful the labour they bestow, the less is their remuneration ; with sixteen hours of continued effort in a day, they can only secure exemption from death by starvation."—"This mass of men, whom industry assembles but cannot always employ, and whom it holds in reserve at mercy, is, for thinkers and for governments, a subject demanding earnest attention and deep disquietude." (*De la Misere en Angleterre et en France, 1 tom. 6S.*)

We might proceed and call more witnesses, English, Italian, and German, to raise their voice of warning against a system of manufacturing industry, fraught in the end with results so disastrous to human well being, physical and moral ; but we forbear. Enough has been said to rouse a spirit of inquiry. Have not we as a nation entered upon this career of over production ? Are not our manufacturing establishments of the overgrown kind ? Are not laborers crowded into them in multitudes ? Are not single individuals and companies becoming the employers of thousands of their fellow men ? Are not such laborers becoming more and more dependant upon their employers, as they become unfitted for other business, and as the present happy circumstances of the country, which now create a demand for labour are passing away ? Human selfishness will display itself here as strongly as in England or France, as soon as it obtains an equal power over the bones and sinews of the working classes. Are not our cities already over-crowded with a redundant population, and is there not constantly exhibited in them a large mass of destitution and suffering ? Now is the time to pause and give to this subject full and searching investigation, before we are irremediably embarked in the career

of pauperism. Now is the time that, availing ourselves of our positive advantages, we should adopt such measures as would secure our working population from the frightful destiny to which they are inevitably proceeding. We do not say that manufacturing industry is to be abandoned; but we do say that while there is any pretence of good government, the power of oppression should not be suffered to accumulate too far in hands directly interested to abuse it. Let no men nor companies of men hold their fellow citizens by thousands in such bondage, that they can compel them to work on pain of starvation, and thus monopolize their labour at less than the cost of slavery.

The prevention of such flagrant wrongs to the laboring classes, without injury to the manufacturing industry of a country, is a difficult problem; and one which is not likely to find a safe or satisfactory solution in legislative halls heated by party ferments, and obscured by obstinate selfishness. It is the duty however of every government to solve this problem, or promote its adequate solution by all the wisdom and intelligence it can command. It is a duty of increasing importance in this country, because palliatives and remedies can now be applied with facility, which may be wholly inapplicable or unavailing hereafter. Let it not be, that when the southern states shall have overcome their great economical difficulty, they shall look northward and behold millions of white laborers sunk into a condition far more dreadful than that from which the African slaves shall then have emerged. Let it not be, that when our posterity shall look back to the time when their forefathers were loudest in their expressions of sympathy for the slaves of the south, they were silently introducing a system of industry which entailed upon those coming after them a bondage more terrible and more incurable. Let those who think there is no danger, observe the progress of pauperism in Massachusetts. Let them hear the details of the misery which is yearly endured in our principal cities. Let them traverse the vast buildings devoted in Boston, New-York, Philadelphia, and other places, to the support of the poor, and they will find evidences of misery which might even shock the old world.

Happily our agricultural population are more secure against the inroads of pauperism. A long period must elapse before the swelling tide of capital can sweep them from their fields, and convert them from independent proprietors

to dependant laborers, craving employment, and uncertain of a day's subsistence. Long as this period must be in the usual course of events, preventive measures should even now be devised, which should ever preserve us a hardy yeomanry with an interest in the soil, and under bond to no holder of princely domains. Shall our lands hereafter be monopolized by capitalists, who shall let them to the needy upon their own terms? Shall they be worked by laborers of tenants, or continue to be owned and occupied as now by the men who perform the agricultural labour? Shall the farms be consolidated, and rented to great farmers in vast tracts, as in England? Shall the tenure and terms of the leases be, as in that country, at the discretion of the holder of the land? Or shall the more humane system which prevails in Tuscany, and in many other places on the continent prevail, where the law determines the condition of the lease, and secures the tenant his home as long as he fulfils his obligations? Is there nothing which a wise foresight can point out to be done now, at least in many of the states, as a preventive of future misery and pauperism among the agricultural population?

There are other social problems which, from their involving present individual interests, and being of extreme intricacy, and requiring for their proper exposition much patience, intelligence and research, are not likely to find their due solution in any of our deliberative bodies as at present constituted. Among these are the regulation of commerce, the encouragement of domestic industry, taxation, money, credit and banks. Such topics are under the most favorable circumstances intensely perplexing, but when complicated by the blindness and obduracy of selfishness, by ignorance and presumption, by rashness and mistake, and by the infatuation of faction, the web of difficulties becomes such that human patience, and talent and sagacity quail before an attempt to unravel the tangled mass. Obstructions rise on all sides to hedge in the inquirer, and he finds the path of truth closed in every direction. The clashing of private interests is incessant and fierce: the array of associations and parties is formidable: the confusion of tongues at Babel was not more complete than the confusion which reigns in the volumes, pamphlets and speeches which have been given to the world on these subjects. If legislators and statesmen have failed in discovering the truth, we are still less indebted to colleges and universities; and there is

no reason to hope, judging from the past, that better success will hereafter crown their efforts. Past experience of our own country and others, dictates that for the hopeful investigation of these subjects, the highest intellect, with ample practical knowledge and special studies are required; and moreover, that the possessors of these qualifications shall be placed as far as possible above the reach of undue influences. In other words, their importance, and their intrinsic as well as their extrinsic difficulties, demand every power, every facility, and every precaution which can be employed, to obtain success in any human attempt. If this be correct, what is to be said of the flippancy and dogmatism which prevails on these questions? Yet with all the discussion, all the efforts of the press, and all the power of eloquence, nothing is settled; no common ground is attained; truth has gained no victories: on the one hand they affirm all, on the other they deny all. The contest waxes and wanes; the combatants multiply and diminish, but opinions remain as various as ever. This is the regular see-saw operation of most governments; the injury of these vacillations is beyond estimate; but in what nation are there symptoms of amendment? Where is the mischief to end?

A main obstruction to the progress of truth lies in this, that most men have some little knowledge of these subjects. That little is magnified into much; infallibility becomes general. If we would make real attainments, we must abdicate these pretensions, admit our ignorance, and condescend to the position of learners. From what school would not the professors retire, if the pupils were allowed to assert equal claims to knowledge with their masters? When there is manifested a sincere desire to know the truth, competent instructors may for the first time be expected to appear. If truth herself were now to appear, there are bustling pretenders who would thrust her aside with contempt, even if she could be heard amid the din of conflicting opinions.

It may be presumed there is some truth upon all sides on subjects like these. The true line of national policy in regard to duties upon imports, the due regulation of commerce, and the protection of domestic industry, lies, it may further be presumed, between the extremes for which parties contend; but it is not probable that this line is susceptible of being previously distinctly defined for any country

It is rather to be determined by the special circumstances of the case, with the aid of that sound discretion, that experience and tried skill, that careful regard of what is just, which should be brought to the decision of all social questions having such a strong bearing on the general welfare. It is not to be discovered by a theory cut out on purpose, nor followed by the light of any previous example. This policy must vary with the ever varying conduct and affairs of men. The inquiry must ever be, what are now all the facts of the case, and what is the policy to be now pursued? What course will most subserve the interests and promote the happiness of the nation for which the legislation is intended, without unnecessarily injuring others? No nation can justly retain all it may have the power to seize; nor can it justly refuse to avail itself of advantages within its reach, if they impose no injustice upon others. The councils of every nation must, in regard to foreign relations, whether of trade or general policy, pursue such a course as in their discretion seems just and wise, and all nations in relations with each other, must necessarily adjust their concerns upon the changes of the policy and measures of each one. Every nation must so use its own as not to injure others; but it cannot in justice allow another to take an undue advantage, to the injury of its own people, without requiring redress, or adopting some countervailing regulation.

The doctrines of free trade so vehemently urged by many do not seem applicable among the nations of the present age; nor indeed among the nations of any period known to us, in history. They belong properly to a better and purer race of men than have yet appeared in the world. There has been no time in our knowledge when if trade had been really left free, its advantages would not have been borne off by some nation more strong, more fortunately situated, more unscrupulous in the use of fraud and violence than others. Among civilized nations, nothing valuable can be left in common, unless it be the ocean itself, which is fortunately not appropriable. Every thing that is valuable is seized upon, and the difficulty of keeping what we claim as peculiar, is too great to allow the idea that any valuable possession can be held in common. If all the regulations of trade, and all special protection of industry could be suddenly cast aside, and the commerce and industry of all countries enfranchised at once from restraint and protection, what a struggle

would ensue ! Violence, fraud and cunning, stimulated by unawed greediness, would engage in a contest which could only end in the ascendancy of those whose superior skill in handling the weapons used gave them the final advantage. The result of making trade less free than before would be certain ; and after such an unhappy experiment, nations would gladly return to the old mode of adjusting commercial questions by mutual compact and conventions.

By regulating judiciously access to its own market, the only one over which it has full control, each nation can make its terms of access to other markets : by properly adjusting its own concerns, it can prevent combinations to its injury, by rendering them useless. So far as there can be interchange of products within its own borders, it may encourage the home, as a most efficient protection against the uncertainties of foreign markets. It deserves indeed to be questioned, whether that trade which without wise regulation is left to the attacks of power and selfishness, is any more desirable or beneficial, than that national freedom which consists in exemption from wholesome laws, and which must therefore end in anarchy.

It may be worth inquiring, whether the principles upon which free trade is urged will not go far in their ultimate conclusions to dissolve the whole fabric of human society. Restraints on human action by the operation of laws are only imposed for the general good, and they are only made necessary by the disposition of men to abuse the powers which nature or accident may have given them. There are no impulses by which men are more apt to be led astray, than those which prompt them to seize all advantages where the acquisition of property is concerned. If all national restraints on commerce were removed, a career would be opened for the operation of bad passions, alike destructive to morals and good government. If the trade of the world were left in the free, that is lawless, state which is proposed, its mischiefs would be soon returned with interest upon those engaged in the internal trade out of which it arises. The effects of this upon governments cannot easily be conjectured, though the worst might be anticipated ; the devotees of commerce hold in their hands the monied power, and that power must be regulated, or it will consult only its own interests, however severely others should suffer in the process.

No subject, as we think, has ever encountered more un-

happy treatment than that of money, with its kindred topics, credit, banking and currency. Money has been called the root of all evil: it may be added that it is a root of bitterness, which has given pungency to controversies so numerous that volumes would be required for their mention. In early times, before the general use of credit, the adulteration of coins by governments, the counterfeiting by individuals, the clipping, filing, punching, and sweating of coins, the rapid depreciation of money by the then continual use and friction, the robberies by sea and land, the monopoly of the precious metals by rich associations and merchants, were subjects of constant, ever varying and loud complaint. Financial and commercial disasters, calamities and ruin in trade, and the cries of distress were, in proportion, not less common then than now. Discussions and complaints not less sharp than those which occur now, prevailed on these subjects in former days. For more than three hundred years have these controversies been increasing in number and variety, if not in heat and violence. The introduction of credit, banks, and paper currency has added complexity to subjects already intricate, but without altering the spirit and tendency of the questions agitated. Volumes upon volumes, showers of pamphlets, and innumerable speeches have been expended in Europe on the various departments of this engrossing topic. It has engaged alike the attention of the ablest minds and the most uncultivated. In this country, too, the press has groaned with its contributions to this subject, and not only have our halls of legislation echoed with the ever-recurring sounds, but our very atmosphere is loaded with breath spent on this worried topic. It is the hobby of the demagogue, the burden of the poor man's complaint, the ground of the rich man's apprehensions; it swells the petitions of the people, and the documents of rulers; and for many years it has been the main subject of our public deliberations, and, it may be added, of our private thoughts. Every motive which could stimulate human exertion has been at work, and as much acuteness and intellectual power has been expended in these discussions, as have ever been brought to bear upon any subject. Of all this, who can sum up the beneficial results? What disputed points have been settled? What positions have been established? To what doctrines have general assent been accorded?

Do not a thousand questions of the greatest practical im-

portance continue to be agitated without hope of termination? The subject of banks and currency has been an almost ceaseless theme of debate, in all the legislatures of our states, and in the two Houses of Congress, from the beginning of their history to this day. What principle has been settled? What has all this discussion elicited; and what has all our experience established?

There is good warrant for doubting whether the problems connected with money and credit, will ever be solved in an assembly created by popular elections. The intrinsic difficulty of the subject is not the chief obstacle to the progress of truth; it is the multitude, the intensity, and contrariety of interests, which are roused in every such discussion. Men in this case, cannot be made to see that their true interests and truth take a parallel course. Jealousy and selfishness take fire when these matters are under consideration, and when all are deeply interested, they do not wish to know the truth unless it promises advantage. He who is seeking to lay down the right path in the matters of money and credit, must expect to find himself assailed on all sides like an engineer, who is seeking the proper route for a rail-road. Before and behind him, and on either hand, he is invited and repulsed, and coaxed and driven, by parties attempting to subserve their own views; facts are withheld, and falsehoods asserted without hesitation, and it is made abundantly plain that if the location of the road depended upon the will of those who reside on its route, it would never be determined.

Several years of close attention, and a careful survey of no small portion of what has been written upon the subject, has brought us decidedly to the conclusion that the true theory of money and credit, has never been propounded to the public in its full proportions. Many treatises of great value have appeared, the works of as gifted minds as have ever engaged public attention; and besides these many others have contributed to the mass of useful materials which have now accumulated on this subject. The failure we have so much reason to lament, has not occurred through defect of industry or intellectual power, nor, as we believe, through the difficulty of the solution. "Mais quelles fautes a-t-on donc fait?" (We adopt the words of the Abbe Galliani in his *Dialogues sur le commerce des Bleds.*) "Est-ce qu'on en peut faire plus d'une? Les hommes n'en font jamais qu'une, and c'est toujours la meme."—"Que l'on se fonde sur une expérience ou sur un fait vrai and éprouvé, mais que

ne s'adapte point, qui ne saurait s'appliquer au cas dans lequel on est." This has all the flippancy of the Abbe, but contains the important truth, that men more frequently err by assuming wrong premises, than by false reasoning from premises assumed. We believe that the main obstacle to the advance of truth on the subject before us, has been the existence of prejudices which writers dare not or could not oppose, and the concession of facts and doctrines irreconcilable with the true theory. The same false assumptions have, according to our conjecture, been continued, not only in nearly all the writings, but in all subsequent legislation. It is impossible to believe that so much mental effort should have been spent so wholly in vain; that for nearly two centuries, men should have been floundering between extremes, and yet not have discovered the truth, in a matter where truth is so important to social happiness, unless some fatal error had been lurking at the root of all their inquiries. But it is not only in the books and treatises, that we find the unsatisfactory results, but the history of money and credit in countries where they have mingled in commerce, furnishes an array of disasters and scenes of ruin, which amply demonstrate that the subject is not understood in practice better than in theory, and that the mistakes and abuses are such as demand a radical change in the whole system. In this country, unfortunately, there is scarce a hope that science or wisdom will lend us assistance. The popular voice, which has, from the beginning, frightened and deterred the calm lovers of truth, has now grown louder and more fearful than ever, in a discussion in which it is difficult to tell which side is most in the wrong. We are driven by the blind impetus of popular thoughtlessness and popular indignation, from one extreme to another. Extremes so wide too, that the reaction must always traverse a circuit, and find a limit corresponding to the point at which the recoil commenced. The far sweeping pendulum which rules our money and credit system, urges up our prosperity in one course to a giddy and unstable height, but in its return strews desolation and ruin in its path, prostrating the hopes and sweeping off the earnings of industry. This pendulum is public opinion: and its operation in this case, if there were no other means of learning the lesson, teaches that the public mind is wholly incapable of managing complex matters, touching men so nearly as money and credit. The past and present both forbid the hope of any amend-

ment: we cannot look to our legislative bodies, state nor national, for wise and consistent legislation on these delicate topics, until science has shed upon them such strong light, that even the public may easily comprehend, and may not dare to disregard the truth.

How may truth shed her holy light upon the subjects we have thus indicated, and a thousand others which are constantly arising for solution under our institutions? How shall the questions and exigencies of our peculiar social position be met? We profess to keep the best interests of men always in view: how shall we redeem that profession? Can the light of science penetrate and not be extinguished, in the atmosphere of a popular assembly? Can she find votaries, or admirers, or even friends, among the conscripts of fraudulent and tempestuous elections? The great desideratum of the day, is clearly a national institution for the study and illustration of those great questions which grow out of the present social condition of man in all countries; and for pursuing the important inquiry how our institutions, being those only in the world which are freely open to amendment, may be so improved on all points, as not only to insure the peace and happiness of our people, but as shall convince the rulers and people of all other nations that the same blessings are within their power.

In all matters of private concern, we seek counsel and aid from those specially fitted by skill and experience to render it; so in regard to the national defence by sea and land, we think it necessary that a special body of officers and men should be carefully trained, instructed in the knowledge, and inured to the labours which belong to the navy and army. If the people, as a mass, have all the virtue and knowledge attributed to them, why this necessity of special provision for national defence? Is not the host of aspirants for office as fit to be officers in the army and navy, as to throng the halls of legislation? Are the duties of the army and navy more difficult, and is the knowledge required more inaccessible, than that which should belong to the legislator and statesman? Surely time has spared no greater absurdity than this, prevalent in representative governments, that the business of governing may be entrusted to any ignoramus who begs for it, without the smallest fitness for such a responsible task. It is owing to this, in part, that the science of legislation has remained so far in the rear of the general advance of knowledge: it was not the interest of kings to

instruct the people in the art of government, and in all cases where people have had their interests in their own hands, they have arrogated to themselves knowledge they did not possess, abused their own power, and disgraced their own management.

The officers of the army and navy and the judges who preside in our courts, are compelled to undergo a long and painful course of study and training to fit them for the duties to which they are assigned; the path to professional usefulness and fame lies through our colleges or schools of science, in which the aspirant must submit to all the labour of learning his profession, and years of practice to perfect himself; the architect, shipbuilder, cannon founder, armorer, the blacksmith, the farrier, and tailor, employed by the government, are expected to have acquired the proper skill in their respective arts and business, and a rigid fulfilment of every contract is required of them; but the head which gives laws to the army, navy, and judiciary, which moves all the machinery of the social system, is not required to have, and, in point of fact never has, any peculiar fitness of talent, intellect or experience for its superior charge: the arms, the body, and the limbs of the republic are required to be of the best materials, sturdy and fair in their proportions; but the brains, which govern these muscular members, are but the poisonous and bitter bubbleings of overworked elections. The choice materials of stone and timber are selected to erect the main body of the social fabric, whilst the rubbish and sweepings are exalted over all, to serve as a head. Not only so: the other members of the body politic remain long in their several places, gathering aptitude and strength for their various and respective duties; but the head is constantly crumbling to pieces, undergoing a perpetual disintegration and renewal; its composition therefore never attains strength nor consistency. It presents but a melancholy spectacle of aimless inefficiency and want of mental power.

After all, it may be said, admitting what is asserted of the anomalies, the absurdities, the abuses of power, the want of foresight and ignorance which prevail so fatally on the peace and comfort of the people in our government, and in all others, what could any institution for the increase and diffusion of knowledge designed to remedy these evils, accomplish towards so great and hopeless an undertaking? Perhaps not very much. Towards the task, however, of ameliorating the physical and moral condition of men, of

improving and perfecting the science of government as the highest human object, all the mental power, all the experience and all the benevolence which can be brought to bear ought to be directed. It will be a great point gained, when by the establishment of such an institution, a practical assertion shall be made, that lessons are needed on subjects, on which, in popular governments, men have assumed to be wise by intuition, and upon which, in despotic governments no free discussion or teaching could be tolerated. Let it be thus virtually and solemnly announced, that the art of government and the whole mystery of legislation, are matters which require years of study and special opportunities to acquire, and it may be hoped that many will eventually be induced to qualify themselves suitably for public stations, as the only way to public favour. Let men with minds ripened by long study of these subjects, and stored with the lessons of history and experience, go forth yearly among their fellow citizens; and they will show the difference between the intuition of the demagogue and the actual attainments of the votary of truth. Taste for such studies thus diffused, young men would soon be found willing to seek distinction by deserving it, and ashamed to take office without some of the necessary qualifications. It is proper too that we should be partially emancipated from the never-ceasing examination of institutions as they are, and that some minds at least, should be chiefly devoted to the inquiry what they ought to be: that while the selfishness of special representation is struggling for its peculiar interests, some minds should be devoted to an exclusive consideration of the good of the whole; that while sectional views and interests are clashing in angry contest, enfeebling and destroying the power of governments, some minds should be employed in devising measures of compromise and conciliation, and the means of giving efficiency to every useful department, every wise undertaking and every salutary law.

Without concerning ourselves for the present, with the corporate form or powers which may properly be conferred upon the Smithsonian Institution, we propose that the "establishment," shall embrace the course of studies contemplated in the following arrangement, and such others as may be necessary to make it complete. The number of professors in each would eventually be regulated by its requirements and the adequacy of the fund. Their appointment to be vested in the judges of the Supreme Court of

the United States. The professors to be ineligible to any public office during their professorship and for three years thereafter. The special supervision of the institution to be under the Professors, subject to the control of the judges of the Supreme Court of the United States. The judges of the Supreme Court of each State of the Union to be visitors, either in a body or by a delegate of their number. A visitation once in each year, and a report to Congress upon the condition of the institution. The privilege of attending the lectures, in case of difficulty to be apportioned among the citizens of each state, according to the ratio of representation in Congress.

FIRST DEPARTMENT.

One Professor.

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES.

Its history, operation, merits, demerits, abuses, and required amendments.

CONGRESSIONAL LEGISLATION.

Its course, general merits, results, and what is required.

THE GENERAL GOVERNMENT AND ITS ADMINISTRATION.

Historical review of its efficiency, wisdom, and faults. How far its deficiencies attributable to improper legislation; how far to vices of men.

These subjects embrace a vast range of discussion and inquiry: the value of the Union; the nature of the compromise upon which it is based; all the powers of the general government, with a review of their past exercise and a consideration of existing emergencies; and, finally, all the duties and responsibilities of citizens in their national capacity. A glance at the constitution and the national legislation, is sufficient to indicate the variety and importance of the subjects falling within this department.

SECOND DEPARTMENT.

Two Professors.

THE CONSTITUTIONS OF THE SEVERAL STATES. THE HISTORY OF THEIR LEGISLATION. THE CONDITION OF THE POPULATION IN EACH STATE, AND THE CAUSES OF THAT CONDITION.

The constitutions and legislation of the states, form a mine of political thought and experience, almost unworked. We are not aware that any attempt has been made to classify

and condense these multifarious materials; and we are for the most part more ignorant of the legislation of our sister states, than we are of that of the chief European countries. What a field for examination! How must the originality of mind and freeness of thought which characterizes the people of the United States, be exhibited in this mass of political action? There must be something in the institutions, legislation, and experience of every state, which, is specially worthy of being communicated to every other state. Of that which cannot be admired nor imitated, there must be a vast display; but blunders and ignorance, corruption and villany, may be usefully indicated as preventives, and held forth as warnings.

THIRD DEPARTMENT.

One Professor.

THE FORM OF GOVERNMENT AND LEGISLATION OF ENGLAND, SCOTLAND, AND IRELAND. THE PAST AND PRESENT CONDITION OF THEIR POPULATION.

The history of the legislation of these kingdoms is replete with lessons for statesmen of all countries: with examples for imitation and avoidance. Here we find the germ of our institutions, and may discover whether they had their origin in wisdom, in necessity, or in accident, and tracing their history downward, may ascertain whether their popularity is owing to their beneficial influences on human well being, or to other causes. We are here furnished with proof that a nation may increase in power and wealth beyond all precedent, while the mass of its people are sinking into a state of wretchedness and destitution beyond description. The explanation of this economical phenomenon is of vital concern to the people of this country; for, we are sons of the same sires, and are embarked in the same career, and if proper preventive measures are not timely applied, no very distant period may witness the same extremes in the condition of our population.

FOURTH DEPARTMENT.

One Professor.

ANCIENT LEGISLATION AND FORMS OF GOVERNMENT, WITH SPECIAL RESEARCHES INTO THE ACTUAL CONDITION OF THE PEOPLE: EMBRACING ALL THAT IS EXTANT ON THIS SUBJECT OF THE ASIATIC AND AFRICAN NATIONS OF ANTIQUITY, BUT SPECIALLY SETTING FORTH THE

RISE, PROGRESS AND DECLINE OF GRECIAN AND ROMAN LEGISLATION, WITH ITS RESULTS UPON THE PEOPLE.

This course opens up sources of knowledge not adequately known, and hitherto not comprehensively treated. Roman legislation covering such a long period of time, copious, rich, and well preserved, affords alone a mine of useful matter, and furnishes the key of modern European legislation.

FIFTH DEPARTMENT.

One Professor.

THE FORMS OF GOVERNMENT IN MODERN EUROPE, AND THE HISTORY OF ITS VARIOUS LEGISLATION AND CIVIL ADMINISTRATION, FROM THE FALL OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE TO THE PRESENT TIME, WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE CONDITION OF THE PEOPLE AS AFFECTED BY THEIR GOVERNMENTS AND LAWS.

A vast field of profitable research. History has very fully unfolded the sad tale of European wars, of broken treaties, of fruitless negotiations, of unprincipled factions, of corrupt rulers: it has dwelt upon the conduct and principles of kings and nobles, but it has not adequately made known the progress of legislation, the interior political movements, and the administration of laws, and the power of government as bearing on the happiness of the people. It is but of late years that comparative legislation has become a study in Europe. What a fund of profitable instruction may be derived from the Italian Republics, from the legislation of Charlemagne, in France, to the formation of the code by Napoleon, from the wise and enlightened enactments of Prussia: there are many European nations, in fine, from which, with all our young wisdom, we might learn much that would be at once applicable and useful here; and there are none from whose systems or experience some important lesson may not be drawn. And while we would draw from these, to us almost unexplored sources, all the instruction which can be valuable, we owe to the nations of Europe a full exposition of our own legislation and civil management, that they may have the benefit of our experience, or incur the responsibility of refusing the offered advantage.

SIXTH DEPARTMENT.

One Professor.

THE THEORY AND OPERATIONS OF COMMERCE, WITH ITS

HISTORY :—THE THEORY AND FUNCTIONS OF MONEY :—THE THEORY OF PAYMENTS, INCLUDING A CONSIDERATION OF THE CREDIT SYSTEM :—THE THEORY AND FUNCTIONS OF BANKS OF DEPOSIT AND CIRCULATION :—THEORY OF PAPER CURRENCY :—THE THEORY OF PRICES.

The consideration of these theories to be connected with ample demonstrations of the facts upon which they arise.

The general course of study and research embraced in the foregoing five departments include, when extended to their proper limits, the whole range of legislation, political rights and duties, and administrative economy. The subjects of commerce, money, credit and prices, although thus embraced, are detached and made the objects of special examination. The propriety of this arises rather from the peculiar nature of these topics, than from their greater intrinsic importance. Whatever concerns these absorbing questions, so engrosses the feelings, warps the inclinations, and governs the minds of men, that whilst they are pending, it is vain to offer more important subjects of consideration. It is of the highest concern to ascertain and settle these theories, and the right course of procedure under them; until this is done, the progress of all other improvement must be checked, if not often wholly stopped. No means promising the least success should be omitted to accomplish this desirable end. The most ample rewards should be held forth to those who shall succeed in demonstrating the principles and theories which should govern legislation and administrative action on these national concerns.

SEVENTH DEPARTMENT.

One Professor.

STATISTICS.

Facts become of increased importance in a period when men are becoming convinced that all progress in true science, must be founded upon a thorough knowledge and due appreciation of things and events as they actually exist and take place. In the course of social inquiry these questions arise.—What facts do we need? How can we best obtain them? How shall we satisfy ourselves of their accuracy? How shall they be displayed to exhibit their just results? That a solution of these queries remains to be found in the United States is very apparent from the manner in which the census has heretofore been taken? Each census has been lamentably meagre and incorrect, and that

of 1840, is admitted to be the most imperfect, and the least to be relied upon of all.

EIGHTH DEPARTMENT.

One Professor.

THE BIBLIOGRAPHY OF POLITICS AND POLITICAL ECONOMY.

If political science remains in its infancy it cannot be attributed to lack of effort in authors, orators and politicians. Every grade of intellect from the pigmy to the giant, has grappled with this subject. Whatever may be the value of their labours, it cannot be doubted they have left much for their successors to accomplish. It is safer to pursue the study of political truth by a direct and actual survey of facts, of society and of human nature, than in treatises, which undeniably fall short of their object. That political education, however, which did not embrace a knowledge of the opinions of the most eminent writers on this subject, would certainly be incomplete. A close searching and critical examination of opinions so contradictory, may lead to the detection of fallacies and false doctrines, which ingenuity, eloquence, and the authority of great names, have long fastened on the minds of men. It is indeed a fruitful source of error and its perpetuation, that men are ever more prone to follow a leader than to pick their own way, to pin their faith to a particular author rather than think for themselves. This is especially the case in the schools where the teaching falls into a beaten track, in which it remains until admonished that the world has moved on and left the college far behind. Those who would escape from the errors of books, must read more books; on many subjects but especially moral, metaphysical and political, they are the best antidote to their own mischiefs. He who reads least generally thinks he knows most; while he who reads most, if he escape burial under the rubbish, will be driven to think for himself, and thus grow in wisdom if not in knowledge.

NINTH DEPARTMENT.

One Professor.

THE LAW OF NATIONS. DIPLOMACY, HISTORY OF TREATIES AND NEGOTIATIONS.

The course of study here recommended, and the number of professors by whom it is taught, may be enlarged or di-

minished, according to the capacity of the fund which is to support them. We have added to each branch of study the number of professors which may be proper at the outset. If the institution should be successful it would yield an income from fees, equal to the salary of several additional professors, for whom the course would find full employment. If there be truth in the adage that "knowledge is power," we might expect a large addition to the power of our government, if our legislators and public officers were fully imbued with the knowledge which is proposed to be taught in the Smithsonian Institute. It does not seem to be suspected, but it may be true, that a large proportion of the embarrassments and difficulties under which the nation is now laboring, are the fruit of pure unadulterated ignorance. If to this ignorance be added the next worse ingredient, presumption, we may find the solution of many blunders in legislation and government. If we can stagger along under such disadvantages, what might we not hope under a system in which intelligence, special skill and talents, should be substituted in our public men, for the qualifications which now advance them to office?

Edwin Hall

- ART. II.—1. *Primitive Christian Worship: or, the evidence of Holy Scriptures and the Church, concerning the invocation of Saints and Angels, and the blessed Virgin Mary.* By J. Endell Tyler, B. D. Rector of St. Giles-in-the-fields, and late fellow of Oriel College, Oxford. London: 1840. pp. 415.
2. *The Virgin Mary. A candid comparison with the Holy Scriptures of the doctrine of the Church of Rome, respecting the mother of our Lord.* By John Hall, Pastor of the Presbyterian Church, Trenton, N. J. Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publication, 1842. pp. 53.

To prevent any misapprehension which the connexion of the author's English University with his title-page might excite, it is proper to state at once, that the design of his work is to prove that the invocation of any other than the Divine Being is a practice contrary to the scriptures, and unknown in history for at least the first three centuries of the Christian era. Mr. Tyler speaks fraternally of the Church of Rome, and mourns

over its errors, "as he would have sighed over the faults of a friend, who, with many good qualities still to endear him, had unhappily swerved from the straight path of rectitude and integrity," but his opposition to the doctrines and practices in question is uncompromising. And from the turn of his allusions and arguments in several instances, we are led to believe, that though his work is in the form of an expostulation with the Romanists, a collateral design was to exhibit the danger to which the Church of England is exposed from the efforts of the new reformers.

With the exception of this concession to Rome, as a sister church, the book is an excellent specimen of the rational and Christian method of agitating our controversy with the followers of the Pope. The arguments and testimony that prove their departure from the faith, are not so mixed with abusive epithets as to make them powerless on the minds of those whose errors they demonstrate. The truth is related fully and fairly; and the perversions and contradictions of that truth are detailed without exaggeration, and in the tone of sorrow rather than of animosity.

It is not likely that many of our readers are very curious to know the particulars of the argument in opposition to the invocation of saints. "The evidence of holy scripture" is sufficient for them, without being anxious to learn whether it is corroborated by that of "the church." An outline, however, of the plan of the work, may possess some interest.

After an introductory address on the duty of exercising private judgment in matters of faith, taking the Bible as the infallible guide and "the witness and mind of the church," as a help in understanding it—which help we leave to those who can find it—Mr. Tyler proceeds to consider the evidence of the Old Testament on the doctrine of invocation. The proof from this source is to this effect, that the one God is revealed as the only object of worship and of supplication; that the prohibitions against paying these acts of homage to any other being, are so peremptory and unqualified as to disallow the introduction of such homage, under the pretext of a new kind or different degree of invocation from that which is addressed to God; and that there is no example, or allusion to, any such practice. This position cannot be shaken by the averment of Bellarmine, that there were no saints admitted to the divine presence in heaven, as intercessors or otherwise, until Christ descended to Hades and released the spirits from their prison. For, (passing by the

theory of the intermediate state,) to admit this would be to deny the scriptural history of Enoch and Elijah; and even if all mortals had been excluded until that period, the same reason cannot be ventured to account for the absence of all precedent for the invocation of angels and other celestial beings. Moreover, if the saints were admitted to heaven at the resurrection of Christ, and thereupon became proper objects of invocation, why is the New Testament so entirely silent as to any such event or practice? Bellarmin, of course, seizes upon the parable in which Lazarus cries out to Abraham. But that was the case of one spirit invoking another, both of whom had passed the bounds of mortality. But if the instance were ever so fairly cited, it would be no gain to the advocate of the Roman doctrine, for Abraham disclaimed in the strongest terms the possession of any power to help the sufferer.

Finding no allusions to the point in the scriptures, excepting such as are utterly condemnatory of the notion of invocation, Mr. Tyler proceeds to investigate the testimony of the primitive Christian writers, during the period that extends from the close of the sacred volume to the first council of Nice, (A. D. 325.) He seems to have adopted this date as the limit of his research, because three centuries are enough to invalidate any claim that rests upon apostolic tradition, if the tenet can be shown to have been unknown throughout that period, and because it might lead to a diversion of the controversy, if he should attempt to fix the precise date of the rise of the heresy in its earliest and most unpretending forms. Mr. Tyler may be followed the more confidently in this examination, as he sets out with the avowal that "when scripture is silent, or where its meaning is doubtful, Catholic tradition is to me a guide, which I feel myself bound to follow with watchful care and submissive reverence." (p. 62.)

Premising, on our own part, that we only wonder that the drag-net thrown into the sea of the Fathers has not produced images of the virgin, rosaries, collyrides, and the whole apparatus of her worship in some nascent form, we proceed to give a summary of the results of Mr. Tyler's investigation. Setting out with "the Apostolic Fathers," he finds in the epistle of Barnabas no trace of the invocation of saint or angel, though prayer, angel, and saint are all spoken of. We would refer, however, in passing, to a sentence of this epistle which exhorts to a regard for the saints, which we venture

to espouse, as the holy Catholic and scriptural doctrine on the point. "Thou shalt search out every day," says Barnabas, "the persons of the saints; both meditating by the word, and proceeding to exhort them, and anxiously caring to save a soul by the word." This sentiment deserves a Tract to restore it to its primitive catholicity; and though such regard to the saints may be neither *Dulia* nor *Hyperdulia*, it may sound as venerably to call it *Koinonia*, or *Diaconia*.

The shepherd of Hermas furnishes nothing to help out the tradition which was so plain to the Tridentine Council and Pius IV., "that the saints reigning together with Christ, are to be honored and invocated; that they offer prayers to God for us, and that their relics are to be venerated; that the images of Christ, and of the mother of God, ever virgin, and also of the other saints are to be had and retained; and that due honour and veneration are to be given them," [the images.] Hermas speaks much of prayer, but it is in the style of the epistle of the apostle James, that if any desire a blessing, he should ask of God in faith; and that though the Divine throne is girded, as it were by a wall, by the heavenly hosts, "the gate is the Son of God, who is the only way to God."

Of the remains of Clement, of Rome, neither the acknowledged nor the doubtful help out the antiquity of invocation. His epistle to the church at Corinth urges to prayer; and one of the Arabic epistles which bears his name, exhorts Christians to look to their faithful predecessors as examples of piety; but it is of Christ, and only of Christ, that he speaks as "our salvation, the chief priest of our offerings, our protector, and the succourer of our weakness." Ignatius, too, seems to have lived and died in utter neglect of the veneration of the saints: an ignorance or omission which has not prevented him from having a place and a day in the Roman calendar, and thus becoming himself an object of invocation. Equally unsuspecting must Polycarp have been, that the time should come when the designation of *saint*, which the scriptures apply to all true believers, should be conferred as a special honour on himself, and the professed worshippers of God offer to *him* their supplications, in the form of an *ora pro nobis*. This saint, (as we trust he was, and is,) in the prospect of martyrdom, offered the following prayer, which is on a very different model from the approved commendams of the church of Rome, or Oxford, to any

or all saints.* “Father of thy beloved and blessed Son, Jesus Christ, by whom we have received our knowledge concerning thee, the God of angels and power, and of the whole creation, and of the whole family of the just, who live before thee; I bless thee because thou hast deemed me worthy of this day and this hour, to receive my portion among the number of the martyrs, in the cup of Christ, to the resurrection both of soul and body in the incorruption of the Holy Ghost; among whom may I be received before thee this day in a rich and acceptable sacrifice, even as thou, the true God, who canst not lie, foreshowing and fulfilling, hast beforehand prepared. For this, and for all I praise thee, I bless thee, I glorify thee, through the eternal high-priest Jesus Christ, thy beloved Son, through whom to thee, with him in the Holy Ghost, be glory, both now and for future ages. Amen.”

The writings of the five apostolic Fathers, therefore, are declared by Mr. Tyler to contain no reference or allusion to the invocation of saint or angel, as a practice either approved or known in their times. He then passes to the later writers, those who, though not dignified with the title of saint, like the first five, were many of them at least their equals in sanctity and learning. Justin Martyr expressly admonishes against looking to any being but God for help or intercession; and a passage in his first apology, which Bellarmin and his followers cite as testifying that Christians worshipped angels, is shown to be perverted to such an use only by taking advantage of a grammatical obscurity, and overlooking the analogous opinions of Justin, plainly expressed elsewhere. In like manner did Bellarmin seize upon a few sentences in Irenaeus, to extort some patristic tradition for the Roman dogma. But his dishonesty is demonstrated by putting the text of the father and that of the Jesuit side by side, and by contradictory citations from other parts of Irenaeus. Clement, of Alexandria, and Tertullian, (both before and after his transition to Montanism,) have been searched in vain for any line to countenance the notion. As

* This prayer is given on the authority of the epistle of the church of Smyrna, relating the martyrdom of Polycarp, as preserved in Eusebius. That document expressly states it to be the sentiment of the church, “that we can never either leave Christ, or worship any other. For him, being the Son of God, we worship, but the martyrs, as disciples and imitators of our Lord, we worthily love,” &c. According to the same testimony, the church of Smyrna collected the bones of Polycarp from the stake, and met at the place of their deposit on the anniversary of his martyrdom, to commemorate him. In such practices, doubtless, the heresy of invoking saints took its origin.

Origen continues to be cited by eminent writers, not only as a witness to the primitiveness of the doctrine of invocation, but as absolutely invoking angels in his writings, Mr. Tyler has taken considerable pains in examining these allegations. In doing so, he discloses fresh evidence of the slender confidence we can place in the genuineness of any of the writings called the Fathers', and of the insecurity of trusting to the second-hand quotations even of the most respectable writers. For example: though Origen's works are so numerous that Jerome enquired, "who is there among us that can read as many books as Origen has composed?" yet few of his writings are extant, and most of those that come to us with his name are Latin versions, without any means of verifying their faithfulness. And upon this point the whole question of Origen's sentiments is rendered utterly uncertain by the alleged fact, that of his known translators, Jerome is charged with "the habit" (*solemne esse*, says De la Rue, the Benedictine editor of Origen, Paris, 1733,) of inserting some things of his own in his translations from the Greek; and Ruffinus, another of his translators, states without disguise, that in preparing Origen's extemporary addresses for publication in Latin, he took the liberty of "adding, supplying, and filling up what he thought wanting;" and this to such an extent, that his friends found fault with him for putting the name of Origen instead of his own to these labours. A third editor is exposed by De la Rue, who, after averring in the advertisement of his translation, that if "he had found any thing inconsistent with the decrees of holy mother church, he would not have translated the book, both suffered much heterodoxy to remain, and entirely suppressed other passages." Mr. Tyler well remarks upon this, that "it unhappily shows the disposition to sacrifice every thing to the received opinions of the church of Rome, rather than place the whole evidence of antiquity before the world, and abide by the result. How many works the principle, in worse hands, may have mutilated, or utterly buried in oblivion, and left to perish, it is impossible to conjecture."

And of the uncertainty of secondary quotation, we are furnished with this new and amusing illustration. Coccius, in his *Thesaurus Catholicus*, (1601,) cites a passage from "*Origen in Lament.*" to prove that this Father invoked the saints in general, and Abraham in particular. The eminent Dr. Wiseman, who is "Professor in the English College at Rome," in his lectures on the doctrines of his church, deli-

vered in London in 1836, instead of consulting the Fathers themselves, trusted to a late compilation in English, made by the Messrs. Berington & Kirk, who, in their turn, had quoted Origen from Coccius, copying his reference as it stands in the Thesaurus, "*Origen in Lament.*" and giving another reference to Origen on the book of Job. Dr. Wiseman, unfortunately, undertook to write out the abbreviation, and says, "Again he thus writes on the *Lamentations*, 'I will fall down on my knees,' " &c., and adds to the quotation, as the reference, "Lib. ii. De Job." But the work cited by Coccius is not Origen's comment on the Lamentations, (*Selecta in Threnos*), at all, but the composition that is variously called the Wailing, or Penitence, or Lament of Origen. This latter production—the one in which the invocation is really found—is discarded from the Benedictine edition, was condemned by Erasmus as the fiction of some unlearned person, designed to throw disgrace upon Origen, and his opinion is quoted by Huet, the celebrated bishop of Avranches, with the addition, that the book had been inserted in the list of apocryphal writings denounced by Pope Gelasius, in the fifth century. Yet this is the testimony of antiquity that is produced by one of the most distinguished Roman Catholic authors in our time, obviously ignorant alike of the book itself, and of its canonical standing! Nor do Dr. Wiseman's blunders end here; for the commentary on Job, attributed to Origen, a passage of which is cited by Coccius, and the reference to which is so strangely appended by Wiseman to the sentence from the Lament, has been as emphatically pronounced spurious, in the Benedictine edition of Origen, on the arguments of Huet, as the Lament itself.

But as to the real sentiments of Origen, taking our chance of all the uncertainties of his genuine works and faithful translations, the extracts bearing upon the subject which are given by Mr. Tyler, while they furnish no ground for placing that Father among the advocates of prayer to any being but God, it appears to us that he must have cherished many imaginations of the possibility of the angels having more to do with the success of human supplications than he could find positive revelation to sustain. His expressions indicate a vivid idea of the sympathy of the heavenly world with believers in this, but he goes no farther than to intimate that angels and saints pray *with* and *for* the faithful, and that through Christ, the help of such may be afforded to the church on earth. This is going quite far, but there is no

hint of any prevailing opinion or practice among Christians in his day that regarded either angels or saints as proper objects of invocation. "Whether," says he, in his comment on the epistle to the Romans, "the saints who are removed from the body and are with Christ, act at all, and labour for us, like the angels who minister to our salvation; or whether, again, the wicked, removed from the body, act at all according to the purpose of their own mind, like the bad angels, with whom, it is said by Christ, that they will be sent into eternal fires; let this too be considered among the secret things of God, mysteries not to be committed to writing." It was indeed a point of his controversy with Celsus, that the Deity is to be worshipped through no other mediator than Christ, and as to the amount or kind of regard due to heavenly beings, he says no more than this,—that if Celsus would specify what description of veneration (*δευαπνευσις*) he claimed for the intermediate orders of holy beings between God and man, he is ready to argue with him. The kind of regard to angels which Origen thus impliedly admits, when honestly interpreted by his more explicit statements, could be no more than that love and esteem in which the Christian must hold every pure spirit; and which has no imaginable affinity with the "worshipping of angels," (*δζησκεια*) into which the church of Rome has been beguiled.

A sentence of Cyprian's has been pressed into the Roman service, and though some of the best scholars of that church have been ashamed to make use of it, it has been adopted by Dr. Wiseman, but at secondhand again, from the Messrs. Berington & Kirk's version. As a matter of mere testimony or opinion, the paragraph is not worthy of controversy or citation, but as a specimen of the perversion of language sanctioned and transmitted by respectable names, we shall simply arrange together the original words of Cyprian, the translation quoted by Dr. Wiseman, and that of Mr. Tyler, putting the latin in the middle for convenience of comparison.

Dr. Wiseman.

Cyprian.

Mr. Tyler.

<p>"Let us be mindful of one another in our prayers, with one mind and with one heart, in this world and in the next; let us always pray, with mutual charity relieving our sufferings and afflictions, and</p>	<p>"Memores, nostri invicem simus, concordēs atque unanimes, utrobique Pro nobis semper oremus, pressuras et angustias mutuali caritate relevemus, et si quis istinc nostrum privilegii or divinæ dignationis ce-</p>	<p>"Let us be mutually mindful of each other, with one mind and one heart. On both sides let us always pray for each other; let us by mutual love relieve each other's pressures and distresses: and if</p>
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may the charity of Him, *meritate præcesserit*, perse- either of us from hence, by
 who, by the divine favour, *veret apud Dominum nos-* the speed of the Divine
 shall first depart hence, *tra dilectio, pro fratribus,* favour go on before the
 still persevere before the *et sororibus nostris apud* other, let our love perse-
 Lord; may this prayer *misericordiam patris non* vere before the Lord; for
 for our brethren and sis- *ccesset oratio.* our brothers and sisters
 ters not cease.” with the Father’s mercy
 let not prayer cease.”

With the same critical object in view, and with the same indifference to the matter itself, we refer to the glaring imposture of Bellarmin in his citations from Eusebius, to sustain the antiquity of the doctrine of invocation. He professes to give three testimonies from that author. The first he takes from Ruffinus’s Latin translation, which turns a Greek sentence from its literal signification, which is, “and such a struggle was thus accomplished by the celebrated Virgin,” into this: “in this manner the blessed virgin, Potamiæna, emigrated from earth to heaven.” This is inconsiderable in its importance, excepting as an evidence of the recklessness of some learned quotations. But the second specimen is atrocious. Eusebius, in his *Evangelica Præparatio*, has a sentence which no honest freedom of translation could force to express any thing more than this: “And this corresponds with what takes place on the death of those lovers of God, whom you would not be wrong in calling the soldiers of the true religion. Whence also it is our custom to proceed to their tombs, and at them to make our prayers, and to honour their blessed souls, inasmuch as these things are with reason done by us.” This translation nearly corresponds with the Latin one of the Jesuit Viger, in 1628. But in Bellarmin’s hands, we have it thus: “These things we do daily, who honouring the soldiers of true religion as the friends of God, approach to their respective monuments, and make our prayers to them, as holy men, by whose intercession to God we profess to be not a little aided.” The third instance in this case which illustrates the tampering to which ancient works have been exposed, is furnished by the interpolations which translators have made in the letter, (recorded by Eusebius,) from the church of Smyrna, respecting the martyrdom of Polycarp. Where the letter expresses the opposition of the church to any kind of worship of a fellow mortal, the Roman Catholic versions qualify the declaration by inserting after worship, “as God.” Where the letter speaks of the sentiment of

Christians towards a martyr by the word "love," (*diligimus*;) Ruffinus, and Bellarmine, after him, add "*veneramur*," which though significant of ordinary reverence as well as of religious worship, would not have been interpolated without a design to give more force to the sentiment than the original writer intended. Similar elucidations of the stress of a bad cause might be adduced from the section on Athanasius; but *le jeu ne vaut pas la chandelle*. One item, however, may be noticed on account of the reputation which the writer concerned in it is now enjoying, and the influence which his pen is exerting. Dr. Wiseman, in the lectures already cited, (vol. ii. p. 108, London ed.) quotes as from Athanasius, a regular *Ave Maria* and supplication to the virgin, calling particular attention to one of its petitions, ("grant us great gifts from the treasures of thy grace,") to show that Athanasius not only venerated Mary, for her possession of gracious endowments, but spoke "as if he hoped directly to receive them from her." But it seems the learned Professor at Rome followed his English guides too closely; for what he gives in the form of one prayer, does not so appear in the production from which it is pretended to be taken, but the Messrs. Berington and Kirk aforesaid had patched up the prayer from detached clauses in the work which they had used in making their compilation. To be as exact in his copy as the Chinese tailors are said to be, Dr. Wiseman duly copies the references of the English compilers to the Benedictine edition of the Fathers, and in so doing refers to the very volume in which those editors, in giving the homily from which the prayer is made up, say, "that this discourse is spurious, there is no learned man who does not now adjudge." They then insert a letter from Baronius, written at Rome in 1592, in which he expresses his conviction that the homily could not have been written earlier than the seventh century, that is, nearly three hundred years after the time of Athanasius. Thus, a forgery acknowledged by competent critics of the Roman church itself, for at least two centuries and a half, is unblushingly reproduced in 1836, by a professor, who was content to derive his learning on the subject from his own contemporaries. It is not impossible that this champion of Romanism may plead a right to state what ancient writers really thought, though from prudential considerations they expressed directly opposite opinions. For in attributing such a device to Athanasius and his predecessors, he would only follow the example of Cardinal Perron, who averred,

in a printed work, that the Fathers did not always speak what they thought, but accommodated themselves to the Gentiles. On this ground he accounts for their declining all occasions of reference to the invocation of the saints, lest the heathen should take Christianity for nothing better than an improved idolatry—a new Pantheon.

The author having brought his historical inquiries to the age of the Nicene council, and discovered no authentic trace of the rise of the doctrine he is in quest of, devotes a section of his work to a view of the state of worship in England at the time of the Reformation. This he accomplishes by the aid of two manuals which were in vogue at the time. One is the Hours of the Virgin, as used in the church at Salisbury, abounding in impious addresses to Mary, and extravagant bribes to procure their utterance. The other work is the service of Thomas Becket, which was a religious celebration in honour of the archbishop, performed on the anniversary of his martyrdom, at an altar consecrated to him, and blending with a long rehearsal of his biography, various incantations and invocations, such as “O good Jesus, by the merits of Thomas, forgive us our debts.” “Pray for us, O blessed Thomas:” “O thou, by the blood of Thomas which he shed for thee, make us, O Christ, ascend whither Thomas has ascended.” “To Thomas all things yield and are obedient; plagues, diseases, death, and devils, fire, air, land, and seas. Thomas filled the world with glory. The world offers obedience to Thomas.”*

* Thomas is left in an anomalous predicament by the revolution which ensued after his glorification. Within less than fifty years from his death, it was disputed at the Sorbonne, whether he was a saint or a condemned sinner; and in the thirtieth year of the reign of Henry VIII. a royal proclamation was issued, in which the king degraded the martyrdom into a scuffle, in which the Archbishop fell a victim to his own turbulence. For “he not only callyd the one of them bawde, but also toke Tracy by the bosome, and violently shoke and plucked hym in suche maner, that he had almoste overthrowen hym to the pavement of the churche; so that upon this fray, one of their company, perceyng the same, strake hym, and so in the thronge Becket wes slayne.” In consideration of this unsaintly death, and that nothing appeared in his life and conversation “whereby he should be called a sained, but rather esteemed to have been a rebell and traytour to his prynce,” it was commanded that from henceforth he should not “be csteemed, named, reputed, nor called a sayncte, but bysshop Becket; and that his ymages and pictures, through the hole realme, shall be putte downe, and avoyded out of all churches, chapelles, and other places; and that from henseforthe, the dayes used to be festivall in his name shall not be observed, nor the service, office, antiphoners, colletes, and prayers, in his name redde, but razed and put out of all the bokes.” But though deposed in this summary method from his English sanctity, the Roman calendar still upholds “St. Thomas, bishop and martyr.”

The council of Trent, in its digest of human traditions and superstitions, has infallibly and immutably established for the church of Rome the dogma, that "the saints reigning together with Christ, offer their prayers to God for men: that it is good and profitable suppliantly to invoke them, and to fly to their prayers, help and assistance for obtaining benefits from God, by his Son Jesus Christ, who is our only redeemer and saviour:" and fixed the irrevocable sentence of condemnation on those who deny "worship and honour to the relics of the saints," and veneration to the bodies of martyrs, and others living with Christ.* Having this sanction for the worship of others than God, and this anathema impending over those who disclaim the decree, it is as broad a foundation as human nature wants to build any shape or height of impiety upon. And let the unhappy subjects of this system gloss over the matter as they may, with their subtleties of latria and dulia, cultus and adoratio, prayer direct and prayer oblique, mediation of redemption and mediation of intercession, the departure from the simplicity of the truth is enough to condemn the whole invention; and the practices to which the doctrine leads its believers—practices sanctioned by the countenance and example of popes, cardinals, and the whole scarlet regiment—are a better illustration of the doctrine than the refined explanations of lecturers or tractarians on the Roman mysteries. We shall, therefore, not detain our readers with the demonstrations of the actual idolatry practised under the decree of the Tridentine council, as they are presented by Mr. Tyler from the testimony of the authorized litanies of the Roman church, of their accredited writers, and of the eye-witnesses of the public homage paid to dead men and women, particularly in the papal countries of Europe. The crime is perpetrated by hymns and prayers; by genuflections and manipulations; by pictures, images, and strings of beads; at altars, shrines, and tombs; in cathedrals, palaces, dungeons, and by the road side. The delusion being once sanctioned that God is to be propitiated by human and angelic intercessors in heaven, and that the Divine mediator himself is less placable than the virgin Mary, "to whom he can deny nothing," the petitions and devotion of the poor benighted souls that receive such doctrines are most naturally lavished on "the mother of

* See chapter XV. of the interesting abstract of the history of the council of Trent, issued by our Board of Publication.

God," and the saints : and hence, according to the testimony of all travellers, (and we here quote from the citation of Daniel Wilson, now the English Bishop of Calcutta,) "the virgin Mary is, beyond all comparison, more adored than God, and throughout Italy, Spain and Portugal, and every country where the Catholic is the exclusive religion of the people, for one knee bent to God, thousands are bent before the shrine of the virgin and the saints"*

Nor shall we enter upon the extensive section of the work in hand which is devoted to a separate examination of the Hyperdulia, the preeminent worship rendered to the virgin Mary. Neither the scriptures, nor the Fathers for the three centuries and more to which Mr. Tyler confines his researches, furnish any trace of the invocation of Mary. And surely it is an appalling caution against trusting to the doctrines and commandments of men, vulgarly called tradition, to observe how in contradiction not only to the silence, but to the revelations of scripture, it is now a matter either of positive injunction by the Roman church, or of the "pious belief of the faithful," to hold that Mary was miraculously conceived, was born perfectly holy, lived without sin, was taken bodily to heaven upon her decease, and there exalted to be "Queen of heaven," "the Refuge of sinners," "the Mother and Spouse of God," and to be indispensable to the salvation of men, and the granting of their prayers.†

Would that we could hope that the warning will be heed-

* Travels on the continent of Europe in 1823, Letter xii, note. It was no better in 1836, according to the testimony of our countryman, the Rev. Dr. Breckinridge. See his Memoranda of Foreign Travel, p. 281, 283, &c. Bayle, in his article on Nestorius, considers the doctrine of dependance on a circle of solicitors in heaven, as too agreeable to men's carnal notions to give way either to scripture or reason, and therefore destined to survive all refutation. The people of despotic countries, he argues, where the sovereign is approachable only through courtiers, favourites, and officers of state, are easily persuaded that the court of heaven is on the same model. The idea of a gracious and omnipotent *Queen*, consummates the vulgar attractiveness of the theory, and so this monstrous delusion becomes incorporated with the imagination. The ancient mythologies prove the same thing.

† If any one doubts whether the modern or American believer in Romanism holds such blasphemous sentiments as these, we commend to his attention "the glories of Mary, Mother of God," printed in Philadelphia in 1839, and recommended by the Roman Catholic Bishop of that Diocese; and to "the New Month of Mary," still more recently issued by a namesake of the same Bishop, who has lately been set over the Diocese of Drasis, that is, St. Louis, Missouri. In these works will be found, *in ipsissimis verbis*, such sentiments as these—that in consideration of Mary's purity and humility, God will turn away his wrath from sinners; that our salvation depends on her will; that as we have no access to the Father, but by Christ, we have not access to Christ but through

ed in the church of England, and then, of course, by the humble followers of its vagaries in the United States. But tradition is of so high authority in that quarter, so indispensable to the hierarchy, so vital to the prelacy and the liturgy, that the hope has little to sustain it. We cannot open the English or American "Book of Common Prayer," without observing that the calendar and the collects, the forms and ceremonies tend to foster that unscriptural regard for saints and for the virgin Mary, which was once a stage in the progress of the Christian church, from primitive simplicity to the Romish apostasy. Mr. Tyler ascribes all the errors of the Roman ritual to an early, (but certainly not apostolical) date, when Christians were accustomed in their prayers or praises to mention the benefits conferred on the church through eminent saints, giving thanks for their example, and supplicating grace to follow it. And in his illustrations of what he regards as the innocent practice of the church in those days, he quotes some of the prayers now in use in the English church, which were taken in whole or part from the Breviary. But the English church went farther. It retained festivals in commemoration of particular saints; and these, not only of scriptural personages, but of others. We see in their calendar at this day Lucian, Hilary, Prisca, Fabian, Agnes, Agatha, Bede, Boniface, Swithun, Crispin, Catharine, &c. &c. The Conception of the virgin Mary, and her Nativity, have their places.* We find offices

Mary; that she saves by her mercy some to whom her Son cannot in justice grant pardon, &c. &c. The value of the merits of Mary was mathematically computed by Suarez, the Jesuit, as quoted in a sermon of Dr. Mill's (the editor of the Greek Testament,) which is cited in Bayle's Dictionary. He estimates her grace in the moment of her conception, to be greater than that of the highest angel, and more than the merits of any thousand men for all their lives; in the second instant her grace was doubled; in the third, she was four times fuller of grace, and so on in geometrical progression till her death, in the seventy-second year of her age; by which time her grace and merit had accumulated far beyond the combined excellence of all angels and men. Dr. Mill proceeds to trace the heresy of the worship of the virgin to the Collyridian women of Arabia, who, in the fourth century offered cakes to her as the Queen of Heaven, as recorded by Epiphanius. The council of Ephesus, (A. D. 431.) gave her the title of Mother of God, in opposition to the Nestorian heretics. It was not until the tenth century that any daily office in her honour was instituted. Long after that the immaculate conception was asserted; later still, Duns Scotus proposed it as a probability, then Sixtus IV. favored it by a bull, which was at length ratified by the council of Trent, and, of course, it is now true.

* Mr. Tyler says, (p. 299,) that the miraculous Conception and Nativity of the Virgin, are feasts of the Roman church, in which the Anglican cannot join. They stand, nevertheless, with the omission of the word "miraculous," in the services in the English Calendar, for December 8 and September 8.

for the commemoration of the Purification of the virgin Mary, and the "Annunciation of our Lady." These are placed among the "Holy-days," and with them days consecrated to St. Andrew, St. Thomas, the conversion of St. Paul, St. Barnabas, the Holy Innocents, and many others. For each of these calendared days, portions of scripture are indicated as proper to be read at "matins," and "evensong" (among these portions are the Book of Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Tobit, Bel and the Dragon, Baruch, and History of Susannah): and before some of them "vigils" are ordained. The services in the English Prayer Book for the Saints' days comprehend chiefly scripture saints, (with whom we must include the children of two years old and under, who are commemorated on "the Holy Innocents' Day,") and consist, in addition to the daily prayers, of two portions of scripture, and a short "collect," or petition, in which the individual or the event celebrated is named. Among the saints is placed St. Michael, to whom, with "all angels," a day is devoted. This is the Michael spoken of in the Apocalypse as fighting with his angels against the dragon. Now, whatever plausible pleas may be made for recalling at set times particular events and personages in the sacred history, the obvious tendency is to invest the days thus consecrated with a superstitious sanctity; and by the very association, to elevate the individuals commemorated to a more exalted rank in heaven than common mortals. The history of the process in the church of Rome is an actual illustration of this danger; and the church of England is now verging so fast to the same point, that its history is equally monitory. The saints and martyrs are even now held up as worthy of a more prominent commemoration than the Prayer Book provides for; the complaint is common, that the Romish practices were too much curtailed at the Reformation; specimens are prepared and published of proper "offices" for the honour of deceased Christians of modern times, and Bishop Becket has been degraded from the calendar only to make room for Bishop Ken. The liturgy already provides a prayer for the help and protection of the angels, in the collect for "St. Michael's" anniversary: it prescribes a form of periodical thanksgiving, "for all thy servants departed this life in thy faith and fear;" and of prayer for "grace to follow thy blessed saints in all virtuous and godly living;" and the funeral service prays, "that we, with all those that are departed in the true faith of thy holy

name, may have our perfect consummation and bliss, both in body and soul," &c. Such phrases may be so explained and employed as to mean nothing more than the following of the example and happy lot of the blessed, but used as they are in connexion with a system of Saints' Days, and a calendar in which these saints are arranged as if they had some necessary connexion with divine worship, it seems to us that the minds of people who habitually use the English liturgy, are, to say the least, in a forward state of preparation for the invoking of saints and prayers for the dead.*

Accordingly we find, that notwithstanding the purgation of the English book by the Convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church in this country in 1789, there is much retained that is calculated to foster the same tendency to superstitious observances. Sixty-nine festivals were struck off, but a book-full is left. There are none but scriptural names in the American calendar of "Saints,"† but there

* We were hesitating whether this might not appear an overstrained conclusion, when the following sentence in a late number of the New York Churchman accidentally met our eye. A correspondent, who says he was very intimately acquainted with the late Bishop Hobart, says of him: "He believed that there was a primitive, if not Catholic, praying for the dead, entirely removed from the doctrine of purgatory, to which Christians might conform without violation of the Catholic faith; and that this principle, although *he* did not see it in that light, might innocently be considered as incorporated into our prayer for the church militant, and the first of the two prayers in the "Burial of the Dead." These are two of the prayers cited above from the English liturgy. The collect for the day of "Saint Michael, and all angels," is as follows: "O, everlasting God, who hast ordained and constituted the services of angels and men in a wonderful order; mercifully grant, that as thy holy angels always do thee service in heaven; so by thy appointment they may succour and defend us on earth, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen." On another occasion, the prayer is, "that following the steps of thy holy apostles, Saint Philip and Saint James, we may steadfastly walk, &c." And in the form for the fast in annual commemoration of the "martyrdom of King Charles I.," after thanks for the "abundant grace" bestowed upon him, occurs the petition, "let his memory, O Lord, be ever blessed among us, that we may follow the example of his courage, &c." The king is spoken of in this service as "the sacred person of thine anointed," and "thy blessed martyr;" and it commemorates "the glories of thy grace, which then shined forth in thine anointed." We might add that in the Communion Service of the English Book, a doxology is several times repeated, beginning, "therefore with angels and archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we laud and glorify thy glorious name"

† Though the ex-scriptural saints are omitted in the calendar, they are found, both male and female, as names of Episcopal places of worship. We have within fifty miles of us, churches of that denomination going by the names of St. Ann, and St. George, and another by the name of the canonized angel Michael. The books of Wisdom and Ecclesiasticus are retained in the "tables of lessons of *Holy Scripture*, to be read at morning and evening prayer."

are at least seventeen of these, and among them are "St. Michael, and all angels," and besides them are days commemorating "the Purification," and "the Annunciation" of the Virgin Mary; days for "All Saints," "the Holy Innocents," "the Nativity of St. John Baptist." To these must be added special Sundays, as in Advent, Epiphany, Lent, Easter, and Whitsuntide, "Trinity Sunday," "Rogation Sunday," and Sundays Septuagesima, Sexagesima and Quinquagesima. Then there are holy "weeks," and weekdays, Ash-Wednesday, and Good-Friday, days before Easter, and Sundays "after Trinity," Easter-even, Ember-days, and Rogation-days, and "all the Fridays in the year." That this array of human appointments and unwarranted observances tends to degrade the one only DAY consecrated in the gospel, and to encourage those who regard them to go farther and farther in their departures from primitive simplicity, is evident to those who are acquainted with the present state of the Episcopal denomination in this country. One striking proof of this, is the symptoms of dissatisfaction evinced in many quarters with the American liturgy, as discarding too many of the Romish features of the English book. Some crave the prerogative of remitting the sins of the sick, according to the bold English formula, "by his authority committed to me, I absolve thee from all thy sins." Some utterly abjure the name of their sect, and will not be called by any other name than Catholic. There is scarcely a puerility or a heresy of Romanism, that has not been in some form practised or advocated by some of the staunchest of the members of that communion in the United States; and if, as Mr. Tyler observes, the decree of the Council of Trent, which enjoins the invocation of saints, has been hitherto regarded as the most formidable barrier against the reconciliation of England and Rome, the Catholics on both sides of the Pope may indulge the happy prospect that the time of their fraternal embrace is not remote. Those that can harmonize in prelacy, tradition, and sacramental grace, may be said to have already found each other on that well-known road, where stand "the Three Taverns;" and after that, there is little else to be done than for the centurion to deliver the prisoners to the captain of the guard.*

Whilst we feel no great zeal in finding for our own eccle-

* For particulars, see the citations from the Oxford Tracts, in our number for January, 1838.

siastical standards the countenance of the later fathers, so long as we have those fathers in our favour, who "wrote as they were moved by the Holy Ghost," we could not help noticing as we looked over the citation of our author, how much is incidentally quoted that disfavours the sentiments and practices that are opposed to our more apostolic and primitive authority. These ancient writers speak of Christ, not of the church, as "the gate." It is He personally, and by his own solitary mediation, without the intervention of priests and ceremonies, that is represented by Barnabas and Clement in solitary pre-eminence as the way to the Father and to heaven. "Let us pray for transgressors," says one of these saints, and one who is set up for a prelate too, "that they may submit, not to us, but to the will of God;" and that God may grant spiritual favours—not by Episcopal grace, in baptism and confirmation, but "to every soul that calleth on his name, through our high priest and protector, Jesus Christ." The line of the apostles was considered extinct in the very first century; for says Ignatius, (bishop, too,) "betaking myself to the gospel and to the apostles as the presbytery of the church," referring to those who had 'received testimony from Christ' personally in their office as witnesses for Christ—the apostles of the New Testament. "For just as the false prophets and false apostles have drawn one and the same wicked and deceitful and seducing spirit, so also the prophets and the apostles, one and the same Holy Spirit, good, leading, true and instructing. For one is the God of the Old and the New Testament." "They are apostles," says this same bishop, referring to Peter and Paul, "I am a condemned man. I do not, as they did, command you." How different the tone from that of some diocesans of our years!

So in the fragments from Justin Martyr, we see that in the old times when the Lord's Supper was administered, the elements were taken by "him who presides over the brethren," that is the pastor; "those who are called Deacons among us" distributed them to the communicants. They were more likely, therefore, to be such deacons as the apostles appointed to assist them in the external services of benevolence and in the manual dispensation of the ordinances, than to be in the first stage of progress to the ministry itself. We find that in Tertullian's time Christians prayed "without a prompter, because it is from the heart:"

and that in Origen's day, also, each suppliant made his own prayer, and "stood up" to do so.

But these are comparative trifles. The reformed church is surrounded by enemies of more consequence than those who invade her outworks, and endeavour to substitute their traditionary, for our scriptural polity. We have lived to see the day in which Jesuitism has succeeded in convincing multitudes that the orthodox articles of the church of England leave room for the consistent reception with them of the doctrines of sacramental justification, purgatory, prayers for the dead, veneration of deceased saints, and of the Lord's Supper as the offering of a sacrifice. When such doctrines are propagated with a coincident zeal for ritual ceremonies, revived from the darkest ages, and religion stands out as a system of grand forms and external operations; when the pulpit and the press, under the direction of these errorists, teem with the praises and injunctions of a system in which the cross of Christ is seen only as a shape, and the yoke and burden of his spiritual religion are undiscernible, at such a time the poetic, the romantic, the superficial, the unstable, and all the multitude whose heart's desire is to find a viaticum that will cost no more than the performance of outward ceremonies, are in danger of being ensnared and deluded. It becomes those who still hold to Christianity as a spiritual system, to be more and more faithful in presenting the primitive truth in all its simplicity. This will soon winnow the church from the chaff, which is so light as to need but a breath of truth to put it in motion, and carry it to places where the resemblance will answer as well as the substance.

Since the above was written, we have received Mr. Hall's seasonable, temperate, and conclusive tract on a part of the same subject. As we have put the two together at the beginning of this article, we think it due to Mr. Hall to quote his statement, that the work of Mr. Tyler, which he describes as written "in the fairest manner and most charitable spirit," was not seen by him "in time to assist him in his own work, excepting to suggest a single note." Of the tract itself, we need say no more than that it perfectly attains its end, of showing, "in the fairest manner and most charitable spirit," what must often have occurred to the attentive reader of the Bible, viz. that if the latter had been framed with an express view to prevent the undue veneration of the virgin Mary, it could not have been more admirably suited to its purpose.

John Snodgrass

ART. III.—*The Scriptural Doctrine of Sanctification stated and defended against the error of Perfectionism.*
By W. D. Snodgrass, D. D. Philadelphia : Presbyterian Board of Publication. 1841. pp. 112.

THIS judicious and excellent treatise presents, in a small compass, the substance of the modern controversy on the doctrine of entire sanctification in the present life. The author's statements are calm and clear, his method logical, his arguments conclusive, and his style simple and dignified. Though it is not long since we called the attention of our readers to this subject, especially in the form in which it is presented by the Oberlin professors, we think they will not regard the following pages as misapplied, when they consider how ceaseless are the efforts of the advocates of error to propagate a doctrine which the history of the church teaches us seldom fails to become, in one form or other, an apology for sin.

The notion of the actual attainment, in some instances, of perfect virtue in this life, is so gratifying to human pride, that we need not wonder at its adoption by some in nearly every age of the world. Contrary as it is to scripture and experience, it is too deeply radicated in man's selfishness, not to find apologists and advocates among the conceited, the enthusiastic, and such as are unaccustomed to an impartial scrutiny of their own hearts. It flatters exceedingly all those pretensions to superior sanctity which are disjoined from humility, penitence, and ardent aspirations after entire assimilation to the perfection of the divine moral character. In most of the false religions of the earth, the doctrine of human perfection, manifested in at least some peculiarly favored instances, has, if we mistake not, formed an essential article of belief; and in all countries, perhaps, individuals have been found, possessing an exemption from the common frailties of their race. A kind of perfection has been claimed for Greek and Roman sages, for Hindoo devotees, for Mahommedan saints; and even for the savage warrior, smiling in death at the impotent efforts of his enemies to extract from his agonized nature the shriek, or the groan of suffering. That Pantheism, which is the philosophical basis of most of the popular systems of idolatry, assumes as a fundamental position, such a union of man to the Deity, as constitutes the leading principle of modern perfectionism,

in its purest and most sublimated form. Hence originates the deification of men, as well as the divine worship paid to stocks, stones, rivers, mountains, wind, and all the inferior parts of the creation; Pantheism, (elevating a creature of yesterday to the rank of a divinity,) which is supposed by many to have been of more ancient date than the universal deluge,* was maintained in all following ages till the time of Christ, and was not entirely relinquished even by some of his professed disciples. Holding such a principle, they were prepared to adopt other opinions equally preposterous and unchristian. To this, perhaps, should be attributed, in part, at least, the antiomianism and perfectionism of some of the heretics in the apostolic age—so the Nicolaitans and Simonians—who maintained that they were released from all obligation to the law, and that none of their actions, however contrary to the letter of the precept, were really opposed to the divine will, and worthy of punishment: and how could they, who were parts of God, or rather identical with him, commit sin? “The Gnostics of the first and second centuries, and the Manichæans of the third, believed human souls to be particles of the celestial light, of the same essential nature with God himself, and no otherwise corrupt or corruptible, than by being combined with sinful matter. The new Platonists of Egypt, held substantially the same opinions. Hieronymus, in the preface to his dialogues against Pelagius, says that Manichæus, Precillian, Evagrinus, Hyperburius, Flavianian, Origen, and the Menalians of Syria, were Perfectionists.*” The brethren and sisters of the Free Spirit, in the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, held that all things flowed by emanation from God; that rational souls were portions of the divine essence; that the universe was God; and that by the power of contemplation, they were united to the Deity, and acquired hereby a glorious and sublime liberty, both from sinful lusts, and the common instincts of nature.† “In the latter part of the seventeenth century, the disciples of Michael de Molinos in Spain, France, and Italy, were Perfectionists.”§ It is worthy of remark, that in none of all these, during so many successive centuries, do we trace any evidence of the belief of the direct agency of the Holy Spirit

* See the Princeton Review, Vol. 13, p. 539.

† Literary and Theological Review, Vol. 3, p. 28.

‡ Buck's Theological Dict. and Mosheim.

§ Lit. and The. Review, ut supra.

on the heart, turning its affections to God, and securing the perfection of its obedience. For the most part, they asserted, that regeneration and complete deliverance from sin could be effected by contemplation, and the soul thus be so identified with God, as to constitute them not two things united, but one being; and in this way, they explained the indwelling and controlling agency of the Most High in man. Of the reality and presence of native moral corruption, as maintained by consistent Calvinists, they seem to have had no conception.* Pelagius and Celestius, in the fourth century, who denied the innate sinfulness of the human heart, and the consequent necessity of efficacious grace in its renewal, maintained, with entire systematic consistency, that men might live without sin during the whole period of their life; that some had actually so lived for many years, and that others, restored by repentance after transgression, had subsequently continued perfect in holiness to the close of their days.† The primitive Quakers, the French Prophets, the Shakers, Jemima Wilkinson, Joanna Southcott, and the great body of Mystics in every communion, held to perfection in this life, as the attainment of the privileged few; and the advocates of this doctrine have usually represented the denial of it as involving great licentiousness, and a state of utter spiritual bondage. The views of the famous John Wesley, the father of Arminian Methodism, are well known to the reading part of the religious community. He affirmed, as Whitfield asserts, “that no Baptist or Presbyterian writer, whom he had ever read, knew any thing of the liberties of Christ;” to which statement Whitfield replied, in his own pointed and emphatical manner—“What! neither Bunyan, Henry, Flavel, Halyburton, nor any of the New-England and Scotch Divines? See, dear sir, what narrow-spiritedness and want of charity arise from your principles; and then do not say aught against election any more, on account of its being destructive of meekness and love. I know you think meanly of Abraham, though he was eminently called the friend of God, and I believe also of David, the man after God’s own heart.”‡ Wesley gives us an account of the steps by which he was led, during a

* Lit. and Theol. Review, ut supra.

† Lit. and Th. Review, Vol. 3, p. 29, where we have in a note a curious specimen of the arguments of Celestius on this subject. Also Wigger’s *Hist. of Augustinism and Pelagianism*.

‡ Gillie’s *Life of Whitfield*, New-Haven edition, 1812, p. 256.

course of many years, to embrace what he calls the doctrine of "Christian perfection," which, as he explains it, though it includes the idea of freedom from sin, implies neither perfection in knowledge nor infallibility, nor security against temptations and infirmities.* According to the system of the Romish church, good men may not only attain to perfection, but perform, moreover, works of supererogation, serving as a fund of merit, for the advantage of believers of inferior spiritual attainments.

It is not till lately that Perfectionism has been professed within the pale of Congregational and Presbyterian churches. By our fathers it was accounted heresy, inconsistent with the express testimony of the scriptures, contradictory to Christian experience, and subversive of the entire scheme of the gospel. But, in consequence of certain Pelagian speculations, concerning moral agency, human ability, and the divine influence in sanctification,—errors that have become extensively popular—individuals, once reputed most zealous for revivals of religion, have been led to join Pelagius and other kindred spirits, in their views of the attainableness of perfection in the present life. Such, as we believe, is the philosophical origin of Perfectionism, as held by the professors at Oberlin, and their theological friends.

That we may not misrepresent the meaning of those to whom we refer, we will state their doctrine of perfection in their own language. "What is perfection in holiness? In answer to this inquiry I would remark," says Mr. Mahan,† "that perfection in holiness implies a full and perfect discharge of our entire duty, of all existing obligations in respect to God and all other beings. It is perfect obedience to the moral law." With respect to the attainableness of perfection in this life, the same writer says, "We have evidence just as conclusive, that perfect and perpetual holiness is promised to Christians, as we have that it is required of them." "We have the same evidence from scripture, that all Christians may, and that some of them will, attain to a state of entire sanctification in this life, that they will attain to that state in heaven." "There is positive evidence that some of them did attain to this state." Mr. Finney affirms, and in this, we suppose, he expresses the

* Wesley's plain account of Christian Perfection, New-York edition, 1837, pp. 3, 18, and passim.

† Christian Perfection, pp. 4, 27, 38.

opinion of his associates at Oberlin, that sinless perfection for the time being, is implied in the lowest degree of true piety. "It seems to be a very general opinion," says he, "that there is such a thing as imperfect obedience to God; (i. e.) as it respects one and the same act, but I cannot see how an imperfect obedience, relating to one and the same act can be possible. Imperfect obedience! What can be meant by this, but disobedient obedience! a sinful holiness! Now, to decide the character of any act, we are to bring it into the light of the law of God; if agreeable to this law, it is obedience—it is right—wholly right. If it is in any respect different from what the law of God requires, it is wrong—wholly wrong."* Here we have the doctrine that all Christians are sometimes perfect, or are perfect so far as they have any true holiness; and it is a very natural inference from such premises, that believers may attain to a confirmed state of perfection in the present life. This conclusion is adopted by Mr. Finney, as well as by Mr. Mahan.

To disprove the perfectionism taught in the above extracts, or to show that none of the saints are entirely free from sin in the present life, will be our object in this essay.

We shall begin with noticing the principal arguments, which are commonly adduced by perfectionists of different descriptions, in support of their views of this subject. We shall next exhibit direct evidence of the sinful imperfection of the heart of the saints in this life; and lastly, we shall show the great practical importance of the doctrine for which we contend, in opposition to the error which it controverts.

The arguments of the Perfectionists are first to be considered.

The command of God requires perfection, is one of their arguments. Answer. It is doubtless true, that the Most High does command us to be perfect; and to enjoin any thing less than perfection, would be inconsistent with his own purity, and those eternal principles of rectitude, according to which he governs the universe. The law expresses his feelings towards moral objects; but it leaves wholly undetermined the question, whether his rational creatures will acknowledge, or reject his authority. His command, in any instance, neither supposes that it will be obeyed, nor implies any insincerity in him, provided he foresees that it will not be obeyed. The contrary supposition would be

* Oberlin Evangelist, Vol. 1.

incompatible with some of the most undeniable facts of revealed religion. Does the divine command to be perfect, prove that some may, or will obey this righteous precept? Then, for the same reason, the divine prohibition of all sin in mankind, equally proves that some of them may pass through a long life without a single act of transgression. It is by no means certain, therefore, that all the human race are or have been sinners; and, of course, the doctrine of universal depravity, unequivocally and frequently as it is taught in the scriptures, may be false. It is as easy to imagine that some never sin, as that they become perfectly holy after they have acquired a sinful character. The opinion of Pelagius with regard to this subject, was, therefore, more specious and more logical than is the notion of those who make God's requirement of perfect sanctification an argument that some are perfectly sanctified in this life; while, with strange inconsistency, they assert the universal moral depravity, anterior to conversion, of such of mankind as have sufficient knowledge to be moral agents. Besides, entire holiness is plainly obligatory on all rational creatures; and no strength of depraved affection or hopelessness of condition can release any from the demands of the law of God. On this principle, the devils in their place of torment, are bound to love their Maker, and yield themselves implicitly to his authority. To say they are not thus bound, is to take their part against their Maker, and pronounce them entirely excusable and innocent in their present rebellion, rage and blasphemy. But does it follow, because they are under law, that they will, therefore, ever return to their duty? The Bible, on the other hand, assures us, that their misery, and consequently, their enmity to God, will be without end.

The command of God, it is alleged, implies our ability to obey; and it is reasonable to suppose that where ability exists, it will, sometimes at least, manifest itself by obedience. This argument has been strongly urged, both to account for the existence of sin, (for where there is ability to obey, there is also supposed to be ability to disobey, or "the power of contrary choice,") and to show the practicability of obedience, in the highest degree, to all the divine requisitions. "Were it not," says Mr. Finney,* "that there

* Lectures on Revivals of Religion, p. 17.

is a sense in which a man's heart may be better than his head, I should feel bound to maintain, that persons holding this sentiment, that man is unable to obey God without the Spirit's agency, were no Christians at all—obligation is only commensurate with ability." Again he says,* "certain it is that men are able to resist the utmost influence that the truth can exert upon them, and therefore have ability to defeat the wisest, most benevolent, and most powerful exertions which the Holy Spirit can make to effect their sanctification." Mr. Mahan says,† "I infer that a state of perfect holiness is attainable in this life, from the commands of scripture, addressed to Christians under the new covenant." The philosophy, from which perfection is thus inferred, had been previously asserted by certain divines of celebrity in Connecticut. In proof of this, the reader is referred to two or three citations from the *Christian Spectator*, formerly published at New-Haven. "Free moral agents can do wrong under all possible preventing influence."‡ "We know that a moral system necessarily implies the existence of free agents, with the power to act in despite of all opposing power. This fact sets human reason at defiance, in every attempt to prove that some of these agents will not use that power and actually sin."§ Again: "God not only prefers on the whole that his creatures should forever perform their duties rather than neglect them, but purposes on his part to do all in his power to promote this very object of his kingdom."|| In all these statements, the implication is clear, that men are, of course, able to do whatever God requires of them; and that the mind is in reality self-moved in all its moral exercises.

We readily admit that men have the requisite faculties to obey God, in other words, that they are moral agents. And this is often what is meant by natural ability. We admit also that the inability of sinners is a moral inability, inasmuch as it relates to moral objects, arises from moral causes, and is removed by a moral change. The possession, however, of natural ability, in the sense just stated, does not establish the conclusion contended for in the preceding argument. Because men or devils have the requisite intellectual or physical faculties to serve their Creator, does it certainly follow, that they will serve him? As it regards moral

* Oberlin Evangelist, Lect. 21, p. 193. † Christian Perfection, p. 28.

‡ Christian Spectator, 1830, p. 563. § Ibid, 1831, p. 617. || Ibid, 1832, p. 660.

ability, it is absurd to imagine that the rule of duty is to be measured by this. On this supposition, there is really no rule of right except the inclinations of creatures; or, guilt is diminished in proportion to the stubbornness and virulence of the principle of evil to be overcome; which is but saying, in other language, that the more sinful, the more bent on rebellion any one is, the less is he to blame for his disobedience. Mankind by nature, then, are perfectly innocent in hating God, and in rejecting the manifold overtures of the gospel; for it is clear from this inspired volume, that they are "dead in trespasses and sins." Their disinclination to obedience is affirmed to be so great, that it can be overcome by nothing less than the direct exertion of Almighty power. "No man," says Christ, "can come unto me, except the Father who hath sent me draw him." Accordingly, the commencement of holiness in the sinner's heart is again and again described by such phrases as indicate the highest manifestation of the immediate and creative agency of God. It is the donation of a new heart—a second birth—a new creation—a resurrection from the dead. These figures, strong as they are, are doubtless used with the utmost propriety, as most happily expressive of the inveteracy of the evil disposition to be vanquished, of the sinner's moral helplessness, and of his absolute dependance on sovereign grace. The continuance of believers in obedience is also constantly ascribed to the same power by which they were originally renewed after the image of God. "Without me," says Jesus Christ, "you can do nothing." "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain." Here we learn that the growth of the fruit in the first instance, and its permanency afterwards, are both owing to the choice, purpose, and effectual agency of the Redeemer. "We are not sufficient of ourselves," says Paul, "to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God." "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in God, will perform (finish) it until the day of Jesus Christ." The good work here intended, is doubtless, as appears from the connexion, the implantation of holiness in the heart by the efficacious grace of God. "Who are kept," says Peter, "by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation." From these passages, and, indeed, from the whole tenor of the Bible, it is evident, that, whatever may be

men's natural power, or freedom as moral agents, their depraved propensities present as effectual an obstacle to obedience, as the want of liberty itself would do. At the same time, they are constantly blamed for that disinclination, or moral inability, which, but for the interposition of omnipotent grace, insures their destruction. They have ruined themselves; and their only hope is in the mercy and unconquerable might of their injured Creator, who may justly leave them to perish in their perverseness. There is no reason, then, for the conclusion, that because men have the natural ability, they will, therefore, obey the law of God, any more than there is ground for arguing with Pelagius, that a portion of the human race will live without sin, from the commencement of their existence till death; and, consequently, that for them, no repentance, no pardon, no Saviour, will be necessary; or, than there is ground for inferring with Universalists, the future probable, if not certain, return of devils and the spirits of lost men in hell, to their duty and to happiness. The argument from ability, therefore, in this instance, is of too wide a sweep in its general application, to be admitted as of any force; for it manifestly goes to undermine the whole gospel, and overthrow all the revealed principles of the moral government of God.

Another argument, connected with the foregoing, in favour of Perfectionism, is founded in an erroneous philosophy concerning the nature of sin. This affirms, that those propensities which we cannot overcome by the force of our own sovereign determination, are merely constitutional susceptibilities, or physical attributes, having no moral character, the extirpation, or extinguishment of which is, consequently, not necessary to sinless perfection. Thus it has been argued, that the most selfish innate desires and passions are in themselves innocent, being nothing more than incentives or occasions to sin, which must be expected to continue after the heart has become completely sanctified.

This summary method of disposing of the subject must doubtless be very gratifying to those who choose rather to find an apology for their sins, than to confess and mourn over them before God. Where there is no sin, there is surely no occasion for godly sorrow on account of sin. Let the standard of duty be low enough, and it will be easy to show that perfection belongs to many men, or to all men, or even to the inhabitants of hell themselves. Suppose, for example, that malice, hatred of God, enmity to creatures,

and furious blasphemy, under circumstances of hopeless suffering, are not criminal; and it will follow, incontrovertibly, that these feelings and acts are perfectly innocent in Satan and his hosts, in their present state of misery. God cannot, therefore, with propriety punish them for their present irreconcilable malignity, and that conduct which flows spontaneously from their hearts. In this view of the subject, the devils are as truly perfect now, as they were when they existed enthroned seraphs in the heavenly paradise. Their condition has, indeed, been changed; but then the divine law has been altered to suit their new condition. To bring this reasoning to bear on the case before us—if the natural passions of anger, revenge, covetousness, pride and ambition be not in themselves wrong, and if nothing but strong resolutions against sin, a resistance of our evil propensities, a devout and moral life, and reliance on the grace of Christ, be needful to constitute a sinless character, then we admit that many of the human race have attained to perfection in this life. Yea, verily, according to this philosophy, sinless perfection is consistent with an eternal war in the breast between principle and passion; and, as there is reason to suppose that the physical attributes of the soul will continue after death, it is next to certain that the saints in glory will be obliged to maintain an unceasing conflict with such innocent things as their love of self-indulgence, their fondness for distinction and power, and their constitutional susceptibility to resentment and revenge. Deny the principle of concupiscence to be sinful, and what hinders its existence, its disquieting irruptions, its violent onsets even within the walls of New Jerusalem?

This philosophy requires an exposition of the law, entirely contrary to the scriptures. The sacred volume condemns the first risings of inordinate desire, and, of course, all vicious tendencies to transgression in the soul. “Whoso hateth his brother, is a murderer.” “Whosoever looketh upon a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.” It requires us, not merely to choose and strive after, but to possess and exercise right affections and passions; to love God and our neighbour; to feel kindly even to our enemies. “Thou shalt not covet,” is one of its express prohibitions. Yet coveting may exist, when from the restraints of conscience and fear there is no effort, no purpose, to obtain the desired object. The affection is wrong and is forbidden, though it lead to no corres-

pendent external acts, or conscious determinative volition of the mind.

It was an apprehension of the spirituality of the law which convinced the Pharisee, Saul of Tarsus, of the exceeding corruption of his heart, and destroyed all his self-righteous hopes. "I had not known sin but by the law; for I had not known lust," (concupiscence,) that is, I had not known that it was sin, "except the law had said, thou shalt not covet." "For I was alive without" (a just apprehension and sense of) "the law once; but when the commandment came," (with a clear view of its spiritual requirements, and immutable obligation,) "sin revived, and I died." Thus plain it is, that, whether we call the principle of concupiscence constitutional or not, it is still sinful in the eye of the law. Words may create confusion in the mind; but they do not change the nature of things. So long as the Christian is agitated in any degree, by excessive or ill-directed devices, he is deficient in his obedience, and therefore continues to be a transgressor.

Changing his ground, the advocate of the doctrine of perfection in this life sometimes asserts, that though Christians cannot accomplish their own sanctification, and ought not to attempt it, yet if they cast themselves upon Christ for this boon, it will be bestowed upon them. Instead of working themselves, they must come to Christ to work in them, both to will and to do, and he will make them perfect. This notion, too, is affirmed by the very men who contend, when it suits their purpose, that sinners have perfect ability to change their own hearts, and believers perfect ability to do all that is required of them. "I am willing to proclaim it to the world," says Mr. Mahan,* "that I now look to the very God of peace to sanctify me wholly." "I have forever given up all idea of resisting temptation, subduing any lust, appetite, or propensity, or of acceptably performing any service for Christ, by the mere force of my own resolutions. If any propensities which lead to sin are sacrificed, I know that it must be done by an indwelling Christ." "If you will cease from all efforts of your own, and bring your sins and sorrows and cares and propensities which lead to sin, to Christ, and cast them all upon him, if, with implicit faith, you will hang your whole being upon him, and make it the great object of life to know him, for the purpose of

* *Christian Perfection*, pp. 189, 190, 191.

receiving and reflecting his image—you will find that all the exceeding great and precious promises of his word are, in your own blissful experience, a living reality.” “You shall have a perpetual and joyful victory.” “Every where, and under all circumstances, your peace in Christ shall be as a river.”

From these, and other similar passages in the writings of the new Perfectionists, it would seem that Christians have nothing to do but to lie passively in the hands of Christ, and “roll the responsibility” of their sanctification upon him. What mean, then, the numerous scriptural inculcations upon believers to strive, to run, to wrestle, to fight, to put on the whole armour of God? It is manifest from the inspired volume, that we are to come to Christ, not for the purpose of saving ourselves the trouble of a personal warfare, but that we may engage in such a warfare with good motives, with becoming zeal, with persevering energy, and with success. The effect of faith is not drowsiness, but vigilance; not self-satisfied repose, but self-distrust; not slothfulness, but untiring activity. When Christ works in us, both to will and to do, of his own good pleasure, it is that sustained, quickened by his power, we may work out our own salvation with fear and trembling. The present is not the first time in which Pelagian self-sufficiency and Antinomian indolence have been found co-inhabitants of the same dwelling, interchangeably occupying one another’s places, and adopting one another’s phraseology. But how are these apparent contradictions to be reconciled? They cannot be; yet, after all, it is not intended by the writers to whom we refer, to ascribe all holiness to divine agency. Their meaning appears to be, that Christ will sanctify us wholly, if we look to him for such a blessing; yet there is no provision, in their system, to secure the act of looking itself. Man begins to turn, and God completes the sanctification of man. Hence it is affirmed, that, notwithstanding the promises of the new covenant, insuring perfection in this life, comparatively few of the saints do ever become perfect on this side of the grave.

The fact that the saints are in scripture sometimes said to be perfect, has been alleged as another argument in favour of Perfectionism.

We answer, that the word perfection is used in different senses. It is sometimes employed to express advancement and maturity in the Christian character and in knowledge,

as distinguished from the comparatively low conceptions, weakness and inconsistencies of mere infants in the divine life. "We speak wisdom among them that are perfect," that is, the thoroughly instructed. "Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded." It is sometimes used to denote evangelical uprightness, or sincere piety, in distinction from an empty profession of godliness. In this sense of the word, perfection belongs to all real saints. Thus the Psalmist says, "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace." Here perfect and upright, agreeably to a well known rule of Hebrew construction, are evidently synonymous terms. A perfect man, in this place then, is a man who is sincere in his religious profession, a real friend of God, and an heir of heaven. The wicked are said to "shoot in secret at the perfect," that is, at the regenerated children of God. "For the upright," says Solomon, "shall dwell in the land, and the perfect shall remain in it." In this passage, too, the terms uprightness and perfection have the same meaning. Noah is said to have been a perfect man; yet the phrase is immediately explained as signifying the reality of his piety, or his humble walk with God. That he was not without the remains of moral corruption, is manifest from a subsequent instance of intoxication, with which he is charged in the scriptures. Job is also affirmed to be a perfect man. But that it was not intended to assert his freedom from sin, is apparent from his conduct, which is recorded, for he afterwards cursed the day of his birth. He, also, himself confessed his want of sinless perfection. "If I justify myself, mine own mouth shall condemn me: if I say I am perfect, it shall also prove me perverse." "If I wash myself with snow-water, and make my hands never so clean, yet shalt thou plunge me in the ditch, and mine own clothes shall abhor me." "Behold I am vile; what shall I answer thee? I will lay mine hand upon my mouth." In the same sense we are to understand the phrase as used by Hezekiah, when he says, "Remember now, how I have walked before thee in truth, and with a perfect, that is, with a sincere heart." That sinless perfection was not intended, seems evident from what the scriptures tell us concerning his conduct soon after the prayer, in which these words are contained. "But Hezekiah rendered not again according to the benefit done unto him, for his heart was lifted up: therefore wrath was upon him, and upon Judah and Jerusalem. Notwithstanding,

Hezekiah humbled himself for the pride of his heart." Most clearly, therefore, though he was perfect in the sense of sincere, or truly pious, he was yet far from being sinless. Of several of the kings of Judah, it is said that their heart was perfect with the Lord, yet actions are attributed to them utterly inconsistent with the supposition, that they were exempt from all sinful defects. The obvious meaning of the phrase as applied to those good men is, that they were sincere believers, and maintained, by their example and public acts, the doctrines, institutions and laws of true religion in their dominions. It is affirmed of Zacharias and Elizabeth, that "they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless." In this passage, it is plainly the design of the inspired writer to teach us that Zacharias and Elizabeth were eminent saints, maintaining an example of impartial and universal obedience. That he did not mean to attribute to them sinless obedience is manifest, because in the context Zacharias is charged with criminal unbelief, for which he was punished with the temporary loss of the power of speech. What! a perfectly holy man subject himself to the divine displeasure, and struck dumb, for his distrust of God's word! Paul calls upon those whom he had addressed as perfect, to be followers of him, Phil. iii. 15, 17; yet, in the same connexion he says, "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect." It is certain, therefore, that in the one instance, the word has a different meaning from what it has in the other; for it is absurd to suppose that a wise and humble man, who confessed himself to be still imperfect, would exhort those whom he regarded as sinless, to look to him as an example. Some have understood by the perfect, whom Paul addressed, full grown men in Christian knowledge, in distinction from children. Accordingly, Beza translates the passage "quotquot itaque adulti sumus, hoc sentiamus."

One of the arguments of Mr. Mahan, on which he strongly insists, is expressed in the following terms. "The Bible positively affirms, that provision is made in the gospel for the attainment of a state of perfection, and that to make such provision is one of the great objects of Christ's redemption."^{*}

This language is ambiguous in several respects. It may

* Christian Perfection, p. 20.

mean, that God has revealed it as his determination, that his people, or some of them, shall become perfect in the present world ; and, in this sense, it is but an assumption of the doctrine to be proved. It may mean that God's plan includes the complete sanctification of his children, at some future period of their existence ; a fact which no one questions, and which proves nothing with respect to the subject in dispute. God has also made provision for the deliverance of his people from sickness, pain and all afflictions, and for the enjoyment of the Redeemer's presence in glory ; but this purpose concerning the elect, is not accomplished, till they are released from the present world by death. Does Mr. Mahan mean, that nothing hinders the perfect obedience of Christians but their own culpable abuse, or disregard of their privileges ? Very well ; and it may with equal truth be said, that nothing different from this, hinders the perfect obedience of impenitent sinners. Does he mean merely that believers might be perfect but for their own fault ? It is also true, as the apostle assures us, that the very heathen are without excuse ; and the damned themselves are doubtless inexcusably criminal for their present rebellion. Does he mean, that the atonement secures the perfect holiness of Christians in the present life ? This is simply a begging of the question ; and it is moreover contradicted by fact ; since the great body of believers are, by the acknowledgment of Mr. Mahan himself, far from perfect holiness. Does he mean that the Spirit of God is able and gracious enough to make them perfect ? So the Spirit of God is able and gracious enough to make the whole world perfect, and even to exclude all sin from the universe. But his power and mercy are ever regulated, in their exercise, by his wisdom and his supreme regard to the interests of universal being. The only question, in reference to this subject, is, what is God's revealed purpose ? Has he any where told us that his people, or a part of them, will become perfectly holy during their abode in this world ? If not, the removal of external obstacles to their perfection no more proves that they will be perfect, than God's readiness to receive every true penitent justifies the conclusion, that all mankind will repent and cordially embrace the overtures of the gospel. The loose manner in which Mr. Mahan expresses himself, makes it difficult to say what he does mean, except that he intends to assert that God has done or will do something that renders it certain a part of his people will grow to a state of

perfection, before they exchange earth for heaven. Excellent, therefore, as Dr. Woods's discussion of this subject mainly is, we cannot agree with him in saying, that "devout Christians and orthodox divines have in all ages maintained the same doctrine" with Mr. Mahan, concerning "the provisions of the gospel." We must know what Mr. Mahan means by the provisions of the gospel, before we can say any thing like this. In all "the practical writings of Calvin, Flavel, Owen, Bunyan, Watts, Doddridge, President Davies, and Good," not a sentence can be found which implies that God has, in such a sense, made provision for the complete sanctification of his children while they "abide in the flesh," that his plan includes this result of his administration towards them; and if Mr. Mahan does not mean so much as this, he means nothing to his purpose.

Mr. Mahan also affirms that "perfection in holiness is promised to the Christian in the new covenant under which he is placed."*

If it be true, that God has promised that his people shall become perfect in this life, the question is settled. But what are the proofs adduced of this fact? Why, he cites a number of passages, which, if they are at all relevant to his design, prove that all Christians become completely holy at the moment of their regeneration. The promises he mentions belong to all under the new covenant. These are contained in Jer. xxxi. 31-34, and Heb. viii. 8-11; Deut. xxx. 10; Jer. i. 20; Mah. xxxii. 30, 40; Ezek. xxxvi. 25-27; Mah. xxxvii. 23; Is. lix. 21, and Luke i. 74, 75, &c. God circumcises the hearts of all his people; he puts his law in their inward parts; he takes away the stony heart out of their flesh; and he causes them to walk in his statutes. But does Mr. Mahan believe, (as he should, in order to be consistent with himself,) that all the elect are completely sanctified, at the very instant of their conversion? So far from it that he says, "the great men of the church are slumbering in Antinomian death, or struggling in legal bondage, with barely enough of the evangelical spirit to keep the pulse of spiritual life faintly beating."† But does Mr. Mahan believe that the promises of the new covenant have failed, with respect to "the great mass of the church?" How, then, can he argue from these promises, that any part of the church will be completely sanctified in this life? Again, he says,

* Christian Perfection, p. 22.

† Idem, pp. 100, 101

“from the evangelical simplicity of their first love, they, (i. e. the great mass of Christians,) fall into a state of legal bondage, and after a fruitless struggle of vain resolutions with the world, the flesh and the devil, they appear to descend into a kind of Antinomian death.” “The spirit of Antinomian slumber prevails, and death, and not a present Christ, is looked for as the great deliverer from bondage.” What does this mean? Has God forgotten his covenant? Or is it simply conditional? But a conditional covenant, from its very nature, does not insure the compliance of a single individual with its proposals. The truth, however, is, that the promises enumerated by Mr. Mahan, have their incipient fulfilment here, and will be accomplished, in the broadest extent of their meaning, hereafter. God, therefore, is faithful, though it remain true, that none are entirely free from sin on this side of heaven.

Some have insisted on those texts, in which God promises to cleanse his people from all sin, as an evidence that they may attain to perfection in this life.

In some instances, to be cleansed from sin, is equivalent to pardon, or gratuitous justification. Thus, in Ps. li: “Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin;” that is, save me from the deserved consequences of my disobedience. Again, in allusion to ceremonial purification, which represented atoning blood, David says in the same psalm, “purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean, wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.” Thus, in Jer. xxxiii. 8: “And I will cleanse them from all their iniquity, whereby they have sinned against me.” That this refers to justifying grace, rather than sanctification, seems evident from what immediately follows—“and I will pardon all their iniquities, whereby they have sinned, and whereby they have transgressed against me.” Thus, also, in 1 John i. 7, 8, “The blood of Jesus Christ, his son, cleanseth us from all sin;” that is, obtaineth our pardon; for it is not the atonement, but a direct divine influence, which removes the power and pollution of sin. Again: “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” Here, to forgive sins, and to cleanse from all unrighteousness, appear to be equivalent phrases. In the sense of pardon, or free justification, all believers are cleansed from sin, since they are all acquitted, and viewed and treated as perfectly righteous, for the Redeemer’s sake.

Where deliverance from the dominion of sin is promised, reference is in part had to what takes place in this world, but, more especially, to the future perfection of the heavenly state. The purifying process begins in the new birth, and is gradually carried forward in sanctification, till the work is completed in glory. But how does the promise of future entire emancipation from the thralldom of sin, prove that this blessing will be obtained immediately, or during the brief term of our earthly existence? It is also promised to believers, that they shall be delivered from all sorrow, that they shall vanquish completely death and hell, and shall live and reign with Christ; and it might as well be argued, that these promises will have their full accomplishment here, as those which relate to the entire purgation of the saints from their moral defilement. The truth is, God's faithfulness peculiarly appears in sustaining his people, amidst the temptations and difficulties connected with a state of sinful imperfection, till death is swallowed up in victory. Every good thing which the Lord has spoken will be shortly accomplished; and is his veracity to be distrusted, because he does not give to his children in this world, the perfect rest and triumph of heaven? Was God unfaithful to his ancient saints, because he did not send them the promised Messiah in the time of Moses? I may remark in general, that if we regard not the scope of a passage, nor the peculiar import of scriptural phrases, nor the analogy of the faith, we may, from insulated texts, deduce doctrines as preposterous as any that were ever advanced by the greatest heretics. Thus from the passage, "Behold the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world," we might argue, in opposition to the repeated declarations, and general tenor of the scriptures, that Christ sanctifies or pardons and saves the whole human race. Whereas, the truth intended to be taught in these words, is the reality, and universal extent of the atonement of Christ.

"I argue," says Mr. Mahan,* "that perfection in holiness is attainable in this life, and that the sacred writers intended to teach the doctrine, from the fact, that inspired men made the attainment of this particular state the subject of definite, fervent, and constant prayer."

So we have examples of inspired men, praying for the purity and blessedness of the heavenly state. But do be-

* *Christian Perfection*, p. 34.

lievers, while sojourning on earth, ever literally become companions of the glorified? Paul was continually pressing toward the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus; the acquisition of this prize was the object of his most earnest labours, of his most fervent prayers; and Mr. Mahan supposes* that the "mark" at which the apostle so strenuously aimed, was the "resurrection of the dead." But was Paul actually raised from the dead, during the period of his abode in this world? Or, does it follow, because he continued to sigh and groan, being burdened, that he did not pray in faith for a glorious resurrection? Christ taught his disciples to pray, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven." This prayer was offered by the apostles, and has been offered by the most devoted Christians, in all later ages; yet to this day, much the greater part of mankind continue the slaves of sin, and ignorant of the way of salvation by the Mediator. Are we to conclude, therefore, that this prayer has been so long, and by such multitudes of the excellent of the earth, offered in vain?

Perfectionists have urged the prayer of Christ, recorded in John xvii. 21, 23, as a proof of their doctrine, "That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me." "I in them, and thou in me, that they may be perfect in one." "The union here prayed for," says Mr. Mahan, "is a union of perfect love." "We must admit that this love, and consequent union, will exist among believers, or maintain, 1st, That Christ prayed for that which he requires us to believe that it is not for the glory of God to bestow upon his children. 2d, That the world are never to believe in Christ."†

That this prayer was offered in behalf of all God's children, cannot admit of a doubt. But if it was offered for all, it has been answered in part at least, with respect to all, since the supplications of the Son are ever prevalent with the Father. However imperfect Christians may be, they are all united to their head by a living faith, they all have essentially the same views of the gospel; they approve of one another's character, and rejoice in the prosperity of the kingdom, of which they are all subjects; they all hate sin, and love the same divine objects; they have all been washed

* *Christian Perfection*, p. 60.† *Id.* p. 33.

in the same blood, have been renewed by the same spirit, have become partakers of the same hope, and have been made heirs of the same salvation. The union among believers, as it is far more pure and sacred than that which subsists among worldly men, is destined to grow in strength, while all earthly friendships decay, and to endure forever. Nor, apparently defective as it is, has it been wholly ineffectual in carrying a conviction to the ungodly of the divine reality and power of the gospel. In consequence of the example of Christians, notwithstanding the many inconsistencies with which it has been marred, the "world" have been constrained to admit the divine mission and character of the Redeemer. But Mr. Mahan seems to suppose that this prayer is not answered at all, except with regard to those who become perfectly sanctified in the present life. What must be the inference? Plainly this—that, with respect to the great body of Christians hitherto, during their mortal pilgrimage, the prayer of the Saviour has been followed by no correspondent effect. According to Mr. Mahan's interpretation, therefore, Christ has failed to secure the object which he sought; for this writer supposes that comparatively few of the saints have attained to that perfection, which their master prayed they should possess. But if the prayer has failed of an answer till now, with respect to millions of Christians, what evidence is there that it will not equally fail, in all the future ages of time? It is reasonable, therefore, to conclude, not that the great intercessor has prayed in vain, but that the Perfectionists have misapprehended and misinterpreted his prayer. Our Lord said, "I pray not thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil." The word evil may be understood to include both sin and suffering, as well as the temptations and buffetings of Satan. If, therefore, we forget facts, and the general testimony of the scriptures, in our exposition of particular texts, we may infer from this last cited passage, that all real believers have done with conflicts, and enjoy perfect freedom from afflictions and sorrows.

Mr. Mahan thinks that Paul's proposing himself as an example to other Christians, "shows that he had arrived to a state of entire sanctification."[†]

Paul does not propose himself as a perfect example. He was worthy of imitation in any respects; and so are

* *Christian Perfection*, p. 39.

many other good men, who would be the last persons on earth to claim the character of entire obedience. That Paul was imperfect, and that, after all his attainments, he felt himself to be so, will fully appear in the sequel. As for the passages which Mr. Mahan cites to prove the perfection of Paul's obedience, they assert nothing more than the sincerity of his faith, the eminency of his self-denial, and his fidelity as an apostle and minister of Christ. When he declared that he was pure of the blood of all men, he referred merely to the clearness and fulness with which he had preached the gospel. But can none, save one who is perfectly holy, declare to his hearers all the counsel of God?

Some have considered 1 John, iii. 9, as proving that saints may be entirely free from sin in this life. "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God."

It is the opinion of some writers, that the apostle here refers to the sin of total and final apostacy, against which all true Christians are secured by the power and presence of God. The connexion, however, seems to warrant the conclusion, that John's object is to exhibit one of the distinguishing evidences of true religion, which is obedience. Some in the primitive church were Antinomians, supposing, with many modern Perfectionists, that Christians were freed from the rule of duty, and were at liberty to live according to their inclinations. To meet this impious dogma, as well as excite believers to the diligent pursuit of holiness, the sacred writer affirms that regeneration implies the implantation of a virtuous "seed," or "principle," which, by its own proper tendency, prompts to all the works of faith and labours of love. The real Christian, therefore, cannot be the committer or doer of sin, in such a sense as implies an habitual and totally depraved character. He longs for perfect holiness, and assiduously strives to keep all the commandments of God. In other words, he is habitually a new man, both in his heart, and in the overt actions of his life. The connexion, both preceding and following the text, accords with this interpretation. The 10th verse is, "In this the children of God are manifested, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother." Such are the scope and design of the passage. The other interpretation is moreover attended with difficulties not easy to be removed.

1. It overthrows a leading doctrine of the greater part of

the Perfectionists, (who are Arminians,) concerning the defectibility of the saints. Here we learn that regeneration includes the idea of permanency or certain perseverance in obedience, "His seed remaineth in him." Most surely then, Wesleyans and other Arminian Perfectionists, ought not to cite this passage as an evidence of their doctrine; since if it proves any thing in their favour, it proves too much for their cause.

2. Admit the interpretation of the Perfectionists, and it will follow, that none but the perfectly holy had been born of God, or are real Christians. The language of the apostle is very explicit: "Whosoever is born of God, doth not commit sin." If by not committing sin here, be intended absolute perfection, then the smallest sin, either external or internal, is enough to demonstrate a professor of religion to be a hypocrite. On this ground, therefore, the difference between saints and sinners must be, not in the nature of some or all of their exercises, but the perfection of the former, and the imperfection of the latter. The last part of the text is, if possible, stronger than the first: "He cannot sin, because he is born of God." If the meaning be he cannot sin at all, then of course no one who does sin at all, has within him the smallest spark of true religion.

3. The interpretation adopted by the Perfectionists, makes John contradict himself in this very epistle; for he does expressly affirm that none of the children of men in this world are entirely free from sin. In chap. i. ver. 8, he tells us, "If we say that we have no sin," (as some pretended that all their actions as believers were pure,) "we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." In the language of the New Testament, the affirmation that the truth is not in one, seems to be the same as saying that he is not a real Christian. Paul speaks of men of "corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth," that is, devoid of the Christian spirit, or of evangelical piety. John in the 2d chapter of this epistle, uses the same phrase. "He that saith I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him." Elsewhere the same apostle speaks of the truth as being in Christians, as dwelling in them; and them he represents as walkers in the truth. Thus he teaches us that the boast of perfection indicates not superior sanctity, but gross self ignorance, or intentional falsehood, and a destitution of the genuine traits of the Christian character. In chap. iii. ver. 3, he says, "and every one that hath this hope

in him purifieth himself even as he is pure." Macknight has the following note on this passage. "The apostle, as Beza observes, doth not say, hath purified himself, but purifieth himself; to show that it is a good man's constant study to purify himself, because no man in this life can attain to perfect purity. By this text, therefore, as well as by 1 John i. 8, those fanatics are condemned who imagine they are able to live without sin." From the foregoing passages, it is apparent that John taught a very different doctrine from that of sinless perfection in this life. And is it credible, that he has been guilty of gross self contradiction, in the course of a single brief letter?

It may be said in favour of the doctrine of perfection of the saints in this life, that it is honourable to Christ, and implied in his all-sufficiency as the Saviour of his people. Will he not, it may be asked, be all to his people that they need or desire?

We answer, that he will be all to them that he has promised, but that he will do nothing for them, contrary to his own express declarations, and the wisdom of his general counsels. We are ill qualified to judge what, except so far as he has revealed his purpose in his word, it is wisest and best for him to do. There are some things, which he will not do for his people. He will not, for example, make them all of gigantic stature, and Herculean strength; nor render them immortal upon the earth, nor cause them to live to the age of Methuselah, nor raise them at once, in intellect and knowledge, to an equality with the angels; nor free them, while they continue here, from the universally experienced pains and ills of this mortal existence. To expect from him such achievements, betrays either infidelity, or the utmost extravagance of enthusiasm. That he will ultimately accomplish the entire sanctification of his people, is certain: this they are bound to believe; but to look to him without any warrant from his word, for such a manifestation of his grace in this world, betokens rather weakness and presumption, than suitable confidence in his faithfulness and power. When he assures us that he will do for us whatever we ask, it is with the expressor implied condition, that our petitions are in accordance with his purposes as made known in the scriptures. Has he ever told us in the Bible, that he will, if we ask him, purify us from all sin in the present world? If not, it seems opinionated pride and ignorance, rather than eminent faith and holiness, to expect him, out of a regard to our wishes, thus

to turn aside from the course of his ordinary gracious operations. Besides, so long as we continue here, we must come to him as needy, as empty, as sinners. But these are not the characteristics of such as are completely sanctified. They have as truly entered into their rest, as any of the saints with Christ in Paradise.

“But some have professed to be perfectly holy.”

Such were not the saints, of whom we have an account in the scriptures. These all confessed their continual proneness to sin; and depended all their life long on the resources of rich, free, superabounding grace. Some, indeed have claimed perfection; but they resembled the pharisee, who thanked the Lord for his moral superiority over other men, much more nearly than the contrite publican, who smote upon his breast, saying, “God be merciful to me a sinner.” The church of Rome too has claimed infallibility. A man’s favourable opinion of himself is but a poor argument to show that he is either good or great. “He that trusteth in his own heart is a fool.” “There is,” says Solomon, “a generation that are pure in their own eyes, and yet are not washed from their filthiness.” It is the self-righteous hypocrite who cries “stand by thyself, come not near to me; for I am holier than thou.” “These,” says God, “are a smoke in my nose, a fire that burneth all the day.” Many poor enthusiasts have believed themselves inspired, and capable of working miracles; and some have affirmed their possession of attributes strictly superhuman and divine. Are the Behmenites, the French prophets, the disciples of Ann Lee, and the Mormons, then, to be acknowledged as the divinely illuminated messengers of God? “Not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth.” When a man professes an eminence in holiness, surpassing that ascribed to any of the scripture saints, he is for that reason to be distrusted; and if he boasts of a perfection, which the Bible denies to pertain to any of the human race in this world, he is to be at once regarded, without the trouble of further examination, either as a deceiver, or the subject of a morbid fanaticism. It is not for a moment to be deemed possible,—whatever may be his professed experimental knowledge of religion, or his zeal, or the apparent blamelessness of his life,—that he is in the right, in opposition to the explicit declaration of the scriptures. “Let God be true, but every man a liar.” “To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to the word, it is

because there is no light in them." At all events if one come to us with a professedly new revelation, he is not worthy of attention from us, until we find him performing works, which are plainly and incontestably miraculous.

It is, moreover, said by Perfectionists, that the common orthodox doctrine on this subject is discouraging, and leads to licentiousness.

The same objection has been made to the doctrines of entire depravity, regeneration by effectual grace, election, justification by faith alone, the atonement of Christ, and indeed the whole scheme of evangelical truth contained in the Bible. Infidels too have professed to reject the sacred volume, on the ground of the alleged evil tendency of many of its narratives, precepts, and exhibitions of divine character. Does it follow then, that the influence of the doctrines of grace is bad, or that the Bible does not give us the most just and consistent view of God? Certainly not.

He who needs the expectation of perfect holiness in this life, to stimulate his efforts in religion, is yet a stranger to the ingenuous nature of that faith which is the fruit of divine grace. The true Christian loves holiness, and will, therefore, strive to make advances in the divine life. Did Baxter, Brainerd, Martyn and Payson labour any the less diligently for Christ, because they did not expect perfect rest on this side of heaven? Has any advocate of Perfectionism ever surpassed those holy men in watchfulness, in fervent prayers, in the most self-denying sacrifices, and in unwearied attention to all the demands of duty? The common doctrine concerning the imperfection of the heart of the saints in this world, is adapted to produce and strengthen some very important branches of the Christian character—particularly humility, a great fear of sin, watchfulness against temptation, and habitual active dependance on the teaching and power of the Holy Spirit." "O," says the believer, convinced of this truth, "how potent must be my corruptions; and how hopeless, but for Almighty grace, my state!" It teaches, in the most impressive manner, the unwearied faithfulness of the Redeemer, who, inconstant and unworthy as they all are, will never leave one of his ransomed people to perish. How sweet, how tender the gratitude, which such a view of his unceasing care cannot fail to inspire. The doctrine, at the same time, serves to wean the believer from the world, where he is ever to bear the burthen of sin, and dispose him to seek, with the most intense desires, for the freedom, rest, and

blessedness of heaven. It helps to make welcome the grave and eternity. To one who knows the evils of his heart, it is fitted, when clearly understood, to impart a hope, which would be otherwise impossible; since it assures him that the struggles he feels within him, have been common to others, who now love and adore in the unclouded vision of the Lamb. He is, therefore, animated to press forward in his holy warfare, till he shall drop all the sorrows of his mortal state, and lay down his arms at the side of the grave.

We now proceed to state the more direct evidence of the sinful imperfection of all the saints in this life.

1. The first argument is derived from the direct testimony of the Bible

Not a single text can be adduced, which, properly understood, attributes perfection to good men in this life. On the contrary, the criminal imperfection of them all is most plainly asserted. Witness Eccl. vii. 20: "For there is not a just man upon earth that doeth good and sinneth not." It is as evident from this passage that no one on earth is perfectly holy, as that any are imperfect. Prov. xx. 9: "Who can say, I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin?" Mr. Mahan suggests, that reference is here had to a man's past life. The language, however, supposes present imperfection. Should one say, "I have made my heart clean," the words would imply, not that his heart had always been clean, (for that which has never been impure, needs no cleansing,) but that he had accomplished his perfect sanctification. To say "I am pure from any sin," is equivalent to saying, "I am free from that depravity which was once my character." The passage then strongly denies the sinless perfection of any of the human race, in this world. 1 Kings, viii. 46: "There is no man that sinneth not." Mr. Mahan contends that this means simply, that every man is peccable, or liable to sin. If so, the passage supposes that all men here are in a very different state from that of the angels and saints in heaven, who are in no danger of apostatizing from God. Is it not natural then to conclude that there is in the hearts of the saints here, something which peculiarly exposes them to sin? And what can this be but a sinful propensity? Mr. Wesley disposes of the passage in a different manner. "Doubtless," says he, "thus it was in the days of Solomon: yea, and from Solomon to Christ, there was no man that sinned not." But he supposes that the declaration is not applicable to the times of the gospel. With such as have a suitable

reverence for the scriptures, this method of explaining away the text requires no comment. "What," says Eliphaz, the Temanite, "is man that he should be clean, and he which is born of a woman that he should be righteous?" "If I say I am perfect," (or sinless,) remarks Job, "it shall also prove me perverse." "How does this declaration," asks Mr. Mahan, "which Job applies to himself and to no other person, prove that all other saints, and Christians even, are imperfect?" It is sufficient to reply, that Job was one of the best men of his own or any other age; that he is celebrated as such in the book of Ezekiel, and that he is proposed to Christians in the New-Testament as a model of distinguished patience. "And the Lord said unto Satan, hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man?" And is it no evidence of perverseness in men of far inferior moral attainments, to boast of their perfection? "Who," says the Psalmist, "can understand his errors? Cleanse thou me from secret faults." Here it is intimated, that all have errors or faults, from which they need to be purified by the grace of God. The New Testament is no less explicit on this subject than the Old. We need not here adduce the passages already quoted from the first epistle of John, as they must be fresh in the reader's remembrance. James iii. 2: "For in many things we offend all," or are all offended. We can see nothing in the connexion, or in the nature of the thing, which limits this declaration to any particular description of men. The apostle evidently includes himself and his fellow Christians.

2. Many of the exhortations, addressed to Christians, and the prayers offered in their behalf, imply that they are not at present completely sanctified. They are required to make advancement in piety. "Grow in grace." But where one is perfect in holiness, he can "grow in grace," only by an increase of his natural capacity. His whole duty is done; and can he do more than his duty? "Giving all diligence, add to your faith, virtue, and to virtue, knowledge, and to knowledge, temperance, and to temperance, patience, and to patience, godliness, and to godliness, brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness, charity." Could such an exhortation, with any propriety, be addressed to one whose obedience, according to his capacity, was as perfect as that of Gabriel? A large portion of the precepts written to Christians in the New Testament, import the necessity of improvement, of progress in the divine life. "Now our Lord Jesus Christ

himself, and God, even our Father, comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work." Would this be a suitable prayer in behalf of those already stablished in perfect goodness? "We pray exceedingly that we might see your face, and might perfect that which is lacking in your faith." The Lord make you to increase and abound in love." "The God of peace sanctify you wholly." "Now the God of peace make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight." The prayer for perfect sanctification supposes, that the blessing has not already been obtained; as the prayer that sinners may be regenerated, assumes, that they are yet in an unrenewed state. The foregoing passages may serve as a specimen of the prayers of inspired men in behalf of their brethren; and, while they prove the moral imperfection of those for whom they were presented, they give us no reason to conclude that a full answer to them was obtained on this side of the tomb. To infer the contrary, would be as unreasonable, as to infer that a sincere prayer for the deliverance of believers from all evil, must secure its object perfectly in the present world.

3. It is the duty of all men daily to ask of God the forgiveness of their sins. This is evident from the form of prayer which our Lord taught his disciples, which is given as a general guide to our daily devotions, and which contains in substance the petitions needful for Christians during their whole life. That the prayer, as it respects the subjects which it brings into view, whether the precise form be adopted or not, is designed for daily use, is manifest from one of its petitions. "Give us this day our daily bread." It is then added, "and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us." We shall all, therefore, need daily to pray for pardoning mercy. But the daily need of forgiveness supposes the daily commission of sins to be forgiven. The daily prayer implies daily confession of sin. And does Christ require us to confess offences, of which we are not guilty? The insertion of this petition among the rest, was doubtless intended to remind us of the sinful imperfection of all our services in the present world. Mr. Mahan's evasion of this argument, that it involves the supposition, that "the kingdom of God will never come, and that the Christian will never be in a state in this life in which he will not be subject to injuries from others," is rather confirmatory, than subversive, of the inference I have

maintained. Mr. Mahan virtually allows, then, that so long as Christians are "subject to injuries from others," this prayer is suitable for all believers. And are they not still "subject to injuries?" The prayer, therefore, is with propriety used by Christians at this day; and it remains to be proved, that it will cease to be appropriate to their circumstances, so long as the sun and the moon endure.

4. The same doctrine is evident from the history which the Holy Ghost has given us in the scriptures, of the most eminent saints in ancient times. Noah was once intoxicated; Abraham practised dissimulation concerning his wife; Isaac indulged sinful partiality towards Esau; Jacob sometimes indulged criminal distrust; Lot was shamefully overcome by temptation; Moses spoke unadvisedly with his lips; Aaron was too accommodating to the sinful wishes of his countrymen, and formed an image for idolatrous worship; David committed crimes, for which his holy soul was afterwards humbled in the dust; Solomon's old age was disgraced by his idolatries; Job and Jeremiah impatiently cursed the day of their birth. Shall I speak of the faults of Eli, and Samuel, and Jehosaphat, and Asa, and Hezekiah, and Josiah? Unpleasant as the recollection of their failings is, it may be profitable, to impress upon us the necessity of continual vigilance and prayer. It is important to observe, that to those holy men, the remembrance of their sins was grievous, and the burden of them was intolerable.

Let us look now at the saints, of whom we have an account in the New Testament. Not one of them is presented to us with a faultless character. In the little family of Christ, we observe the spirit of worldly ambition. We hear the disciples inquiring among themselves, who shall be greatest; they were warm in dispute; and carry their mutual complaints to their meek and compassionate Lord.—Who can think of the confidence of Peter, and his subsequent lapse, though so soon followed by his repentance, without exclaiming, "what are the holiest men, unaided and unsustained by the grace of God!" Much as Peter's character afterwards was improved, his sanctification was still imperfect. "But when Peter," who was in that instance too much actuated by motives of carnal policy, "was come to Antioch, I," says Paul, "withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed." Thus weak in himself and liable to transgress, was that great apostle, whose very name denotes firmness and constancy. James, and the gentle, affectionate

John actuated by a spirit of revenge, would fain have commanded fire to come down from heaven and consume the Samaritans, who refused to receive their master. Yet Mr. Mahan thinks, that John became perfectly holy in this life. Because John was conscious of the sincerity of his obedience, it is inferred, that he was free from sin. Paul and Barnabas contended and divided, with a spirit of acrimony, ill befitting their eminent meekness, self-denial, and devotion to the cause of the Redeemer. Yet in Mr. Mahan's view, it is at least "doubtful," whether Paul in that instance, deviated in the smallest degree from perfect holiness. The same writer makes the apostle attest his own perfection in a number of passages, which simply assert the reality of his faith and piety, though he expressly says, "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect; brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." In the apostolical epistles to the churches, faults are specified and reprov'd, which render it certain that the religion of the primitive Christians was by no means such as dreaming Perfectionists claim for themselves. Thus do Bible facts on this subject, explain and establish the Bible doctrine.

5. The most holy men mentioned in scripture have confessed, and that in their best frames, their remaining sinfulness. "Against thee, thee only," says David, "have I sinned." "Mine iniquities have gone over my head; as an heavy burden, they are too heavy for me." "Behold I am evil," says Job, "what shall I answer thee?" Nehemiah and Daniel include themselves in their confessions of the sins of their people. Paul again and again renounces all dependance on his own righteousness, and casts himself, without reserve, on the atonement and perfect obedience of the Saviour. These were among the best men that ever lived; and if they felt themselves to be still imperfect, is it not evident, that others who regard themselves as purified from all sin, are miserably deceived?

6. The warfare, which the scriptures teach us, exists through life in the bosoms of good men, implies the imperfection of their obedience, or the continuance of evil principles, however mortified and weakened, in their hearts. It is no where intimated, that any of the saints have arrived

at such a state, that they have nothing more to do in opposing sin in their hearts. On the contrary, they are all exhorted to continual watchfulness and diligence, lest they be overcome by temptation. "Be sober, be vigilant." It is clearly implied in many exhortations, that Christians will be obliged to fight the good fight of faith till they die. Is it not plain from this, that there will always be sin in them to resist? Would it not be absurd to direct men to fight an enemy already completely vanquished and destroyed? To evade this argument, shall we be told of innocent susceptibilities to sin, which render perpetual resistance necessary? On this principle, as we have already observed, there must be an inward warfare in heaven; since men carry with them their innocent mental susceptibilities into the regions of endless purity. But is there any warfare in that world? Were the saints here perfectly holy, we see no reason why they should be any more troubled with internal conflicts, than are the glorified spirits in heaven.

According to the more common interpretation of orthodox divines, the apostle, in Rom. vii. is describing his own experience, and that of every believer in this world. In that chapter, he speaks of sin dwelling in him; of willing what he could not perform; of finding a law, that when he would do good, evil was present with him; of delighting in the law of God, after the inward man, and yet seeing another law in his members warring against the law of his mind, and bringing him into captivity to the law of sin in his members; and he adds the pathetic exclamation, "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" He speaks as if two distinct persons within him were contending for the mastery; and he rests all his hope of the final victory of the good principle over its opposite, on the mere grace of the Redeemer. "I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind, I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin." No real difficulty exists from the connexion, in supposing this passage to be descriptive of the Christian experience of Paul himself, and of other true saints. It has been appropriated by the best of men, as most happily expressive of their own views of themselves; while most of the opponents in modern times of its application to true Christians, have also had Arminian or Pelagian notions of the great doctrines of grace. The orthodox interpretation is the most natural, and such as the plain, unlettered Christian, who

had no system to support, would be most likely to adopt. Some of the phrases employed express a state of feeling, which is never found in a totally depraved sinner. Can such an one truly say, that he allows not the evil which he commits, that he hates what he does, and that he delights in the law of God after the inward man? The Psalmist represents it as one of the characteristics of a good man, that "his delight is in the law of the Lord." "O Lord, how love I thy law!" "Delight thyself also in the Lord, and he shall give thee the desires of thy heart." As for the confession, "I am carnal, sold under sin," it merely expressed the strong sense which Paul had of the power of indwelling sin, as it was manifested in the effects which he noticed in the following connexion.

In Gal. v. 17, the apostle speaks of an inward spiritual conflict as common to Christians. "The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other, so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." By the flesh here, as is evident from what follows, is intended the corrupt nature, or sinful disposition of mankind. This flesh is affirmed to exist in Christians, and to counteract the impulses of their new, or spiritual nature. The combatants being thus in the field, the contest can never be intermitted, till the foe is finally routed and destroyed.

7. The temper, represented in the scriptures as necessary to acceptable prayer, implies, on the part of the offerers, the consciousness of remaining sin. None are permitted to mention their own goodness as the meritorious ground of acceptance. Humility and penitence are indispensable to a right approach to the throne of grace. We read of one, who, without any confession of sin, boasted before God of his good deeds; but we are assured by the supreme judge, that this man found no favour with his maker. Observe Daniel's prayer. After confessing his own sin, as well as the sin of his people, he said, "We do not present our supplications before thee for our righteousness, but for thy great mercies. O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive; O Lord, hearken and do; defer not, for thine own sake, O my God; for thy city and thy people are called by thy name." Observe the prayer of the Psalmist. "Enter not into judgment with thy servant; for in thy sight shall no man living be justified." Observe the prayer of Isaiah. "Behold thou art wroth, for we have sinned; in thy ways is continuance, and

we shall be saved. For we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away. And there is none that calleth upon thy name, that stirreth up himself to take hold of thee; for thou hast hid thy face from us, and hast consumed us, because of our iniquities. But now, O Lord, thou art our Father; we are the clay, and thou our potter; and we all are the work of thy hand. Be not wroth very sore, O Lord, neither remember iniquity forever; behold, see, we beseech thee, we are all thy people." Here we see the church relinquishing all confidence in herself, in her strength, in her goodness, taking to herself everlasting shame, and reposing all her hope in the sovereign mercy and gracious covenant of her God. In the spirit of this passage, Jeremiah prays, "Though our iniquities testify against us, do thou it for thy name's sake." Of that penitent submission, which prostrates the pride of the heart, and all the powers of the soul before the divine Majesty, we are most impressively taught the necessity in the parable of the publican and pharisee. He, whose prayer was graciously accepted, had no good actions to enumerate, no apology to offer for his transgressions. His only plea was mercy, through the great propitiation provided for the guilty and the lost. The pharisee, on the other hand seemed to regard himself as perfect. See the repenting prodigal. He tells of no good that he has done. He speaks not even of his compunction, his sorrow, his long and painful journey, to regain the parental mansion, and sue for an abused parent's love. No, with shame and weeping, he cries, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee, and am not worthy to be called thy son." The current language of the Bible accords with these examples. The Lord fills the poor with good things, but he sends the rich empty away. "He will regard the prayer of the destitute; he will not despise their prayer." But what have such promises to do, with those who believe that they have already attained to perfection? Are they poor, destitute in their own eyes? What, they who have only to be thankful for the forgiveness of what is past, and to be satisfied with their present purity and worthiness? This is pharisaism, this is arrogance, indeed, if any thing can deserve the name. "Thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing, and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked."

S. The same doctrine is confirmed by the testimony of those in later times, who have given the best evidence of eminent meekness, humility and a disinterested consecration of themselves to the service and cause of God. In the confessions and writings of the great Augustine, the power of indwelling sin is acknowledged with a strength and pungency of expression, which prove the depth of his conviction, and the intenseness of his penitential sorrow. The ardent and intrepid Luther is full of this most humiliating subject, that he may drive the church from every other refuge, to the atoning sacrifice and the immaculate righteousness of her Redeemer. Baxter, Owen, Flavel, Charnock, Bates, Howe, Bunyan, and a host of their godly contemporaries, unite in their acknowledgments of the exceeding potency of remaining sin in the hearts of the best of God's people. Who has not observed the strong language of Edwards, Brainerd, and Payson, as they confessed and mourned over the sins that were mixed with, and defiled their holiest services? John Newton, Winter, Scott, Martyn, and indeed most of those who have seemed eminently spiritual, have been full and constant in expressing their conviction of the criminal imperfection of their best works, the strength of their innate corruptions, and their entire dependance on the power and sovereign grace of God to direct and uphold them. And if these were not real saints, who, in modern times are entitled to the appellation? Are they, who profess to depend on their good life for acceptance with God, while they oppose, calumniate and hold up to ridicule the peculiar doctrines of the gospel? Are those zealots, proud, censorious and dogmatical, who boast of their perfect deliverance from sin? "By their fruits ye shall know them; do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?"

On this subject, the great and good Wilberforce says: "To put the question concerning the natural depravity of man to the severest test; take the best of the human species, the watchful, diligent, self-denying Christian, and let him decide the controversy; and that, not by inferences drawn from the practices of a thoughtless and dissolute world, but by an appeal to his personal experience; go with him to his closet, ask him his opinion of the corruption of the heart; and he will tell you, that he is deeply sensible of its power, for that he has learned it from much self-examination, and long acquaintance with the workings of his own mind. He will

tell you, that every day strengthens this conviction; yea, that hourly he sees fresh reason to deplore his want of simplicity in intention, his infirmity of purpose, his low views, his selfish unworthy desires, his backwardness to set about his duty, his languor and coldness in performing it; that he finds himself obliged continually to confess that he feels within him two opposite principles, and that he cannot do the things that he would. He cries out in the language of the excellent Hooker, "the little fruit which we have in holiness, it is, God knoweth, corrupt and unsound; we put no confidence at all in it, we challenge nothing in the world for it, we dare not call God to reckoning, as if we had him in our debt books; our continual suit to him is, and must be, to bear with our infirmities, and pardon our offences."

9. The Bible teaches us to look for the accomplishment of our perfect conformity to God, as a part of that peculiar and glorious reward which is reserved for a future life. "I shall be satisfied, when I awake with thy likeness." "It doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." Is not the implication clear and unanswerable, that our moral assimilation to Christ will not be completed, till we awake in eternity, and behold him in his unveiled glory? But according to the scheme of the Perfectionists, that which makes Heaven most attractive to the pious heart, may be fully enjoyed upon earth; we may be as sinless, and, according to our capacity, as much conformed to the Redeemer here as are any of the saints in his immediate presence before the throne. Why then, should Christians so eagerly, as the Bible represents them do, fix the eyes of their faith and desire on the celestial Paradise? Why do they so joyfully anticipate the second coming of their victorious Prince and deliverer? We are assured, that "the spirits of just men made perfect" are collected together in "the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem." Why are we not told, that their dwelling-place is upon earth, as well as in the distant country beyond the tomb?

10. God deals with the best of his people here, as in a state of imperfection. They are subject to the discipline of affliction. The voice of divine providence, as well as of the word to them, is, "arise ye, for this is not your rest; for it is polluted." It is plainly a doctrine of scripture, that mankind suffer only because they are sinners. Sickness, pain, disappointments, and the other calamities of life, are, in

innumerable passages, represented as divine judgments, or expressions of God's righteous displeasure against the wickedness of the world. "When thou with rebukes dost correct man for iniquity, thou makest his beauty to consume away like a moth." "There is no soundness in my flesh, because of thine anger; neither is there any rest in my bones, because of my sin." "For we are consumed by thine anger, and by thy wrath are we troubled." "Wherefore doth a living man complain, a man for the punishment of his sins?" Our blessed Lord was exposed to suffering, in the capacity of our substitute. Had he not acted in this character, his life would have been as happy, as it was innocent and holy. "The Lord laid upon him the iniquity of us all;" and therefore he was bruised, tortured, and put to death upon the accursed tree. His was a peculiar case, unparalleled in the history of our world; the result of an expedient of the divine government, to save the guilty, in consistency with the demands of righteousness, and the maintenance of the honor of God. The sufferings of no other person are strictly vicarious, or avail to the removal of the divine anger against transgressors.

With respect to Christians, however distinguished by their attainments in piety, afflictions are affirmed to be fatherly chastisements, and proofs of the paternal faithfulness of their covenant God. "If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; if they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments; then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless, my loving-kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail." From this passage it is plain, that believers are never visited with the "rod," and with "stripes," except on account of their "transgression" and their "iniquity." "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards and not sons." None of God's children then, in this world, can wholly escape chastisement; and the reason is, they all need correction. "As many as I love," said Christ, "I rebuke and chasten." He told his disciples, that "in the world," they should "have tribulation." "We must," said Paul, "through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God." "For we that are in this

tabernacle do groan, being burdened." "For they verily for a few days chastened us, after their own pleasure : but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness." The plain doctrine of the apostle here is, that after believers have become fully partakers of the divine holiness, the end designed to be answered by God's chastisement, will have been accomplished. The undeniable inference, therefore, is, that then their sufferings will cease. And this is what we should have reason to expect. Is it credible that a wise and merciful parent will inflict needless pain on his own children ? Mr. Mahan himself virtually admits the force of this reasoning. "The rod," he says, "properly applied, brings the child into a state in which the rod is no more needed. So of the rod in the hand of our heavenly Father. Its object is to render us partakers of his holiness. Till this end is accomplished, the rod will be used. When this end is accomplished, it will no longer be needed."* But we have already seen, that all God's people here are, to a greater or less degree, the subjects of affliction. Will Mr. Mahan pretend, that they who claim to be perfect, are less liable, than other professors of religion, to the common natural evils of this life ? If not, their claim, according to the principle, allowed by himself, can have no good foundation.

Will it be said, that believers suffer according to general laws ? Be it so ; but by whom, I ask, were those general laws established, and were they not formed by their author, in view of all the wants which would ever take place under their operation ? Besides, who does not know that the scriptures, in numerous instances, ascribe all the calamities which befall creatures, to the sovereign appointment and direct agency of that being, on whom are dependent all the laws of nature, and all the results to which they give birth ? A few passages to this effect have already been quoted. It is apparent from these, and many other texts, that the hand of God is as much to be acknowledged in the evils we suffer, as in those events that are strictly miraculous, and which occur without the intervention of means, or second causes. Since then, affliction is ordained on account of sin, the perfectly obedient ought to be as exempt from affliction, as are any of the saints in heaven. Every bereavement therefore, that the Perfectionist sus-

* *Christian Perfection*, p. 66.

tains, every pain he feels, demonstrates the falseness of his creed. Were he what he professes to be, this poor, dying world would be a most unsuitable residence for him; and he would, without doubt, ascend at once to join his kindred in the skies, and swell the shouts of their praise. The entire system of divine providence here proceeds upon the assumption, that the whole human race are so depraved, as to need perpetual restraints, and the intermingling of painful inflictions with the attractive influences of mercy.

We have now to show the great practical importance of correct views of this subject.

Some have said, that, if the doctrine we have maintained be true, it is not worthy of being contended for, especially at the risk of peace; and it has been sometimes intimated, that the contrary scheme, though erroneous, may excite Christians more powerfully than the truth would do, to the indefatigable pursuit of holiness. This notion directly contradicts the Bible. There we learn, that believers are sanctified through the truth; and we are urged to "buy the truth, and sell it not." No portion of revealed truth can be of little consequence; since we are told, on the best authority, that "all scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable." The common doctrine here defended therefore, provided that it be scriptural, cannot be of small importance, in its relation to truth and duty. Nor has it been received as of small importance, by either its enlightened friends, or its enemies. Great stress was laid upon it by Augustine and the reformers; and it has been deemed of vital moment, by the most distinguished later theologians in our own country, and in Europe. While it has been held by the orthodox, it has been strongly opposed by the wildest and most erratic of the opposers of evangelical doctrines. This fact indicates clearly the tendency of the different schemes on this subject. In every well-instructed and well-balanced mind, the scriptural doctrine of the imperfection of good men in this life stands not as an isolated truth, but as an inseparable part of a system of religious belief, experience and practice.

The Perfectionist if consistent with himself, must have different apprehensions of God, from those which are possessed by the advocates of orthodoxy. Where is the Perfectionist who has clear and correct views of the universality, definiteness, and immutability of the divine purposes? Can an instance be found of such an one, who does not confound

the decrees of God with his commands; thus virtually undermining the stability of the divine government, and taking away the foundation of our confidence, in the ultimate prevalence of truth and holiness over error and wickedness? Besides, as holiness is the same in all beings, he, who regards himself as perfectly sanctified, must believe that he is, in proportion to his capacity, as pure and as good as his Creator. How far below the representations of the Bible must be such a man's views of the righteousness and moral glory of the adorable Supreme?

Perfectionism explains away, or virtually repeals God's holy and unchangeable law. In some instances, its advocates directly affirm, that the obligations of the law have been abrogated, with respect to all believers; and that Christ has so fulfilled its demands, that his people are not, in any sense, answerable for their delinquencies. They are said to cease from their works, and to "roll the responsibility of their future and eternal obedience upon the everlasting arm."* In order to maintain the dogma of personal perfection, it is necessary to make it consist in something far short of the consummate virtue required in the word of God. Hence real sins are called weaknesses, frailties, or innocent constitutional temptations. Concupiscence is reduced to the blameless, though, when they become excessive, somewhat dangerous cravings of physical appetite. Supreme self-love is declared to be an essential characteristic of intelligent moral agency, against which there is no law; which is the spring of all virtue as well as of vice, and to which no more blame can be attached than to the pulsations of the heart, or the vibrations of a pendulum. Affections, as such, have no character; they are but the innocent susceptibilities of our nature, and their most violent workings are innocent, except so far as they are produced or modified by a previous deliberate act of the will. In all other cases, they are passive emotions, like the involuntary impressions made upon the brain by the bodily senses. It follows, on this principle, that love to God and hatred of him, are equally indifferent things; and that they become praiseworthy or criminal, solely in consequence of their connexion with some previous purpose of the mind. It must hence be inferred, that when God commands us to love him, he does not mean what he says; but that he is to be understood as simply

* *Literary and Theological Review*, Vol. i. p. 558. }

requiring us to do what we can to approve of his character, and yield obedience to his commands. Thus his law, in its high and spiritual import, is frittered down to an accommodation to the taste, or moral inability of mankind. Observe the language of Mr. Finney. "It is objected," says he, "that this doctrine lowers the standard of holiness to a level with our own experience. It is not denied that in some instances this may have been true. Nor can it be denied, that the standard of Christian perfection has been elevated much above the demands of the law in its application to human beings in our present state of existence. It seems to have been forgotten, that the inquiry is, what does the law demand—not of angels, and what would be entire sanctification in them; nor of Adam, previously to the fall, when his powers of body and mind were all in a state of perfect health; not what will the law demand of us in a future state of existence; not what the law may demand of the church in some future period of its history on earth, when the human constitution, by the universal prevalence of correct and thorough temperance principles, may have acquired its pristine health and powers; but the question is, what does the law of God require of Christians of the present generation; of Christians in all respects in our circumstances, with all the ignorance and debility of body and mind which have resulted from intemperance and the abuse of the human constitution through so many generations?"

"The law levels its claims to us as we are, and a just exposition of it, as I have already said, under all the present circumstances of our being, is indispensable to a right apprehension of what constitutes entire sanctification."*

Perfectionism often and directly leads to the most gross, palpable and blasphemous forms of Antinomianism. It has been conjoined with the horrible notion, that to the Christian all actions are alike; that sin in his case ceases to be sin; that his doings, however perverse, are not his own, but are the works of Jesus Christ himself, whose will impels his perfect ones in all they think, say and do. Hence some of the Perfectionists have talked of themselves as divine; as incarnations of the Deity, possessing at once the righteousness, strength and infallibility of the Redeemer. By many, the utility and necessity of all divine ordinances are denied, as fit only for the uninstructed and carnal, who have not

* Oberlin Evangelist, Vol. ii. p. 50.

yet entered into their rest. In the writings of even the more sober Perfectionists of this day, expressions are found which seem to contain the germ of these extravagant and impious pretensions.

It is scarcely needful to remark, that the belief in perfectionism cannot stand in connexion with clear scriptural apprehensions of the total moral corruption of unregenerate men. Hence, whatever words the defenders of this scheme have used, they have universally, so far as we know, denied the essential difference, as it respects the spring and nature of their exercises, between saints and impenitent sinners. The governing motive, namely, self-love, or the desire of happiness, however it may vary in its results, is represented to be the same in both classes, or, at the most, any change effected in this respect, is to be attributed simply to the operation of principles, which, though stimulated perhaps by a divine influence, are yet common to both. With such philosophy, to speak of any as totally depraved, is to use words without meaning; or to adopt a phrasology, fitted to bewilder and mislead those who are incapable of reducing doctrines to their legitimate and primary elements. The history of Perfectionism shows indeed, that most of its advocates have renounced the use of evangelical language on this subject; and have maintained, either that men are naturally no more inclined to evil than good, or that a portion of the divine moral image has been imparted to the whole human race.

Perfectionism has been commonly, as it is naturally, connected with a want of reverence for the Bible. Mr. Wesley reproves those, who infer from the conduct of the apostles, that some are entirely free from sin in this life, in the following terms: "Will you argue thus, if two of the apostles once committed sin, then all other Christians in all ages, do and must commit sin as long as they live? Nay, God forbid we should thus speak." Again. "What if the holiest of the ancient Jews did sometimes commit sin? We cannot infer from hence that all Christians do and must sin as long as they live."* Thus scripture examples are made to prove nothing against the doctrine of perfection. Mr. Mahan contends that the passages in the Old Testament, which assert the imperfection of good men, ought not to be adduced as evidence that none under the gospel are perfectly holy. His words are, "Whatever is said of the character of

* Wesley's Plain Account of Christian Perfection, pp. 19, 20.

saints, under the old dispensation, cannot be applied to Christians under the new, unless such application was manifestly intended by the sacred writer." Speaking of the declaration in Eccl. viii. 20, he says, "It was made with reference to men in the state then present, and not with reference to their condition under an entirely different dispensation."* Thus easily does he dispose of passages, which contradict his view. Many have supposed the prophets and primitive Christians to have been unenlightened and carnal, compared with themselves. Many Perfectionists have substituted impulses, or the inward light, for the teaching of the word; and have spoken in disparaging terms of the latter, as compared with the internal illumination, of which they boast. In exemplification of this remark, we might refer the reader to the votaries of ancient Quakerism, Shakerism, and Mystics and Quietists of every description. And no wonder, that they who are perfect, undervalue that volume which condemns their creed, and which was written by men who confessed themselves to be sinners. What! the perfect condescend to be taught by those who are imperfect. It is absurd in the extreme. Besides, it is natural to suppose, that they who are perfectly holy, should read the word of God, rather on the tablet of their own minds, than on the perishing pages of a book, printed by human hands. It has accordingly been no uncommon occurrence, for those who imagined themselves to have attained to the highest degree of sanctification, to abandon the reading of the scriptures, and trust to the supposed illapses and movings of the Spirit within them. And what is this but a species of infidelity, under the guise of a superior sanctity and devotion? "Search the scriptures," says Jesus Christ, "for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me."

We see, then, why it is, that Perfectionism has so generally led to the wildest enthusiasm. Notwithstanding the warnings of some of its more intelligent and sober champions,† it has been very extensively connected with confidence in impressions, visions, and unaccountable voices, to the practical rejection of that word of truth, light and power

* Mahan on Christian Perfection, p. 67.

† Wesley's Plain Account, pp. 119, 120, where are some sound and important remarks on this subject. The Oberlin professors have written against some of these extravagances, yet they maintain opinions which lead to the most pernicious enthusiasm, and their paper, it is said, is read and admired by some of the most fanatical of the Perfectionists in the western country.

which speaks from heaven. Many of its disciples have professed to be literally inspired; and with the pretext of obeying divine instruction, have committed the most disgraceful excesses.

It is also the parent and the offspring of monkish austerities, inasmuch as it readily and almost necessarily attributes the source of sin to the body, or the animal appetites, which, though not wrong in themselves, will yet become the certain occasion of transgression, unless they be kept in subjection by the strictest regimen, and a kind of unceasing penance. Most of the Romish recluses, who inflicted the severest castigation upon themselves, and endeavored to drive out sin by voluntary hunger, cold and nakedness, professed by these means to be seeking, or actually enjoying the blessing of unstained purity, and unalloyed communion with God. Some of the Protestant preachers and believers of the doctrine in our own country, seem to be verging towards the same superstition; and to imagine that such abstinence and dietetics as they inculcate, connected with a general reception of their creed, would, in the course of a few generations, almost entirely extirpate sin and its consequences from our world. What less can Mr. Finney mean when he says, "Is it not true, my brethren, that the mind is, in this state of existence, dependent upon the physical organization for all its developments—and that every transgression of physical law tends strongly to a violation of moral law?" Again. "I am now fully convinced, that the flesh has more to do with the backsliding of the church, than either the world or the devil. Every man has a body, and every man's body, in this age of the world, is more or less impaired by intemperance of one kind or another. Almost every person, whether he is aware of it or not, is in a greater or less degree a dyspeptic, and suffering under some form of disease arising out of intemperance. And I would humbly ask, is it understood and proclaimed by ministers, that a person can no more expect healthy manifestations of mind in a fit of dyspepsia than in a fit of intoxication? Is it understood and preached to the church, that every violation of the physical laws of the body, as certainly and as necessarily prevents healthy and holy developments, in proportion to the extent of the infraction of physical law, as does the use of alcohol? I am convinced that the temperance reformation has just begun, and that the total abstinence principle, in regard to a great many other subjects besides alcohol, must prevail

before the church can prosper to any considerable extent.”* To such an absurd extreme does this leader of Perfectionism carry his notions respecting the connexion between the body and the soul; and so clearly does he lay down principles of temperance, which are rather Pythagorean, Gnostical, or Papal, than conformable to the precepts and maxims of pure Christianity.

Correct views of this subject are important, on account of their necessary connexion with the great system of truth and duty, revealed in the scriptures. A number of errors springing from Perfectionism, as the waters from a fountain, have already been noticed. As a general fact, the Perfectionist is a Pelagian in his views of native depravity, decrees, election, the divine agency in regeneration, and gratuitous justification; and he denounces the doctrines of Paul, according to their plain import, as they are taught in his epistles to the Romans and the Ephesians, as injurious to the interests of holiness, and in the highest degree dishonorable to God. Experience has proved that Perfectionism peculiarly prepares the ground, where it is cultivated and flourishes, for an abundant crop of infidelity, and the most odious forms of delusion and imposture.

As to the practical fruits of this error, may we not be permitted to ask, without subjecting ourselves to the imputation of uncharitableness, do we not see enough of them at Oberlin itself, represented by its admirers as the very focus of all moral light and of holiness, to justify the severest censure? What mean the constant denunciations against the church; against orthodox and faithful ministers; and against all who dare to resist the dangerous innovations, which go forth, like swarms of locusts, from that seat of superficial learning, and of bold, reckless speculation? What mean the complaints which we hear from the west, of the disorganizing spirit and conduct of the students and preachers from that seminary; the divisions they have created, and sought to create, in once powerful churches; and the resolutions condemnatory of their proceedings, adopted by ecclesiastical bodies, formerly believed to be sufficiently favorable to the extraordinary opinions and measures, which have characterized the theological revolution of the last fifteen or twenty years? What mean the violent acts of some of the

* Oberlin Evangelist, as quoted in the April number of the Princeton Review, pp. 243, 244.

professedly perfect ones, blindfolding, menacing, and unmercifully beating a youthful offender, accused of attempting to corrupt one of the female members of the school; and that, after they had themselves deceived him, and seduced his mind, by a feigned correspondence, and other acts of dissimulation, not unworthy of the disciples of Loyala? What mean the published apologies for those disgraceful acts, under the eye, and with the sanction of the fathers of the heresy? What mean the apparent conceit, arrogance, dogmatism and radicalism of not a few of the ill-instructed young men, who are sent out from Oberlin, to preach down dead professors of religion, and dead ministers, and orthodox creeds and catechisms, and to proselyte the world to the kind of sanctity taught by the faculty of that institution? But we forbear. It is, we are persuaded, but to know Oberlin thoroughly, to be convinced of the utter falseness of all its pretensions to uncommon spiritual mortification and holiness. Perfectionism, indeed, can never bear a rigid and impartial scrutiny, as to its visible effects, any more than as to the radical principles which produce them. Its grapes, however beautiful in the eye of the distant or cursory spectator, are still the grapes of Sodom; and its clusters are the clusters of Gomorrah. In proportion to the developements which are made, new evidence is afforded, that this heresy, however diversified, or modified by circumstances, is every where the same in its essential features, and in its tendency; arrayed alike against evangelical doctrine and order; fostering fanaticism and spiritual pride; and, whether it nominally acknowledge or reject the ordinances of the gospel, taking away the grounds which support them, and robbing them of the salutary influence, which in their legitimate use, they are adapted and designed to exert.

It is time to draw these extended remarks to a close.

Reader! the progress of this doctrine, the indifference of many professedly evangelical men with regard to its diffusion, and the disposition manifested by not a few to apologize for its propagation, are indications most unpropitious to the cause of humble, meek, spiritual Christianity. Perfectionism, with whatever professions "of love, tenderness, and devotion," it may be accompanied, is not the progeny of light, but of darkness; and as truly as Universalism or Socinianism, it should be viewed and treated by ministers and churches, as a fundamental error. Tending as it does to sap the foundations of all true religion and genuine mo-

rality, apostacy to it should be regarded as an evidence either of a peculiar species of monomania, a profound ignorance of the meaning of the terms employed, or of the want of that humility, without which all pretensions to piety are vain.

Be jealous of any system of mental philosophy, the principles of which naturally lead to the adoption of this great error, so contrary to the word of God, and the conscious experience of the most eminent believers. It is worthy of very serious inquiry, (if indeed there be any room to doubt on the subject,) whether some modern speculations concerning moral agency, and the divine influence in the production of holiness, have not contributed largely to the existence and progress of the peculiar form of this error, which has within the last few years, swept, like a simoom, over some of the fairest portions of our Zion. Guard, with constant vigilance, the citadel of truth at its very vestibule.

Christian reader! "Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines; for it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace, not with meats, which have not profited them, that have been occupied therein."

This subject urges upon you most impressively the duty of a humble walk with God. Is it true, that sin mixes with and pollutes all your doings—your most disinterested charities, your holiest prayers, your most grateful praises? Is it true, that you will daily, hourly, every moment, need a fresh pardon, and the aid of all-conquering grace, till your feet shall stand on the shores of the celestial Canaan, with the harp of God in your hand, and the wreath of immortality encircling your brows? The dust then surely becomes you. There lie, and confess your sins, and acknowledge the justice of your condemnation, and weep with ingenuous sorrow, and beg for mercy.

Unite, with fervent prayer, untiring watchfulness and diligence. To this, your innumerable inward foes, ever ready for the assault, seem continually, vehemently, irresistibly, to urge you. In such a situation, can you sleep? Awake, for the powers of hell are near, and are eagerly pressing on to circumvent and destroy you. "Wherefore, take unto you the whole armour of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand."

Let not the reality of your continual imperfection be your

excuse ; but rather let it excite you to more ardent exertions to reach the crown of life.

Be satisfied with nothing less than perpetual progress in holiness. You have but commenced the war ; there remaineth yet much land to be possessed ; go on from victory to victory, till not an inch of the promised territory shall continue in possession of the enemies of your Lord.

Persevere for a few days, and you will gain the perfect purity and bliss, after which your glowing heart aspires. No sound of clashing arms, no opposing hosts, are in heaven. Its quietude is never invaded by anxiety, or fear. Its holiness is untarnished as its pure light, and enduring as its years. Triumphant termination of conflicts and of wars ! Hasten, then blessed day, so long desired by the holy creation.

Adore the grace and faithfulness of your redeeming God. He has not only forgiven the sins of your unregenerate days, but he has borne with your renewed provocations since your conversion—your ingratitude, your coldness, your worldliness, your self-seeking, your manifold abuses of his love. Nor will he leave unfinished the work which he has begun. He will guide you by his counsel, and afterwards receive you to glory. Thus will he keep, bless, save, all the armies of the ransomed, to the praise of his glorious grace forever. What patience, what condescension, what unfainting, boundless love ! “O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, for his wonderful works to the children of men.”

Charles Hodge

ART. IV.—*The General Assembly of 1842.*

THE General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, met agreeably to appointment, in the Seventh Presbyterian church, in the city of Philadelphia, on Thursday, the 19th of May, A. D. 1842, and was opened with a sermon by the Rev. R. J. Breckinridge, D. D., moderator of the last Assembly, from 2 Thess. i. 11. The number of delegates in attendance was between one hundred and forty and one hundred and fifty. The Rev. John T. Edgar, D. D., was elected moderator, and Rev. Willis Lord, temporary clerk.

Devotional Exercises.

On motion of Dr. Breckinridge, the following resolutions were adopted, viz.

Resolved, 1. That there shall be preaching before the Assembly every secular evening during its present sessions; and this shall be in lieu of the religious exercises usually set for a particular day, during the Sessions of the Assembly.

2. That it shall be the duty of the Committee on devotional exercises to appoint members of this body to conduct these services from day to day, to designate the respective times and places in which these services shall be held, and to give due notice thereof; and those persons so appointed are hereby required to perform this service, according to their ability.

3. Such houses of worship, in this city and liberties, as may be put at the disposal of the Assembly for this purpose, shall be reported to the aforesaid Committee, and supplied in the manner herein provided.

4. This arrangement shall commence on Monday evening next.

The Nestorian Bishop.

On motion of Dr. Breckinridge, it was

Resolved, That Mar Yohannan, Bishop of the Nestorian Christians, of Ooromiah, in Persia, now on a visit to the United States, and at present in this city, be invited to sit with the Assembly; that a seat be provided for him near the Moderator; and that the Moderator invite him to address the Assembly, at such time as may suit his convenience.

In compliance with this invitation, Mar Yohannan, attended by Rev. Mr. Perkins, missionary of the American Board to Persia, (who also was invited to sit with the Assembly,) entered the house and took his seat by the Moderator. After a short pause, the Bishop rose, and through Mr. Perkins, as his interpreter, addressed the Assembly in the following terms:

“He felt peculiar pleasure in meeting such a body of clergy together as this. He had been delighted to observe the two great characteristics of the clergy, viz. : education and piety. In this he sees the secret of the darkness that prevails in his own country and the light in this. In his country the clergy are able to chaunt merely in an unknown tongue, and not to interpret to the people. The clergy are the eye of the church, and if that eye is blind and dark, both clergy and people will fall into the ditch. Here they are educated, and love and fear God, but in his country it is directly the reverse. He had been deeply impressed since coming here with their lack of knowledge and still greater lack of love to God; for the apostle has justly said that knowledge without love is nothing. He was happy to see the brotherly love that prevails among Christians in this country, and he prays that it may increase more and more. He also

takes great pleasure in recognizing the clergy of this Assembly as brethren in the Lord and brethren in the ministry of Christ, and he desires their prayers for his people and particularly for the clergy of his country, that they may be truly converted to God and thus be prepared to break unto that famishing people, the bread of life."

After exchanging salutations with members of the Assembly, the venerable Bishop took leave of the body, the House rising and bidding him a respectful and affectionate farewell.

Property of Lane Seminary.

Rev. Mr. McDonald submitted to the Assembly, papers of the Kemper family in Ohio, conveying a large amount of property to the Lane Theological Seminary. These papers, and the whole subject to which they related, were referred to a select committee, consisting of Judge Thompson, Messrs. Breckinridge, Galloway, McDonald, and Fullerton. This committee subsequently made the following report, which was adopted, viz. *Resolved*, That the Trustees of the General Assembly be requested to inquire into the facts relating to the Lane Seminary, near the city of Cincinnati, and if they find that the proviso in the deed of the 9th of December, 1829, from Elnathan Kemper, and others, to the Trustees of the Lane Seminary has been disregarded by the appointment of "Professors and teachers who are not members of the Presbyterian church, under the care of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian church in the United States of America," that they take advice of counsel learned in the laws of Ohio, and if they shall be advised that the laws of the state furnish an adequate remedy in the case, that they institute the proper proceedings to enforce the observance of the said provisos. It was further *Resolved*, That a copy of the aforesaid resolutions be transmitted to the Board of Trustees of the General Assembly, together with the copy of the deed referred to, and the other documents in the case.

On a subsequent day the Rev. William Chester moved a reconsideration of this vote. The reconsideration was ably and strenuously opposed by Dr. Breckinridge and others, who urged among other considerations the following arguments. The Rev. James Kemper wished to appropriate a farm for the purpose of a Theological Manual Labour Seminary. His own farm not answering his purpose, he negotiated for one in possession of his son, and having purcha-

sed it, applied it as above specified. This accounts for the deed being in the name of Elnathan Kemper, the son, who in consequence has by some been supposed the donor. This property, which is in the borders of the city of Cincinnati, consists of seventy acres of land, and is supposed to be worth seventy or eighty thousand dollars. According to the terms of the deed, the property was put in trust for a Theological Seminary, with the proviso that the professors should be in connexion with the Presbyterian church, under the care of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian church in the United States of America. Mr. Kemper and his sons being Old School Presbyterians, there can be no doubt of their intention to found an orthodox Presbyterian Institution. Subsequent to this, Mr. Lane, a Baptist, as a thank offering for some successes in business, offered to his own denomination twenty thousand dollars, on condition that they would apply it to the establishment of a Theological Seminary, which they failing to do, he made the same offer to the Presbyterians, which being accepted, the sum, or so much of it as was actually received, was appropriated to the erection of buildings on the land given by the Kempers. The present professors of Lane Seminary have not the sanction of the General Assembly, and therefore the condition of the trust has been violated. Neither did Mr. Lane give his money to a body of Presbyterians, who had no organized existence at the time of the gift, so that the possession of the property of the New-School party is in plain contravention of the terms on which the property was contributed.* The New School have, indeed, endowed the Professorships, and the interest only, and not the principal of these endowments has been paid. But these funds are entirely distinct from the property which it is now proposed to enquire after.

It was strongly urged that as the Assembly sat still and saw the trust created, there results a moral obligation on them to see it faithfully executed. If the deed conveyed the property to be used for the cause of Christ, under the direction of this church, it is our duty to our Lord and Master; our duty to the good men who gave the property; to the heirs of those men who have now called our attention to the subject; it is a duty from which we must not shrink,

* See Presbyterian, June 4, 1842.

to go forward and assert the claim of the Presbyterian church to the control of that Seminary.

On the other hand it was urged, that the Lane Seminary does not belong to this Assembly. Possession was a *prima facie* evidence of ownership. The New School had been in possession of that institution from its foundation; and had at least in great part contributed the funds by which it was carried on. Besides, it was generally understood, that in 1837, when an amicable separation of the two parties in our church was attempted, the committee of five from either side appointed to fix the terms of such separation, agreed on all matters in relation to the institutions and property of the church. It was conceded that the institutions in the hands of the New School party should belong to them, and those in the hands of the Old School should belong to them. Though these terms were not accepted, and are not now formally binding on either party, yet we shall certainly have the appearance of claiming, what we once acknowledged did not belong to us, if we now attempt to disturb the New School in the possession of that institution.

In the second place it was denied that we had any trust to execute in the case. The property in question was, in the first instance, offered to the Assembly and urged upon their acceptance, but declined; the Assembly preferring to locate their western Seminary at Allegany town. Besides, the deed conveys the property to trustees for certain purposes and on certain conditions, and provides, in the case the contemplated seminary should fail or become extinct, the proceeds of the property should go to the American Bible Society, the American Tract Society, the American Colonization Society, and perhaps one other of the national societies; and in case of either of these societies ceasing to exist, then the General Assembly was to designate to what benevolent object the money was to be applied. It is obvious, therefore, that we as an Assembly, have neither interest nor responsibility in the matter. If the trustees violate their trust, it belongs to one of these societies, or to the subscribers to the Institution, to take measures to secure their faithful performance of the conditions of the deed.

It was further urged, that we had hitherto acted on the defensive. It was the New School that had brought suit against us for the possession of property, which they had virtually acknowledged did not belong to them. That this suit had been a great scandal to religion; and we should

incur the responsibility of bringing odium on the cause of Christ, if we now became the assailants, and drew our brethren to the bar of a civil tribunal, at the very moment they were withdrawing their suit against us.

There was moreover no such prospect of success as to justify us in incurring the evils which must result from a protracted law suit. The law in any case was uncertain. One court had decided against us in our former suit, and another for us. Though a plainer case, both as to law and equity in our judgment was never submitted to a court. The incompetency of such tribunals to decide questions connected with ecclesiastical proceedings, both parties in the church had been loud in proclaiming. It was therefore most unwise, to put the important interests at stake to the hazard of another trial; especially as in the present case, we were not the party immediately interested.

The motion to reconsider prevailed by a vote of 96; and it was then moved that the whole subject be indefinitely postponed, which motion was carried, ayes 65, nays 52. It was then resolved, that the papers on this subject transmitted to the trustees should be recalled, and returned to the gentleman who laid them before the Assembly.

Hasty ordinations and unauthorized demission of the sacred office.

The committee appointed on this subject by the last Assembly, made the following report, which was amended and adopted as follows, viz.

The Moderator of the last General Assembly submitted to the Committee of Overtures, a minute in regard to hasty ordination of ministers of the gospel, and to unauthorized demission of their covenanted employment by ministers, which that committee reported to the Assembly, (Overture No. 11, p. 432, printed minutes of 1841,) and which being considered was referred to a select Committee, (page 425,) the report of which together with the original minute, was by order of the Assembly, (page 447,) referred to another select Committee, which was directed to report to the Assembly of 1842; which last named committee, having considered the subject, submit the following minute as their report viz:

I. That as persons are liable to mistake their calling, and as the office of the ministry is, by God's institution, a permanent one, which cannot be laid aside at pleasure, Presbyteries ought to exercise great caution in ordaining ministers of the gospel. And they are hereby enjoined, not to ordain any one to the Pastoral office, until full proof has been made of him, as a licentiate, by the Presbytery that ordains him.

II. As one great evidence of a divine call to the work of the ministry, is the call of a particular congregation, it is especially necessary to use great caution in ordinations *sine titulo*, and the Presbyteries are enjoined not to pro-

ceed to such ordinations except in the cases provided for in our form of government.

III. That the Presbyteries are specially enjoined not to ordain their licentiates when they are about to remove into the bounds of other Presbyteries, but to dismiss them as licentiates.

IV. That, as intimately connected with this subject, Presbyteries ought to have a special oversight of the settlement of ministers in vacant churches, as by the word of God, and the standards of the church, they are empowered and directed. And that in all such settlements, it is in itself right, and would tend to establish proper order, and the due supervision of Presbyteries, and to break up irregular influences and residences, that vacant churches should apply to their own Presbyteries for supplies.

V. That permanent ministerial connexion with any Presbytery except that in whose bounds the individual lives, is irregular and disorderly, and not to be allowed. But where the residence is not in the bounds of any of our Presbyteries, (as in the case of foreign missionaries,) the connexion may be with either of them.

VI. That the relation of stated supply, which has grown up between many of our churches and ministers, is unknown to our system, and tends to disorder and injury in many ways. The Presbyteries, are therefore directed to supplant it, as far as possible, in all cases, by the regular pastoral relation; and to discountenance it as a permanent relation.

VII. That those ministers who give up the regular and stated work of the gospel ministry, as their main work, except it be for reasons satisfactory to their Presbyteries, should be called to an account by the Presbyteries to which they belong, and dealt with according to the merits of their respective cases. And the justifiable cause for which any minister gives up his work should be stated on the minutes of his Presbytery at the time—with the approval of the body.

VIII. That all our Presbyteries be directed, at their first stated meeting after the rising of this Assembly, to require such ministers in their bounds, as are not regularly engaged in their covenanted work, to give an account of themselves; and the Presbyteries shall take such order in the premises, as is consistent with this minute, and report their doings specially to their respective synods, and to the next Assembly.

IX. The whole object of this action is to enforce the true principles of our standards, in regard to the calling and work of the gospel ministry; and to correct errors and irregularities which have sprung up in various places. And for effectual reform in the premises, the whole subject is commended to the special attention of all our Synods and Presbyteries. And nothing herein is to be construed as any disparagement of the true office and work of an Evangelist, which is scriptural, permanent, and most important; and on that very account the more carefully to be guarded, lest it become a pretext and covering for deceived persons, or for intruders into the holy work of the gospel ministry.

X. *Resolved*, That it be referred to the Presbyteries whether the following section shall be added to the 15th chapter of our form of government;

The office of a minister of the gospel is perpetual and cannot be laid aside at pleasure—yet any minister may, with the permission of his Presbytery, demit the exercise of his office, and when any minister has thus demitted the exercise of his office, he shall not be permitted to sit as a member of our ecclesiastical judicatories. And any minister, having so demitted the exercise of his office, may on personal application to the Presbytery which allowed him to demit it, if said Presbytery think proper, be by it restored to the exercise thereof, and to all the rights incident thereto.

This report gave rise to considerable discussion, but was

finally as amended unanimously adopted. The principal points embraced in the discussion were the following: First, when may a candidate for the ministry be properly ordained *sine titulo*. On the one hand it was contended that such ordinations should never be allowed, unless the candidate intended to make the preaching of the gospel his main work, and to go as an evangelist to frontier or destitute places. But, on the other hand, it was said that this principle did not embrace certain cases, in which Presbyteries had the right, and ought to exercise the power to ordain. If the candidate had, in the judgment of the Presbytery, a clear call of God to the ministry, and a proper field to exercise its functions, then he had a right to ordination, and it was the Presbytery's duty to grant it. Ordination confers the right and imposes the duty of preaching the gospel and of administering the sacraments; but it does not necessarily imply that the discharge of these duties should constitute the main business of the minister. There are many of our missionaries whose time and attention are mainly devoted to the superintendence of schools, or the translation of the scriptures. Such men were Carey, Morrison, Martyn. While thus employed, however, they had abundant opportunities of preaching the word. Was this right to be denied them, to satisfy the whim of adhering to rule? Our constitution declares that "the pastoral office is the first in the church both for dignity and usefulness." This we have no disposition to dispute; but the church may see fit to assign some of her probationers to the more humble office of teaching her candidates the a b c of the sacred languages, of superintending their general or professional education, and while this is their main, official business, they may have abundant opportunities to preach the gospel and administer the sacraments. Is there any reason why they should be deprived of this privilege, or shut out of this field of usefulness? We know professors in our colleges who preach every Sabbath, who attend bible classes among the students, who have religious meetings every day in the week, often for months together. We know on the other hand, pastors, who from necessity or choice, are six days in the week engaged in their schools, upon their plantations, or in some other secular or semi-secular employment, and who preach on the Sabbath one or two discourses. Is there any ground for regarding these latter as more in the way of their duty than the former; has the one class any right to say to the

other stand by, I am holier than thou? We know no class of men worthier of more respect than pastors, whose congregations are unable or unwilling to give them an adequate support, and who, therefore, after the example of Paul, labour with their own hands night and day, that they may be able to preach the gospel of the grace of God. But it cannot be denied that what is at first undertaken as a means of support, is often prosecuted as a means of wealth, and that the richest ministers are often those who get the smallest salaries. All we wish is that justice should be done; that some of the best and most devoted men in the church, whom the providence of God and the wishes of their brethren have placed in the position of hewers of wood and drawers of water, who are engaged in our colleges in preparing the children of the church for the sacred ministry, should not be regarded as themselves intruders into that office; while in point of fact their time and strength are devoted to the service of the church.

Another point involved in this discussion was the case of those ministers who give up the stated duties of the ministry as their main work. All agree that when a man, for inadequate reasons, after having been ordained to the sacred office, turns aside to secular employments, it is an evil and scandal which requires a remedy. And besides, it sometimes happens that a man mistakes his calling; and after due trial discovers he has not the qualifications or character suited for the successful discharge of the duties of his office. It was thought that some provision should be made for such cases; that the Presbyteries should not allow their members to turn aside from their work for the sake of worldly gain; but should consider such cases as calling for the exercise of discipline. And for the other class, comprising those who, without forfeiting the confidence of their brethren, found themselves unfit for the work to which they were called, the addition to our form of government proposed in the tenth section of the above report, was introduced. To this there seems to be no reasonable objection. It is already provided in our constitution, that although the office of a ruling elder is perpetual, and cannot be laid aside at pleasure, yet any elder may, for adequate reasons, lay aside the exercise of his office. And when this is done, he is not entitled to sit as an elder in any of our church courts. It is simply proposed to extend this rule to the case of ministers.

The above rules while they provide for acknowledged

evils, leave uncensured that class of our ministers, who, though not engaged in preaching the gospel as their main work, are employed in the service of the church, and in accordance with the wishes of their Presbyteries.

The only other point in this report which gave rise to much debate, was that part of the third section of the original report, which declared that no candidate should be admitted to trials for settlement in a vacant congregation independently of the immediate supervision of the Presbytery. It was urged on the one hand, that it was the right of the session of a church to supply its own pulpit, or to invite any licentiate or minister in good standing in our church to preach for them, without consulting the Presbytery; that to deny this right was to introduce patronage into our churches, and to interfere with the liberties of the people. On the other hand, it was maintained that the elders of a vacation church were bound to exercise the right in question in subordination to the Presbytery; that they were not an independent body, but a constituent part of an extended organization; and consequently must in all their acts conform to the rules of the church. As a minister and his session are the spiritual rulers of a parish, and have a right to say who shall and who shall not exercise the office of a teacher to the people submitted to their care; so a Presbytery are the spiritual rulers within their bounds, and have the same right with regard to all the churches. The liberties of the people are abundantly provided for by our system. No man can be imposed upon them as a ruler without their consent, or even without their deliberate request. Greater liberty than this they need not desire, and do not as Presbyterians possess.

It was further urged that the supervision of the Presbytery over the supply of vacant congregations, is expressly recognized in our form of government, as in chapter 18; and was constantly exercised; since nothing was more common than for a vacant congregation to apply to its Presbytery for supplies, or for liberty to supply its own pulpit for a definite period. The denial or neglect of this supervision, it was contended, would be the occasion of the greatest disorders. It would effectually nullify all those provisions of our constitution which give to the Presbytery authority in the ordination or installation of pastors. For if a man, whom a Presbytery could not see its way clear to ordain, was allowed, without their consent, to preach within their

bounds, gain ascendancy over the minds and affections of the people, the Presbytery would be forced, in a multitude of cases, to choose between ordaining a man of whom they disapproved, and the division or secession of the church to which he preached. These were evils of frequent occurrence, and arose from the neglect of the plain principles of our standards. This part of the report, was however, almost by common consent struck out; not as conceding the principle in debate, but because it was thought that that principle was asserted with sufficient distinctness in the former part of the section. As thus amended, the whole report, as before stated, was unanimously adopted.

Imposition of Hands.

The committee of bills and overtures reported an overture from the Presbytery of South Alabama on the subject of ordaining elders and deacons with the imposition of hands. The committee recommended that it be left to the discretion of each church session to determine the mode of ordination in this respect.

Under the old dispensation and in the apostolic church, the imposition of hands was used on all solemn occasions to signify the idea of communication. It is a fitting and becoming ceremony whenever the rights and privileges of a sacred office are conferred; but there is evidently no necessity or peculiar importance to be attached to it. There would seem to be something of the leaven of the popish doctrine of the communication of a mysterious influence, producing the indelible impress of orders, by the imposition of consecrated hands, still lurking in the minds of some of our brethren. If grace, in the sense of divine influence, was given by the laying on of hands, then indeed, it would be a serious question when that ceremony should be used. But if grace, in such connexions, means what it often means in scripture, and in the language of the English reformers, office, considered as a gift; then it is obviously a matter of indifference, whether those in authority express their purpose of conferring a certain office by words, or signs, or by both.

The same committee reported an overture from the Presbytery of the Western District, on the subject of allowing ruling elders to unite in the imposition of hands in the ordination of bishops. The committee unanimously recommended an adherence to the order, and until recently, the uni-

form practice of our church, on this subject viz., to allow preaching elders or bishops only to engage in this service. This report was unanimously adopted.

The participation of ruling elders in the ordination of bishops can be defended only on the assumption that the office of the former is superior to that of the latter and includes it; or that the two offices are identical. As no one asserts the superiority of the ruling elder over the bishop; the only question is as to the identity of the two offices. It seems plain from the New Testament, that the early churches, after the manner of the synagogue, were governed by a bench of presbyters or elders; that these elders performed different duties according to their gifts; and that there was one presbyter who presided over the rest, whose office was analogous to that of the ruler of the synagogue. This latter office was a permanent and peculiar one, and not a mere moderatorship, as may be inferred from the epistles to Timothy and to the seven churches of Asia. The man who held this office was still a presbyter, but not merely a ruling elder, and was what he was, in virtue of a special appointment. Thus every church was governed by a Presbytery, that is, by a bench of presbyters, composed of a bishop, in the proper sense of the term, and elders. It may well be doubted whether there was perfect uniformity, in this matter, in the apostolic churches. But this seems to have been the general model, and this is our system. It is easy to see how prelacy grew out of this scriptural plan of church government. We have a bishop, presbyters, and deacons in every diocese; but a diocese with us, is as it was in the times of the apostles, a single parish, governed by this congregational Presbytery. But as neighbouring and feeble churches were gathered, through the instrumentality of the officers of such a church, around the parent organization, they retained their connection with their common centre. Thus the diocese instead of being a single congregation, came to be a city, then a province, then a kingdom, and then all Christendom.

If this view of the scriptural doctrine be correct, then it is plain that the offices of pastor and ruling elder, are not identical. Both indeed are presbyters; but the former has rights and duties which do not belong to the latter. And peculiar rights and duties, constitute or suppose a peculiar office. This distinction, which we believe is recognized in the word of God, is constantly kept up in our standards.

They give different names to those who fill these offices; the one class are called pastors or bishops, the other ruling elders; they assign them different duties; and they demand in them different qualifications. The effect of confounding offices thus distinct, will be either that we must require the same qualifications in ruling elders as in ministers, which would be to abolish the eldership in two thirds of our churches; or the hedge around the sacred office, erected by our standards and the word of God, must be broken down, and every ruling elder made a preacher and teacher of the gospel. And for what purpose is this innovation desired? What good object can it accomplish, or what important truth does it propose to vindicate? It seems hard to conjecture. The very fact that it is an innovation, in the absence of all stringent reasons for it, is argument enough against the change. Our Assembly is in danger of being turned into a legislature, called together to make rules; whereas its leading functions are executive or judicial. Before the Assembly just closed, there were, we know not how many proposals to make new rules either enforcing or altering the constitution. There was one series of resolutions about ordinations and resignations of the ministerial office; another about baptism; another about the mode of admitting members to the church; at least two altering the terms of Christian communion; besides other things of a like kind. If every man, not content with enjoying his own opinions, is to insist on their being turned into laws, to bind his brethren, our church will soon become a scene of utter confusion, one Assembly wasting its time in unmaking laws, which another had wasted its time to make.

The above resolutions, though passed unanimously, and without debate, were as a matter of courtesy, reconsidered, in order to give an opportunity to have them discussed, and then laid over to the next Assembly.

Manufacture and sale of Ardent Spirits.

The committee of overtures reported the question, Whether the manufacturer, vender or retailer of intoxicating drink should be continued in full communion of the church; and recommended the adoption of the following resolution, viz. That while the Assembly rejoice in the success of the temperance reformation, and will use all lawful means to promote it, they cannot sanction the adoption of any new terms of communion—which was adopted.

Complaints were made by brethren from various parts of the church, of the disastrous effects produced by fanatical advocates of temperance. The authority of the word of God is slighted or openly contemned; the blessed Redeemer irreverently spoken of; the sacrament of the Supper tampered with and profaned; ignorant and irreverent men set up as teachers of morals; the Sabbath desecrated by newly reformed, and in some cases, half reformed drunkards being allowed, in sacred places, to discourse on drunkenness; avowed infidels, virtual infidels, professors of religion, ministers of the gospel mixed up in the same voluntary organization, and the former often turning the action of the body in favour of their own evil peculiarities; the church set aside, the ministry denounced, temperance turned into a religion with its revivals, its conversions, its hymns, its new measures; a spirit of denunciation, slander and proscription indulged; combinations "to break down" the conscientious opposers of these evils, by misguided public opinion; moral distinctions confounded, the end made to sanctify the means, and in short the devices of man instinct with man's spirit, exalted above the ways and spirit of God. It is very obvious that if the church allows herself to be cowed much longer; if good men allow themselves to be cajoled into sanctioning what they know to be wrong for the sake of effecting what they know to be right; if they continue to associate themselves with bad men, and to sanction evil principles, evil measures and an evil spirit, we shall soon see the foundations of our faith and hope overturned, and after having sacrificed truth, order, and religion for temperance, we shall find that Satan has outwitted us, and religion will be gone and little else than drunkenness be left. There are two principles, which every Christian is ready enough to admit, but which many Christians practically disregard, which we should ever sacredly maintain. The one is that the Bible is our only infallible rule of faith and practice, a rule by which we are bound as by the authority of God. It is therefore the very spirit of infidelity to set up our own opinions as to what is true or false, right or wrong, in opposition to the plain teaching of the word of God. The other is, that we should not do evil that good may come. These are very plain principles, and yet it is the neglect of them, which threatens to turn, and in some parts of the country has already turned, the "temperance movement" from a blessing into a curse, from a river of water into a flood of fire.

Board of Foreign Missions.

From the Report of this interesting Board presented to the Assembly, by its Secretary, the Hon. Walter Lowrie, it appears that during the past year the Board has had but two agents permanently in the field: that its receipts have been \$60,324 32, (subject to a discount on uncurrent money of \$2,416 03,) and its expenditures \$59,039 82. Eight new missionaries have been sent out to different stations. Preaching the gospel, the superintendence of schools, the distribution of religious publications continue to employ the time of the missionaries at all the different stations, and the prospect of success is becoming constantly more encouraging. The committee to whom this report was referred recommended the following minute, which was adopted.

The important document submitted to the examination of your committee, is one which in the cause it advocates, the facts and information it offers, and the appeals it contains, is well calculated to awaken peculiar emotions in the breasts of the members of this General Assembly, and those of the officers and members of our church generally. The sentiments of gratitude and praise to God for having permitted our church to take an honoured place in the ranks of the consecrated hosts of God, which are now moving forward in the glorious enterprise of the world's conversion, and for the success with which he has been pleased thus far to crown her efforts to send forth the riches of his salvation to distant portions of the earth. The feelings of a common and solemn obligation resting upon us and our successors in this communion, collectively and individually to persevere in this hallowed enterprise, and renew and augment our contributions and our prayers until the spiritual dominion of the world is given to Christ, and the promised triumphs of his grace are realized among all nations. And it is also calculated to awaken the feelings of sorrow in our hearts, and grief and self-abasement before God, that we are as a community and a generation of Christians doing so little in proportion to our ability and our obligations to the Saviour of the world, for the benighted and perishing heathen—that so many of our churches seem unanxious and unwilling to share in the blessing which God will surely shed forth upon those, and those only, whose hearts and hands are open for the spread of the Redeemer's kingdom: and that the exertions of our Board are to so great an extent circumscribed and restrained by the want of necessary funds to carry on the work. Our condition and our duty as a denomination, in respect to this department of our work, plainly show that the state of the world must be still more plainly laid before our churches, missionary information far more extensively disseminated, obligation to Christ, and the interests of his kingdom more earnestly inculcated, and the duty and blessedness of fervent and persevering prayer for the spread of his everlasting gospel more constantly set forth and urged upon the followers of Christ. In view of these considerations, the committee would propose the following resolutions, viz:

1. *Resolved*, That the annual report of the Board be approved and referred to the Executive Committee for publication and distribution among the churches, as extensively as may be found practicable.
2. *Resolved*, That the Foreign Missionary cause obviously claims from our church a great augmentation of funds, and this Assembly cordially approve of the suggestion that an effort be made to raise and place at the disposal of the

Board the sum of \$100,000, for the expenses of the coming year, and that sum, or more, annually thereafter—believing that such an offering would eminently redound to her own temporal and spiritual welfare, as well as to the glory of God.

3. *Resolved*, That in order to call the attention of our churches in a special manner to such an endeavour, and to the throne of grace to humble ourselves before God, and implore the aids of his Holy Spirit and his blessing upon the cause of Missions in general, the first Monday of October next be and the same hereby is appointed and set apart as a day of public instruction on the subject of Foreign Missions, and of supplication and prayer throughout the bounds of our church, to the intent that our past sins and neglects may be duly recognized and deplored—our duty to the brethren distinctly set before the churches; our dependance upon the grace of God in this matter clearly presented, and the influences of the Holy Spirit upon ourselves and our Missionary stations fervently invoked. And it is herein further recommended to all our Presbyteries to take order for a similar observance, and with a similar view, on the second Monday in January, annually.

4. *Resolved*, That this General Assembly highly approve of the proposal of the Executive Committee to establish a small monthly paper, to be denominated *The Foreign Missionary*, to be afforded to subscribers at the small sum of twelve and a half cents per annum, exclusive of postage, in the belief that with little exertion on the part of Pastors and Church Sessions, there may be annually circulated among our people and the youth, and children of our congregations and Sabbath schools, from 50 to 100,000 copies of a work thus calculated and adapted to furnish a great amount of select Missionary information.

On motion of Mr. Duty,

Resolved, That this General Assembly earnestly recommend to the Bishops and Elders under its care to take special pains in directing the attention of the children and youth of the church to the great subject of Missions. And in order to do this more effectually, advise the formation of Juvenile Missionary Societies wherever practicable, in every Sabbath school throughout the bounds of the church.

On a subsequent day on motion of the Rev. E. B. Smith, the following minute was adopted:

The General Assembly impressed with the importance of making more decided and prompt efforts to secure from all the members of its communion, systematic contributions to the funds of the Board of Foreign Missions, HEREBY ENJOINS on all the Presbyteries which have not already anticipated such action, 1st. To require of every pastor and minister supplying a church, and of the Sessions of all vacant churches, the adoption of some plan by which, if possible, all the members of their respective congregations shall hear the claims of this great Christian charity, and annually enjoy an opportunity of contributing to its sustenance, to the extent of their ability, however limited; and 2d. To embody in their annual presbyterial report to the General Assembly, an account of the diligence of the Presbytery and the success of its efforts in this matter.

The greatest interest in the successful operation of this Board was expressed by the members of the Assembly. As usual, the subject of agencies was more or less alluded to. This is such an easy topic of declamation, and is in itself so generally unpopular that it is not a matter of surprise that even the small number of agents in the service of this and

our other Boards should be a matter of complaint. The object to be accomplished by agents, is to bring the duty of contributing to the various religious enterprises of the church before its members in all parts of our land, and to forward their offerings to the officers appointed to receive them. We have in our Presbyteries, our ministers, elders and deacons, an organization and men, which would seem to preclude the necessity of the expensive machinery of agents. But those who know much of human nature, even when partially sanctified, or who open their minds to the lessons of experience, know that men need to be roused and urged to discharge even acknowledged duties. There is no Christian in the land who does not admit the duty of contributing to the Bible, Tract, Missionary, and other religious and benevolent enterprises of the day; but have these enterprises ever been started or carried on, without this duty being pressed both upon ministers and people, and the opportunity for the present discharge of it, being presented to them? Besides, we are all creatures more or less of habit. Men who have grown up, and become old without forming the habit of giving, or of urging others to give, are not easily brought by their own persuasions to undertake the duty. We know a congregation which now gives a larger salary to its pastor than it ever gave before, and gives to benevolent objects more than it formerly gave to its minister; simply because its present pastor has been formed under the influences of the present instead of the past century. We say this in no disparagement of our elder ministers. They may be in many respects much better men than their children; but as to the single point of missionary and other cognate enterprises, they cannot in general be expected to take the interest in them, or to devote the time to them, which may be fairly demanded of men who have heard of little else since the day of their spiritual birth. Agencies, therefore, are a necessary evil in the beginning of every benevolent work. One of their best effects is to render themselves unnecessary. They awaken a spirit and induce habits which enables the church to do without them; and the sooner that time arrives the better. But we trust there are few who are prepared to say, Let the heathen perish, rather than have agents to gather the means of sending them the gospel. We can hardly conceive it possible that any good man, who wishes well to the object of any of our Boards, should speak against them, discourage their operations, refuse to give or hinder others

from giving, merely because he differs from his brethren, as to whether, there should be two agents, or one, or none at all; whether the organ of the church in these matters should be called a Board or a Committee; or whether it should be located in one place or another. If we are never to do good until every body thinks as we do and is willing to submit to our directions, whatever good is to be done, will be done without our co-operation, and without our sharing in the blessing. While speaking of this subject of agencies, we will drop an idea, which perhaps has been before suggested in these pages, and that is, that it seems to us important, that our agents should have it for their object not so much to collect money, as to rouse the churches and organize the means of collecting it. If our church sessions would take this matter in hand, and appoint a collector to present to every member of the congregation, once a year, the opportunity of contributing to each of our Boards, there would be no need of agents; and the best way in which an agent could labour, would be to get the sessions engaged in this very work.

Board of Domestic Missions.

Though the past year has been one of unprecedented pecuniary embarrassment, yet this Board has been able to extend its operations and to close its annual account free of debt. Its receipts were \$35,909 73; its expenditures \$32,083 50, leaving a balance in the Treasury of \$3,826 23 cents, which however is not more than sufficient to meet the demands already due. The number of missionaries employed is two hundred eighty-six, and of congregations or missionary districts supplied, more than eight hundred. There have been added to these churches more than two thousand members, on examination, and on certificate about fifteen hundred. Sixty new churches have been organized; and not less than sixty houses for worship have been erected or are now building. More than five hundred Sabbath schools are reported, and about the same number of Bible and catechetical classes. What a blessed work! Who can estimate the benefits to the present and to coming generations from the labours of this Board for this single year! It may be that some other enterprises address themselves more powerfully to the imagination, or even to some of the feelings of our hearts, but surely there can be no work more really important than planting the gospel, with all its life-

giving influences, contemporaneously with our rising villages and cities of the west. It is when a community is forming that it receives its character, which it rarely fails to transmit from generation to generation. If our country is to be a Christian land, the institutions of the gospel must keep pace with the growth and extension of our population. If orthodox Christians do not send the truth, others will be sure to send error. We are labouring for all coming ages. May our church be found, in this matter, faithful to her high vocation.

The following resolutions were adopted in reference to the report of this Board.

1. *Resolved*, That this General Assembly is called upon to express its gratitude to God, that amidst the almost unexampled embarrassments of the times, he has enabled their Board of Domestic Missions to prosecute the work entrusted to them, not only without diminution but with increased success.

2. That the employment of two hundred and eighty-six ministers, preaching the everlasting gospel in more than eight hundred congregations, and in twenty-three States and Territories; the addition to the visible church of more than two thousand souls, by the instrumentality of these ministers led to Christ; the gathering of sixty new churches, and the erection of sixty or more houses of worship; the instruction of twenty thousand youth in Sabbath Schools and in the Catechisms of our church; and the wide dissemination of the books of the Board of Publication, by the labours of these ministers, through so many new and destitute settlements during the past year, are striking proofs that this Board is one of the most important and useful agencies of the church for the extension of the Redeemer's kingdom through the earth.

3. That the condition of the population of wide portions especially of our Southern and Western States, not only justifies but *requires* the employment of evangelists engaged in itinerant labours, and that Pastors are called upon, in all such regions, to inquire if they cannot extend their labours beyond the bounds of their own congregations, occupy new stations for preaching, gather new churches, and with the consent of their own people, spend some portion of their time in missionary labours.

4. That it behoves our several Presbyteries to take a careful survey of the territory within their respective bounds, inquire whether the population residing there is fully supplied with the ordinances of the gospel and in habitual attendance on the worship of God, and to take such measures as their wisdom may suggest to establish at all proper points the preaching of the word and the ordinances of God's house.

5. That the Report of the Board of Missions be approved by this Assembly, and be recommended to the attention of our Synods, Presbyteries, churches, and members, and that it be returned to the Board for publication as they shall see fit.

Board of Education.

It appears from the report of the Board of Education that the whole number of young men assisted by it up to this date is one thousand seven hundred and forty-five. The number of new candidates added during the year is

ninety, the whole number under its care, three hundred ; of these one hundred and nine are in their Theological course, one hundred and twenty-two in college, fifty in school, and nineteen engaged in teaching.

We greatly rejoice in the increasing prosperity of this branch of our benevolent efforts. This Board has various prejudices to encounter peculiar to itself. Even some good men think that we have ministers enough, although churches, and destitute regions in every part of our land are earnestly calling for some to declare to them the way of life, and when the heathen world is but just entered upon. Others think that candidates for the ministry should be left to support themselves. If so, we see not why the same may not be said of ministers. The candidate devotes himself as really to the service of the church as the minister does. He gives up the prospect of worldly emolument, and consecrates his time and talents to Christ, and is therefore as much entitled to be sustained in preparing for the work, as those who have entered on the active discharge of the duties of the ministry. Besides, we may be assured that if we do not aid those who are seeking the ministry in our own church, we shall soon find our young men taken from us, and brought up under influences hostile to all that is peculiar in our doctrine and discipline. Unless this board therefore be vigorously sustained, our Boards of Domestic and Foreign Missions will soon find themselves without labourers ; and our whole vocation as a church will remain unaccomplished.

The Assembly adopted the following minute, in relation to this subject.

Whereas, the General Assembly, at its last meeting, seeing that the number of their candidates for the ministry was from year to year diminishing, felt constrained to recognize their entire dependance on God for their increase, and the impotence of all human organizations without the divine blessing. And whereas, under this sense of dependance, the last General Assembly earnestly recommended to all the churches to betake themselves to the Lord of the harvest in fervent and importunate prayer, on a day fixed upon for that purpose ; and as we find from the Report of the Board of Education that God has in a very remarkable manner answered those prayers in a speedy and large increase of candidates for the ministry—therefore

Resolved, 1. That this Assembly do not ascribe this success to the wisdom or efficiency of their plans of operation, but entirely to the blessing of God, and do therefore call upon the churches to give him all the glory.

Resolved, 2. That the Assembly regard this but as the first fruits of a great and glorious harvest which they may reap if they faint not ; and that while they should render thanks for mercies received, *they should pray without ceasing* till the number of labourers is sufficient to gather the great harvest. They would therefore earnestly recommend to all their ministers and churches that

on the first Sabbath in November, the same day of the year in which our God has heard our prayers, united thanksgiving and praise be rendered to his adorable name for his condescension and grace: and that at the same time fervent and importunate prayer be offered that he would continue to pour out his Spirit, and even more abundantly, and incline the hearts of many more to preach the gospel to a perishing world.

Resolved, 3. That on the same day, if convenient, it be recommended to all our ministers to preach on "the influence of a pious and learned ministry on the temporal and eternal happiness of mankind, and the necessity for increasing such a ministry."

Resolved, 4. That inasmuch as God has heard our prayers, and increased the number of the candidates under the care of our Board of Education, and we trust will grant us a still larger increase, it is the *indispensable duty* of our churches to provide for them the necessary aid in the prosecution of their studies. This can probably be better accomplished by bringing the churches more universally to co-operate in this work, than to strive for larger contributions from those churches which now give liberally. It is therefore enjoined on all the Presbyteries to adopt such measures as they may deem best, to secure the accomplishment of this purpose. Also, that the Synods inquire whether the Presbyteries have taken due order on this subject.

Resolved, 5. That the General Assembly earnestly recommend to the Board of Education, to avail themselves, as far as possible, of our system of ecclesiastical organization, believing that with the wise and hearty co-operation of our inferior judicatories, they can most economically and successfully carry forward their great enterprize. The Assembly would also express their great gratification that so many pastors have rendered, and propose to render gratuitous services to the Board, and would warmly recommend to all who have it in their power to render such services, to do it willingly, and thus save the Board from what may otherwise be indispensable—the employment of more agents.

Resolved, 6. That the Assembly deem it of great importance that all the Presbyteries should take upon themselves directly the important duty of selecting, examining, and recommending to the patronage of the Board all the beneficiaries belonging to their churches, and of watching over them during every stage of their progress in their preparation for the ministry, agreeably to the general principles stated in their Annual Report.

Finally, that the Report be approved, and referred to the Board for publication.

Board of Publication.

This Board have, during the year, added thirty-three new volumes to their list of publications, containing fifteen millions of pages, besides about four and a half millions pages of new editions of former publications. The annual sales amount to about sixteen thousand dollars.

The following minute was adopted in reference to the operations of this Board:

Resolved, 1st. That this Assembly regard with approbation the wisdom and energy manifested by the Board in the discharge of their important duties.

2. That it be recommended to the Board to publish a series of works suited to children and youth.

3. That the funds committed by the church to the Board of Publication ought to be managed upon the principle of yielding a nett yearly revenue of about six per centum per annum upon the actual amount of its whole capital.

And the Board is hereby recommended to adhere to a system of rigid economy, in every department of its outlay, so as to effect the object now contemplated, and yet afford their publications at the lowest rate.

4. That all the churches in our connection which have not hitherto taken up a collection for this Board are hereby enjoined to do so in order to perfect its endowment; that the Board take the necessary steps to secure such collection; and that the Synods be, and they are hereby directed to call the Presbyteries to account as to their diligence in promoting this collection.

5. That the report be referred to the Board to be published under their direction.

The only points which gave rise to debate were the following: The committee reported a resolution recommending to the Board to form depositaries of their books at certain central points, and to employ voluntary or paid agents to distribute their publications among the people. This suggestion was made, at the request of many of the western members, who felt great difficulty in getting the books from the depositary at Philadelphia. The Assembly declined adopting this resolution, on the ground that as it was an experiment involving a good deal of risk, it had better be left to the unbiased judgment of the executive committee.

We feel convinced that the plan suggested above may be carried out in a manner consistent with the safety of the funds committed to the care of the Board, and that unless it, or something equivalent is adopted, the circulation of their books must continue to be limited and uncertain. The sales of our Board are about sixteen thousand dollars; those of the American Sunday School Union sixty-five thousand; those of the Tract Society two hundred thousand; and those of the Methodist-Book Concern, we know not how much, but confessedly very large. What is the reason of this great disparity between the sales of our Board and those of other societies? There are doubtless many reasons for this difference. Our enterprise is in its infancy; our field of operation is much more limited; our publications, many at least of them, are of a higher, and less popular grade. Admitting the force of these and similar reasons, we think the chief cause of the difference, is our mode of conducting our operations. It requires no argument to prove that thousands of people will buy a book if presented at their doors, who will never think of sending a thousand miles for it; and therefore unless we can devise some way of having our books made accessible to the people, we might almost as well not publish them. If other societies do this without loss or with a profit, it is certain the thing can be done.

And we hope the Board will gradually, but perseveringly make the attempt.

The resolution recommending the Board to conduct their operations on the plan of endeavouring to realize a profit of six per cent. on their capital, and to practice the strictest economy, gave rise to a long debate. No objection was urged to either part of the resolution; but the discussion took a wide range, bringing under review the past operations of the Board, the wisdom of their selection of books, the price of their publications, the economy of their mode of conducting business. On all these points we believe the Assembly were satisfied that the executive committee had discharged their duties in a manner to entitle them to the thanks of the church. That every body would be pleased with all their books, or with all their plans, no one could expect. Some complain of their books being too small, others of their being too large; some of their being too various, others of there not being a sufficient variety; some of their being got up in too costly a style, others of their not being done well enough. It is always so, where there is a multitude of masters, and the gentlemen composing the committee must be content to do the best they can, and then be blamed on inconsistent and contradictory grounds. Still in the end, Wisdom will be justified of her children.

Resolutions explanatory of the Acts of 1837 and 1838.

Dr. Phillips from the committee of bills and overtures, presented the following minute, which was unanimously adopted:

Whereas it is believed by this Assembly that there are ministers, and churches, and private Christians within our bounds holding the same doctrines and maintaining the same church order with us, but who from a misapprehension of the Acts of the Assembly of 1838, are not in our communion; and whereas, as it is expressed in Act II. adopted by that Assembly, it was never the intention of the General Assembly to cause any sound Presbyterian to be permanently separated from our connexion, but it is and always has been the desire of the church, that all who really embrace our doctrine, love our order, and are willing to conform to our discipline should unite with us; and, moreover, as the General Assembly has no idea of narrowing, but would rather expand its geographical limits, so as to unite in bonds of most intimate fellowship every evangelical Christian likeminded with ourselves, through every portion of our beloved country; therefore,

Resolved, (1), That it be and is hereby declared by the General Assembly, that in requiring an adherence to our church on the Basis of the Assemblies of 1837 and 1838, they did not create nor introduce any new Basis of Presbyterianism, but require an adherence to the true and only basis of our organization and communion, viz. the doctrinal standards and constitution of our church as

founded on the word of God, a deplorable departure from which had been suffered through the operation of the plan of union.

Resolved (2), That it was not then and is not now required of those who would adhere to us as a branch of the Church of Christ, that as a term of membership in this church, they should approve of the Acts of the Assembly of 1837 and 1838, but simply that they should recognize the church as then and subsequently constituted as the Presbyterian Church of the United States of America, and acknowledge their subjection to its judicatories.

The acts here referred to have certainly been not a little misapprehended, and it is to be feared quite as much misrepresented. They have been held up to odium as cutting off from the church multitudes of ministers and members without charge and without a trial. The truth is, however, they cut off no one from the church. The General Assembly is charged with the duty of seeing that the constitution is adhered to in every part of our bounds, in the organization of all our courts, and in the exercise of their respective powers. The constitution prescribes how a presbyterian church, Presbytery and Synod are to be organized and the Assembly is bound to see that these prescriptions are conformed to. Now it was notorious that there were a multitude of churches, many Presbyteries and several Synods, made up of presbyterians and congregationalists, in which the latter, though not adopting our standards, not acknowledging subjection to our courts, exercised all the rights of membership, governing us with a rod of iron and refusing subjection to any of our rules. This flagrant absurdity and injustice it was the simple object of those acts to correct. They required nothing more than that the churches, Presbyteries and Synods which claimed to constitute the presbyterian church, should conform to the constitution of the church and separate themselves from their congregational members. If the churches and Presbyteries in western New York, had in obedience to our standards, effected this separation, and appeared before the Assembly, as regularly constituted, not a minister or member would have been deprived of his rights. But those Presbyteries met in convention, and resolved that they would not separate from the congregationalists, and yet would claim for themselves and the congregationalists the right to sit in all our courts and administer our laws. We do not believe a more unreasonable claim was ever made in any age of the church. This was the claim that was resisted. It was not a question whether presbyterians should be admitted, but whether certain presbyterians should be allowed to introduce into our courts, men

who never adopted our standards, for the purpose of increasing their own power, and subjecting the true members of the church to their control. We believe the time is coming when this whole transaction will be viewed in its true light, and when those who have made such an outcry about persecution, will be seen to be unreasonable men justly disappointed of their prey.

These acts, therefore, proposed no new test of ministerial or Christian communion, they created no new basis, they simply required that those who joined us should acknowledge that the presbyterian church without the congregationalists and those who adhered to them, was the presbyterian church still.

The Peoria case.

This was a complaint of the first church in Peoria against the Synod of Illinois for having dissolved that church contrary to the wishes of the people and of the Presbytery of Peoria, and for various other acts of the Synod in reference to the case. This cause had, in one form or another, been before several successive Assemblies, had consumed a great deal of time, to very little purpose, and given the lower judicatories a great deal of unnecessary trouble. As there is no principle of general interest involved in the case, we abstain from doing any thing more than giving the vote of the Assembly, which it must be confessed is not very consistent with itself; as it first refused to sustain the complaint, and then says that its main ground, viz. the dissolution of the church, was well founded. This inconsistency arose from the manner of taking the vote. There was so much in the course pursued by the complainant that the Assembly could not approve, and so many of the grounds of the complaint which they considered futile, that they did not feel at liberty to sanction by a simple vote to sustain, what they were disposed to censure. It was obvious however from the subsequent vote, that a majority of the house were disposed to sustain one, and that the principal ground of complaint. A preceding Assembly had directed the Synod of Illinois to send a committee to Peoria, to endeavour to remove existing difficulties and to unite the contending parties. The Synod, as it seems to us, in the exercise of a wise discretion, instead of sending a committee, send a commission with full powers; and this commission, when they got on the ground, finding, according to the best information they could

get, that the first church of Peoria had only a nominal existence, thought that the best way of removing the difficulties in the case, was to dissolve both the existing churches, and to organize a new one. In this decision they were sustained by the almost unanimous voice of the Synod. But in this the majority of the Assembly thought they erred, and hence the vote, that follows :

1. Shall the complaint be sustained? Yeas 46, nays 52. So the complaint was not sustained.

2. *Resolved*, That the censure which was laid by the Assembly of 1840 upon the Rev. Mr. Kellar, the Presbytery of Peoria, and the Synod of Illinois, be and the same is hereby removed. Adopted unanimously.

3. *Resolved*, That the Synod of Illinois and its commission erred by transcending their powers and the directions of the General Assembly of 1840, when they dissolved the First Church of Peoria. Yeas 55, nays 43.

4. *Resolved*, That the Presbytery of Peoria be and it is hereby directed to restore the name of the aforesaid First Church of Peoria to its roll, the same being, and it is hereby declared to be a constituent part of the Presbytery of Peoria and of the Synod of Illinois. Yeas 56, nays 38.

5. *Resolved*, That to prevent all further misconstruction, the church of Peoria created by the commission, as approved by the Synod of Illinois, be and it is hereby recognized and declared to be the Second Church of Peoria.

Appeal of the Rev. Archibald McQueen.

The Rev. Archibald McQueen having married the sister of his deceased wife, was, for that offence, suspended by the Presbytery of Fayetteville, from the gospel ministry and the sealing ordinances of the church. From this sentence Mr. McQueen appealed, by permission of his Presbytery, to the General Assembly. When the case was called up, there was a disposition manifested on the part of some of the members to have the consideration of it referred to the Synod of North Carolina, or to the next Assembly. The absence of the appellant, the want of suitable counsel to act in his behalf, the importance of the question at issue, were urged in favour of one or the other of these courses. But as the appellant had requested permission to bring his case immediately before the Assembly, as he had excused his personal attendance, and begged the court to appoint some member to act as his advocate, the house thought that justice to him and the interests of the church required that the cause should be decided without unnecessary delay.

Believing the following remarks of the N. Y. Observer in reference to this case to be just, we transfer them to our pages. "Probably no discussion in any late ecclesiastical meeting has been attended with more solemn interest than

that in the General Assembly last week. The subject was approached with deep sensibility, and with a strong conviction of the necessity of settling the law of the church in reference to incestuous marriages. The question was discussed both in reference to the particular case in hand, and on general principles, and a decision made in the fear of God, which will produce a powerful sensation in the church of which this Assembly is the highest judicatory. As the action of the Assembly will be subject of much remark, and as we were present at the discussion, it may be proper to state that we never heard a debate in any deliberative body, conducted with more profound solemnity, with a greater apparent desire to know the mind and to do the will of the Lord, and with more freedom from the excitement of human passion, either for or against the accused. Those who spoke against Mr. McQueen bore the highest testimony to his character and usefulness, in all relations but this; the counsel against him said that Mr. McQueen was his most intimate friend, and with deep emotion he commended him to the sympathies of the Assembly, if those could be indulged consistently with the constitution of the church and the word of God.”*

We feel somewhat at a loss what to do in this case. It has been our custom to present our readers with a summary of the leading arguments on either side of the important subjects discussed in the Assembly. But on the present question we feel we cannot do justice to the arguments either for or against the appellant. Dr. Krebs, having been appointed to act as Mr. McQueen’s advocate just as the cause was called up, had no adequate opportunity to prepare himself for the discussion, and deserves great credit for the exertions which he made to present every thing which could make for his client. Still many of his arguments were stated hypothetically; some are inconsistent with others urged on the same side, so that we are really at a loss to know on what ground the advocates of the appellant would choose to rest his cause. Some took the ground that there is no law in the Bible against incest; others that the law once given on this subject is no longer in force; others admitting it to be in force, denied that it prohibited the particular marriage under consideration. Then as to the other side of the question, though we have satisfactory reports of some of the speeches, we have nothing but a meagre out-

* New York Observer, June 11, 1842.

line of the argument of Dr. Breckinridge, which was by far the ablest speech delivered during the whole discussion. We think it due to ourselves to say this much, as an apology for the unsatisfactory character of the following account of the debate.

It was admitted that the Confession condemns the marriage now under consideration, but it was contended that this does not preclude an appeal to the Bible which is our only infallible standard. The constitution of the church itself recognizes the propriety of this appeal to the word of God. No man can be disciplined for any thing but an "offence," and an offence is defined to be, "anything in the principles or practice of a church member, which is contrary to the word of God; or, which, if it be not in its own nature sinful, may tempt others to sin, or mar their spiritual edification. Nothing, therefore, ought to be considered by any judicatory as an offence, or admitted as a matter of accusation which cannot be proved to be such from scripture, or from the regulations and practice of the church founded upon scripture, and which does not involve those evils, which discipline is intended to prevent." Discipline ch. 1, sec. 3, 4. And in the Form of Gov. ch. 1. sec. 1, it is said, "God alone is the Lord of the conscience; and left it free from the doctrine and commandments of men, which are in any thing contrary to his word, or beside it in matters of faith or worship." Again in sec. 7. "The holy scriptures are the only rule of faith and manners; that no church judicatory ought to pretend to make laws to bind the conscience in virtue of their own authority; and that all their decisions ought to be founded upon the word of God." It is plain, therefore, from our own standards, that the accused has a right to put himself on trial on the word of God, and challenge his accusers to make it clear by that rule that he is guilty of an offence which calls for the censure of the church.

The Presbytery freely admit this right on the part of the appellant, for in answer to his allegation that the scriptures do not condemn the marriage of a man with his wife's sister, they say, "This indeed would be a good reason for appeal if it could be proved, and would justify the reversal of the sentence."

Besides, a distinction must be made between what is fundamental in the confession and what is of minor importance. This idea was strenuously urged by Mr. Stanton, in behalf

of the appellant. Our standards say that Christians should not marry with infidels, papists, or other idolaters; nor with persons notoriously wicked in their lives, nor with such as maintain damnable heresies; yet who ever heard of a man or woman being subjected to censure for such a marriage. There are many other things of a like nature, which never have been and which cannot be enforced to the letter. The infallibility of creeds and confessions is a doctrine which none but the church of Rome has ever asserted. If we receive the interpretations of the framers of the Confession as infallible, we do what they themselves never dreamed of asking at our hands. The church of Rome claims nothing more. This Confession is but the declaration that the framers believed thus and so; and among other things they asserted, as a fundamental doctrine, that the consciences of men were to be free and untrammelled.

We have a right then to appeal to the Bible, and this appeal should not be decided by prejudice. Brethren may have a strong prejudice against such marriages, but this proves nothing. Others think them peculiarly desirable. Nor is it enough to say that all antiquity condemns them, that the Reformers with one voice pronounced them unlawful. The Reformers erred in many things, they believed in witchcraft; they justified persecution; they retained more or less of the errors of the church in which they had been brought up, and of the age in which they were born. Their opinions are no authority for us. Nor is this question to be decided by expediency. Some who admit that there is no law of God in force against such marriages, contend they are unlawful because inexpedient. But this is mere matter of opinion. A man is not to be condemned, for acting against the opinions of other men. If you cannot show a *Thus saith the Lord*; if you cannot produce an express command of God prohibiting the marriage in question, the appellant cannot be condemned.

In turning to the Bible, it may well be questioned whether there is now, or ever was any law upon the subject of incestuous marriages. We know that the sons of Adam married their own sisters, without incurring any guilt. Such marriages were then obviously in accordance with the divine will, and therefore cannot be in themselves sinful. Abraham married his half sister, and was not regarded as sinning in so doing. It is plain from the history of Absalom and Tamar, that their marriage, though children of the same father, was

considered as a thing that might lawfully take place. Again, in certain cases, God commanded a man to marry the widow of his deceased brother, which is a clear proof that such connexions are not in themselves wrong.

The laws in the 18th and 20th chapters of Leviticus, which are supposed to refer to incest, have no reference to marriage, but relate to certain aggravated forms of fornication and adultery. The word translated wife, means wife, a woman whose husband is living, and not a widow. The Hebrew word for widow is not used throughout these chapters. The sense therefore of Lev. xviii. 16, is plain. Thou shalt not take thy brother's wife, not widow. Nothing is here said of widows; for the *usus loquendi* of the Hebrew scriptures gives us an entirely different word to signify a widow or a woman deprived of her husband. So in the case of Herod, who was reprov'd for having his brother Philip's wife, it was adultery and not incest that was condemned.

This view of the case sweeps away all ground of charge against the accused, and makes even the canon of the church a nullity. For as the Confession only condemns marriages within the degrees prohibited in the word, if the Bible contains no prohibitions on the subject, the Confession condemns nothing. The matter is therefore left, as the Bible leaves civil and ecclesiastical governments, to be decided by the views and exigencies of society. And as the marriage in question is not condemned by the law of the land, it cannot be regarded as calling for any ecclesiastical censure.

This is stable and consistent ground. It is ground which has been taken by distinguished theologians and jurists. But if it be conceded that the 18th and 20th chapters of Leviticus do relate to marriage, then we assume that they have no authority over us; they belong to the Levitical law, which Christ has abrogated. The laws supposed to relate to marriage occur in the midst of enactments purely ceremonial or municipal, and it is altogether arbitrary and unauthorized for any man, or set of men, to take a code of laws and retain what they please and throw out what they please, and then expect their expurgated code to be received as of divine authority. If this law is binding, it is binding in all its parts; we must not wear linsey-woolsey garments, nor sow diverse seed in the same field, or raise a mixed breed of cattle; we must punish theft with forced restitution, per-

sonal injury according to the *lex talionis*, and adultery with death. With the Levitical law, considered as law, we have nothing to do. God never gave it for a law to us. The moral precepts which it contains we receive, because they are moral, but not on the authority of the Levitical law; and if we receive some of the precepts of the judicial branch of that law, it is not because they are found in Leviticus, but because their general equity recommend them to our adoption. It is the business of the state, and not of the church, to determine what particular parts of the judicial law, as human regulations, we must be under.

But if we could be driven from this position, if it could be proved that Leviticus 18th and 20th relate to marriage, which we doubt, and that they are binding on us, which we deny, we have the still stronger ground that the marriage of a man with the sister of his deceased wife, is no where forbidden in the Levitical law. So far from its being forbidden, the lawfulness of it is expressly implied. Thou shalt not take a wife to her sister, to vex her, besides the other in her life time. The limitation "in her life time," is a clear intimation that after the death of one sister, the other may be taken.

As it is and must be conceded that there is no express prohibition of the marriage in question in the word of God, on what ground can such a prohibition be contended for? On the ground of construction, or inference. Similar marriages are forbidden, therefore this is unlawful. But against this mode of argument we protest. It is inconsistent with the very nature of prohibitory statutes. Such statutes curtail our liberty as rational beings, or as members of society, it may be for wise reasons, but then they must be construed strictly. We should not be exposed to constructive offences; or held as sinners for doing what the law no where forbids.

Besides, the minuteness of the law, and its irregularity, its running much further in one direction than in another, show that it was the design of the lawgiver to include whatever he intended should be included. The law does not mention one case in each degree of relationship, and leave others to be inferred; but the maternal aunt is specified as well as the paternal aunt; the father's daughter and mother's daughter are both mentioned. Why is this, unless the law meant to be explicit, and to leave nothing to implication, nothing to construction?

It will hardly be denied that the foregoing considerations render it at least doubtful whether the marriage under consideration is forbidden in the word of God. The fact that so many wise and good men in every age of the church have held this marriage to be lawful, shows that it is at least a doubtful point. What other point of morals is thus a matter of dispute? Who doubts whether theft and drunkenness are crimes? Who would hesitate a moment in inflicting the censures of the church for such offences, or who would think it proper to certify to the good character of the offender, or to profess so much pain in visiting him with the punishment he had justly merited? It is evident that those who condemn Mr. McQueen, still think him a good man, and yet they charge him with a great crime, and in bringing the charge they profess such peculiar pain, as shows that they do not feel the offence to be so heinous as their sentence would imply. This consideration alone should lead this Assembly to pause before they sustain the action of the Presbytery. It is not right to condemn a man for an act the criminality of which is matter of doubt. It is a serious matter to deprive a minister of his right to preach the gospel, or to exclude a brother from the table of the Lord. It is saying as far as we can say it, that he is unfit for heaven; that he deserves to be excluded from the communion of saints here and hereafter. We should remember, said Mr. Stanton, that we are criminals, sitting in judgment upon a criminal; we should remember the words of Christ, and imitate his long suffering and disinclination to pronounce judgment upon his people. This General Assembly should be slow to pronounce that to be incest which no former Assembly had ventured thus to stigmatize; especially as enlightened public opinion will be against the judgment. The matter will not rest here; it is a question in which all the world is interested; and the decision of this house will have to sustain a severe ordeal. It is in vain for any body of men to attempt to legislate against public sentiment, in such cases as this; and we may rest assured that public sentiment will never sanction the suspicion and excommunication of a minister for an act which so large a portion of the Christian world regard without disapprobation.

The argument in support of the action of the Presbytery, was substantially as follows. This Assembly has been called upon to pause before it proceeds to condemn the marriage of a man with the sister of his de-

ceased wife; brethren have spoken as though we were about to do something heretofore unheard of. If this were true, it would create a strong presumptive argument against the righteousness of such a decision. It is in the highest degree improbable that a decision of a question of religious morals, contrary to the general judgment of the Christian world, and the uniform practice of the church should be in accordance with the will of God. We believe that his will is so clearly revealed, that on all questions of morals of practical importance, the general judgment of the people of God, will be in accordance with the will of God. We grant then to the advocates of Mr. McQueen that if they can make it appear, that the general judgment of Christian men has been favourable to the marriage under consideration, they have the vantage ground, from which it must be exceedingly difficult to dislodge them. And on the other hand, we call on them to concede, that if the reverse is the fact, then the probability is on the other side. If the great mass of Christian men in all ages have united in thinking such marriages wrong, then the probability is that they are wrong. At any rate we are not to approach the consideration of this subject under the prejudice that we are innovators, that we are introducing some new rules of morals, or taking ground which had not before been assumed. It will not be denied that the earliest records of the ancient church, relating to this subject, condemn the marriage under consideration. By the apostolic constitutions, no man who had married the sister of his wife, could ever be admitted to the ministry; and by the early councils, the parties to such connexions were excommunicated from the church; so that this became as settled a point in ecclesiastical law as any other connected with the whole subject of marriage. Indeed the language of our Confession is a literal version of the old canon law, on this point. As this law was of authority in all the western churches before the reformation, so the various Protestant communions adhered to its provisions as far as our Confession retains them. It is a matter of history that when the question was submitted by Henry VIII. of England to the universities of France, Germany, and Italy, whether such marriages were lawful, they almost with one consent answered in the negative. The great matter in dispute was not so much the lawfulness of such connexions, as the dispensing power of the Pope. The Romanists in many cases maintained that the Bishop of Rome had authority to dispense with the law of God in this,

as in other cases; but they could not deny what was the law of the church on the subject. From the Reformation to the present time the general law of Christendom has remained unchanged. The Lutheran churches, the church of Holland, the church of England, the church of Scotland, our own church have one and the same general rule on this subject. So far from a tendency prevailing to relax this law, it has of late years been rendered more stringent. Before 1835, the marriage of a man with the sister of his deceased wife, was in England merely voidable; but since that date it is void, and the children illegitimate.

Now as to our own church. As early as 1717, the Rev. Mr. Wotherspoon presented for the consideration of the Synod the case of a member of his church who had married his brother's widow, and the Synod decided unanimously that the marriage was unlawful, and that the parties must be excluded from the church.

In 1761, the following minute was adopted in reference to the marriage of a man with the sister of his deceased wife. "Though the majority of Synod think that the marriage is incestuous, and contrary to the laws of God and the land, and agree that it is sinful and of dangerous tendency; yet, inasmuch as some learned men are not so clear as to this point, it is agreed to resume the consideration hereof next year." The following year the Synod resolved, "That as the Levitical law, enforced by the law of the land, is the only rule whereby we are to judge of marriages, whosoever marry within the degrees of consanguinity or affinity forbidden therein act unlawfully, and have no right to the distinguishing privileges of the church; and as the marriages* in question appear to be within the prohibited degrees, they are to be considered unlawful, and the persons to be suspended from special communion, while they continue in this relation."

In 1772, the Synod say in reference to a different case, "After mature deliberation, the Synod declare their great dissatisfaction with all such marriages as are inconsistent with the Levitical law, which in cases matrimonial, we understand to be the law of our nation, and that persons intermarrying in these prohibited degrees, are not only punishable by the laws of the country, but ought to suffer the censures of the church."

* These marriages were, of a man with his half brother's widow, and of a man with his wife's sister.

In 1782, the Synod restored to the communion of the church Anthony Duchane, who had married his wife's sister, after he had been under suspension for three years. This decision was protested against, and the next year remonstrances having been presented against this judgment, the Synod, "Declared their dissatisfaction with all such marriages as are inconsistent with the Levitical law, and that persons marrying within the degree of consanguinity prohibited in that law, ought to suffer the censure of the church, and they further judged, that although the marriage of a man to two sisters successively, viz. to one after the death of the other, may not be a direct violation of the express words of that law, [which nobody affirms], yet as it is contrary to the custom of the protestant churches in general, and an evidence of great untenderness towards many serious and well disposed Christians, and may, through the prejudices or generally received opinions of the members of our church, be productive of very disagreeable consequences, the persons contracting such marriages are highly censurable, and the practice ought to be disallowed in express terms by the Synod, and we do therefore condemn such marriages as imprudent and unseasonable. Yet as some things may be done very imprudently and unseasonably, which when done ought not to be annulled, we are of opinion that it is not necessary for the persons whom this judgment respects, to separate from one another, yet they should not be received into the communion of the church, without a solemn admonition at the discretion of the church to which they belong. And the Synod publicly recommend it to all their members to abstain from celebrating such marriages, and to discountenance them by all the proper means in their power."

With regard to this decision it may be remarked, first, that the Synod so far from taking the modern ground that the Levitical law of marriage, is no longer in force, reassert the contrary doctrine. Secondly, that they restored the appellants in this case after a three years' suspension on the ground, that the marriage in question was not prohibited "by the express words of that law." Thirdly, they declare their disapprobation of such marriages, and urge their ministers never to celebrate them. That is, though the Bible had not expressly prohibited them, men ought to forbid them. Fourthly, this decision, as far as we know, stands entirely alone on our records; there is no

other instance either before or since, in which the higher court has felt at liberty to remove the censure inflicted by a lower court, for the marriage in question.*

Several other cases of questionable marriages were from time to time referred to the General Assembly for their decision. These, as far as they are mentioned in the Digest, were cases of a man's marriage with his wife's niece or half niece, a far more doubtful case than the present one. The common decision of the Assembly was to refer them back to the inferior judicatory, with directions to dispose of them as the interests of religion in their churches required. In 1821, the case of a man who had been excluded from the privileges of the church on account of his marriage with his wife's sister, was brought before the Assembly and decided as follows :

Resolved, 1, That, in the opinion of this General Assembly, the marriage of a man to the sister of his deceased wife, and all similar connexions, are highly inexpedient, unfriendly to domestic purity, and exceedingly offensive to a large portion of the churches.

2. That it be, and it hereby is earnestly enjoined upon the ministers, elders and churches of our communion, to take every proper occasion to impress the sentiments contained in the foregoing resolution, on the public mind, and by all suitable means to discourage connexions so unfavourable in their influence on the peace and edification of the church.

3. That while the Assembly adopt the opinion and would

* We have before us a letter relating to this case, dated November 16th, 1782, written by the Rev. Robert Cooper of Pennsylvania, to the Rev. James Waddell of Virginia ; in which he says, "The vote was carried in favour of Duchane and his wife ; for it 16 ; against it 10 ; 4 or 5 non liquets. Mr. James Finley and myself entered our protest against the decision, others entered their dissent. Several of the older members who attended the Synod were absent when the vote was taken, being employed as members of the corporation of the Widow's Fund. . . . Those who carried the vote in favour of this marriage were mostly juniors ; among whom were all the three sons of Rev. Robert Smith ; their father, though absent when the votes were taken, yet approved the decision. I suppose the old man was gained over by the great learning, abilities, and eloquence of his son Samuel, who made a learned speech respecting [the case] at two or three successive meetings of the Synod. The other principal speakers on that side, were Dr. Patrick Allison of Baltimore, and Mr. Joseph Montgomery. This you will see is a new discovery in discipline. I understand some of your youth have collected some fragments or pieces of what in New England they call New Divinity. If they should incline to import the whole cargo, and set up shop for themselves this modern decision of Synod might contribute something to a new assortment of discipline accommodated to their new doctrines."

enforce the injunction above expressed, they are by no means prepared to decide that such marriages are so plainly prohibited in scripture, and so undoubtedly incestuous, as necessarily to infer the exclusion of those who contract them from church privileges, they therefore refer the case of Mr. Vance back again to the session of the church of Cross Creek, agreeably to former decisions of the General Assembly in similar cases, to be disposed of in such manner as the said session may think most conducive to the interest of religion.

The General Assembly in 1827 adopted the following report in reference to an analogous case. "The committee on Mr. McCrimmon's appeal from the decision of the Presbytery of Fayetteville, confirming his suspension from the communion of the church, for having married his deceased wife's sister, reported, that in their opinion no relief can be given to the said McCrimmon without an alteration of the Confession of Faith, ch. 24, sec. 4, the last clause of which declares that "the man may not marry any of his wife's kindred nearer in blood than he may of his own." But inasmuch as a diversity of opinion and practice obtains on this important subject, your committee beg leave to submit the following resolution, viz:

Resolved, That the Presbyteries be and thereby are directed to take this matter into serious consideration, and send up in writing to the next General Assembly, an answer to the question, whether the above clause of our Confession shall be erased?

In answer to this call only eighteen of the whole number of Presbyteries voted for the erasure, thus fixing, if anything could fix, the law of the church on this subject. With what propriety then can it be said that the Assembly is about to pronounce a new decision, to give a new interpretation to our Confession, to set a new precedent. The appellant calls upon the Assembly to do what it has declared it cannot do, and what the Presbyteries by an overwhelming majority said they shall not do. We are not therefore to be represented as innovators. We are acting on the defensive; we are refusing to do what every other Assembly has refused to do, viz. to remove the censure inflicted by an inferior court for the offence under consideration. We are not only adhering to our own laws, and to our own usages, but we are standing up for the common law and practice of Protestant Christendom, against modern

innovations. We are insisting that the defence which the word of God, the judgment of the Christian world, and the laws of the Christian church, have erected around the domestic circle, shall not by our instrumentality be broken down. If then we err in this matter we err with our fathers, and with the great mass of the Christian world. The Parliament of Great Britain has within a few months, promptly refused to legalize such marriages, and the church and the public have sanctioned their decision. Let the charge of innovation lie, therefore, where it should lie, upon those who in opposition to the general judgment of the church, desire to make our Confession on this subject a dead letter.

Another prejudice with which we have to contend in approaching this question is, that it is not a matter of much importance: if the marriage is prohibited in the Levitical law it must be for some peculiar reasons, for it is not itself an evil; if not desirable, it is at least harmless. Now there is *prima facie* evidence that this view of the subject is incorrect, from the fact that the Christian world for so many ages, and with so much unanimity, has regarded this marriage as an evil of such magnitude as to require its prohibition both by the civil law and the canons of the church. It will not do, to answer that this is only another evidence of the force of prejudice, and of the influence of the church of Rome. We are not so much wiser than all other men. The marriage in question was forbidden before there was a Pope in Rome; it was prohibited by the Reformers with greater zeal than by the Romanists; it has continued to be forbidden in the most protestant, and most enlightened nations of the earth. It is great presumption, therefore, for us to stigmatize as narrow prejudice what has been and still is the general judgment of Christian men.

If a man were to marry his own sister, it is admitted that he would be an object of universal execration, he would be driven from society as unfit for social converse with men. Why is this? Men say they have a natural horror of such connexions. But what is the origin of this horror? It did not exist in the family of Adam, nor in the breast of Abraham, nor among the Egyptians and Persians. It arises from the fact that under the influence of the scriptures, the feelings which attend the relationship of brother and sister are inconsistent with those which belong to the matrimonial connexion; so that any such connexion implies a violation

of the holy charities of domestic society. Every man knows that his feelings towards his sister are in their nature different from those which he has for his bride. Both are pure, they share alike in the approbation of God, but they are incompatible; and the attempt to blend them is felt to be a kind of sacrilege, and therefore is universally and justly viewed with absolute abhorrence. To this must be added the instinctive perception of the consequences of allowing such marriages. Every family would become a den of impurity; every social virtue would be blasted in the bud; and society itself would become too corrupt, not only to deserve existence, but to be able to exist. But why are such results to be apprehended? Because all experience teaches that habitual, familiar, confidential intercourse, such as must and should exist among members of the same family, between young persons of different sexes, who are allowed to intermarry, is, among the mass of men, inconsistent with the preservation of purity. This is the principle on which every father acts with regard to his sons, and every mother with regard to her daughters. Is there any mother who would allow her daughter to associate with a stranger, on the same terms that she associates with her brothers? Would any parent send his children to a boarding school where youth of both sexes were promiscuously associated? Is not the experiment at Oberlin regarded as an opprobrium in a Christian community? It is useless, however, to argue a point which is universally conceded. Then the only question is, whether the intercourse between a man and his sister-in-law is of the kind just specified? As a general rule it is so in fact, it is so of right, and in a multitude of cases, it is so of necessity. He calls her sister; she calls him brother. He is her brother *IN LAW*, that is in the sight of the law of God and man. They are near relations; their interests, their affections, their friendships are all implicated in one inextricable web. She feels that she has a right to his affection and protection; she cannot help loving him as the husband of her sister; she has a right to a sister's place in his family, for marriage does not dissolve her relationship to his wife, who is still her sister, with whom she is entitled to all a sister's intercourse and fellowship. You cannot, therefore, place her in the position of a stranger; and you have no right to do it, if you could. She is a near relative, and must be regarded and treated as such. Is she then to have all the rights and privileges of a sister, without

a sister's protection? Is she to be a sister in all relations but one, and as to that one, a stranger? This is in the first place impossible; and in the second, if possible, in the highest degree dangerous. It is impossible, because the affection which belongs to her as a sister-in-law is inconsistent with any conjugal relation; just as the affection due from a brother to his own sister is incompatible with any such relation. If you sanction the marriage of a brother and sister-in-law, you render it impossible that they should feel towards each other as brother and sister-in-law ought to feel; and as in virtue of their relation they can hardly fail to feel. You place them in a false position; one set of feelings belongs to their relation as brother and sister, and another to their relation as persons who may intermarry. This is a state of things which cannot exist. If a wife's sister is not to look upon her brother-in-law as a brother, then she cannot allow him a brother's rights, nor receive a sister's privileges. She will shrink from him as from every other man. She will become a stranger in her sister's house, and to her sister's children; and yet this is from the nature of the case impossible. It is inconsistent with the constitution of our nature, with the constitution of society, and with the will of God, that persons should be placed in such relation to each other, that they cannot feel and act as becomes that relation, in one of its aspects, without violating the feelings which belong to it in another aspect. That is, it is an attempt to violate the fundamental principles of Christian society to place a woman in the relation of a sister to a man, and yet allow him to marry her.

But suppose it was possible for a woman to occupy these inconsistent positions, what would be the consequence? We are not about to turn prophets, we will simply say what every one will admit, and that is, that such a case would be a violation of the principle on which every father, every mother, every brother, every sister, every man and every woman acts, in every other case; and that is, that a woman ought not to associate with any man whom she can marry, as she associates with a brother. No virtuous woman could do it; no mother would permit it, and in point of fact it never is allowed. No parent permits a daughter to live in the house of a stranger, for months or years, often in the absence of his wife, often alone. Yet this may be done and is done in the case of a brother-in-law, with perfect impunity; the sister feels as secure as on the

hearth of her own father. And why? Because she knows that her sister's husband is, in the sight of God, her brother. This is her protection. It is felt to be enough, but it is acknowledged by all men to be necessary. If you destroy faith in this divinely appointed relationship, you destroy this protection; and you make what was before right and innocent, indelicate and evil: you force the woman to look upon a man as a stranger, whom the constitution of society and her own heart declare to be her brother; you banish her from her sister's house; you break the bonds of relationship which God himself has established for the solace and blessedness of life.

It has been said that a man must be a wretch who would regard with any improper feeling, an inmate of his own house. This we consider as mere affectation. Very few men are wretches in the sense here intended. Evil, in such cases, is rarely the result of design; it is the silent, insidious effect of constant intercourse, of unsuspecting confidence, of indulgence in familiarities, innocent in the supposed relation, but dangerous if the sacredness of that relation be denied. Besides, we are to remember that laws are made not for the peculiarly good, but for all mankind; and Christ has taught even his own children daily to pray, Lead us not into temptation. It is the universal conviction of men, every where manifested by their practice, that it is a temptation for any man to associate with any woman whom he may marry, as he associates with his own sister. We hold therefore it is clear that to allow a man to marry his sister-in-law is inconsistent with the relation in which, by divine appointment, they stand to each other. The affections which arise out of this relation are inconsistent with the conjugal connexion. The intercourse which it authorizes and necessitates is incompatible with domestic purity, if marriage is allowable. To sanction such connexions must lead to loss of confidence in families; to breaking up some of the most sacred relationships of life; and to casting upon the world those who have a right to an asylum in the house of a sister.

This is said to show that the law of God which forbids marriage between near relations, is not an arbitrary command. It is not a matter of little importance. It has its foundation in the essential principles of our nature; and in the constitution of society. Men may legalize such marriages, but they never can cease to be violations of the law of nature, that is, to be inconsistent with the order and con-

stitution of nature as established by God. A parent and child, a brother-in-law and sister-in-law cannot intermarry without doing violence to the feelings which of right and of necessity belong to those relations, and without undermining the foundations of Christian society. We ought not therefore to approach the investigation of the scriptures on this subject, as though we were searching for something which ought not to be there. The very reverse, according to the common judgment of mankind, is true. The Christian world has acted on the principle that any relationship, which of right and of necessity leads to such intercourse as subsists between brothers and sisters, is in its nature, a bar to marriage.

Let us then examine what has been said as to the doctrine of scripture on this subject. It is obvious that the main ground of defence of the marriage in question, is that the Bible contains no law against incest. To this ground the advocates of the appellant were constantly driven back; for it evidently matters little whether it be denied that the Bible contains any law on the subject; or that the law once given is no longer in force: in either case, we are without a divine rule of duty as to this matter. It must excite surprise that this position can be assumed by any who maintain, on the one hand, that no man or set of men can make laws to bind the conscience, that God has retained dominion over our moral nature as his sole prerogative, and left the conscience free from all human authority; and upon the other, that for parents and children, or brothers and sisters to intermarry is a horrid sin. But why is it a sin? Where there is no law there is no transgression. If God has not forbidden such marriages they are not sinful. God may reveal his will either by the light of nature, or by his word. But we as Protestants believe that the Bible is the only infallible and the sufficient rule of faith and practice, and that whatever cannot be proved from scripture, cannot be enjoined either as a matter of faith or duty. To affirm therefore that there is no law in the Bible against incest, or that that law is not now in force is to affirm that incest is no sin.

But in the second place this opinion does violence to the plain and necessary sense of scripture. The command, 'Thou shalt not approach any who is near of kin to thee,' admits of no interpretation that does not include marriage. It forbids all approach, such as is here referred to, whether

in wedlock or otherwise. The opposite interpretation which would confine the law to adultery or fornication, is not only inconsistent with the plain meaning of the words, but with the whole design and character of the passage. Why should the lawgiver, who had said, Thou shalt not commit adultery, give this long enumeration of kindred? All are included in the general prohibition, why then specify mother, step-mother, sister, half-sister, sister-in-law, &c. &c.? And why, after affixing death as the penalty of adultery, should the milder penalty of excision from the people, or dying childless, be attached to many of the offences here referred to? The mere fact that the whole Jewish and Christian world has from the beginning understood these chapters of marriage, is a proof of the extremes to which the advocates of the new doctrine are driven to sustain their views. It has been argued that because the word wife and not widow is used in these laws, they must be understood of women whose husbands were living. But this argument is contradicted by scriptural usage; the widow of a man is often called his wife when her marriage with another is spoken of. Thus Genesis xxxviii. 8: And Judah said unto Onan, go in unto thy brother's wife and marry her. Deuteronomy xxv. 5: The wife of the dead shall not marry without unto a stranger. Verse 7: If a man like not to take his brother's wife, then his brother's wife, &c. So also in other places, as Ruth iv. 5, 1 Sam. xxvii. 3: It is obvious therefore that there is no force in this objection.

The reference indeed of Lev. chapters 18 and 20, to marriage, is so obvious and necessary, that few adopt the contrary opinion, it is much more commonly assumed that these laws though relating to incest, are no longer binding. Then we are in the extraordinary position already mentioned; professing to regard the scriptures as a perfect rule of duty, we maintain that there is a most important class of obvious and destructive sins which it no where forbids. Or rather what all mankind is forced to regard as sin, the advocates of this opinion must hold to be no sin at all. To say that a thing is sinful, and yet not contrary to the law of God, is a contradiction in terms. To say a thing is sinful, and yet not forbidden in the scriptures, is to deny the sufficiency of the scriptures as a rule of duty. We must therefore either admit that these laws are binding, or assert that it is no sin for a father to marry his daughter, or a brother his sister.

But besides this *reductio ad absurdum*, it is evident from

the nature of these laws that they are of permanent obligation. It has been said indeed that they are positive laws. But what is a positive law in the strict sense of the term? It is confessedly a law which has no foundation either in the nature of God or the nature and constitution of things, but which rests entirely on the express command of the law-giver. There may be and doubtless there are reasons for all such commands, but they are reasons arising out of peculiar and temporary circumstances. It is characteristic of positive laws, that they are not obligatory until expressly enacted, that their binding force is temporary, that they might not have been enacted at all. The laws of Moses are full of commands of this nature, which were given in view of the peculiar circumstances of the Hebrews, and of the design of the old economy. Such were the commands regarding circumcision, clean and unclean meats, sacrifices, and festivals.

But it is on all hands admitted that besides these positive and temporary laws, the Old Testament contains laws of perpetual obligation. Is not the whole decalogue binding upon us? And why? Not because of its re-enactment in the New Testament, for it is not there re-enacted. Its perpetual authority is simply recognized, or taken for granted. Why then do we assume that the ten commandments are still binding? It is because they express the will of God in reference to those duties which arise out of our permanent relations to him and to our fellow men. The command to love God must be always binding because God is always supremely excellent; the command to honour our parents is always binding because children are always indebted to their parents for existence and support. The same remark may be made in reference to a multitude of precepts relating to our duty to the aged, the infirm, the destitute, the afflicted. It has been said that these precepts are binding not because they are in the Levitical law, but because they are in their nature moral; that there are moral precepts in the laws of Confucius, which is no proof that his code is binding upon us. But there is this infinite difference between the two cases. The precepts of Confucius are the expression of his opinion as to what is right in certain cases; the precepts in Leviticus are the declaration of God as to what is right. We may differ from Confucius, we dare not differ from God.

It is evident, therefore, that the Levitical code contains

laws of three different classes. First, those which are the expression of the will of God in reference to the peculiar circumstances of his ancient people; secondly, such as are expressions of his will in reference to duties of men in their relation to himself, or which arise out of his own nature; and thirdly, such as regard their permanent relations to each other. To which of these classes any particular command belongs, is to be determined partly from its nature, and partly from the reasons assigned for the command. These means are found to be sufficient, for there is scarcely any difference of opinion on the subject, except in reference to marriage, which some would except from the operation of a principle of interpreting the divine law which they admit in all other cases. They acknowledge that the command to love God, to honour our parents, to venerate the aged, to succour the afflicted, are binding not merely because such things are expedient, but because they are the commands of God, expressions of his will, having relation to nothing in the peculiar circumstances of the ancient Hebrews, but to permanent relations among men. The command, thou shalt have no other gods before me; thou shalt not kill; thou shalt not steal; thou shalt not commit adultery, were uttered upon Mount Sinai to the assembled multitudes of Israel; but the voice reaches to us; it reaches to all men, because it declares the duties not of Jews but of men. The same voice has said that near relatives must not intermarry; on what possible ground can the authority of this command be evaded? There is nothing in its nature to limit it to any one age or people. It is enforced by no reasons which are special and temporary. It declares the duty of relatives as relatives, as plainly as the command, thou shalt not steal, declares the duty of men as men. If one expresses the will of God, so does the other.

It is constantly argued that these laws cannot be moral and permanent, because it was sometimes right to violate them. It was right in the family of Adam; and right in the case of a brother's widow who was childless. It is said that what is sinful never can be made right. It is obvious that this argument proves too much. If the command that one brother should take the childless widow of another brother as his wife, proves that it is not wrong for a man to marry his sister-in-law, then the command to the immediate sons of Adam to marry their sisters, proves that it is right now for brothers to marry their sisters. This objection is

founded upon the confusion of two very different things. There are things which are inherently and essentially wrong, and can in no possible case be right; as hatred of God and malevolence towards men. The prohibitions of such things arise out of the very nature of God, and are as immutable as that nature. But there are other things which are wrong only in virtue of a divine prohibition; and this prohibition may be founded either on temporary considerations, or such as are permanent. But in either case, whenever the prohibition is removed or the opposite commanded, the guilt of the action ceases. It was a sin in any Israelite not to circumcise his child on the eighth day; but if God commanded any one to defer the rite or omit it altogether, it was of course his duty to comply. It was forbidden to the Hebrews to labour on the Sabbath, but in many cases, labour on that day was a duty. These are cases of positive commands. But further than this, it is sinful to take the property of others without their consent, but if God commanded the Israelites to take the property of the Egyptians, it was right for them to do so. It is a sin to kill a human being, yet God commanded the Hebrews to extirpate the Canaanites. We all admit that bigamy is a sin, but if any man will produce a command of God to marry two wives, no one will deny his right to do so. It is a sin for a brother to marry his sister, but if required by a divine command, it is a sin no longer. Thus, also, if any one can produce a divine command to marry his sister-in-law, the lawfulness of the marriage will be readily admitted. All these commands belong to the same class; they all express the will of God as to duties of men in the permanent relations of society, and are therefore of permanent obligation; yet any one or all of them may be set aside by him in whose hands are all his creatures, and whose nature and relations, and the resulting duties may be modified at will. That an Israelite, therefore, under peculiar circumstances and for specified reasons was commanded to marry his brother's wife, no more proves that the general law on this subject is not binding, than the command to Abraham to sacrifice Isaac proves that the command, thou shalt not kill, is not moral and permanent.

That the Levitical law of marriage is still binding upon us, we think is proved by what has already been said. It is the expression of the will of God in reference to relationships which still exist among men. It tells us what is

the duty of near relatives. It tells us that brothers and sisters must not intermarry, not because they were Jews, but because of their relationship. It extends the prohibition to all who are near of kin, because they are near of kin. It is as much a law for us therefore as any other expression of the will of God. The binding authority of this law is recognized in the New Testament, just as the continued obligation of the original law of marriage is recognized. We find no express assertion that marriage must be between one man and one woman, but the expression of the will of God at the creation, is held to bind all ages and nations. Thus though there is no express declaration that near relatives must not marry, it is plain from the language of the apostle to the Corinthians, that he considered the original revelation on this subject as still our rule of duty.

The only remaining question is, whether the marriage of a man with the sister of his deceased wife is prohibited by this law? Perhaps nothing has contributed more effectually to produce the impression of the lawfulness of such marriages, than the translation of Leviticus, xviii. 18, adopted in our version. "Neither shalt thou take a wife to her sister, to vex her, besides the other in her life time." In the margin the translation is, *one wife to another*. If the former version is correct, then the implication would seem to be, that though it was unlawful to have two sisters at the same time, as wives, it was lawful after the death of a wife to marry her sister. If the translation in the margin is correct, there is of course no ground for this inference. There would probably be no dispute as to the meaning of this text, were it not for the impression that polygamy was lawful under the old dispensation. We know however from the authority of Christ that it never was lawful; that God in the beginning having made one man and one woman, thereby expressed his will against polygamy. That good men through ignorance sometimes violated this law, is no proof that it was not binding. It should be remembered also that the cases of polygamy recorded in the scriptures are comparatively few. The practice was by no means common among the Hebrews, and long before the advent seems to have ceased entirely. It has been supposed impossible that such men as David and Solomon should have erred in this matter, if there had been any express prohibition on this subject in the law of Moses. We give the ancient church however far too much credit for attention to

the law of God as contained in the pentateuch, if we suppose that all its prescriptions were rigidly observed. We know on the contrary that the law of Moses for many generations, was more or less neglected, and that even the pious portion of the people were far from observing all its directions. Besides, there is no more difficulty in reconciling the piety of David with his violating the law of Moses, than with the admission that his conduct was contrary to the revealed will of God. Those were times of ignorance in which God winked at many departures from his own law. Things that are wrong in virtue of a divine prohibition, even when that prohibition is founded upon the nature of things as constituted by God, are obviously less wrong when the prohibition is imperfectly revealed, or partially suspended.

That this verse is a prohibition of polygamy, or that the marginal translation gives the true sense of the passage, seems plain from the fact that though the common Hebrew idiom "a man to his brother" or "a woman to her sister," occurs between thirty and forty times in the Bible, in no case has it any other meaning than "one to another." Why then should this uniform usage be violated in this solitary case? Who would presume to rest any doctrine on a translation at variance with the uniform sense of the words in all other passages of the Bible? This is the more unwarrantable, inasmuch as the sense is perfectly simple and natural, if the words be taken in their ordinary meaning. "Thou shalt not take one wife to another, to vex her, to uncover her nakedness, besides the other in her life time." One wife besides the other, is to say the least, as natural, as one sister besides the other. This passage, therefore, if explained according to the common rules of interpretation, gives no sanction to the marriage in question.

But as it is admitted that these chapters contain no prohibition in express words of the marriage of a man with the sister of his deceased wife, the question whether such marriage is prohibited depends upon the manner in which the law is to be interpreted. If the cases therein mentioned are to be taken as specific instances, which exclude all others, then this marriage is not prohibited. But if those cases are given only as examples of the degrees within which marriage should not take place, then this connexion is forbidden. As every thing at last turns upon this point, it is obvious that we must have better authority than our

own, to decide upon the rule of interpretation. If the law does not explain itself; if it does not make it plain what it means to allow and what to forbid, we cannot give it the force of a divine rule. In turning to the law we find it begins with a general prohibition of marriage between those who are near of kin; and by kin we are to understand relationship in general, because nearly two to one of the specifications which follow relate to affinity and not to consanguinity. This law, therefore, as explained by itself, forbids marriage between near relations whether by marriage or by blood.

Again, when we come to examine the specifications, we find that the degree of relationship is the very ground of the prohibitions. A man must not marry his half sister because she is his sister, verse 11; a man must not marry his aunt, because she is nearly related to his father or mother, v. 12; a man must not marry his brother's wife, because she is so nearly related to his brother; a man must not marry the daughter or grand-daughter of his wife, "because they are her near kinswomen: it is wickedness:" v. 17: relationship to his wife, is the very ground of the prohibition. Is not this a plain, explicit declaration that it is wrong in the sight of God for a man to marry the near kindred of his wife?

Besides, if we adopt the other rule of interpretation, a father may marry his own daughter. (Leviticus xviii. 17, forbids the marriage of a man with his mother, and not that of a daughter with her father, as it would seem from our version to do. The sense is plain by comparing v. 7 with vs. 8 and 16.) Now, as we know no rule of duty to bind the conscience but the word of God; and as that word, if interpreted on the principle contended for, does not forbid the grossest of all forms of incest, such incest can be no sin. But as it is a sin of the most shocking character, as all admit, this principle of interpretation, must be false.

In reviewing this case, therefore, we think it plain that the word of God does contain a law against incest; that the law is binding upon us, and that this law, as interpreted by itself, does forbid marriage between a man and the near kindred of his wife.

Much has been said as to the severity of the sentence pronounced by the Presbytery. But according to our Book the case admitted of no other penalty. A mere reprimand would have answered none of the ends of punishment. The Presbytery was bound to express by their sentence

that the marriage in question, was in their judgment contrary to the law of God, and to the standards of the church, and in a high degree injurious to the peace and purity of society. Exclusion from the privileges of the church, under such circumstances, is the only adequate penalty, and it is the one which in all churches has in such cases been inflicted. This suspension must continue until the party gives evidence of repentance. What evidence is, in this case, to be deemed satisfactory rests with the discretion of the Presbytery. No one will doubt that incest is an offence which admits of various degrees. It is founded upon degrees of kindred, and as these degrees are very different, so the offence of marrying those who are nearer to us is greater than that of marrying those who are more remote. No man can believe that the marriage of a man with his aunt is an act of the same turpitude as his marriage with his mother or daughter would be. And as a sister is nearer than a half-sister, or a sister-in-law, so the degree of turpitude of the offence depends on the degree of relationship. As therefore the offence differs, so should the penalty. We find that in the ancient church the penalty for the marriage of a man with his wife's sister, was excommunication for a term of years; for marriage with his own sister it was final excision from the church.

This opens a question however which was not before the Assembly. That body had simply to decide whether it would remove from the appellant the censure inflicted by his Presbytery; and in deciding this question in the negative, we believe they decided agreeably to the word of God, the standards of the church, the general sentiment of the Christian world, and as the best interests of society imperatively demanded.

Report of the Committee on Psalmody.

In 1838 the Assembly appointed a committee to revise and correct the book of Psalms and Hymns in common use and to report to the Assembly of 1839. Several of the members of this committee declined to act and others were appointed in their places; the working members of the committee were Dr. W. W. Phillips, Dr. R. J. Breckinridge, Dr. C. C. Cuyler, Rev. John Gray, and subsequently Dr. W. M. Engles and Dr. Krebs; by whose labours a hymn book was finally prepared and laid before the Assembly. When the report was called up for consideration Dr. Howe moved

that it should be approved, and be allowed to be used in the churches. Dr. McFarland moved that it be referred for examination to the Presbyteries who should report their suggestions for its amendment to the committee in time to enable them to make a final report to the next Assembly. This motion was lost by a vote of 57 to 50. The Assembly then proceeded to vote on the book in detail, long enough to show that such a body was utterly unfit for such business. A motion was then made to refer the book to the same committee with directions to make such alterations as their own judgment or the suggestions of others might dictate, and to report it together with the book of Psalms to the next Assembly. This motion prevailed. On the day before the close of the sessions Mr. Smith moved a reconsideration of the last mentioned vote, which motion requiring two-thirds, was lost. Dr. Breckinridge then moved, That in view of the minute of the Assembly of last year and this year in regard to the new Psalm and Hymn Book, the Assembly order that the Committee on the said book be and they hereby are authorized to go on, and, at their discretion print the book containing the Psalms now in use together with the new selection of Hymns which has been laid before this Assembly. And the book so printed shall be laid before the next Assembly and is authorized to be used in the churches. Yeas 59, nays 11.

2. *Resolved*, That our ministers and members individually, and the Presbyteries are invited to communicate to this committee such suggestions as may appear best to them before the first day of December next, addressing their communications post paid to the chairman, Rev. Dr. W. W. Phillips, New York, and the committee shall not put the book to press before the first day of December next. Yeas 60, nays 11.

These resolutions were obviously out of order, as the Assembly had made a different disposition of the book, by a vote which they refused to reconsider. However, we are in favour of the majority having their own way ; and as a large majority of the house were in favour of final action on the subject we are glad the matter has been thus disposed of. The responsibility resting on the committee is very great, and it is probable they will execute their task as much to the satisfaction of the churches, as any committee would be likely to do. But we are free to confess that there are many things in the book laid before the Assembly which we think

ought not to be there ; hymns which we consider unsuitable for the worship of God. Some of them are mere sentimental effusions ; some exhortatory addresses to sinners ; some objectionable from the lightness of their measure, and others for their want of all poetic excellence. As this is a matter in which every body is concerned, every body thinks he has a right to be pleased, and therefore feels that he has a right to find fault. We trust that the impossibility of pleasing every body will not lead the committee to determine to please nobody.

QUARTERLY LIST

OF

NEW BOOKS AND PAMPHLETS.

Horae Solitariae : or, Essays upon some remarkable names and titles of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit, occurring in the Old and New Testaments, and declarative of their essential Divinity and gracious offices in the redemption and salvation of men. To which is annexed, an essay, chiefly historical, upon the doctrine of the Trinity; and a brief account of the heresies relative to the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, which have been published since the Christian era. By Ambrose Serle, Esq. Complete in one volume. New-York: Robert Carter, 58 Canal street. 1842. pp. 708. Svo.

A beautiful specimen of Glasgow typography, though published at New-York. It is surely unnecessary to recommend to our elder readers, the writings of Serle. To those who are younger, it may be seasonable to say, that the book here republished is from the pen of a learned and pious layman, and that it has always been a favourite work with that class of orthodox Christians, who love to dwell upon the names and person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. It tends, in every page, to exalt the Redeemer, and to invite the soul to commune with Him. Where there is any prevalence of Socinian infection, it is one of the best preservatives and antidotes which could be recommended. It contains much doctrine and much experience; so intermingled, that the doctrine is never dry, nor the experience ever unsound. The *Horae Solitariae* was a favourite work of William Romaine, who often mentions it in his correspondence, and who was an intimate friend of the author. This is not to be wondered at, when we observe how constantly the discussion of abstruse theological points is, in these pages, made to pass, by the easiest transition, into the expression of faith and love, and the language of tender Christian emotion. We are persuaded, that no pious reader will judge otherwise of the volume, or regret the purchase of it, on this recommendation.

Life of Thomas McCrie, D. D., author of the Life of John Knox, Life of Melville, Lectures on Esther, &c. &c. By his son, the Rev. Thos. McCrie. Wm. S. Young, 173 Race street.

It is very natural, when we have been pleased and instructed by a book, to wish to know something of the life and private character of the author. The writings of Dr. McCrie are among the best on ecclesiastical history which have

been published for a century. Indeed he has done more to elucidate the history of the origin and progress of the reformation in Scotland, than all other writers; and the fidelity and accuracy with which he has recorded facts, have never been called in question. He has also done eminent service to the church by rescuing from undeserved opprobrium the character of such men as Knox and Melville, and has by an authentic statement of facts, exhibited these Scottish worthies in their true light. Perhaps no works have had so much efficiency in producing in Scotland a revival of the evangelical doctrines of the reformation. The life of this excellent and useful man has been prepared by his son, also a minister of the gospel, and evidently partaking, in a high degree, of the excellent traits, which shone so illustriously in his deceased father. It is always pleasing to find eminent men succeeded by sons who emulate their virtues, and resemble them in the soundness of their opinions, and in the vigour of their intellectual powers.

Comfort in Affliction: a Series of Meditations, by James Buchanan, D. D., High Church, Edinburgh. First American, from the ninth Edinburgh Edition. R. Carter: New-York.

The American editor has performed an acceptable and valuable service to the religious community, by publishing this little volume of *Meditations*, which has been so popular in Scotland, that it has passed through nine editions already. The work is evidently the production of a mind mature in piety, and capable of taking deep and comprehensive views of the truths of the Gospel. It is written in a style remarkably terse, but so perspicuous, that it is level to the meanest capacity. We take pleasure, therefore, in recommending these "*Meditations*" as well suited to point out the true sources of consolation to all serious inquirers.

Theopneusty, or the Plenary Inspiration of the Holy Scriptures. By S. R. L. Gaussen, Professor of Theology in Geneva. Translated by E. N. Kirk. New York. John S. Taylor & Co. 1842. 12 mo. pp. ix, 343.

Mr. Gaussen, the author of this seasonable treatise, is Professor of Theology in the Theological School at Geneva. The translator, we need scarcely say, is pastor of a Congregational Church in Boston, but more widely known as a zealous evangelist and as the Secretary of the Foreign Evangelical Society. Mr. Kirk has given a valuable work to the American public, and we are not sure that he could have made a better selection. It establishes and vindicates the thorough-going, old-school doctrine of the plenary inspiration of the scriptures. Though this doctrine has never, so far as we know, been formally denied, among ourselves, it has been rejected and derided on the continent of Europe, and allowed to go into neglect among certain theologians in America. The book before us will be a useful one, for both these classes. It will be read, understood, and felt, by those who would throw aside with a sneer the productions of a Scottish or an American author. It is boldly argumentative, in a high and uncommon degree; and, if we may say so without the opportunity of collation with the original, it is well translated. Mr. Gaus-

sen has transfused into his discussion all the fervour of his nation, and even where his method and his way of giving us the argument, are most unlike our own, he awakens our attention and commands our respect.

The Divine Rule of Faith and Practice; or a Defence of the Catholic Doctrine that Holy Scripture has been since the times of the Apostles the sole Divine Rule of Faith and Practice to the Church, against the dangerous errors of the Authors of the Tracts for the Times, and the Romanists, as particularly, that the Rule of Faith is "made up of Scripture and Tradition together;" &c. In which also the Doctrines of the Apostolical Succession, the Eucharistic Sacrifice, &c., are fully discussed. By William Goodc, M. A. of Trinity College, Cambridge, Rector of St. Antholen, London. 2 volumes. Philad. Herman Hooker. 1842. pp. 494, 604.

It needs only a cursory examination of this work to shew, that it will more vex and harass the Tractators and their humble followers, than any thing which has been published. The latter, as we are informed, have already begun to sneer, and to enquire who this new disputant may be: they are like to know him, before long, as one whose blows will be remembered, who copes with them within their own lists, in their own armour, and with greatly more than their own straightforwardness and logic. It is a book which reminds us of the old-time argumentation, in which every point was proved, and every objection answered, with an overwhelming copiousness of reason and authority. But it is not possible to say, within a few pages, what would be just: If we return to him, in a future number, it will be to exhibit his triumph over the semi-papists of Oxford.

Episcopal Bishops the Successors of the Apostles. The Sermon preached in St. Paul's church, Detroit, on Sunday, February 13, 1842, at the ordination of the Reverend Montgomery Schuyler, to the Priesthood, and Sabin Hough and Edward Hodgkin, to the Deaconship. By the Right Reverend Samuel Allen McCoskry, D. D. Published by request. Detroit, 1842: pp. 43. 8vo.

The pious and amiable author of this sermon is "episcopal bishop" of Michigan, and there is no man whom we should more cheerfully believe, if it were possible, when he assures us that, on this occasion, he has "shown that the Apostles received full power to rule and govern the church from Christ; that they very early transferred that power to others, and that the office was continued in the church; that it was supreme; and that they established two inferior grades in the ministry to which was given limited powers, derived entirely from the Apostles, and the Bishops, their successors." The good Bishop adds, "How any one can resist the testimony, I know not." He ought to know, however, that the power of "resisting testimony" very much depends upon the relevancy, clearness, and conclusiveness of that which is "resisted;" and that those who have been able to resist the learned and ingenious sophistry of "Episcopacy tested by Scripture," may without any superhuman power of resistance, be expected to withstand a paraphrastical abridgment of that celebrated tract, presented in the less imposing form of an

ordination sermon at Detroit. That Bishop McCrosky's arguments are weak, and inconclusive, can occasion neither wonder nor regret on our part; but we do grieve to find such a man asserting as a truth which he "most fully believes," that "if the positions advanced [in this sermon] cannot be sustained, Christ has left no church on the earth and no ministry of reconciliation." That is to say, unless the Bible teaches that the twelve apostles were first ordained "to preach the gospel" and "baptize;" then "to bless the elements of bread and wine in remembrance" of Christ; and then "were raised up to the very same office which Christ himself held," "in his human nature, as head and governor of the church"—unless the Bible teaches this it teaches nothing! It would be less absurd to say that unless the primacy of Peter can be proved, it never can be proved that there were any apostles. We can assure Bishop McCrosky that whatever "the powers of the successors of the Apostles" (falsely so called) may be, they do not possess that of making the most clear and fundamental truths of scripture stand or fall with the puerile conceits of modern controversy. He may rely upon it, that the certain existence of a church on earth and of a "ministry of reconciliation," will be known and believed in, as a truth of revelation and a ground of rejoicing, long after men have even ceased to inquire how many "commissions" the twelve received, and to make distinctions where nothing short of a creative power could ever make a difference.

The offensive feature of this sermon is not the use of "words calculated to irritate or wound Christians who hold different views;" for this the author has according to his promise, "been most scrupulously careful to avoid," Nor is it his maintaining paradoxical opinions by imaginary proofs; for this is an infirmity too common to provoke the slightest feeling of displeasure. But the crying sin of the performance is its popish tendency to place church government upon a level with the gospel, and to suspend the very offer of salvation, or at least the authority to make it on the petty details of a far-fetched hypothesis, which one generation of sane men after another have perused the scriptures without seeing there or dreaming of. Had Bishop M. confined his rash assertion to the fundamental principles of prelacy, it would have been enough, nay too much for a wise and good man; but the "positions advanced," upon the truth of which the very being of a church and of a ministry depends, include the sickly dream of a triple ordination in the apostolic body and the impious dogma that "episcopal bishops" are not only the successors of the twelve but of the Saviour; that "every thing that could be performed by a mere human being was given by the Saviour." "He was, as the Apostle declares, the Head of the body, consequently this headship was transferred, and, all the power necessary to preserve and regulate the body." When the One Head of the Church, whom we believe in, has forsaken it, we shall be glad to have these substitutes, and not till then.

Meditations and Addresses on the subject of prayer, by the Rev. Hugh White,

A. M., curate of St. Mary's parish, Dublin. First American, from the tenth Dublin edition. New York: Robert Carter, 58 Canal street: pp. 237.

We cannot but think, that the religious public, and especially the Presbyterian church, in the United States, are laid under great obligations to Mr. Carter, of New York, for the many reprints of valuable European books, which he has edited in a cheap and neat form, suited to the wants of our country. But his publications are not all from writers of the Presbyterian denomination. The popular little volume, which we now notice, is from the pen of a pious minister of the established church of Ireland, who being prevented by infirm health from engaging in the active duties of his office, 'has been led to adopt the medium of the press, as a substitute for the ministrations of the pulpit.' That the publication has been well received in the country where the author is known, needs no other evidence than that it has gone already through ten editions. And in our opinion, it deserves to be extensively circulated in this country. The subject of prayer is here treated as a spiritual exercise, and the sentiments of the author appear to us not only pious, but sound and judicious, and very seasonable in the state of religion among us. We do, therefore, cordially recommend it to the perusal of all who desire to be instructed in the right manner of performing this important duty.

The Works of the Right Reverend Father in God, Joseph Butler, D. C. L., late Lord Bishop of Durham. To which is prefixed an account of the character and writings of the author. By Samuel Halifax, D. D., late Lord Bishop of Gloucester. New York: Robert Carter, 58 Canal street.

While Bishop Butler's Analogy of natural and revealed religion is in the hands of almost all readers, and has become a text-book in many of our institutions of learning, the other works of this eminent author have not been in common circulation, in this country. We are pleased, therefore, to see his whole works collected in one handsome volume, printed in a good large type, and sold at a reasonable rate. It would be worse than superfluous to eulogize the writings of this extraordinary man. In some important respects, he stands pre-eminent and alone, as an author. In profundity and impartiality he has no superior. He possessed the rare power of collecting and concentrating the feeble and scattered rays of light which to most minds were invisible, or which they had not the power of so presenting, as to render them visible to others. And while we cannot concur in all his opinions, we believe that there are few books better adapted to discipline the inquisitive mind, and to habituate it to a patient and candid pursuit of truth.

Comly's Spelling and Reading Book. With Notes for Parents and Teachers; adapted to the use of Public Schools, and Private or Family instruction. Philadelphia: Thomas L. Bonsal, No. 33 1-2 Market Street. 1842.

